Research Report DCSF-RR199

Commissioning - A Survey of the Views and Experiences of Providers of Services to Children, Young People and Families 2009

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The Government considers effective commissioning[1] of services for children, young people and families by local authorities and other Children's Trust[2] partners to be vital to the achievement of better outcomes for all children, young people and their families. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) appointed BMRB Social Research to collect robust evidence to assess current experiences and perceptions of commissioning practices among service providers from the public, private and third sectors[3].

In particular, the DCSF wished to gather providers' views and experiences of commissioning at the local, regional and sub-regional levels; identify what encourages providers to enter or leave a market and the extent of barriers to entry (and exit); establish what incentivises providers to expand or retrench their service offering and find out how easy it is to do so; seek providers' views on what has changed in the last three years; and collect opinions on providers' outlook for the future. Additionally, for third sector providers only, the survey set out to assess the extent of Compact[4] compliance (full cost recovery, duration of contracts etc.).

This study describes experiences and perceptions of the commissioning process amongst 1,576 providers of services for children, young people and families in England. The fieldwork for the study was undertaken April to June 2009. The nine different types of services covered by the research are: children's homes, residential special schools, fostering, adoption, short breaks, activities for young people, family and parenting support, school transport and teacher supply agencies. To be eligible for the survey, providers had to have bid for or received funding from local authorities, other Children's Trust partners or from schools in the previous financial year (2008/09).

1.2 Methodology

A total of 5,269 providers were selected from a variety of sources, including the Ofsted database of registered providers, DCSF datasets and the Shared Care network. Where providers operated on different levels (e.g. individual settings which were part of a larger organisation), the survey focused on the lowest level that was involved in the commissioning of services. Further information on the survey design and methodology can be found at Appendix A. When interpreting the findings for the survey, it should be borne in mind that the

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[1] Commissioning is the overall process by which services are planned and delivered with a view to best meeting needs and driving up outcomes. As such, it encompasses the assessment of needs, the planning and design of services, the securing of services through contracts, grants or other means, and the monitoring and review of service performance.

[2] The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 strengthens Children's Trusts by putting Children's Trust Boards on a statutory footing. The new legislation also extends the existing duty to cooperate to promote children's well-being to maintained schools, Academies, non-maintained special schools, SFCs, FE colleges and Jobcentre Plus. It also places a duty on the Children's Trust Board to prepare, publish and monitor the implementation of the strategic Children and Young People's Plan for the local area. Responsibility for implementing the Plan remains with individual partners.

[3] At the start of the interview providers were asked whether they were a 'public sector organisation e.g. local authority, primary care trust, youth offending service', a 'private sector company' or a 'third sector' organisation (the latter defined as 'not public sector or private sector i.e. non-governmental, value driven, does not operate for profit and re-invests surpluses to further its objectives'). Based on their response, providers were categorised as a public, private or third sector provider for the purposes of the survey.

[4] The Compact is an agreement between the Government and the voluntary and community sector. See **http://www.thecompact.org.uk** for more details.

survey is based on a sample of providers in each of the service areas (not the total population). As such, the findings are subject to sampling tolerances. Throughout the report, findings are noted only when they are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

1.3 Main findings

1.3.1 Funding

Most of the providers in the survey said that the local authority was their principal commissioning body[5] (72 per cent on average), with individual schools the principal commissioning body for most of the remainder[6]. However, while funding for private sector providers generally came only from these two sources, third sector providers tended to obtain funding from a greater range of sources, including service users, personal donations and charitable organisations. A small proportion of providers (two per cent on average) said that a joint funding body was their principal commissioning body. The exceptions to this were adoption service providers and teacher supply agencies, none of whom said that a joint commissioning body was their principle funding and commissioning body.

Overall, grants were the most common form of funding in the public sector, whereas contracts were most common in the private sector. Third sector providers mentioned grants, contracts and service-level agreements in approximately equal numbers.

1.3.2 Provider experiences and perceptions of commissioning practices

Most providers said that they had at least a little involvement in assessing the needs of users with their principal commissioning body, and on average one in three said they had a high level of involvement. Overall, providers were less likely to have been involved in planning services than in assessing users' needs, and less likely still to have been involved in designing or redesigning services: the proportion of providers with a high level of involvement[7] was, on average, 37 per cent for assessing users' needs, 28 per cent for planning services, and 23 per cent for designing or redesigning services.

Public sector providers were more likely than those in other sectors to say that they were involved in these ways, and third sector providers more so than those in the private sector. Specifically, involvement tended to be higher than average amongst providers of short breaks, but lower amongst providers of school transport, fostering services and (in relation to planning and design of services) residential special schools.

The majority of providers said that they found the information in grant application, tendering or service level agreement documents easy to understand, although this tended to be 'fairly' rather than 'very' easy. There were variations by sector, with public sector providers less likely to have problems than those in the private or third sector. Most providers also said that documents contained the right amount of information, although on average 18 per cent said there was too much information and 11 per cent said there was not enough. Providers of fostering services were most critical of documentation, in terms of being both difficult to understand and not having the right amount of information.

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[5] The principal commissioning or awarding body is the organisation that the provider has 'worked with' most often in the last financial year. For the purposes of the survey, 'worked with' refers to receiving money or funding, submitting a tender, or applying for funding (even if not successful).
[6] To be eligible for the survey, providers had to have bid for or received funding from local authorities, other Children's Trust partners or from schools in the last financial year.
[7] For the purposes of the survey a 'high level of involvement' in assessing needs of users or planning services was defined as 'providing feedback from users or frontline professionals or being represented on a working group etc.'. A 'high level of involvement' in designing or redesigning services was defined as 'representation on a planning group etc.'.

Providers said that they had received a number of different types of support from the principal commissioning body in 2008/09, such as specific advice on request, written guidance about the commissioning strategy and process, and advice by a knowledgeable practitioner. Providers of activities for young people were more likely to receive the different types of support than other providers. There were also differences between sectors, with private sector providers less likely to receive the various types of support and public sector providers more likely to do so. This included large proportions of public sector providers receiving start-up funding (for example 28 per cent of public sector fostering providers compared with two per cent in private or third sectors and 38 per cent of public sector short break providers compared with 19 per cent in private or third sectors).

Around half of the providers in the survey had submitted a tender or bid to their principal commissioning body in 2008/09 (the remainder had received funding but had not submitted a bid in that financial year). School transport providers submitted a much greater number of bids than other types of provider (13 on average in 2008/09) and had a higher proportion of unsuccessful bids.

The main reasons why providers thought that recent bids had been successful were that they offered a good quality service or met the required quality standards, the provider had a proven track record, the price was acceptable or gave good value for money, and that the bid met the objectives or understood the priorities. The perceived barriers to success in tendering were short timescales to submit a bid, the approach to cost comparisons, the amount of information requested by the commissioner, the perceived inherent advantage of in-house services and the high cost of preparing a bid.

Most respondents said that contracts were based on specified outcomes and were of an appropriate duration, while (on average) around half said that contracts were standardised in some way, for example through national contracts. Respondents also said that contracts were monitored in a number of ways, most frequently through progress reports to the contract manager, and outcomes and / or outputs reported to the contract manager at the end of the contract. In general, third sector providers (specifically providers of short breaks and activities for young people) were most likely to say their contracts were monitored in various ways.

1.3.3 Nature of playing field

All providers were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that “there is a level playing field between public, private and third sector providers”, thinking about the service area in which they operated. Respondents were more likely to disagree than agree that there is a level playing field (on average, 28 per cent agreed and 54 per cent disagreed).

Overall, public sector providers were most likely to agree that there is a level playing field (although even within the public sector, providers were as likely to disagree as agree), while those in the third sector were least likely to agree (in particular third sector providers that were stand-alone organisations rather than part of a larger organisation or group). Providers of school transport, teacher supply and short breaks were more inclined than those in other service areas to agree that there is a level playing field; providers of residential special schools and fostering services were less likely than average to agree.

Providers who said there was not a level playing field generally said that it was their own sector that was disadvantaged with third sector providers most likely to perceive that their own sector was disadvantaged. The most important factors in ensuring a level playing field were seen as fair or transparent cost comparisons, the same standards being applied to all sectors, a more open relationship or better communication, and a clear commissioning process.

In many cases, providers did not feel that competition between providers had become more or less fair in the past three years, and approximately equal proportions said that competition had become fairer (24 per cent on average) as said it had become less fair (27 per cent on average). Similarly, respondents were equally likely to say that competition would become fairer over the next three years as they were to say it would get less fair.

1.3.4 Changes in recent years

On average, providers were more likely to say that there had been an increase in the overall financial value of contracts over the last three years rather than a decrease (34 per cent compared with 22 per cent). Short break providers were particularly likely to have seen an increase following major government investment in this area through the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme. However, school transport providers were more likely to have seen a decrease than an increase. Similarly, providers were more likely to say that their market had grown rather than contracted over the previous three years (45 per cent and 29 per cent respectively on average).

Overall, providers were no more likely to say that the proportion of funding from government had increased as decreased over the previous three years. However, providers were more likely to say there had been a shift towards greater in-house service provision over the previous three years than a move towards fewer in-house services (41 per cent and 17 per cent respectively on average). Providers of adoption services and residential special schools were more likely than those in other service areas to say there had been a move towards in-house provision, whereas providers of children's homes, short breaks and activities for young people were more likely than other providers to say there had been a shift away from in-house services. In general, public sector providers were more likely than those in other sectors to say there had been a move towards in-house provision.

When asked about changes in commissioning practices, respondents were more likely to agree than disagree that monitoring arrangements had improved and that the degree of provider involvement in needs assessment, planning and service design had increased, although they were less positive in relation to the clarity of tendering documents and the support offered by the commissioner or awarding body. Third sector providers were not convinced that Compact compliance had improved (on average they were as likely to disagree as to agree), while providers who had received contract funding mostly agreed that contracts had improved in terms of their quality and appropriateness of content.

1.3.5 Entry, exit, expansion, retrenchment and respective barriers

On average, three in five providers had expanded their services in the last three years, although providers of residential special schools, school transport and children's homes were less likely to have done so. Expansion was mostly prompted by a rise in demand, although some respondents said that (although they had expanded) lack of demand was a barrier to expansion, along with regulation or bureaucracy. The level of demand was also an important factor for providers who had recently started providing a new service, while others said they had identified a gap in the market. Providers who had not expanded recently said that an increase in funding or demand would be the main factors that would encourage them to do so.

On average, 19 per cent of providers said that they had considered cutting back their service provision in the last three years and eight per cent had considered closing down, mainly because of insufficient funding or a fall in demand. The proportion who had considered cutting back or closing was highest amongst providers of residential special schools, activities for young people, and family and parenting support.

On average, eight per cent of providers had experienced decommissioning of a service in 2008/09. This was similar across different service areas.

1.3.6 Outlook for the future

The majority of providers (64 per cent on average) felt that the outlook for the market in their service over the next three years was very or fairly positive, while 19 per cent thought the outlook was negative. Providers of short breaks were by far the most positive in their outlook, while school transport providers were the most negative. In general, public sector providers tended to give more positive views than those in other sectors.

The vast majority of providers (93 per cent on average) expected still to be providing the service in three years' time, and were more likely to expect a rise in volume at that time than a fall (59 per cent and 11 per cent on average).

Around half of providers who expected to still be providing their service in three years' time said that they expected to diversify into new services over the next three years, and this was highest amongst short break providers. On average, 11 per cent expected that they would rationalise their range of services.

Over the next three years, providers were more likely to expect a move towards more services being outsourced than taken in house (44 per cent and 31 per cent respectively on average). However, providers of adoption services, residential special schools and school transport were more likely to predict a shift towards greater in-house provision than a shift to more outsourcing.

1.4 Conclusions

Providers' experiences and perceptions of the commissioning process showed that principal commissioning bodies - local authorities and schools - have some way to go to achieve both a level playing field and the involvement of providers in service design. Nevertheless, there were signs that providers received some support from commissioning bodies. Providers were also positive about the future of their services. Headline conclusions are listed below:

- The perception was that a level playing field between providers in the public, private and third sectors had not yet been achieved.
- Third sector providers were least likely to agree that there was a level playing field and most likely to perceive that their own sector was disadvantaged.
- The principal funding and commissioning body for most providers was the local authority, and for most of the remainder it was individual schools. Joint commissioning[8] bodies were the principal commissioner for only a very small proportion of most providers, the exceptions being adoption and teacher supply agencies (none of whom said that a joint commissioning body was their principal funding and commissioning body).
- There were mixed views among providers about their experience of the commissioning process.

[8] Local authorities and health bodies have the power available through Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006 (pooling funds) and Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 to jointly finance services for children, young people and families. The arrangement is usually through a Joint Commissioning Unit under the umbrella of the local authority.

- There were changes in the segments of the market relating to social care for children, young people and families, as services responded to recent policy developments and levels of demand.

- On balance across the survey, in April to June 2009 providers were optimistic about the sustainability of their services**.**

2 Introduction

2.1 Policy background

The Government considers effective commissioning[9] of services for children, young people and families by local authorities and other Children's Trusts[10] partners to be vital to the achievement of better outcomes for all children, young people and their families. Services for children, young people and families comprise education, social care, health and other services that support the well-being of children, young people and their families, parents and carers directly and indirectly. The policy which underpins commissioning is set out in the green paper **Every Child Matters (2003)[11]** and enacted in the **Children Act, 2004[12]**. The **Children's Plan (2007)**[13] challenged Children's Trust partners to improve outcomes for all children and young people and the **White Paper on 21st Century Schools (2009)[14]** restated the role of the LA as strategic commissioner of schools and set out an enhanced commissioning role for schools themselves. Essential stages of effective commissioning are generally considered to be: analyse; plan; do; and, review. Useful references include the **Joint Planning and Commissioning Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (2006)[15]** and **World Class Commissioning (2008)[16]**. Advice and support to Children's Trust partners to become more effective commissioners is available through the **Commissioning Support Programme** (2009 to 2011).[17]

The Government is keen to encourage a diverse range of providers from which commissioners, and consequently the children, young people and families who they represent, can source services. This means having a wide variety of providers from the public, private and third sectors and achieving a level playing field between sectors, that is, a commissioner being indifferent to which sector a provider comes from when commissioning decisions are made. It also means ensuring there are low barriers to providers wishing to enter or leave a market. The **Third Sector Strategy and Action Plan (2009)[18]** sets out how the Department is working with the third sector in the delivery of their shared goals.

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[9] Commissioning is the overall process by which services are planned and delivered with a view to best meeting needs and driving up outcomes. As such, it encompasses the assessment of needs, the planning and design of services, the securing of services through contracts, grants or other means, and the monitoring and review of service performance.
[10] The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 strengthens Children's Trusts by putting Children's Trust Boards on a statutory footing. The new legislation also extends the existing duty to cooperate to promote children's well-being to maintained schools, Academies, non-maintained special schools, SFCs, FE colleges and Jobcentre Plus. It also places a duty on the Children's Trust Board to prepare, publish and monitor the implementation of the strategic Children and Young People's Plan for the local area. Responsibility for implementing the Plan remains with individual partners.

[11] HM Government Every Child Matters, HM Government 2003
[12] Children Act, 2004
[13] DCSF (2007) The Children's Plan Building brighter futures, The Stationery Office
[14] DCSF (2009) Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system, The Stationery Office
[15] HM Government (2006) Joint planning and commissioning framework for children, young people and maternity services, HM Government
[16] Department for Health (2008) World Class Commissioning, DH
[17] More information on the Commissioning Support Programme is available on www.commissioningsupport.org.uk
[18] DCSF (2009) Third Sector Strategy and Action Plan: intentions into actions, DCSF

2.2 Research objectives

The aim of this research is to provide DCSF with robust evidence of the views and experience of providers of services for children, young people and families of being commissioned by local authorities and other Children's Trust partners in the nine selected services in 2009.

Objectives include:

- Gathering providers' views and experiences of commissioning at the local, regional and sub-regional levels.

- Identifying what encourages providers to enter or leave a market and establishing the extent of barriers to entry (and exit).

- Establishing what incentivises providers to expand or retrench their service offering and finding out how easy it is to do so.

- Seeking providers' views on what has changed in the last three years e.g. number and value of contracts awarded, and collecting opinions on the outlook for the future.

For third sector providers only, the survey set out to assess the extent of Compact[19] compliance (full cost recovery, duration of contracts etc.).

In order to contextualise findings the study collected key provider characteristics such as ownership, number of staff (paid and unpaid), funding, turnover, etc.

2.3 Analysis and interpretation of the data

This study describes experiences and perceptions of the commissioning process amongst 1,576 providers of services for children, young people and families in England. The report presents findings for each of the service areas included in the survey (i.e. children's homes, residential special schools, fostering, adoption, short breaks, activities for young people, family and parenting support, school transport and teacher supply agencies), as well as for sub-groups within service area (e.g. private/public/third sector[20]). It is not possible to combine the results for different service areas to give a single 'total' figure. This is because the sample has come from various sources, and no data is available on the combined 'population'. It is therefore not possible to calculate a weighted total. However, the report includes figures for the 'average' across all of the service areas. This average is calculated by giving each service area an equal weight.

In reporting the findings for the different service areas covered by the survey, it is inevitable that the detailed experiences of individual providers have been generalised to some extent. Most of the service areas are diverse, with representation from different sectors and sizes of provider. The report should therefore be seen as providing a broad overview across services, rather than a detailed examination of individual service areas.

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[19] The Compact is an agreement between the Government and the voluntary and community sector. See **http://www.thecompact.org.uk** for more details.

[20] At the start of the interview providers were asked whether they were a 'public sector organisation e.g. local authority, primary care trust, youth offending service', a 'private sector company' or a 'third sector' organisation (the latter defined as 'not public sector or private sector i.e. non-governmental, value driven, does not operate for profit and re-invests surpluses to further its objectives'). Based on their response, providers were categorised as a public, private or third sector provider for the purposes of the survey.

Regional analysis is not possible because of the relatively small numbers of respondents in each of the service areas (in addition, providers were often spread over multiple regions or England / the UK as a whole; these providers could therefore not be allocated to a single region). However, analysis has been conducted by the size of area covered by the provider (i.e. within a single local authority, within a single region, across multiple regions, across England / UK as a whole, or internationally).

When interpreting the findings for this survey, it should be borne in mind that the survey is based on a sample of providers in each of the service areas (not the total population). This means that all findings are subject to sampling tolerances. In the report, differences are reported only when they are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level (and if the differences were considered relevant and/or interesting to the topic being discussed).

The report includes tables showing findings analysed by service area. In some cases the percentages do not add up to exactly to 100 for each column and this is normally due to rounding of individual percentages to the nearest whole number. It may also be because multiple responses are possible.

Further information about the survey design and methodology can be found at Appendix A.

3 Funding

This chapter looks at the sources of funding received by providers, and the forms in which funding is received (e.g. grants, contracts, service level agreements[21]).

- As might be expected, the Government is the predominant source of funding[22] largely through local authorities and to a smaller extent schools. Personal donations and users of services also contribute to some services.
- Government funding is received mainly through contracts and to a lesser extent service level agreements and grants.
- Private sector[23] providers are more likely to receive funding from one source. In contrast third sector providers are likely to receive funding from more than one source, thereby increasing the transaction costs (for example bidding, contracting, monitoring) of doing business.

3.1 Sources of funding

Table 3.1 shows the sources of funding received by private and third sector providers in the financial year 2008/09[24]. In general, third sector providers tended to use a greater number of sources than private sector providers. This applied in particular to providers of activities for young people, short breaks, and family and parenting support (all of which contain a large proportion of third sector, rather than private sector, providers). Residential special schools also obtained funding from various sources, and were more likely than other types of provider to receive funding from joint funding bodies[25]. This is to be expected as funding for children with special needs may come from both local authorities and primary care trusts.

By contrast, private sector providers (concentrated in children's homes, fostering, school transport and teacher supply agencies) were unlikely to obtain funding other than through local authorities or (in the case of school transport and teacher supply agencies) from schools. Schools may use their own devolved funding to pay for supply teachers or transport for educational activities.

In addition, larger organisations (with a higher turnover) were more likely than smaller providers to receive funding from central government and from personal donations (the latter applied specifically to larger providers of children's homes). Stand-alone organisations were more likely than those that were part of a larger group or organisation to receive funding from service users.

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[21] **Contracts** between providers and public sector funders of children's services are likely to be for specified services linked to measurable outcomes for children and for an agreed length of time. **Grants** from public sector funders (that is government money) for children's services are likely to be for one off purposes such as start-up cost for new services, specific items of equipment or contributions to improve facilities. A **service-level agreement** is a part of a service contract where the level of service is formally defined. Local authority Children's Services Directorates for example use service-level agreements with their 'internal' providers of services within the same organisation.

[22] For the purposes of the survey, government funding was defined as funding from local authorities, other Children's Trust partners, joint funding bodies, central government or schools.

[23] At the start of the interview providers were asked whether they were a 'public sector organisation e.g. local authority, primary care trust, youth offending service', a 'private sector company' or a 'third sector' organisation (the latter defined as 'not public sector or private sector i.e. non-governmental, value driven, does not operate for profit and re-invests surpluses to further its objectives'). Based on their response, providers were categorised as a public, private or third sector provider for the purposes of the survey.

[24] The survey only included providers that had received or bid for funding from a local authority, other Children's Trust partners or from schools in the financial year 2008/09.

[25] Local authorities and health bodies have the power available through Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006 (pooling funds) and Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 to jointly finance services for children, young people and families. The arrangement is usually through a Joint Commissioning Unit under the umbrella of the local authority.

Table 3.1 - Sources of funding

		Type of service			
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Local authorities	*87*	97	98	99	100
Schools	*32*	4	5	2	-
Personal donations	*27*	9	44	10	50
Users of services	*26*	7	26	3	55
Charitable foundations / trusts	*25*	4	29	5	37
Local charities	*19*	3	30	2	13
National charities	*19*	3	23	3	21
Central government	*18*	5	32	3	16
Other Children's Trust partners	*17*	13	27	5	8
Joint funding bodies	*16*	23	44	5	5
Other types of organisation	*12*	3	11	2	13
Unweighted		*302*	*66*	*131*	*38‡*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Local authorities	96	88	72	90	63
Schools	10	49	24	61	95
Personal donations	55	42	54	2	-
Users of services	35	50	26	35	16
Charitable foundations / trusts	38	58	59	5	5
Local charities	25	51	37	5	5
National charities	32	52	41	2	5
Central government	12	27	52	4	5
Other Children's Trust partners	32	32	33	5	-
Joint funding bodies	20	26	13	6	-
Other types of organisation	13	24	24	9	11
Unweighted	*69*	*222*	*46‡*	*191*	*19‡*

Based on all survey respondents in the private or third sector
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
- No observations

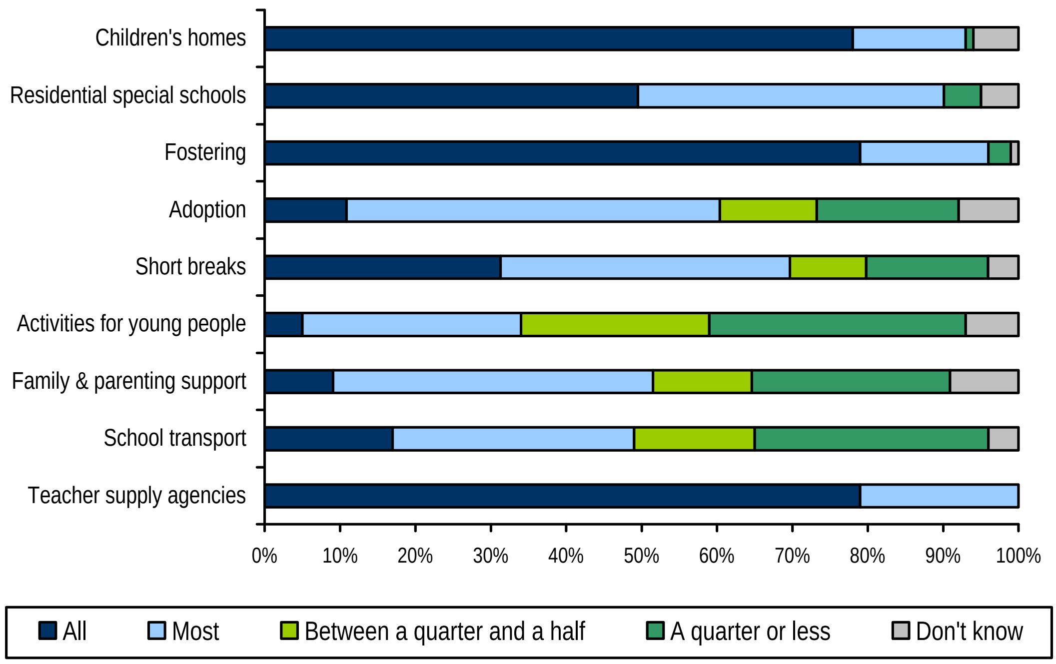
Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

3.2 Proportion of funding from government sources

The majority of providers in the private or third sectors who received any funding from government sources[26] in 2008/09 said that all or most of their funding came from this source. Detailed findings are shown in Figure 3.1, which broadly reflect the findings for sources of funding, in that private sector providers were more likely than those in the third sector to derive most or all of their funding from government sources. Specifically, a majority of providers of children's homes, fostering and teacher supply (all predominantly private rather than third sector providers) said that *all* of their funding came from government sources, while providers of residential special schools tended to say that *all or most* of their funding came from government.

By contrast, providers of activities for young people and family and parenting support (mainly third sector providers) were likely to derive only a proportion of their funding (often less than a quarter) from government. Providers of school transport were also likely to derive funding from non-government sources, specifically from service users (as shown in table 3.1). Providers of short breaks and adoption services varied, with some relying on government funding but others receiving only a minority of their funding from government sources.

Figure 3.1 - Amount of funding from government sources in 2008/09



Based on all survey respondents in the private or third sector who received any funding from government sources in 2008/09 (children's homes: 299, residential special schools: 66, fostering: 131, adoption: 38‡, short break: 68, activities for young people: 217, family & parenting support: 45‡, school transport: 184, teacher supply agencies: 19‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

[26] Government sources defined as: local authorities, other Children's Trust partners, joint funding bodies, central government or schools

3.3 Forms of government funding

All providers that received government funding in 2008/09 (including public sector providers) were asked about the forms of funding or income they had received from government sources. Overall, grants were the most common form of funding in the public sector, whereas contracts were most common in the private sector. Third sector providers mentioned grants, contracts and service-level agreements in approximately equal numbers.

The findings for the different types of services reflect these overall variations by sector. Table 3.2 shows that grants were most common amongst providers of recently expanded services - activities for young people, and family and parenting support (both of which have very few private sector providers). More established services - residential special schools and providers of school transport - were most likely to receive government funding via contracts. In this context, it is worth noting that the sample of residential special schools included in the survey was limited to non-maintained and independent schools. However, non-maintained residential special schools do receive some central government funding each year to include them in policy initiatives.

Table 3.2 is restricted to providers who said they received funding in one of the three forms listed (some respondents did not know or referred to payment methods rather than forms of funding).

Table 3.2 - Forms of government funding

		Type of service			
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Grants	*37*	9	36	13	56
Contracts	*60*	57	84	70	39
Service-level agreements	*40*	58	20	46	38
Unweighted		306	61	125	64
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Grants	47	72	68	2	†
Contracts	42	43	48	96	†
Service-level agreements	46	49	46	9	†
Unweighted	*97*	*296*	*44‡*	*164*	*5*

Based on all survey respondents who received government funding in 2008/09 in one of the three forms listed.

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Respondents were also asked what proportion of their government funding in 2008/09 came in different forms. Findings are summarised in Table 3.3. These findings reflect the forms received (as shown in Table 3.2), but also show that for some providers there was no one form that gave them the majority of their funding (this applied particularly to providers of adoption services).

Table 3.3 is again restricted to providers who said they received funding in one of the three forms listed.

Table 3.3 - Main forms of government funding

		Type of service			
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Majority through grants	*19*	4	8	8	38
Majority through contracts	*43*	43	75	49	20
Majority through service-level agreements	*22*	46	10	28	11
No majority form	*16*	6	7	15	32
Unweighted		*306*	*61*	*125*	*64*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Majority through grants	26	38	36	-	†
Majority through contracts	21	19	25	89	†
Majority through service-level agreements	30	18	21	4	†
No majority form	24	26	18	7	†
Unweighted	*97*	*296*	*44‡*	*164*	*5*

Based on all survey respondents who received government funding in 2008/09 in one of the three forms listed.

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents
- No observations

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

The analysis also showed that where providers received funding in the form of both contracts and grants, or in all three of the main forms (contracts, grants and service level agreements), they were more likely to get the majority of their funding from contracts than from the other forms.

As discussed in the next chapter, most providers said that a local authority was their principal commissioning or awarding body. The forms of funding received from the local authority as principal commissioning or awarding body were very similar to those shown in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 for government funding as a whole.

4 Provider experiences and perceptions of commissioning practices

This chapter examines providers' experiences and perceptions of commissioning[27] practices, looking specifically at providers' involvement in service design, their experience of the tendering process and their views on whether there is a level playing field. The survey focuses on the commissioning process as undertaken by local authorities, other Children's Trust partners and by schools. The survey coincided with the recent development of local commissioning frameworks for Children's Trust partners (Audit Commission, 2008)[28].

- Most providers worked with local authorities as their principal commissioning bodies, although teacher supply agencies were more likely to work with schools. Some providers worked with joint commissioning bodies, but very rarely as the principal commissioner. Public sector providers had a greater involvement in assessing needs than third and private sectors. Overall providers were less likely to be involved in planning than assessing needs.

- Most providers found information in tendering documents fairly easy to understand. Good quality standards, track records, value for money and meeting objectives were the reasons given for successful bids, while price was the main reason for unsuccessful bids. Contracts tended to be based on specified outcomes and monitored through reports of progress, outcomes and outputs to contract managers.

- There appears to be an issue of fairness regarding the ease with which different sectors found the commissioning process, with the public sector more favourably advantaged than the private and third sectors. Public sector providers were less likely to have problems with documents than other sectors and accessed more support from commissioners. Overall, there appeared to be a lack of access to guidance about local commissioning strategies, which militates against a transparent and neutral approach to doing business fairly with all sectors. Public sector providers were more likely to receive start-up funding.

- Overall, half of providers had submitted a tender in the last year but the proportions were higher for third and private sectors than for the public sector. Barriers to bidding successfully were short timescales and cost comparisons.

- Overall, providers were more likely to disagree than agree that there was a level playing field. The most important factor given for ensuring a level playing field was fair or transparent cost comparisons[29].

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[27] Commissioning is the process of arranging for appropriate services to be provided to a group or to an individual. All agencies, jointly or separately, identify needs and then plan and deliver services from within their own resources or from a range of providers. Commissioning includes monitoring the delivery and quality of services and their responsiveness to defined need.

[28] Audit Commission (2008) Are we there yet? Improving governance and resource management in Children's Trusts, Audit Commission

[29] Research by the CBI, 2008 that shows 'full cost comparison is at the heart of competitive neutrality' in public services is reinforced by this survey's findings.

4.1 Work with commissioning bodies

Table 4.1 shows the commissioning bodies that private and third sector providers worked with[30] in the financial year 2008/09. The list of commissioning bodies is restricted to local authorities, other Children's Trust partners, and schools, rather than other organisations such as central government or charities (which were covered in the previous chapter)[31].

Most providers worked with local authorities. Teacher supply agencies were more likely to work with individual schools than with local authorities, but otherwise at least 80 per cent of providers in each of the various types of service worked with local authorities, and this figure was highest for providers of children's homes, residential special schools, fostering, adoption and short breaks.

Along with teacher supply agencies, providers of school transport and activities for young people were more likely than other types of provider to work with individual schools. Providers of activities for young people were also the most likely to work with school clusters, as well as with youth offending services.

Work with primary care trusts was quite common in some types of service: family and parenting support, short breaks, activities for young people and residential special schools. The flexibility allowed in the Children Act, 2004, for partners in Children's Trusts to jointly commission services, is shown in the providers involved in joint funding arrangements - this was highest for residential special schools.

These findings repeat the general pattern seen in the previous chapter, with third sector providers working with a wider range of commissioning bodies than private sector providers. Specifically, providers of activities for young people and family and parenting support (both containing a preponderance of third sector organisations) tended to work with a wider range of commissioning bodies.

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[30] "Worked with" was defined as "either receiving funding or income, or submitting a tender or applying for funding, even if you were not successful".
[31] In order to be eligible for the survey, providers had to have received, or bid for, funding from local authorities, other Children's Trust partners or schools in the previous financial year, 2008/09.

Table 4.1 - Commissioning bodies worked with in 2008/09

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Local authorities	*88*	97	98	99	100
Individual schools	*33*	3	8	1	3
Primary care trusts	*18*	14	27	5	8
Joint funding	*18*	21	44	7	11
School clusters	*10*	1	5	1	3
Youth offending services	*6*	9	2	2	-
Unweighted		*302*	*66*	*131*	*38‡*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Local authorities	99	89	80	92	53
Individual schools	10	46	22	62	100
Primary care trusts	33	30	39	7	-
Joint funding	26	27	24	6	-
School clusters	3	24	15	17	11
Youth offending services	3	25	13	5	-
Unweighted	*69*	*222*	*46‡*	*191*	*19‡*

Based on all survey respondents in the private or third sector

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
- No observations

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Table 4.2 focuses on the principal commissioning body[32] that private and third sector providers worked with in 2008/09. Local authorities were the principal commissioning body for the vast majority of providers of children's homes, residential special schools, fostering and adoption. Individual schools were the principal commissioning body for the majority of teacher supply agencies, and were also the principal commissioning body for one in four school transport providers, and one in eight providers of activities for young people. Despite the use of joint funding shown above in Table 4.1, providers rarely worked with joint funding bodies as their *principal* commissioner.

[32] The principal commissioning or awarding body is the organisation that the provider has 'worked with' most often in the last financial year. For the purposes of the survey, 'worked with' refers to receiving money or funding, submitting a tender, or applying for funding (even if not successful).

Table 4.2 - Principal commissioning body in 2008/09

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Local authorities	*72*	93	94	98	95
Individual schools	*17*	*	-	-	-
Primary care trusts	*2*	1	-	-	-
Joint funding	*2*	4	2	1	-
School clusters	*1*	-	-	-	-
Youth offending services	*	-	-	-	-
Unweighted		*302*	*66*	*131*	*38‡*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Local authorities	83	67	61	71	16
Individual schools	1	13	4	24	79
Primary care trusts	4	3	7	-	-
Joint funding	3	4	4	1	-
School clusters	1	2	2	1	-
Youth offending services	-	2	-	-	-
Unweighted	*69*	*222*	*46‡*	*191*	*19‡*

Based on all survey respondents in the private or third sector
* Less than 0.5 per cent
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
\- No observations

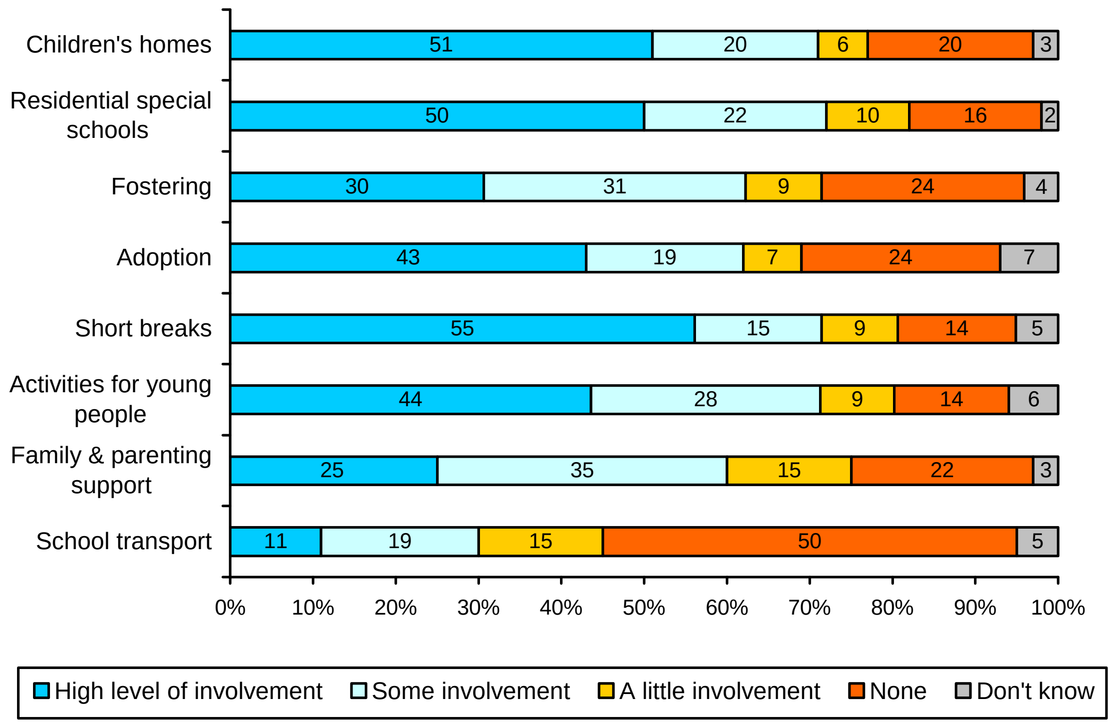
Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

4.2 Understanding needs of service users

Providers (in all sectors) who had received grant or contract funding in 2008/09 were asked whether the principal commissioning body had involved them in assessing the needs of service users. As shown in Figure 4.1, most providers said they had at least a little involvement, and on average 37 per cent of providers said that they had a high level of involvement; this figure was lower for providers of fostering services (30 per cent), family and parenting support (25 per cent) and school transport (11 per cent). School transport providers were unusual in that only 45 per cent said they had any involvement at all.

Public sector providers were most likely to say that they were involved in assessing users' needs; for example, 90 per cent of public sector providers of activities for young people had at least a little involvement. The level of involvement was generally higher among providers in the third sector than the private sector. For example, involvement was lower than average among providers of school transport and fostering services (mostly containing private sector providers), but was higher than average among providers of short breaks (with a high proportion of third sector organisations).

Figure 4.1 - Amount of involvement in assessing the needs of users



Based on all survey respondents who received any grant or contract funding from the principal commissioning body in 2008/09 (children's homes: 188, residential special schools: 50, fostering: 86, adoption: 46‡, short break: 63, activities for young people: 228, family & parenting support: 32‡, school transport: 150, teacher supply agencies: 1†)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

4.3 Service planning

The charts below show the proportion of providers that said the principal commissioning body involved them in the planning (Figure 4.2) and designing or redesigning (Figure 4.3) of services. Overall, providers were less likely to have been involved in planning services than in assessing users' needs, and less likely still to have been involved in designing or redesigning services: The proportion of providers with a high level of involvement[33] was, on average, 37 per cent for assessing users' needs, 28 per cent for planning services, and 23 per cent for designing or redesigning services. This may be because large scale reviews of services do not happen on an annual basis and when they do it is likely that only a few representatives drawn from local umbrella groups for public, private or third sector providers would be involved in planning, designing or redesigning services, while other providers would

[33] For the purposes of the survey a 'high level of involvement' in assessing needs of users or planning services was defined as 'providing feedback from users or frontline professionals or being represented on a working group etc.'. A 'high level of involvement' in designing or redesigning services was defined as 'representation on a planning group etc.'.

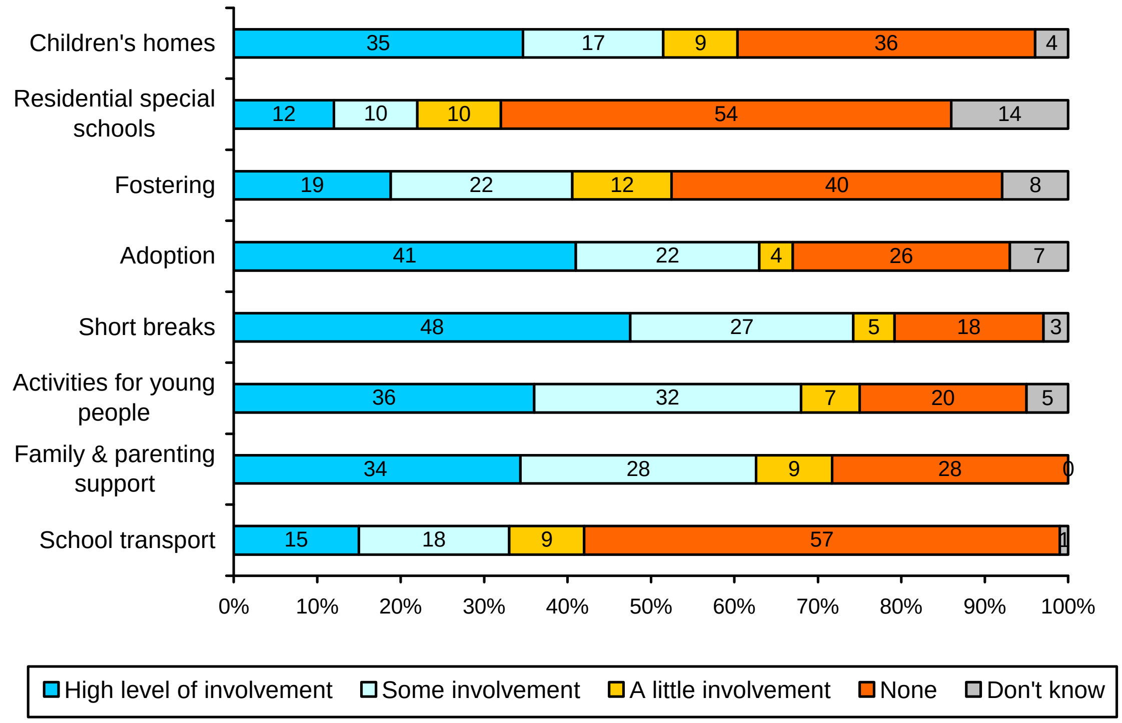
participate through giving feedback through consultation documents or open meetings (NECTP, 2007)[34].

The details in Figures 4.2 and 4.3. broadly reflect the patterns identified above in relation to assessing users' needs, with public sector providers most involved and private sector providers least involved. Providers of school transport and fostering services were again less likely to be involved than those in other service areas. In addition, providers of residential special schools were also unlikely to be involved in the planning or design/redesign of services.

Providers whose services covered a single local authority only were more likely than those who covered a larger area to be involved in the planning and design/redesign of services. This can be seen in the greater involvement among providers of short breaks and activities for young people (many of whom provide services in just one local authority), compared with providers of residential special schools and fostering (who are more likely to cover a larger area). Specifically, 56 per cent of short break providers covering a single local authority had a high level of involvement in the planning of services, as did 40 per cent of providers of activities for young people covering one local authority only. By contrast, just 12 per cent of providers of residential special schools that covered more than one local authority had a high level of involvement, as did 13 per cent of providers of fostering services covering more than one local authority.

[34] NECTP (2007) Children's Trust Pathfinders: Innovative Partnerships for Improving the Well-being of Children and Young People. National Evaluation of Children's Trust Pathfinders Final Report. University of East Anglia in association with the National Children's Bureau. Krikorian. Department for Education and Skills Research Report 839

Figure 4.2 - Amount of involvement in planning services

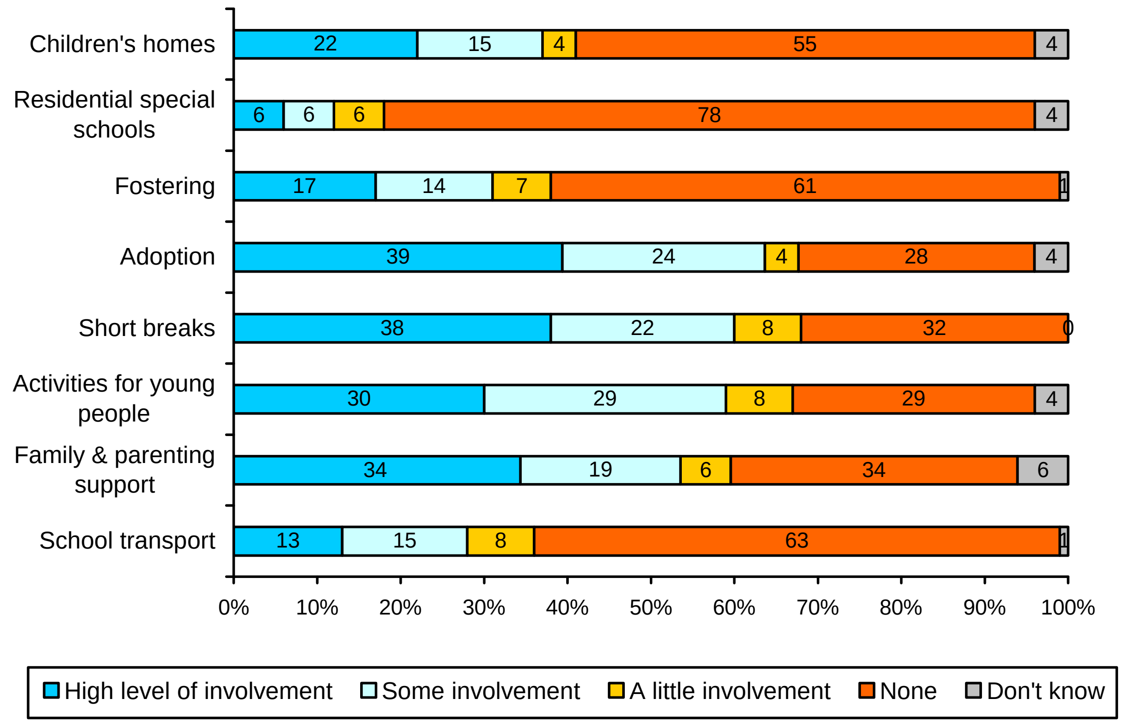


Based on all survey respondents who received any grant or contract funding from the principal commissioning body in 2008/09 (children's homes: 188, residential special schools: 50, fostering: 86, adoption: 46‡, short break: 63, activities for young people: 228, family & parenting support: 32‡, school transport: 150, teacher supply agencies: 1†)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Figure 4.3 - Amount of involvement in designing or redesigning services



Based on all survey respondents who received any grant or contract funding from the principal commissioning body in 2008/09 (children's homes: 188, residential special schools: 50, fostering: 86, adoption: 46‡, short break: 63, activities for young people: 228, family & parenting support: 32‡, school transport: 150, teacher supply agencies: 1†)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

4.4 Experience of the tendering process

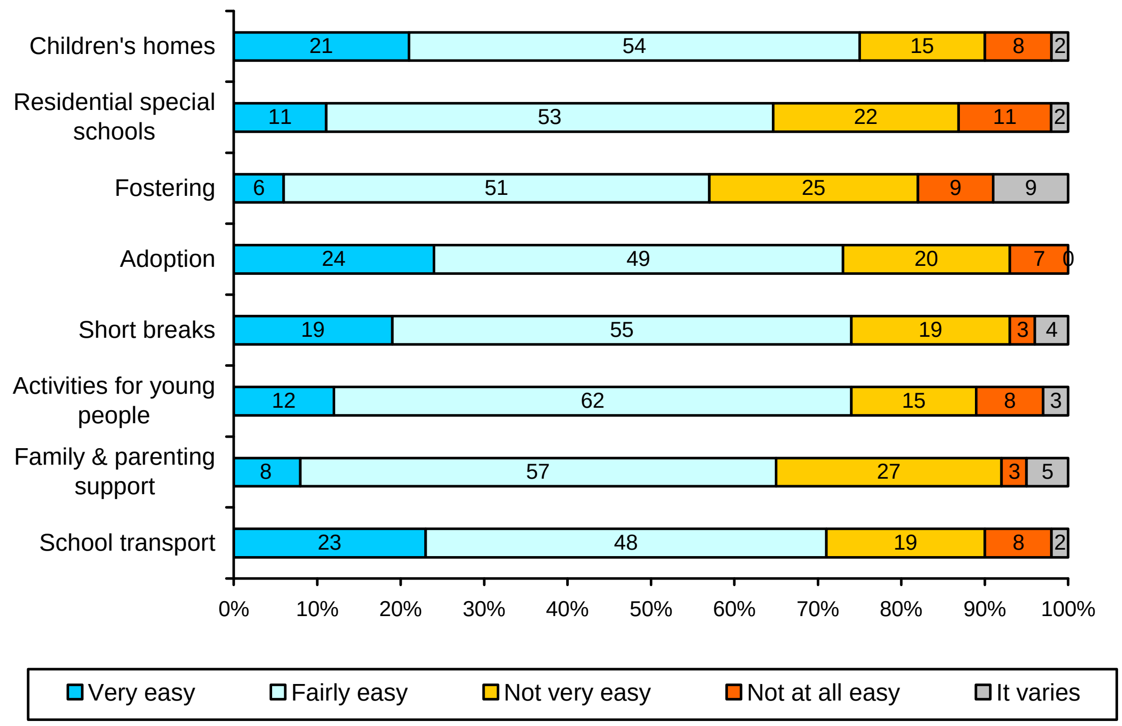
This section covers providers' experience of dealing with the principal commissioning body, in relation to tendering and contracting, applying for grants and service level agreement documents.

Understanding documents

Most providers said that they found the information in grant application, tendering or service level agreement documents at least fairly easy to understand, as shown in Figure 4.4, although they were more likely to say documents were 'fairly' rather than 'very' easy. Providers of fostering services were less likely to find documents easy to understand than other types of provider.

There were also variations by sector, with public sector providers less likely to have problems than private or third sector providers, and third sector providers least likely to find documents 'very easy'. This overall pattern can be seen when analysing the findings for providers of activities for young people: just 13 per cent of public sector providers found documents difficult to understand, compared with 28 per cent of third sector providers, while only seven per cent of the third sector providers found document ‘very’ easy to understand. Similarly, amongst providers of children’s homes, just 10 per cent of public sector providers found documents difficult to understand, compared with 24 per cent of private sector providers.

Figure 4.4 - How easy tendering / grant / service level agreement documents are to understand



Based on all survey respondents who received any grant or contract funding or a service level agreement from the principal commissioning body in 2008/09, except where the principal commissioning body is a school or school cluster; findings also exclude ‘don’t know’ answers (children’s homes: 253, residential special schools: 45‡, fostering: 117, adoption: 41‡, short break: 73, activities for young people: 245, family & parenting support: 37‡, school transport: 136, teacher supply agencies: 1†)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Amount of information in documents

Most providers felt that the amount of information in documents (for grant applications, tendering or service level agreements) is about right (66 per cent on average). More respondents said that there was too much information than said there was too little (18 per cent and 11 per cent on average respectively). Details are in Table 4.3, which shows that providers of fostering services were less positive than other types of provider: 31 per cent said that too much information is provided.

Findings were similar across different sectors, and by other provider sub-groups (e.g. size).

Table 4.3 - Attitudes towards the amount of information in documents

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Too much	*18*	18	10	31	21
About right	*66*	67	74	48	71
Too little	*11*	13	10	14	5
It varies	*5*	3	7	7	3
Unweighted		*261*	*42‡*	*111*	*38‡*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Too much	20	21	9	16	†
About right	68	61	69	72	†
Too little	8	11	14	12	†
It varies	4	7	9	1	†
Unweighted	*71*	*244*	*35‡*	*135*	*1*

Based on all survey respondents who received any grant or contract funding or a service level agreement from the principal commissioning body in 2008/09, except where the principal commissioning body is a school or school cluster; findings also exclude 'don't know' answers

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Support received from principal commissioning body

Providers said that they received a number of different types of support from the principal commissioning body in 2008/09, as shown in Table 4.4. Providers of activities for young people were more likely than other providers to receive the different types of support, and were the most likely to receive training sessions to familiarise them with the commissioning process. In addition:

- Providers of fostering services were more likely than average to receive written guidance about the commissioning strategy and process.

- Short break providers were more likely than average to receive advice by a knowledgeable practitioner and start-up funding to help develop a new service.

- Providers of children's homes were also more likely than average to receive advice by a knowledgeable practitioner.

- Providers of adoption services were less likely to receive specific advice on request, written guidance about the commissioning strategy and process, and training sessions to familiarise them with the commissioning process.

- School transport providers were less likely to receive advice by a knowledgeable practitioner, written guidance about the commissioning strategy and process, and training sessions to familiarise them with the commissioning process.

- Providers of residential special schools were less likely to receive advice (specific advice on request or advice from a knowledgeable practitioner).

There were also patterns by sector, with private sector providers less likely to receive the various types of support and public sector providers more likely to do so. For example, amongst providers of children's homes, 45 per cent of public sector providers received training sessions, compared with 31 per cent of private sector providers. There were also large proportions of public sector providers receiving start-up funding (for example 28 per cent of public sector fostering providers compared with two per cent in private or third sectors, and 38 per cent of public sector short break providers, compared with 19 per cent in private or third sectors) and advice by a knowledgeable practitioner (for example 62 per cent of public sector providers of activities for young people, compared with 45 per cent in private or third sectors).

Table 4.4 - Types of support offered by principal commissioning body in 2008/09

		Type of service			
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Specific advice given on request	*54*	61	41	57	41
Written guidance about the commissioning strategy and process	*43*	46	34	58	28
Advice by a knowledgeable practitioner	*39*	50	24	41	35
Training sessions to familiarise yourself with the commissioning process	*31*	35	24	36	23
Start-up funding to help you develop a new service	*12*	8	3	7	9
Other	*7*	5	3	7	6
No support provided	*21*	16	29	14	27
Unweighted		*474*	*68*	*167*	*109*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Specific advice given on request	64	69	50	55	†
Written guidance about the commissioning strategy and process	52	54	52	29	†
Advice by a knowledgeable practitioner	55	52	42	14	†
Training sessions to familiarise yourself with the commissioning process	38	46	31	20	†
Start-up funding to help you develop a new service	29	21	15	7	†
Other	15	10	13	2	†
No support provided	14	14	17	31	†
Unweighted	*139*	*310*	*48‡*	*147*	*4*

Based on all survey respondents, except where the principal commissioning body is a school or school cluster
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Tenders or bids submitted

Overall, around half of the providers in the survey had submitted a tender or bid to their principal commissioning body in 2008/09 (the remainder had received funding in 2008/09 but had not submitted a tender or bid in that financial year[35]). The first row of Table 4.5 shows the proportions in each type of service that did submit at least one tender or bid in 2008/09, while the second row shows the average number of bids/tender submitted in 2008/09. School transport providers submitted a far higher number of bids than providers in other service areas (more than 13 on average in 2008/09), while the average number was lowest for children's homes and adoption services.

The number of bids made by public sector providers was much lower than for private or third sector providers. Specifically, amongst providers of children's homes, the average number of bids/tenders was 0.1 for public sector providers, compared with 4.5 for private sector providers. Amongst providers of fostering services, the equivalent figures were 0.2 for public sector providers and 7.0 for private sector providers.

Table 4.5 also shows the proportion of tenders that were successful. The average proportion overall was 65 per cent, and this was higher than average amongst providers of activities for young people (79 per cent), but lower amongst providers of school transport, where on average only 42 per cent of bids were successful. Numbers are too small to analyse differences by sector.

[35] In some cases, providers were receiving funding that had continued from previous years; in addition, some funding may have been obtained in 2008/09 but not through bids/tenders as such (for example providers of children's homes receive funding through spot purchases).

Table 4.5 - Tenders or bids in 2008/09

		Type of service			
	Average	Children's homes	Residential special schools	Fostering	Adoption
Proportion that submitted at least one tender / bid	*49%*	33%	48%	62%	27%
Average number of tenders / bids submitted	*4.7*	2.1	7.0	4.7	0.7
Unweighted		*358*	*50*	*143*	*89*
Proportion of tenders that were successful (on average)	*65%*	55%	77%	72%	67%
Unweighted		*105*	*24‡*	*87*	*22‡*
	Short breaks	Activities for young people	Family and parenting support	School transport	Teacher supply agencies
At least one tender / bid submitted	52%	71%	57%	78%	16%
Average number submitted	3.6	5.4	4.9	13.5	0.4
Unweighted	*110*	*294*	*42‡*	*166*	*19‡*
Proportion of tenders that were successful (on average)	76%	79%	63%	42%	†
Unweighted	*52*	*203*	*23‡*	*118*	*2*

Based on all survey respondents, except don't know or refused

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Reasons for successful bids

The main reasons why respondents thought that recent bids had been successful are shown in Table 4.6, which lists the top four answers given. Care should be taken when interpreting these figures due to the small number of respondents answering the question. However, the table shows that the main reasons for successful bids are broadly consistent across the various types of service, although price appears to be more of a factor in some service areas (such as fostering, short breaks and activities for young people).

Although numbers are small, it is possible to identify some differences by sector. Price was more likely to be given as a reason by private sector providers (as shown by the high figures for providers of fostering services and school transport, both containing a high proportion of private sector organisations), while track record was more likely to be given as a reason by third sector providers (for example, amongst providers of activities for young people, 43 per cent of third sector providers said this, compared with 16 per cent of providers in the private or public sectors). Public sector providers were most likely to say their bid was successful because they met the objectives or understood the priorities (amongst providers of activities for young people, 53 per cent of public sector providers said this, compared with 26 per cent of providers in other sectors).

Table 4.6 - Reasons for successful bids (top four answers)

	Average (%)	Type of service: Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Good quality service / met quality standards	*39*	47	61	51	22
Had a proven track record	*32*	35	30	23	44
Price was acceptable / value for money	*28*	18	13	43	28
Met the objectives or understood the priorities	*20*	25	17	21	11
Unweighted		*79*	*23‡*	*80*	*18‡*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Good quality service / met quality standards	39	45	10	18	†
Had a proven track record	30	34	8	34	†
Price was acceptable / value for money	47	42	11	26	†
Met the objectives or understood the priorities	24	13	81	2	†
Unweighted	*49‡*	*196*	*19‡*	*96*	*1*

Based on all survey respondents with at least one successful bid/tender in 2008/09

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Reasons for unsuccessful bids

Most providers said that, when bids were unsuccessful, they received feedback when they requested it - either always (47 per cent on average across the various types of service) or sometimes (34 per cent on average)[36]. These figures cannot be broken down by type of service because of the small number of respondents who had unsuccessful bids in 2007/08.

Providers said that the main reason why their bids were unsuccessful was because of the price (41 per cent on average across the various types of service). The other reasons given by respondents were that the bid did not meet the essential requirements (13 per cent on average), because of lack of funding (10 per cent) and because a larger organisation won the bid (10 per cent). These figures include providers who had obtained feedback on the bid, as well as those that had not obtained feedback.

[36] Percentages exclude 'don't know' answers.

All providers that submitted a bid or tender in 2008/09 were asked what they thought were the main barriers to success in tendering for organisations like themselves. Respondents were read out the items shown in Table 4.7 and asked which they thought were the main barriers. As the table shows, many respondents felt that a number of these barriers applied to organisation like themselves. About half of all providers mentioned short timescales to submit bids and approaches to cost comparisons as barriers. The survey did not examine the extent to which providers chose not to tender for these reasons. Findings were similar across the different types of service, although providers of fostering services were more likely than other providers to mention multiple barriers, while school transport providers were less likely than average to feel the various barriers applied to them.

Table 4.7 - Barriers to success in tendering

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Short timescales to submit bid	*52*	47	38	60	71
Approach to cost comparisons	*51*	49	54	60	54
The amount of information requested by the commissioner	*45*	42	33	61	58
In-house services have an inherent advantage	*44*	50	46	47	38
High cost of preparing bid	*43*	41	54	54	50
Insufficient access to data or information	*33*	39	38	27	33
Insufficient skills to bid successfully	*28*	21	25	28	42
Not being well established or known in the market	*26*	34	17	34	25
Unweighted		*121*	*24‡*	*89*	*24‡*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Short timescales to submit bid	67	67	67	26	†
Approach to cost comparisons	50	51	50	38	†
The amount of information requested by the commissioner	55	50	46	27	†
In-house services have an inherent advantage	38	47	46	36	†
High cost of preparing bid	40	48	50	23	†
Insufficient access to data or information	36	40	37	22	†
Insufficient skills to bid successfully	36	31	33	16	†
Not being well established or known in the market	19	30	37	11	†
Unweighted	*58*	*210*	*24‡*	*129*	*3*

Based on all survey respondents who submitted at least one bid / tender in 2008/09
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Nature of contracts

Where providers had received contract funding in 2008/09 (649 respondents), they were asked about the nature of the contracts. Findings were as follows:

- Most respondents said that the contract(s) were based on specified outcomes for service users: on average, 70 per cent said this was the case (19 per cent said this was not the case and 12 per cent did not know); this was higher than average among providers of activities for young people (90 per cent) and lower than average among school transport providers (54 per cent).

- Around half said that the contracts were standardised in some way, for example through national contracts: on average, 48 per cent said this applied to their contract(s), 34 per cent said it did not and 18 per cent did not know. This was more likely to be the case for providers of residential special schools (87 per cent), children's homes (64 per cent) and fostering (58 per cent).

- The majority said that contracts were of an appropriate duration: 76 per cent on average (13 per cent said this was not the case and 10 per cent did not know). Providers of activities for young people were less likely than average to say that the duration was appropriate (66 per cent said it was and 26 per cent said it was not). Where the duration was not felt to be appropriate, nearly all respondents (93 per cent on average) said that they were too short (rather than too long).

Contract monitoring

Table 4.8 shows details of how contracts were monitored. Some of the individual figures should be treated with caution due to the small base sizes, but the findings indicate some general patterns:

- Contracts for providers of short breaks and activities for young people were more likely than average to be monitored in various ways.

- Providers of children's homes were also more likely than average to have contracts which were monitored in some (but not all) of the methods listed.

- School transport providers were less likely than those in other service areas to have contracts monitored in the various ways.

- Overall, there was a tendency for third sector providers to be more likely than private sector providers to say their contracts had been monitored in various ways; this is linked to the figures noted above for providers of short breaks and activities for young people (both containing a high proportion of third sector providers), as well as for school transport providers (mostly private sector).

Table 4.8 - How contracts were monitored in 2008/09

	Average (%)	Type of service: Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Progress reports provided to contract manager	*70*	81	85	77	65
Outcomes reported to contract manager at end of contract	*61*	73	65	60	54
Outputs reported to contract manager at end of contract	*59*	69	57	59	62
Feedback received from the commissioner	*53*	58	59	56	62
Contracts required a satisfaction survey of users	*45*	60	35	39	46
Contracts required feedback from frontline professionals	*45*	63	54	46	50
Specified milestones and reporting times linked to payment	*38*	34	26	25	38
Unweighted		*176*	*46‡*	*80*	*26‡*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Progress reports provided to contract manager	82	90	74	32	†
Outcomes reported to contract manager at end of contract	87	93	68	32	†
Outputs reported to contract manager at end of contract	82	90	68	34	†
Feedback received from the commissioner	70	68	63	20	†
Contracts required a satisfaction survey of users	75	60	47	26	†
Contracts required feedback from frontline professionals	42	54	42	21	†
Specified milestones and reporting times linked to payment	62	68	53	32	†
Unweighted	*40‡*	*112*	*19‡*	*149*	*1*

Based on all survey respondents who received contract funding in 2008/09

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

The majority of third sector providers who had received contract funding felt that the monitoring arrangements were in proportion to the size or value of the contract (on average, 66 per cent said this was the case, while 25 per cent said it was not and nine per cent did not know). There were no differences between providers in the various service areas.

Compact agreements

Half of third sector providers who had received contract funding (51 per cent on average) said that the service was contracted in accordance with principles of Compact[37] agreements (both national and local), while 16 per cent said it was not in accordance, seven per cent said it varied and 26 per cent did not know. Again, there were no differences between providers in the various service areas.

Only 38 respondents said that the contract was not in accordance with Compact agreements. Reasons included problems with timescales, the fact that the service was not paid on a full cost basis, lack of consultation/communication, and the fact that the full consultation period (12 weeks) were not adhered to.

4.5 Nature of playing field

All providers were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that "there is a level playing field between public, private and third sector providers", thinking about the service area in which they operated. Respondents were more likely to disagree than agree that there is a level playing field (on average, 28 per cent agreed and 54 per cent disagreed)[38].

As shown in Figure 4.5, providers of residential special schools and fostering services were most likely to disagree (and to disagree strongly) that there is a level playing field. Providers of family and parenting support also included a large proportion who disagreed strongly. In contrast, school transport providers and teacher supply agencies were most likely to agree that there is a level playing field (36 per cent and 50 per cent agreed respectively). The more positive views in these two service areas may reflect the fact that almost all providers are in the same (private) sector. Providers of short breaks were also more likely than average to think there is a level playing field. The findings for the other three service areas (children's homes, activities for young people and adoption) were similar to the survey average.
In general, third sector providers were the least likely to agree that there is a level playing field, with public sector providers most likely to agree (although even within the public sector, providers were as likely to disagree as to agree)[39]. Specifically, amongst providers of activities for young people, 43 per cent of third sector providers disagreed strongly that there is a level playing field, compared with 17 per cent of public sector providers. Within the sample of providers of children's homes, 20 per cent of public sector providers disagreed strongly that there is a level playing field, compared with 32 per cent of private sector providers. Amongst providers of adoption services, just nine per cent of public sector providers disagreed strongly, compared with 53 per cent in other sectors.

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[37] The Compact is an agreement between the Government and the voluntary and community sector. See http://www.thecompact.org.uk for more details.
[38] The analysis in this section is based on standard, descriptive analysis of sub-groups, as well as multivariate analysis that identified key patterns in the findings. Regression analysis and CHAID (Chi-square Automatic Interaction Detector) were the multivariate techniques used.
[39] This finding reflects an earlier survey that found 79 per cent of third sector organisations said that competitive tendering, involving in-house local authority bids lacked 'fairness or transparency, or both' (National Association for Voluntary Action, 2006).

In particular, third sector providers that were stand-alone organisations (rather than those that were part of a group or larger organisation) were likely to feel that there is not a level playing field.

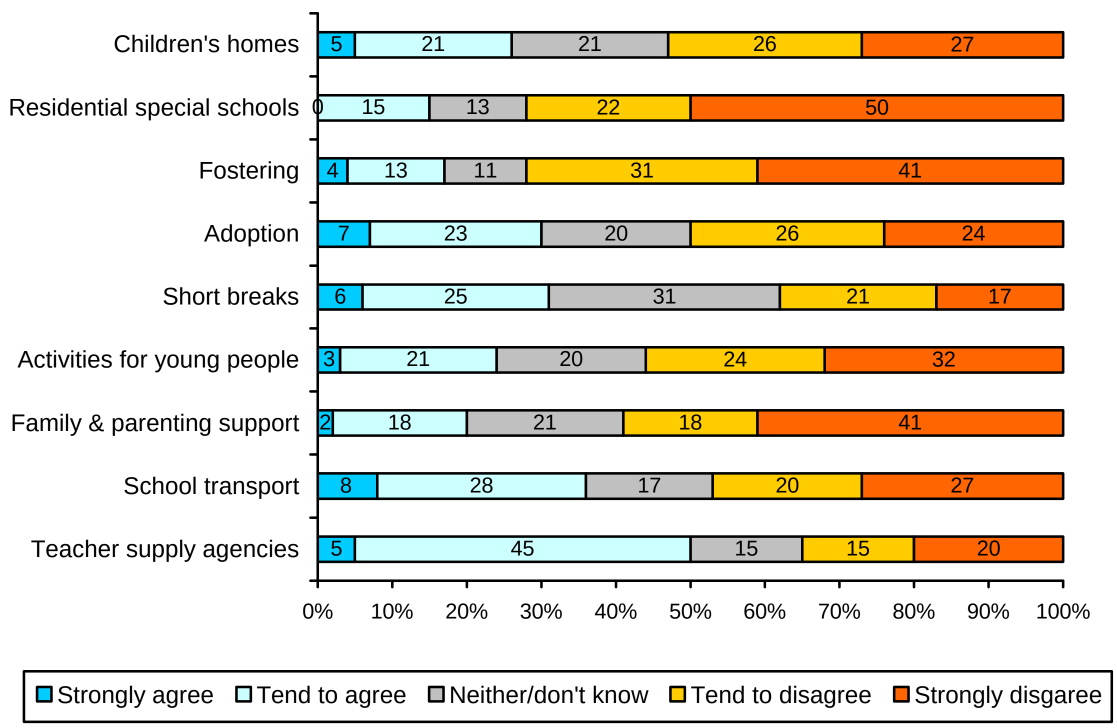
In addition, the analysis identified the following patterns:

- Providers that had been involved in assessing users' needs, as well as planning and designing services with the principal commissioning body, were more likely to think that there is a level playing field.

- Personal experience clearly played an important part in respondents' perceptions. Providers that had seen the market for their services contract, had seen more services taken in-house, or had considered cutting back their own services recently, were less likely to agree that there is a level playing field. The same applied to providers who had a pessimistic outlook for their market or their own volumes in the future.

Both of these patterns are relevant in particular to providers of short breaks, who (as a whole) were relatively positive towards the nature of the playing field. Short break providers were more likely than average to be involved in assessing needs and planning services, and also to have seen market growth.

Figure 4.5 - Whether there is a level playing field between public, private and third sector providers



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short break: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Providers who felt there is not a level playing field were asked which sector(s) they felt were disadvantaged. Most respondents (78 per cent on average across the different service areas) said that it was their own sector that was disadvantaged, rather than (or in addition to) another sector, although this was less likely to be the case for public sector than third or private sector providers. For example, amongst providers of activities for young people, 90 per cent of third sector providers said it was their own sector that was disadvantaged, compared with 51 per cent of public sector providers. Within the sample of providers of children's homes, 83 per cent of private sector providers said it was their own sector that was disadvantaged, compared with 51 per cent of public sector providers.

All respondents were asked what they thought was the most important factor in ensuring a level playing field. Table 4.9 shows that the most common answers were that there should be fair or transparent cost comparisons and that the same standards should be applied to all sectors. Other respondents mentioned communication and the need to have a clear commissioning process.

As table 4.9 shows, these priorities were similar across the various service areas, although providers of fostering and school transport services were most likely to mention cost comparisons, while providers of short breaks and family/parenting support services were most likely to refer to communication and relationships. This is linked to a more general pattern in which private sector providers were more likely than other providers (particularly those in the public sector) to mention fair/transparent cost comparisons but were less likely to mention communication and relationships.

In addition, larger providers were more likely than smaller providers to mention fair or transparent cost comparisons, while the need for the same standards to be applied to all sectors was mentioned most frequently when the principal commissioning body was an individual school.

Table 4.9 - Most important factors in ensuring a level playing field

	Average (%)	Type of service: Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Fair / transparent price / cost comparisons	*18*	15	24	28	19
Same standards to be applied to all sectors	*18*	19	13	18	12
Better / open relationships / communication	*13*	10	13	7	9
Clear commissioning process	*7*	6	6	7	6
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Fair / transparent price / cost comparisons	11	11	8	25	25
Same standards to be applied to all sectors	15	20	8	19	40
Better / open relationships / communication	23	15	27	4	5
Clear commissioning process	7	10	14	5	5
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents.Table shows answers given by five per cent or more of respondents overall

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

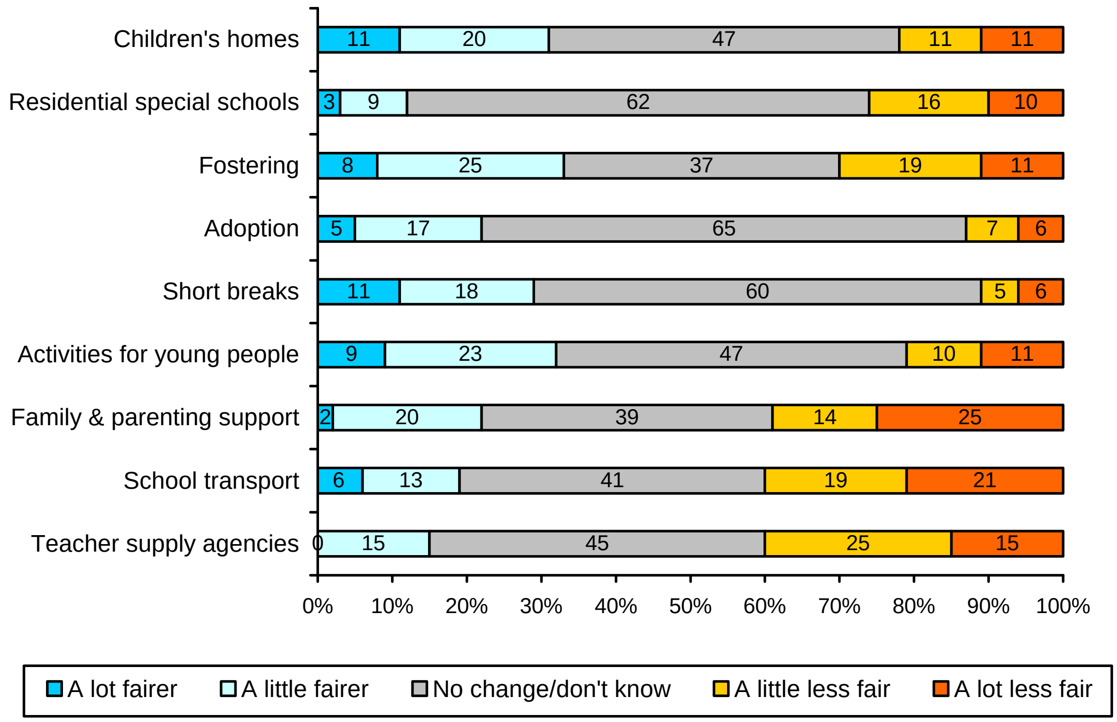
Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

In many cases, providers did not feel that competition between providers had become more or less fair in the past three years, and approximately equal proportions said that competition had become fairer (24 per cent on average) as said it had become less fair (27 per cent on average).

Figure 4.6 shows that providers of short breaks were the most likely to say competition had become more fair, while providers of family / parenting support services, school transport and supply teachers were most likely to say it had become less fair. Linked to these findings for providers of school transport and supply teachers, respondents were less likely to say the competition had become fairer where the principal commissioning body was an individual school.

In general, public sector providers were more likely than those in other sectors to say the competition had become fairer. Amongst short break providers, 40 per cent of public sector providers said that competition had become fairer, compared with 18 per cent in the third sector, while amongst providers of activities for young people, the equivalent comparison was 43 per cent for public and 27 per cent for third sector providers. Within the sample of providers of children's homes, 38 per cent of public sector providers said the competition had become fairer, compared with 20 per cent of private sector providers.

Figure 4.6 - Whether competition has become more or less fair over the last three years



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short break: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

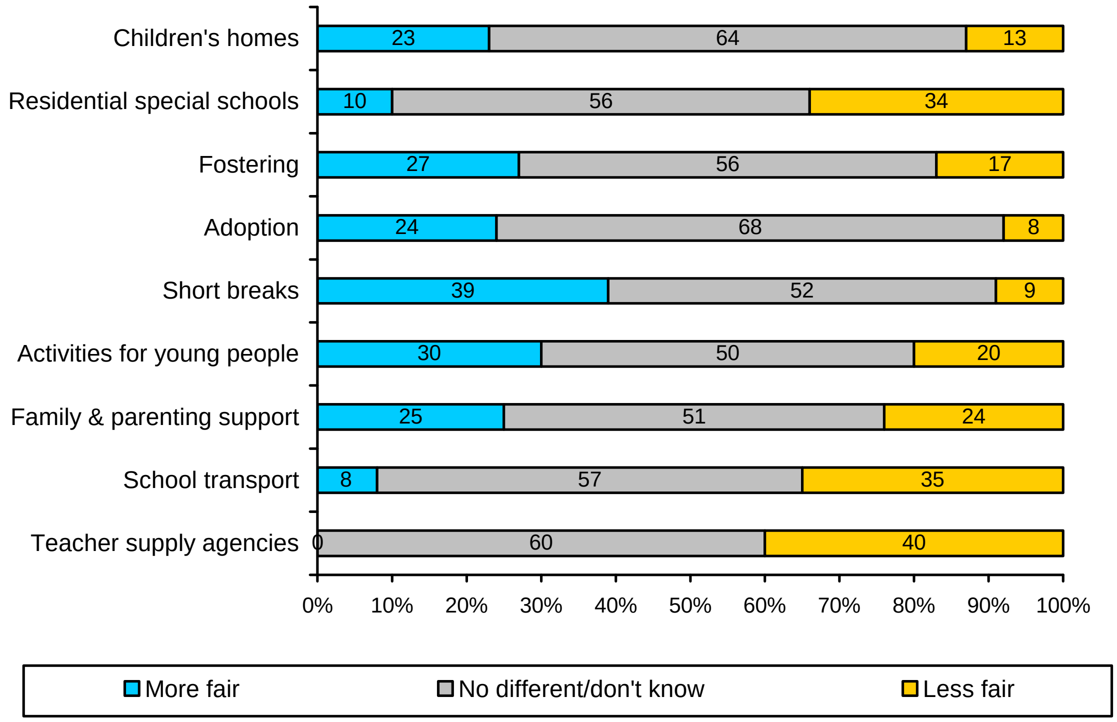
Where respondents said there had been no change in the fairness of the competition over the past three years, they were more likely to say this was because it had always been fair (40 per cent on average) rather than because it had always been unfair (19 per cent). The remainder said it was somewhere in between or did not know.

On average, respondents were equally likely to say that competition would become fairer over the next three years as they were to say it would get less fair, although this did vary by service area, as shown in Figure 4.7. Providers of short breaks were the most likely to say that they expected competition to become fairer, while providers of residential special schools, school transport and supply teachers were most likely to predict that it would become less fair.

Again, the findings varied by sector, with public sector providers more likely than those in other sectors to say competition would become fairer. For example, amongst short break providers, 54 per cent of public sector providers said that competition would become fairer, compared with 21 per cent in the third sector, while amongst providers of activities for young people, the equivalent comparison was 41 per cent for public and 25 per cent for third sector providers.

The findings on expectations for the future (both overall and in relation to different sub-groups) were very similar to perceptions of change in the last three years.

Figure 4.7 - Expectations for fairness of competition over the next three years



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short break: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

5 Changes in recent years

This chapter looks at providers' experiences of recent changes in commissioning practices, as well as changes in the market for their service area. Questions focused on the previous three years, during which time Children's Trusts had been established.

- Providers experienced changes in commissioning and market share in recent years, coinciding with new joint planning and commissioning arrangements being established by local Children's Trusts and their partners (Audit Commission, 2008[40]).

- On balance, across the different survey areas, survey respondents indicated that the overall financial value of contracts was more likely to have increased than decreased over the previous three years, while the market share had shifted somewhat to more in-house provision. Monitoring of contracts had improved and provider involvement had increased. However, providers were less positive about changes in the clarity of tendering documents and support from commissioners. The third sector was not convinced that Compact compliance had improved in the last three years.

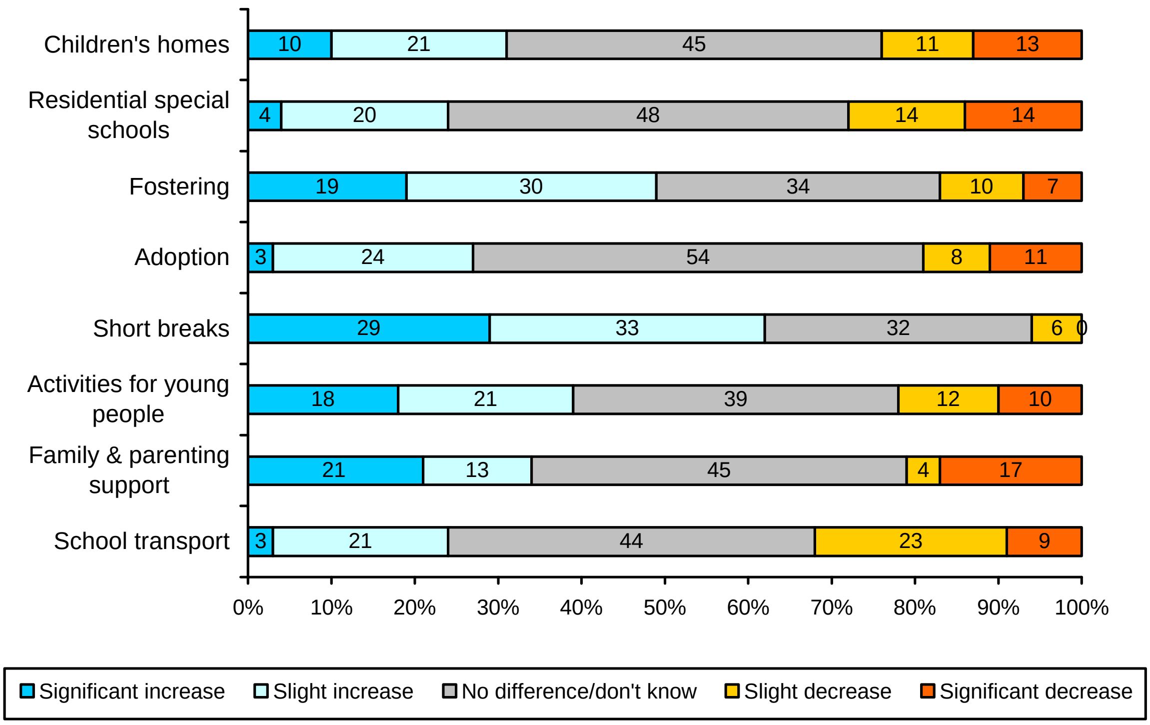
5.1 Changes in funding

Providers who had received contract funding at any point within the previous three years were asked whether, over that time, there had been a change in the overall value of contracts put out to tender by their principal commissioning body for their area of work. Figure 5.1 shows that respondents were more likely to say there had been an increase in overall value, rather than a decrease (on average, 34 per cent compared with 22 per cent).

Short break providers were the most likely to say that there had been an increase in the overall value of contracts - 29 per cent said the value had increased significantly over the previous three years. This increase reflects government policy to support carers of disabled children and their children through respite care through the Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme (2008-11). Providers of fostering services were also more likely than average to have seen an increase in line with government policy to place young people in family settings rather than children's homes[41]. By contrast, providers of school transport services were more likely to say that the overall value had decreased rather than increased.

[40] Audit Commission (2008) Are we there yet? Improving governance and resource management in Children's Trusts, Audit Commission
[41] DCSF (2007) Care Matters: Time for Change, HMSO

Figure 5.1 - Change in overall value of contracts over the last three years



Based on all survey respondents who had received contract funding in the last three years (children's homes: 204, residential special schools: 51, fostering: 91, adoption: 37‡, short break: 63, activities for young people: 192, family & parenting support: 24‡, school transport: 160, teacher supply agencies: 1†)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Third sector providers were asked whether there had been a shift between grant and contract funding over the previous three years. On average across the different service areas, a third (32 per cent) said that there had been a shift from grants to contracts, including 21 per cent who said there had been a large shift. Only four per cent said there had been a shift from contracts to grants; the remainder said there had been no noticeable shift or did not know. Because of the small number of respondents, it is difficult to analyse individual service areas separately; however, it is clear that providers of activities for young people were particularly likely to have seen a shift from grants to contracts (51 per cent had seen such a shift).

All respondents were asked whether they had seen a change in the proportion of funding that comes from government (both local and national) over the previous three years. On average, providers were as likely to say there had been an increase as a decrease (16 per cent and 17 per cent respectively), although this varied by service area, as shown in Table 5.1. Providers of short breaks were more likely than other providers to say the proportion of government funding was now higher, while providers of children's homes, residential special schools and school transport were more likely to say the proportion of government funding was now smaller.

Overall, public sector providers were more likely than those in other sectors to say that the proportion of government funding had increased. For example, amongst providers of activities for young people, 38 per cent of public sector providers said that the proportion was now higher, compared with 25 per cent of third sector providers.

Table 5.1 - Change in the proportion of funding from government over the previous three years

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Smaller proportion of funding	*17*	20	16	17	8
Higher proportion of funding	*16*	9	6	14	10
No change	*45*	52	66	44	46
Don't receive government funding	*7*	4	1	7	9
Don't know	*14*	15	10	17	27
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Smaller proportion of funding	13	29	27	14	10
Higher proportion of funding	43	29	24	4	10
No change	33	32	35	47	50
Don't receive government funding	1	1	2	17	20
Don't know	11	9	12	18	10
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents.
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

5.2 Changes in the market

Providers tended to say that there had been a shift towards greater in-house service provision over the previous three years, rather than a move towards fewer in-house services (41 per cent and 17 per cent respectively on average). As shown in Table 5.2, providers of adoption services and residential special schools were most likely to say that there had been a move towards more in-house services, while providers of children's homes, short breaks and activities for young people were more likely than other providers to say that there was a shift away from in-house services.

In general, public sector providers were more likely than those in other sectors to say that there had been a shift towards greater in-house provision. For example, 63 per cent of public sector providers of adoption services said that there were now more in-house services, as did 45 per cent of public sector providers of activities for young people.

Table 5.2 - Change in the extent to which services have been provided in-house over the previous three years

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
More services in-house	*41*	37	49	41	58
Fewer services in-house	*17*	28	9	21	7
No difference	*33*	28	35	28	27
Don't know	*9*	7	7	10	8
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
More services in-house	35	37	45	34	35
Fewer services in-house	28	25	12	10	15
No difference	27	31	24	51	45
Don't know	10	7	20	6	5
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

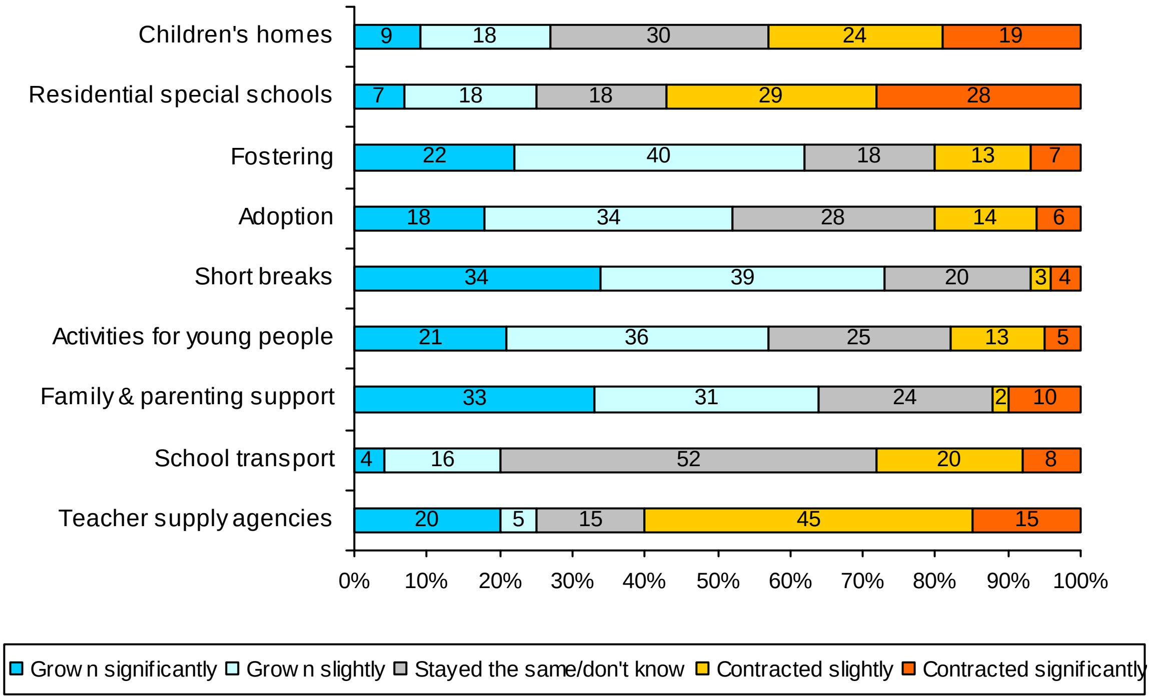
Based on all survey respondents.
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

On average, providers were more likely to say that their market had grown rather than contracted over the previous three years (45 per cent and 29 per cent respectively). This applied particularly strongly to providers of short breaks, 73 per cent of whom said their market had grown. This repeats the pattern seen throughout this chapter, whereby providers of short breaks were more likely than other providers to have seen market growth, as well as a greater proportion of government funding and increased value of contracts, over the past three years. Providers of fostering, adoption, activities for young people, and family / parenting support were also more likely than average to say their market had grown. By contrast, providers of children's homes, residential special schools, school transport and supply teachers were more likely to say their market had contracted rather than grown.

Public sector providers were generally more likely to say their market had grown, with private sector providers least likely to say this. This pattern reflects the differences noted above by service area (for example providers of supply teachers and school transport, mostly private sector, were less likely to say their market had grown). Within service area, private sector providers of children's homes were more likely than those in the public sector to say their market had contracted (52 per cent compared with 30 per cent), but there was no difference by sector within the sample of short break providers.

Figure 5.2 - Change in the market over the last three years



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short break: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

5.3 Changes in commissioning practices

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with various statements about commissioning practices. Findings are summarised in Table 5.3, which shows the 'net agreement' scores - the proportion who agreed with each statement minus the proportion that disagreed. On average, respondents were more likely to agree than disagree that monitoring arrangements had improved and that the degree of provider involvement in needs assessment, planning and service design had increased, although they were less positive in relation to the clarity of tendering documents and the support offered by the commissioner or awarding body. Third sector providers were not convinced that Compact compliance had improved (on average they were as likely to disagree as to agree), while providers who had received contract funding mostly agreed that contracts had improved in terms of their quality and appropriateness of content.

Looking at the figures for the various service areas, short break providers were the most likely to agree with the various statements, with providers of children's homes also more positive than average. Providers who were most likely to work with schools as commissioning bodies i.e. providers of school transport and teacher supply agencies tended to be more negative than other providers. Providers in other service areas were similar in their responses to the survey average, although providers of family and parenting support were less likely to agree that monitoring arrangements had improved. There was also a general pattern whereby public sector providers were more positive towards the various issues than those in the private or third sectors.

Table 5.3 - Changes in commissioning practices over the previous three years

'Net' agree scores	*Average (%)*	Type of service: Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
The degree of provider involvement in needs assessment, planning and service design has increased	*+22*	+41	+22	+20	+16
The clarity of tendering documents / awards applications has improved	*+10*	+23	+9	+15	+13
The support offered by the commissioner / awarding body including guidance, capacity building, etc. has improved	*+8*	+25	+1	+13	+9
Monitoring arrangements have improved	*+27*	+46	+24	+36	+33
Compact compliance has improved*	*-1*	+31	0	+4	-23
Contracts have improved in terms of the quality and appropriateness of their content**	*+28*	+47	+35	+33	+24
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
The degree of provider involvement in needs assessment, planning and service design has increased	+54	+33	+10	-2	+5
The clarity of tendering documents / awards applications has improved	+20	+14	+8	+2	-10
The support offered by the commissioner / awarding body including guidance, capacity building, etc. has improved	+26	+16	+10	+6	-35
Monitoring arrangements have improved	+37	+34	+5	+16	+5
Compact compliance has improved*	+17	0	-9	†	†
Contracts have improved in terms of the quality and appropriateness of their content**	+52	+21	+16	11	†
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents, except statements marked*: third sector only (children's homes: 45‡, residential special schools: 35‡, fostering: 28‡, adoption: 26‡, short break: 63, activities for young people: 195, family & parenting support: 43‡, school transport: 1†, teacher supply: 1†); ** contract funded providers only (children's homes: 204, residential special schools: 51, fostering: 91, adoption: 37‡, short break: 63, activities for young people: 192, family & parenting support: 24‡, school transport: 160, teacher supply: 1†). ‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution. Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

6 Entry, exit, expansion, retrenchment and respective barriers

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the factors taken into consideration by providers when deciding to enter the market or change the scale of their operations. It begins by establishing the reasons why new providers enter a market, and the obstacles they face in doing so. Section 6.3 explores prompts and barriers associated with the expansion of service provision, including the impact of the Multisystemic Therapy (MST)[42] initiative on providers of fostering services. Section 6.4 is concerned with the opposite side of the coin: whether providers have considered cutting back or closing down services in the past three years and the reasons behind this. Finally, section 6.5 covers the decommissioning of services, and the reasons and circumstances surrounding this process.

- Overall, providers were willing to set up new services in response to gaps in the market and rises in demand. A large proportion of existing providers had expanded their services in the last three years due to rises in demand and increased funding, although a lack in demand was given as a hindrance for a smaller proportion of providers.

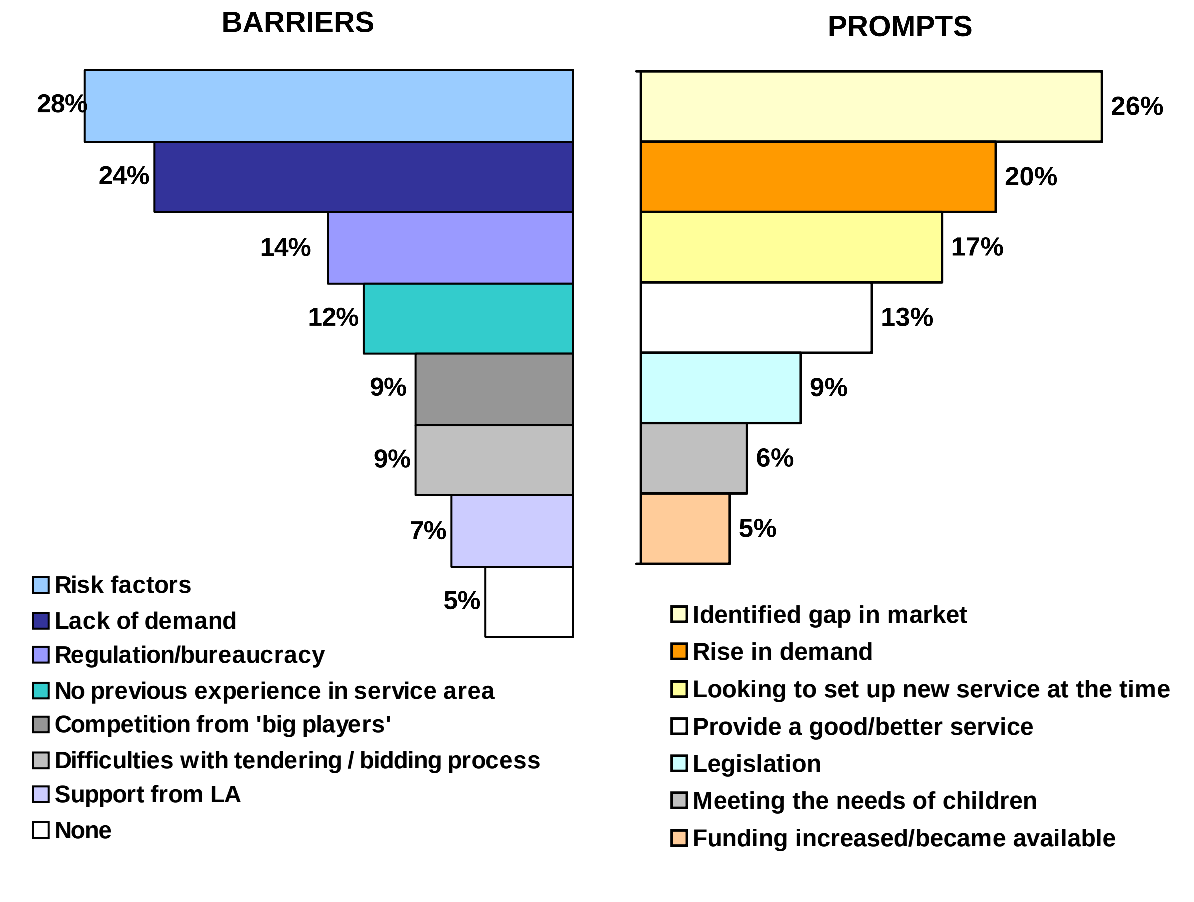
- Those who had not expanded recently said that increases in funding and rise in demand were the factors that might prompt them to do so. Cutting back services had been considered by one in five of providers and closing down by one in ten. On average, less than one in ten had experienced decommissioning.

6.2 Starting service provision

Two questions were used to determine the factors providers take into account when setting up a new service. Organisations which were new to a market - that is to say, organisations that started providing a service less than three years ago - were asked what prompted them to start, and what obstacles they had to overcome in order to begin provision. Responses given by five per cent or more of respondents are shown in Figure 6.1. This shows the average percentages, combining all service areas (the number of respondents was too small to examine individual service areas separately).

[42] Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is a specific government initiative aimed at preventing children being taken into care.

Figure 6.1 - Barriers and prompts to starting service provision



Based on all survey respondents who have been providing service for less than three years (total: 87)

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Over a fifth of providers indicated that their decision to set up a new service was opportunistic: they recognised a gap in the market (26 per cent) or a rise in demand (20 per cent). The decision to start provision was sometimes part of an organisation's business agenda, with 17 per cent mentioning that that they had been looking to set up a new service at the time; 13 per cent looking to provide a good quality service in that particular field; and six per cent wishing to take the steps they considered necessary for meeting the needs of children.

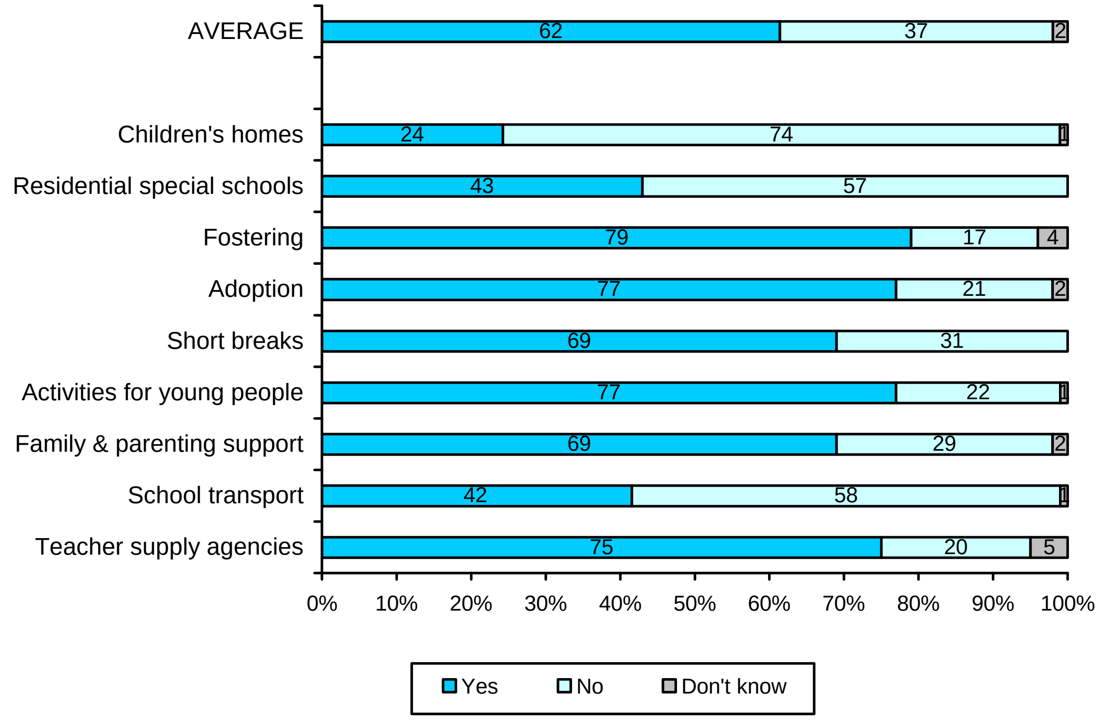
The main obstacle to contend with was the risk involved to the organisation (28 per cent). A quarter carried out their venture despite a lack of demand (24 per cent), while over a tenth faced difficulties with regulation or bureaucracy (14 per cent) or a lack of experience in that service area (12 per cent). Just under a tenth (nine per cent) mentioned competition from 'big players' and difficulties with the tendering/bidding process.

The number of providers that were new to a market is too small to allow results to be broken down by sector or type of provider.

6.3 Recent expansion

On average, six in ten providers (62 per cent) had expanded their service in the last three years. Figure 6.2 shows the proportion of providers within each service area to which this applies.

Figure 6.2 - Proportion of providers who have expanded service in the last three years



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short breaks: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Within six of the service areas, providers were more likely than not to have expanded their provision over the last three years; expansion was less common amongst providers of residential special schools (43 per cent) and school transport (42 per cent), and particularly low amongst providers of children's homes (24 per cent). The likelihood of expansion did not vary by sector or size of the organisation. This mirrors the findings in section 5.2 with regard to the service areas which were least likely to say their market had grown over the past three years.

Providers who had expanded their service provision were asked what had prompted and what, if anything, had hindered their expansion.

Expansion was mostly driven by demand, with half of providers (51 per cent on average) citing a rise in demand as a stimulus for expansion. On the other hand the lack of demand did not always prevent expansion, with a third of providers (33 per cent) mentioning this as one of the factors they overcame.

As with setting up a new service, expansion of an existing service was often opportunistic. Opportunistic factors included an increase in funding (16 per cent), changes in legislation (nine per cent), or gaps appearing in the market (eight per cent). Obstacles to expansion were similar to the obstacles faced by providers in introducing a new service, with regulation and bureaucracy again seen as a stumbling block (21 per cent). Risk factors were, however, less of a concern in the case of expansion (five per cent). Over a tenth of providers on average (13 per cent) felt there were no obstacles to overcome.

Prompts and barriers varied according to the type of service in question. Across the board, the most commonly cited factor prompting expansion was a rise in demand. Other factors were cited less consistently across service areas. An increase in funding, for example, was more likely to prompt an expansion in the provision of short breaks (32 per cent), activities for young people (31 per cent) and school transport (22 per cent), than for the provision of any other type of service. Providers of children's homes and school transport were more likely than other providers to base the expansion of their service on a desire to enlarge their business (mentioned by 18 per cent of children's homes and 15 per cent of school transport providers). Certain factors were relevant to just one or two of the service areas: legislation, for instance, was a significant factor for prompting expansion of adoption services (12 per cent), whereas gaining the support of the local authority was mentioned as a prompt for expansion by five per cent of children's homes .

Similar proportions of providers across the six different service areas viewed competition from 'the big players' as an obstacle to expansion (12 per cent on average across all service areas). Other obstacles, however, were more apparent in some service areas than others. Overcoming a lack of demand for their services was mentioned most frequently by providers of activities for young people (51 per cent) and providers of adoption services (48 per cent). Regulation and bureaucracy were more likely to hinder service expansion for providers of fostering services (35 per cent) and short breaks (33 per cent). Other obstacles were specific to particular service areas: the unavailability of carers hindered the expansion of fostering services, while costs were an impediment to the expansion of school transport services.

Providers of fostering services were asked an additional question on this topic: whether the Multisystemic Therapy (MST) initiative encouraged expansion of the service they offered. Multisystemic Therapy is a specific government initiative aimed at preventing children being taken into care. A fifth of the providers asked (19 per cent) said that the initiative would indeed encourage them to expand, though providers in the private sector were less likely (14 per cent) than providers in other sectors (27 per cent) to say this. A further third of fostering providers (33 per cent) had not heard of the initiative, and four in ten (37 per cent) reported that the initiative had no impact on the scale of their operations.

On average, providers in the third sector were more likely than those in other sectors to consider an increase in funding as a prompt to expansion; providers in the private sector were more likely to say they had expanded through a desire to grow; public sector providers were more likely than those in other sectors to cite a change in legislation. In terms of barriers, providers in the public and third sectors were more likely than those in the private sector to view a low level of demand as a hindrance. There were no other differences between organisations in different sectors or of different scale with regard to prompts and barriers to service expansion.

To get a fuller picture of the types of factors that could affect expansion, providers in all service areas that had not expanded their service provision in the past three years were asked, first, what would encourage them to expand and, second, what barriers they think they might face if they attempted to expand. Answers given by five per cent or more of respondents are presented in Table 6.1, which shows the average figures across all service areas.

Table 6.1 - Factors that would encourage expansion and barriers might have to overcome

BARRIERS	*Average (%)*	*Average (%)*	PROMPTS
Lack of demand	44	37	Increase in funding
Regulation / bureaucracy	13	26	Rise in demand
Competition from 'the big players'	11		
Risk factors	8		
Resource issues	5		
None	5	7	None
Don't know	*4*	*6*	*Don't know*
Unweighted	*646*	*718*	*Unweighted*

Based on all survey respondents who had not expanded their service provision within the last three years (718) and all who had not expanded in the last three years by could be encouraged to expand (646)

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

The range of answers is very similar to that supplied by providers who had actually experienced expansion of their service. It is interesting to note, however, that providers who had not expanded were significantly more likely to consider expansion as contingent on an increase in funding (37 per cent, compared with 16 per cent of providers who had actually expanded their service provision). They were also more likely to regard a lack of demand as an obstacle (44 per cent, compared with 33 per cent of those who had expanded their service), while, paradoxically, less likely to be encouraged towards expansion by a rise in demand (26 per cent, compared to 51 per cent of those who had actually expanded their service).

The similarity between anticipated barriers and barriers that were actually encountered suggests that providers have a good understanding of the types of challenges associated with expansion. On average, third sector providers were more likely than those in other sectors to say that an increase in funding would prompt them to expand their service provision. Providers in the public and third sectors were, in general, more likely than those in the private sector to perceive low demand as an obstacle to expansion (more specifically this applies to providers of children's homes).

6.4 Retrenchment

All providers in the survey were asked whether they had considered cutting back or closing services in the last three years. Responses given by providers in different service areas are shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 - Whether considered cutting back or closing down service provision within last three years

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Cutting back	19	15	34	12	11
Closing down	8	13	9	6	7
Neither	77	77	66	85	85
Don't know	1	2	-	1	1
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Cutting back	9	30	29	23	10
Closing down	4	13	12	8	-
Neither	87	66	65	74	90
Don't know	1	1	2	1	-
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents

- No observations

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

On average, a fifth (19 per cent) had considered cutting back and less than a tenth (eight per cent) had considered closing down their service. The possibility of cutting back was significantly higher in four service areas: it was reported by a third of providers of residential special schools (34 per cent), three in ten providers of activities for young people (30 per cent) and providers of family and parenting support (29 per cent), and a quarter of providers of school transport (23 per cent). On average, providers in the public sector were less likely than those in other sectors to have considered cutting back; this applied in particular to providers of children's homes. Third sector providers were more likely than other providers to have considered cutting back or closing down. This is reflected in the higher than average levels of consideration of cutting back or closing down among providers of activities for young people and family and parenting support (both of which have high proportions of third sector providers).

The vast majority of providers of short breaks (87 per cent), fostering services (85 per cent) and adoption services (85 per cent) had not considered scaling down their operations in any way.

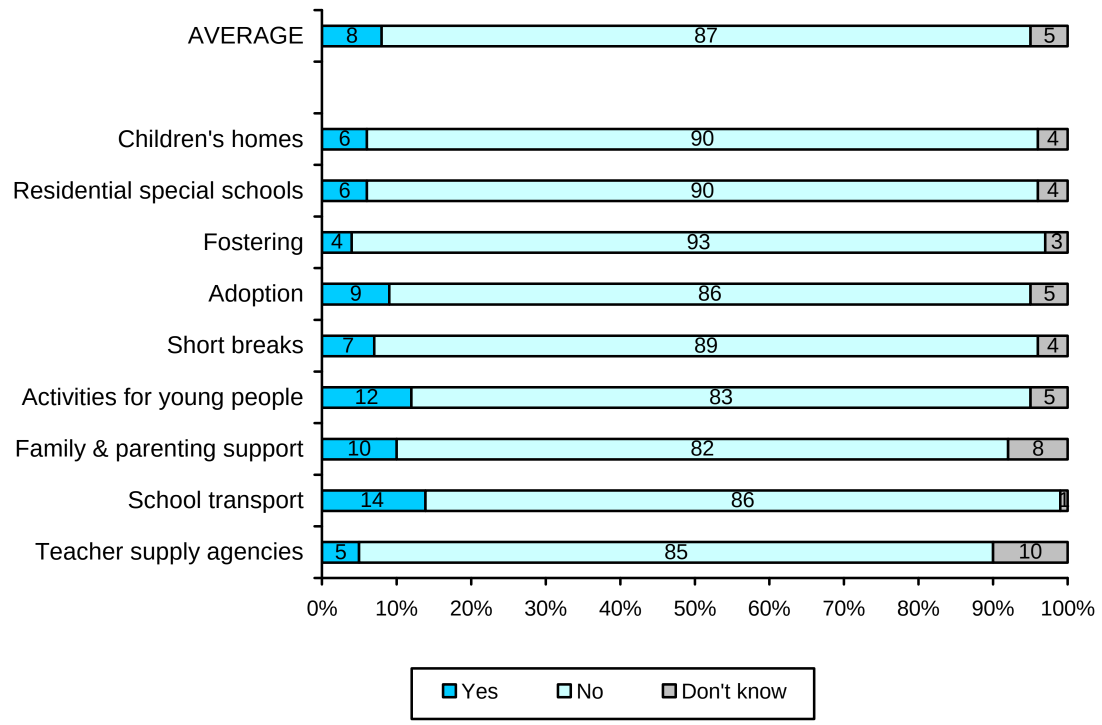
Providers which had considered either option were asked to give their reasons. Half (50 per cent) reported that this was due to insufficient funding, and a quarter (24 per cent) due to a fall in demand. On average, providers in the private sector were less likely than those in other sectors to have considered cutting back or closing down due to insufficient funding, and more likely to cite fall in demand as a reason.

Reasons that were mentioned less frequently overall included the cost effectiveness of the service (seven per cent), workforce issues (four per cent) or a lack of referrals (three per cent), problems with contracts (three per cent), or issues to do with regulation and bureaucracy (three per cent).

6.5 Experience of decommissioning

Occasionally, a commissioned service is terminated before the provider's contract comes to its natural end for example because the service is not capable of effectively meeting the needs of service users, or there has been a large and unexpected fall in demand. In some service areas, this will involve the closure of individual settings. Providers were asked whether their service had been decommissioned in the last financial year (2008-2009). The proportion of providers which had experienced decommissioning in each service area appears in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3 - Proportion of providers who have experienced decommissioning of service in 2008-2009



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short breaks: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

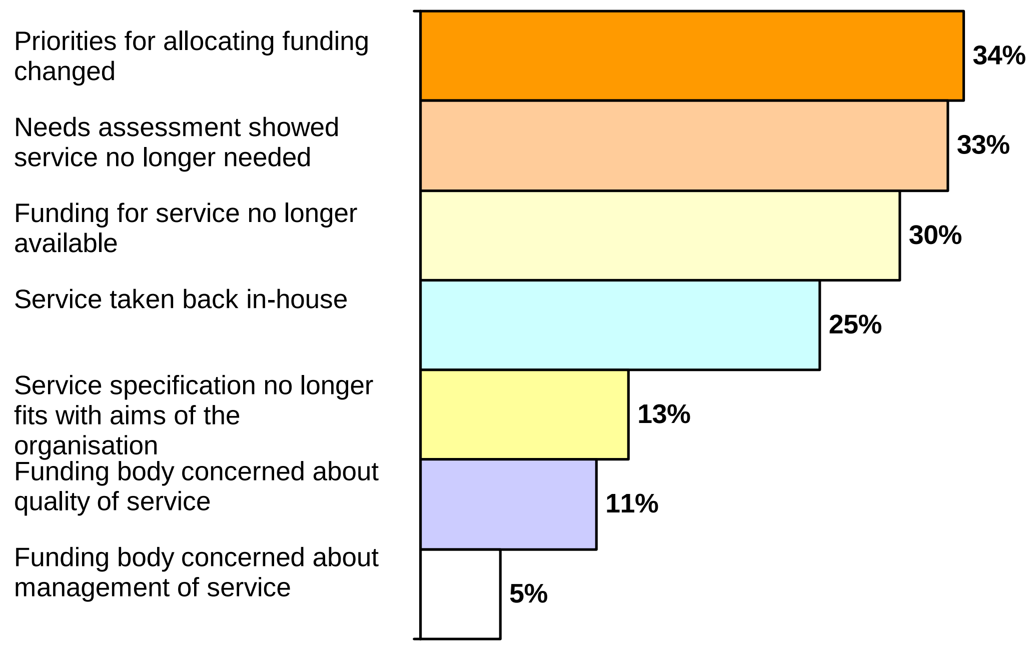
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

On average, less than a tenth of providers (eight per cent) had experienced decommissioning of their service. Providers of school transport and activities for young people were most likely to have recently undergone this process, but otherwise there was little variation between service areas, sectors and other subgroups with regard to decommissioning.

The small number of providers that had had their service decommissioned in the last financial year were asked what reasons they were given by their commissioning body. Reasons mentioned by five per cent or more of respondents are shown in Figure 6.4; this shows the average percentages across all service areas.

Figure 6.4 - Reasons given for decommissioning



Based on all survey respondents whose service was decommissioned in 2008-2009 (total: 134)

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Around a third of providers had been given financial reasons for the decommissioning of their service: either that priorities for funding allocation had changed (34 per cent) or that funds were no longer available for that service (30 per cent). The numbers are too small to analyse by provider type. However, public and third sector providers were more likely than providers in the private sector to attribute decommissioning to changes in allocation of funds. Providers in the third sector were the most likely to attribute decommissioning to the non-availability of funds.

Various non-financial reasons had also been given by commissioners. A third of providers (33 per cent) were told that their service was found to no longer be needed. In a quarter of cases (25 per cent) the service had been taken back in-house; notably, there was no significant difference by sector amongst those who picked this reason.

Over a tenth of providers (13 per cent) were told that the service specification was no longer compatible with the aims of the organisation. There were also issues surrounding delivery of the service: one in ten (11 per cent) were told that their funding body was concerned about the quality of the service, while one in twenty (five per cent) were told that their funding body was concerned about the management of the service.

7 Outlook for the future

7.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the expectations of providers at the time of the survey (April to June 2009) regarding the market for their service and the prospects for their organisation over the next three years. Section 7.2 establishes how providers view the general outlook for their market. The sections that follow look more specifically at providers' expectations concerning their own organisation, including its likely status, the volume of service, and range of services it might provide in three years' time. Section 7.6 focuses on providers' predictions regarding the level of outsourcing of services in three years' time.

- Overall providers had a positive view of the market for their services over the next three years and were committed to continuing their involvement in it.

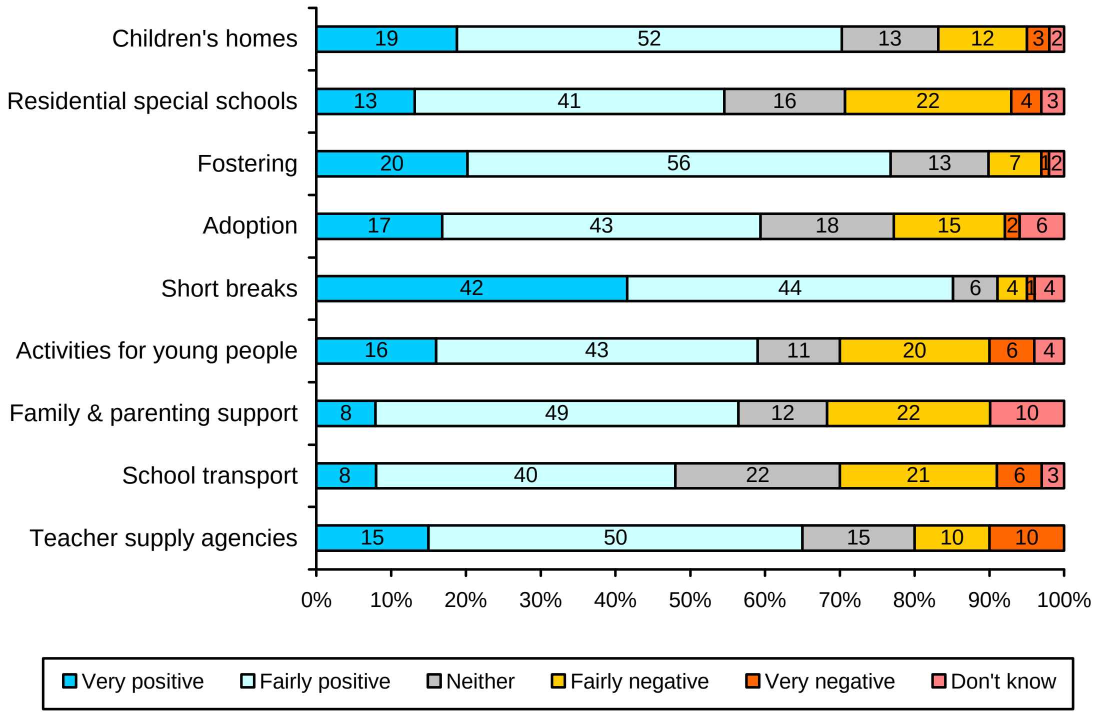
- There was a tendency for providers to expect to increase the volume of their services and an expectation that they would diversify into other areas of the market. Notably providers anticipated that more services would be outsourced.

7.2 General outlook

All providers were asked to think about the market for their service, and to give their opinion of its outlook over the next three years. Most providers had a positive view of the market outlook (on average, 64 per cent), with almost a fifth (17 per cent) reporting a *very* positive view. A further fifth (19 per cent) had a negative view, though only a minority amongst them felt that the outlook was *very* negative (four per cent of all providers).

Figure 7.1 shows the responses broken down by service area. Negative views were most likely to be held by providers of school transport services (27 per cent), activities for young people (26 per cent), and residential special schools (26 per cent). A positive outlook was most common amongst providers of short breaks (86 per cent); indeed, providers of this service were significantly more likely than any others to have a *very positive* view. This reflects recent policy changes affecting this service area.

Figure 7.1 - Providers' view of market outlook over next three years by service area



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short breaks: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

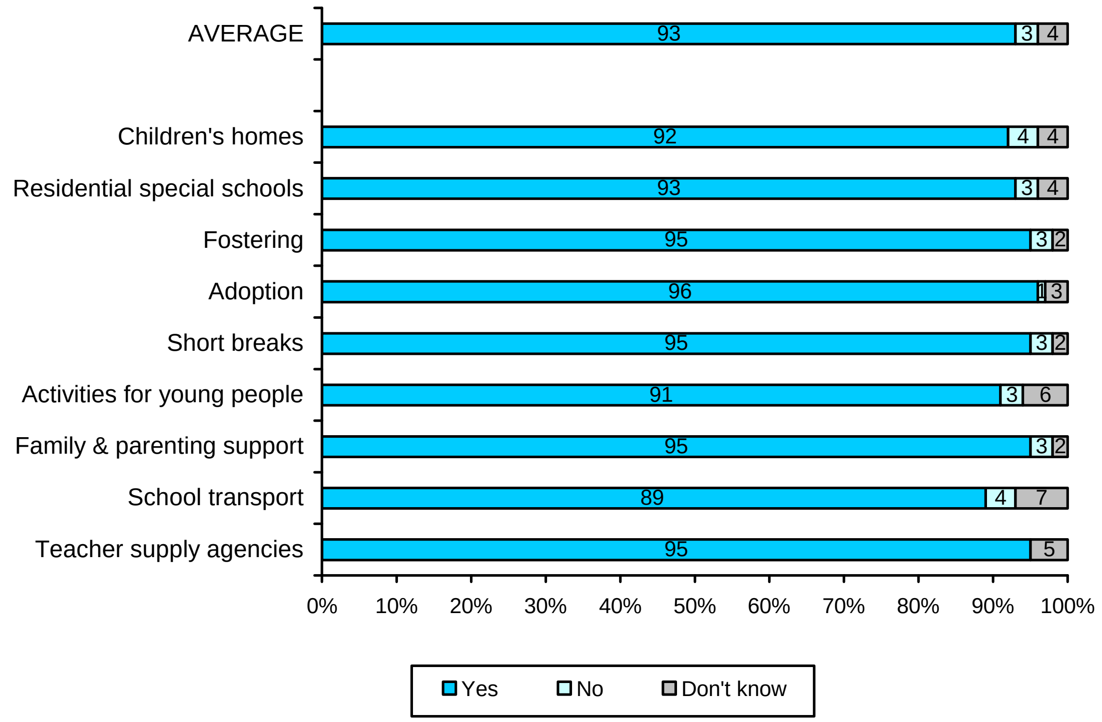
Of the remaining providers, two types - providers of fostering services and of children's homes - were more likely than the rest to have a positive view (77 per cent and 70 per cent, respectively). Within these service areas, there are differences of opinion. Amongst providers of fostering services, for example, standalone organisations belonging to the private, voluntary and independent sectors (PVI) were less likely (70 per cent) than PVI organisations operating as branches or parts of group (87 per cent) to have a positive outlook.

Further differences of opinion are apparent between organisations in different sectors, or with different characteristics or circumstances. There is a general tendency for providers in the public sector to hold a positive view more frequently than providers in other sectors (this applies in particular to providers of short breaks and children's homes); in addition, a greater proportion of relatively new providers than those that are well-established had a positive outlook. Unsurprisingly, providers that have experienced decommissioning of their service during the last financial year were more likely than other providers to have a negative view of the market outlook.

7.3 Likely status in three years' time

Providers were asked whether they expected to still be providing their service in three years' time. Figure 7.2 reveals that, on average, over nine in ten (93 per cent) believed that they will. There were no differences in opinion between providers in different service areas or sectors. However, larger organisations (with a higher turnover) were more likely than smaller organisations to believe that they would still be providing their service in three years' time.

Figure 7.2 - Proportion of providers who expect to still be providing service in three years' time



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short breaks: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

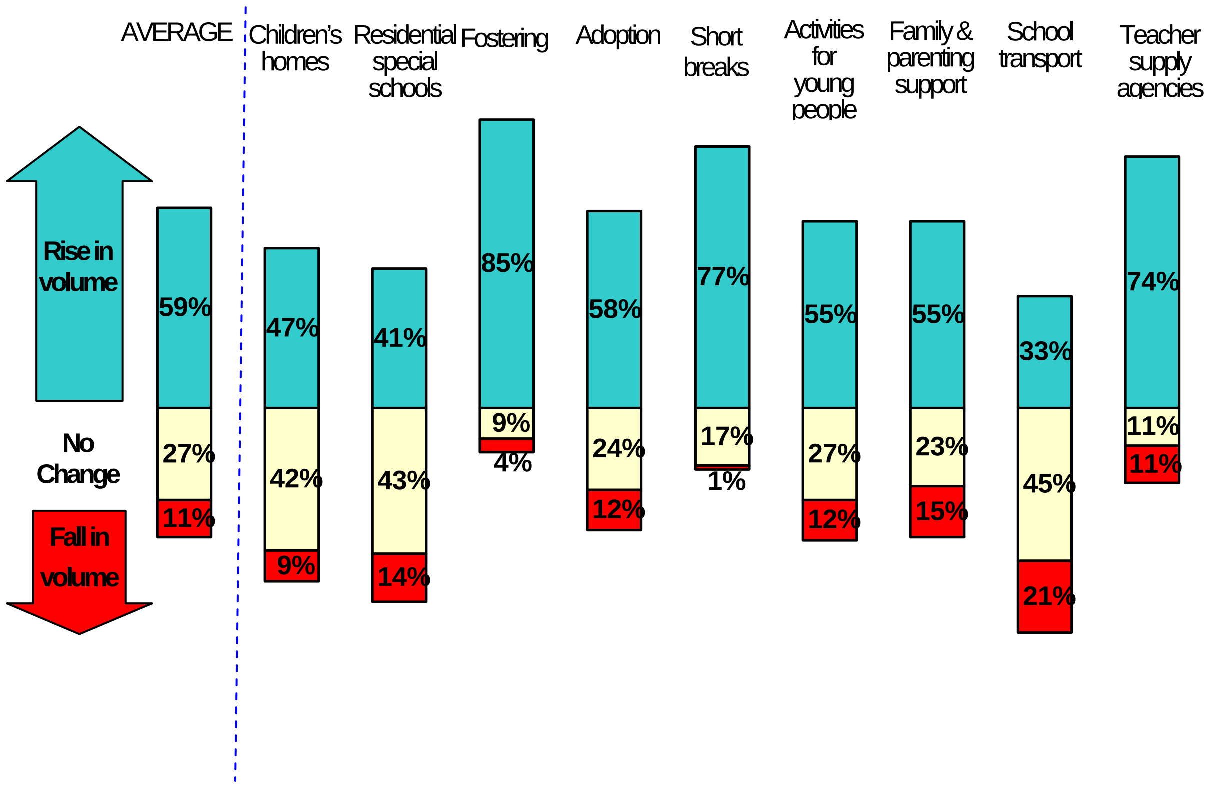
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

7.4 Expected volume of provision

Providers who expected to still be offering their service in three years' time were asked to speculate how the service they will be providing at that time might differ in volume from the service they provide today (Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3 - Providers' expectations regarding volume of their organisation's service provision in three years' time



Based on all survey respondents who expect to still be providing service in three years' time (children's homes: 436, residential special schools: 63, fostering: 158, adoption: 105, short breaks: 134, activities for young people: 316, family and parenting support: 47‡, school transport: 175, teacher supply agencies: 19‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

On average, six in ten (59 per cent) of the providers who expected to still be operating in the market in three years' time predicted a rise in the volume of their service provision. Providers of fostering services and short breaks were significantly more likely than providers in other service areas to foresee an increase in volume (85 per cent and 77 per cent respectively). Moreover, providers that were new to the market were more likely than well-established providers to predict an increase; specifically, this is true of providers of children's homes.

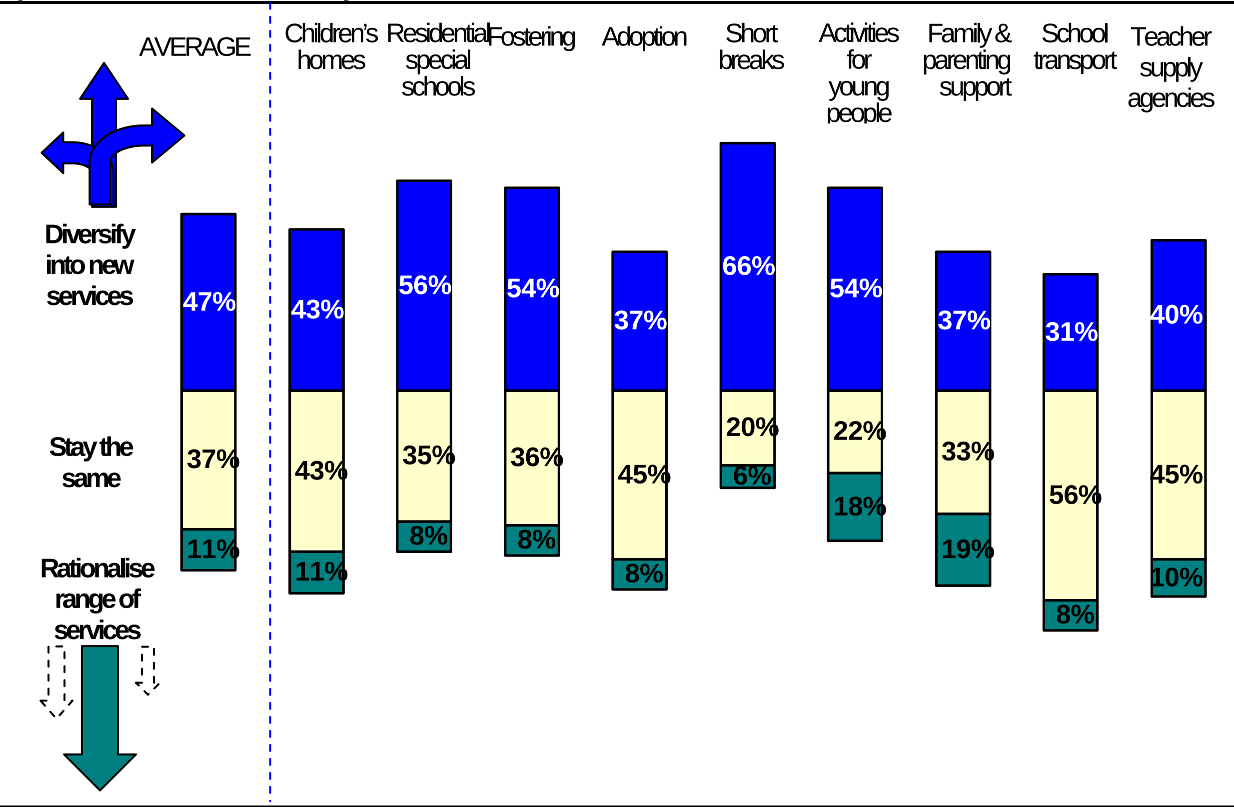
Three in ten (27 per cent) believed the volume of service provision would remain stable, with providers of children's homes, residential special schools and school transport the most likely to predict this. Meanwhile, one in ten (11 per cent) predicted a decrease in volume.

Predictions regarding future volumes of service provision did not vary by sector or other provider characteristics.

7.5 Predicted changes to services

Providers who did not explicitly state that they expected to cease providing their service in three years' time were asked whether they anticipated diversifying or rationalising their service provision (Figure 7.4).

Figure 7.4 - Providers' expectations regarding changes in their organisation's service provision over next three years



Base: All survey respondents who don't expect to cease providing service in three years' time (children's homes: 456, residential special schools: 66, fostering: 162, adoption: 108, short breaks: 137, activities for young people: 337, family and parenting support: 48‡, school transport: 189, teacher supply agencies: 20‡,)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

On average, almost half (47 per cent) of the providers asked this question said they expected their organisation to diversify into new services. Providers of short breaks were significantly more likely than providers in other service areas (apart from residential special schools) to expect future diversification.

Those that did not expect to diversify were more likely to expect their organisation's range of service provision to stay the same rather than to be reduced (37 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively, of all providers asked). Providers in the private sector were the most likely to predict stability in the range of services on offer. This is reflected in the high proportions of school transport, children's homes and teacher supply providers who predicted stability (these all have high proportions of private sector providers).

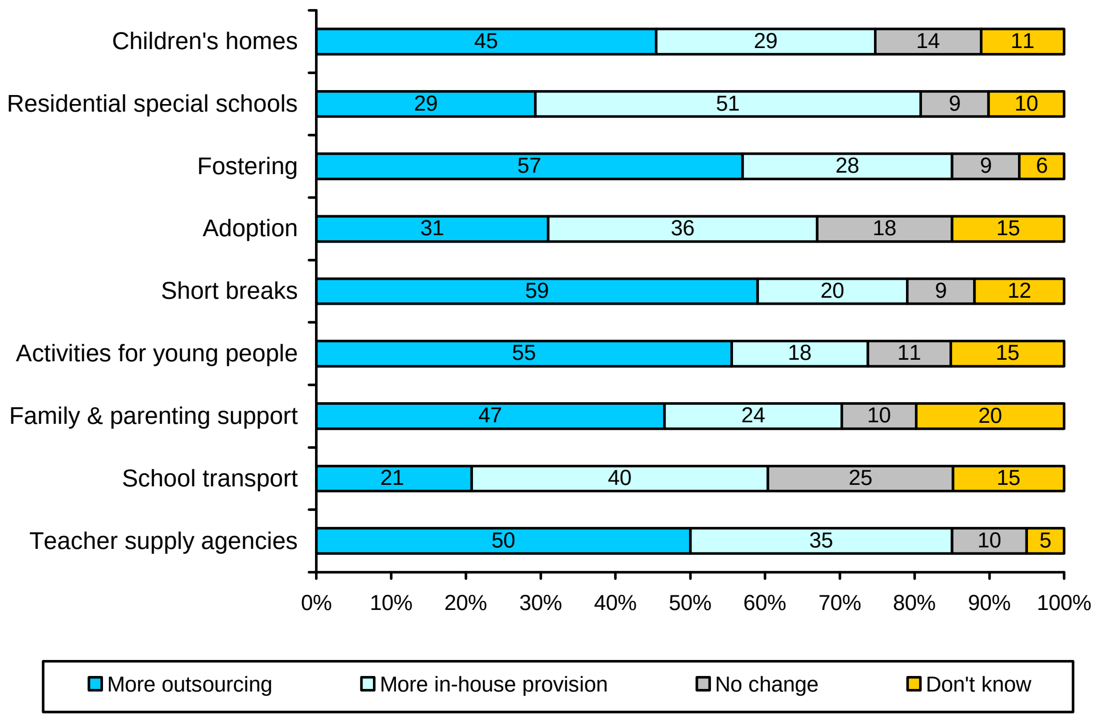
Surprisingly, the size of the organisation (whether in terms of geographical range of annual turnover) made no significant difference to providers' expectations.

7.6 Predicted level of outsourcing

All providers were asked to speculate on the direction that service provision might take in the next three years: specifically, whether commissioners in the public sector would outsource more services, take more services in-house, or whether there would be no change.
On average providers were most likely to predict that more services would be outsourced (44 per cent). A further third (31 per cent) predicted that more services would be taken in-house. When the results are broken down by sector, organisation size, or the provider's perception regarding fairness of competition, no subgroup stands out as being more or less likely to hold a particular view.

The prevalence of these views does, however, differ amongst providers working in different service areas (Figure 7.5).

Figure 7.5 - Providers' expectations regarding public sector outsourcing of services over next three years



Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, residential special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short breaks: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

A predicted increase in outsourcing is most common amongst providers of short breaks (59 per cent), fostering services (57 per cent) and activities for young people (55 per cent). Providers of residential special schools, on the other hand, are significantly more likely than any other type of provider to expect a shift towards in-house provision (51 per cent, compared with 29 per cent of all other providers). Meanwhile, a quarter of school transport providers (25 per cent) believe that the degree of outsourcing will remain the same: this proportion is far higher than in any other service area, with the exception of adoption (18 per cent).

8 Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the conclusions that can be drawn from the main findings. Additionally we outline conclusions for each service area. Caution should be used in generalising from these conclusions as the findings relate only to the experiences and perceptions of the nine services areas that were sampled. There are some clear issues regarding commissioning practices for local authorities, as well as other Children's Trust partners, who have both a strategic commissioner role within Children's Trusts as well as being a provider of services.

8.2 Conclusions from main findings

Providers' experiences and perceptions of the commissioning process showed that principal commissioning bodies - local authorities and schools - have some way to go to achieve both a level playing field and the involvement of providers in service design. Nevertheless, there were signs that providers received some support from commissioning bodies, and crucially service areas were adapting in response to government policy changes. Providers were also positive about the future of their services. Headline conclusions are listed below followed by further explanation.

- The perception was that a level playing field between providers in the public, private and third sectors had not yet been achieved.
- Third sector providers were least likely to agree that there was a level playing field and most likely to perceive that their own sector was disadvantaged.
- The principal funding and commissioning body for most providers was the local authority, and for most of the remainder it was individual schools. Joint commissioning[43] bodies were the principal commissioner for only a very small proportion of most providers, the exceptions being adoption and teacher supply agencies (none of whom said that a joint commissioning body was their principle funding and commissioning body).
- There were mixed views among providers about their experience of the commissioning process.
- There were changes in the segments of the market relating to social care for children, young people and families, as services responded to recent policy developments and levels of demand.
- At the time of the survey, on balance, providers were optimistic about the sustainability of their services**.**

The perception was that a level playing field between providers in the public, private and third sectors had not yet been achieved. Providers were more likely to disagree than agree that there is a level playing field between sectors in their service area. The most important factors in ensuring a level playing field were seen as fair or transparent cost comparisons, the same standards applied to all sectors, more open relationships or better

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[43] Local authorities and health bodies have the power available through Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006 (pooling funds) and Section 28 of the Children Act 2004 to jointly finance services for children, young people and families. The arrangement is usually through a Joint Commissioning Unit under the umbrella of the local authority.

communication, and a clear commissioning process. Research by the CBI, 2008[44] that shows ‘full cost comparison is at the heart of competitive neutrality’ in public services is reinforced by this survey’s findings. There was no clear view as to how things would change in the future: providers were equally likely to say competition would become fairer in the future as they were to say it would become less fair. With the majority of funding for children’s services coming from government sources, there is still work to do to tackle the issue of competitive neutrality, decisively, in the near future.

Third sector providers were least likely to agree that there was a level playing field and most likely to perceive that their own sector was disadvantaged. They were not convinced that Compact compliance had improved.

There were indications that the public sector was favoured during the commissioning process. Public sector providers were more likely to be involved in assessing needs and planning services than private or third sector providers. They had fewer problems when bidding or tendering, accessed more guidance and support than other sectors and were the most positive about the future. Indeed, private and third sector providers said a barrier to submitting bids was the inherent advantage of in-house bids. A further advantage for public sector providers was that they were more likely to receive start-up funding than other sectors. This finding reflects an earlier survey that found 79 per cent of third sector organisations said that competitive tendering, involving in-house local authority bids lacked ‘fairness or transparency, or both’ (National Association for Voluntary Action, 2007[45]). Likewise a report undertaken for the Confederation of British Industry (CBI, 2006[46]) on competitive tendering in the UK public service market warned that: “unless the government ensures a fair field and no favours - and reassures private and voluntary providers that it understands their concerns - then attempts to introduce greater diversity and contestability into public service provision could fall short of its ideals”.

In addition, while the public and private sector received most of their funding from one source, the third sector obtained funding for services from many sources. While this places an expensive, financial, burden on third sector providers as they have to interact with more funding or commissioning bodies, it has the benefit of diversifying risk. The CBI considers that such complex models of funding reduce provider confidence and discourage new players from getting involved (Walker, 2008[47]). Services areas dominated by the private sector - school transport and supply teacher agencies (further details in Service Provider Summaries) were most likely to agree that there was a level playing field between sectors. However this positive view may be a reflection of the fact that there will inevitably be less of an issue of competition between sectors when almost all providers are from the same sector.

The principal funding and commissioning body for most providers was the local authority, and for most of the remainder it was individual schools. Joint commissioning bodies were the principal commissioner for only a very small proportion of most providers, the exceptions being adoption and teacher supply agencies (none of whom said that a joint commissioning body was their principal funding and commissioning body). However, while joint commissioning bodies were the principal commissioning body for only a small proportion of providers (two per cent), a larger proportion (18 per cent) had worked with[48] them at some time in 2008/09 or had received joint funding (16 per cent).

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[44] Walker David (2008) Counting the cost Full cost comparison between public service providers. CBI Brief. CBI
[45] Jason Leman Centre for Voluntary Sector Research for NAVCA (2007) Frontline hopscotch -- VCS engagement in delivering change for children and young people: a jumpy start or a step back?
[46] CBI (2006) A fair field and no favours -- Competitive neutrality in UK public service markets, CBI
[47] Walker David (2008) Counting the cost Full cost comparison between public service providers. CBI brief. CBI
[48] For the purposes of the survey ‘work with’ was defined as ‘either receiving funding or income, or submitting a tender or applying for funding, even if you were not successful’.

There were mixed views among providers about their experience of the commissioning process. Most providers had some involvement in assessing the needs of users, although they were less likely to have been involved in planning services and less still in designing or redesigning services. While providers received a number of different types of support from commissioning bodies both in response to specific requests and more generally, there were concerns about the degree to which support had improved. While providers who had submitted a tender in the last year found tendering documents easy or fairly easy to understand, overall they were less positive about the improvement in clarity of tendering documents. On a more positive note those providers who had received contract funding agreed that contracts had improved (in terms of quality and appropriateness of content). These mixed findings are reflected in the experience of one umbrella organisation, the National Council for Excellence in Residential Children's Care (NCERCC) which observed polarisation of commissioners and providers hindered by lack of a shared culture. They concluded that in their area of social care provision: "Commissioning needs to be able to take the strengths of finance and administration and combine them with care values and practice."[49]

There were changes in the segments of the market relating to social care for children, young people and families as services responded to recent policy developments and levels of demand. There have been increases in demand and recent expansion in the service areas of fostering and adoption and preventative services targeted at supporting families to look after their own children such as short breaks and family and parenting support. In contrast, the majority of providers of placements away from family settings in children's homes and residential special schools had not expanded, possibly because the (other) expanding services had prevented the need for increases in these acute services. However there were signs of uncertainty amongst providers of activities for young people, residential special schools and children's homes, who were more likely than average to have considered cutting back or closing down.

Providers in the segments of the market relating to social care for children, young people and families showed considerable variation by service area in the proportions found in public, private or third sectors, and this is reflected in their experiences of the commissioning process, views of whether there was a level playing field and their outlook for the future. To illustrate these differences, the experiences and perceptions of each service area are given below at the end of this chapter.

On balance across the survey, in April to June 2009, providers were optimistic about the sustainability of their services. Their confidence was based on recent experiences. A third of all providers had expanded their services in the last three years in response to a rise in demand, and one in ten due to an increase in funding. Those who had not expanded recently said that increases in funding and rise in demand were factors that might encourage them to do so. The vast majority expected to be providing services in three years time. Indeed many providers predicted an increase in the volume of their services and about half expected to diversify services. However this finding should be treated with caution as the research was conducted before providers and local authorities were aware of the likely severity of public sector funding cuts from 2011.

[49] National Council for Excellence in Residential Children's Care (2008) Desire, the link between intention and achievement: Commissioning is a parenting and childcare activity. NCERRC / NCB

8.3 Service provider summaries

This section contains the main findings for each of the service areas covered by the survey. Table 8.1 gives a summary of the characteristics of providers in each area, and this is then followed by a commentary on the key survey findings for each service area in turn.

Table 8.1 - Main characteristics

	Dominant sector	Proportion with turnover over £1 million (%)	Proportion that cover one local authority only	Proportion providing service for more than 10 years
Children's homes	Private (54%)	23	43	48
Residential special schools	Third (51%)	83	1	91
Fostering	Private (62%)	47	17	49
Adoption	Public (65%)	41	41	87
Short breaks	Public (51%)	29	62	74
Activities for young people	Third (56%)	21	59	72
Family and parenting support	Third (84%)	37	31	65
School transport	Private (96%)	40	44	87
Teacher supply agencies	Private	45	15	20

Based on all survey respondents (children's homes: 475, special schools: 68, fostering: 167, adoption: 109, short break: 141, activities for young people: 348, family & parenting support: 51, school transport: 197, teacher supply agencies: 20‡)

‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Children's Homes

Providers of **children's homes** were most likely to be in the private sector; their funding came mostly from local authorities in the form of contracts or service level agreements. Their level of involvement in assessing the needs of users, and planning and designing services was similar or slightly higher than providers in other service areas. Attitudes to tender documents were similar to those in other service areas, as was the level of support provided by commissioning bodies. However, providers were more positive than those in other service areas towards recent changes in commissioning practices (e.g. support offered, Compact compliance).

Only one in three had submitted a tender or bid in 2008/09, indicating that many existing contracts were long-term. Compared with other service areas, contracts were more likely to require feedback from front line professionals or users.

Providers were more likely to disagree than agree that there is a level playing field between sectors, with figures similar to the survey average.

They were more likely to say that their market had contracted rather than grown in the past three years. One in four providers had expanded their service in recent years (lower than in other service areas), while a similar proportion (one in four) had considered cutting back or closing (around the survey average).

Most providers were positive in their outlook for the next three years (in line with the survey as a whole), with many expecting a rise in volumes. Respondents were more likely to expect an increase in services to be outsourced rather than taken in-house over the next three years, with figures again similar to the survey average.

Residential Special Schools

Providers of **residential special schools** tended to be part of large, well established organisations, either in the private or third sector.

Funding came from a range of sources, including a relatively high proportion from joint funding bodies, although local authorities were almost always the principal commissioning body. Funding was mainly in the form of contracts.

Although often closely involved in assessing users' needs, they rarely had any substantial involvement with commissioners in the planning and design of services, and this was lower than in other service areas. They were also less likely to receive different types of support from commissioning bodies than providers in other service areas. This may be explained by the wide geographic area served by many providers, with a third covering multiple regions and a half across the whole of England or the UK. Service quality was seen as the main reason for success in tendering, with price seen as less of an issue than in other service areas.

Of all the service areas in the survey, providers of residential special schools were strongest in the view that there is not a level playing field between sectors. Fair and transparent price or cost comparisons were seen as the most important factors in ensuring a level playing field.

They were more likely than average to say there had been a move towards in-house provision over the past three years (and to have seen their market contract over that time), and also to predict this would also happen in the next three years. This may be a reflection of government policy to remove barriers to achievement and the specific aim to include children with special needs in mainstream education where feasible (DfES, 2004)[50].

Two in five had expanded their service in the last three years (lower than the survey average), while a similar proportion had considered cutting back or closing during that time (higher than the survey average).

Fostering Services

Providers of **fostering services** were predominantly private sector organisations covering more than one local authority area. Funding was almost entirely from local authorities.

Providers tended to have a relatively low level of involvement in assessing users' needs, planning, designing and redesigning services; this is linked to a general pattern whereby involvement tended to be greater amongst providers based only in one local authority. They were critical of documentation, in terms of being both difficult to understand and not containing the right amount of information. However, the level of support offered by local authorities was similar to that seen in other service areas. Price was more likely to be seen as a key reason affecting success in tendering than in other service areas.

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[50] DfES (2004) Removing barriers to achievement: The government's strategy for SEN, HMSO

Providers were strong in their view that there is not a level playing field between sectors, although similar numbers said that competition had become fairer in recent years as said it had become less fair.

Many providers had seen an increase in the overall value of contracts in the previous three years (a greater proportion than average), as well as overall market growth in the same period. The majority said they had expanded their service in the last three years, and only 18 per cent (a relatively small proportion in the survey as a whole) had considered cutting back or closing. Nevertheless, they tended to say that more, rather than fewer, services had been taken in house in recent years.

Views of the future were positive, and 85 per cent expected to see a rise in volumes in the next three years (a higher proportion than in any other service area). They were also more likely than average to expect that more services would be outsourced in the next three years rather than taken in house.

Adoption Services

Providers of **adoption services** were mostly in the public sector. They all received funding from local authorities (and for the vast majority this was also the principal commissioning body) as well as from a range of other sources, including personal donations and service users. They had a relatively high level of involvement in the planning and design of services.

Less than one in three had submitted a bid or tender in 2008/09, indicating a preponderance of longer term contracts / agreements. A proven track record was seen as the main reason for success in tendering.

Providers were more likely to disagree than agree that there is a level playing field between sectors; figures were similar to the survey average. Compared with other service areas, providers of adoption services were less likely to have seen any change in the fairness of completion in recent years (positive or negative), or to expect to see any change in the future. At the same time, they were likely to say there had been a shift to more in-house services in the last three years, together with a growth in their market (the majority being in the public sector). Three in four said they had expanded their service in the last three years, while only 18 per cent had considered cutting back or closing.

They were more likely than average to predict a shift towards greater in-house provision than a shift to more outsourcing over the next three years, and this was consistent with an expectation of rising volumes among public sector providers.

Short Breaks

Providers of **short breaks** were mostly in either the public or third sector, and the majority covered just one local authority area. Funding came mainly from local authorities, but also from other sources including personal donations. Funding in this service area came in different forms (contract, grants and service-level agreements).

In comparison with other service areas, they were highly involved in assessing needs, planning services and designing or redesigning services, and were more likely than average to have received different types of support (especially start-up funding). They were also more likely than average to say that contracts were monitored in different ways. Providers also felt that commissioning practices had improved in the last three years. Price was considered the most important factor in successful bids.

Although they were more likely to disagree than agree that there is a level playing field between sectors, they were more likely to agree than providers in most other service areas. Better communication and open relationships were seen as the most important factor in ensuring a level playing field. Short break providers tended to feel that competition had become fairer in recent years, and would become more fair in the future.

Short break providers were more likely than those in other service areas to say that the overall value of contracts had increased in the last three years, and that the proportion of funding they received from government had increased. Overall, they were likely to have seen growth in their market recently. As a result, many providers had expanded their services in the last three years, while only 13 per cent had considered cutting back or closing.

Providers of short breaks also had a very positive outlook for the future, with three in four expecting to see a rise in volumes in three years' time, and two in three expecting to diversify into new services. They also expected to see more outsourcing of services rather than services being taken in-house.

The relatively positive views of short break providers compared with those in other service areas are not unexpected given the funding available for disabled children and their families through the Aiming High for Disabled Children[51] programme.

Activities for Young People

The majority of providers of **activities for young people** were in the third sector and covered one local authority only. Funding sources were diverse, and hardly any providers obtained all of their funding from government sources alone. That said, in most cases local authorities were the principal commissioning body, with most funding obtained in the form of grants.

They had a relatively high level of involvement in assessing users' needs, as well as in planning, designing and re-designing services. They were also more likely than average to have received different types of support from commissioning bodies (and one in five had received start-up funding). Contracts were more likely to be monitored in various ways than in other service areas.

Providers were more likely to disagree than agree that there is a level playing field between sectors, with figures similar to the survey average. However, they were more likely to say that competition had become fairer, rather than less fair, in recent years and expected it to become fairer in the future.

Providers of activities for young people were likely to say that their market had grown in the last three years, although there was variation between different providers in terms of the recent changes (e.g. in the proportion of funding they received from government, and the shift towards / away from in-house service provision). While the majority had expanded their service in the past three years, one in three had considered cutting back or closing, suggesting a relatively unstable market and/or variation in the experiences of individual providers within the service area as a whole.

Most providers had a positive view of the future for their market, and expected to see more outsourcing of services over the next three years.

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[51] Her Majesty's Treasury & DfES (2007) Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families, HMSO

Family and Parenting Support

The majority of providers of **family and parenting support** were in the third sector. Funding was obtained from a range of sources, and very few were reliant on government funding alone. In this service area, funding was received in different forms (contract, grants and service-level agreements).

There was considerable variation in the amount of involvement providers had in assessing the needs of users, and in planning, designing or redesigning services, with providers as likely to have a high level of involvement as none at all. Most providers disagreed that there is a level playing field between sectors, including two in five who disagreed strongly. Providers were also inclined to feel that competition had become less fair in recent years (rather than fairer), with many saying that more services had been taken in-house. Better communication and open relationships were seen as a key factor in ensuring a level playing field.

Nevertheless, most providers said that their market had grown in the past three years, and the majority had expanded their service over that time. At the same time, two in five had considered cutting back services or closing in recent years, again indicating the variation between different providers in this service area.

There were also mixed views of the future. Providers were likely to expect more outsourcing rather than more in-house provision, but views differed over the overall outlook for the market (half were positive but one in three were negative).

School Transport

Providers of **school transport** were nearly all in the private sector and were mostly well established organisations. They obtained funding mainly from local authorities and schools, as well as (in some cases) from service users. Overall, they were less likely to receive funding from Government sources than providers in other service areas - when they did, they were almost always in the form of contracts.

School transport providers had a lower involvement than average in the process of needs assessment, planning, designing and redesigning services. This may be a reflection of the predominance of private sector organisations, who were generally less involved than organisations from other sectors in these processes. Providers in this service area were also less likely to receive support from the principal commissioning body (generally a local authority). However, they generally found tendering documents as clear and easy to understand as providers in other service areas.

School transport providers submitted a far greater number of bids than other types of provider (13 on average in 2008/09) and had a higher proportion of unsuccessful bids. This suggests that many contracts are relatively small or short-term (and this may be reflected in the low level of contract monitoring compared with other service areas), and that there is often competition between providers. A proven track record was seen as a key reason for success in tendering.

School transport providers were more likely to disagree than to agree that there is a level playing field between different sectors, although they were slightly more likely than average to agree. However, they were more likely than average to say that competition had become less fair over the previous three years, and they also tended to think it would become less fair in the future (rather than more fair).

Compared with those in other service areas, school transport providers were more likely to feel that the overall value of contracts had decreased over the previous three years, and they were more likely to say their market had contracted rather than grown over this time. Two in five had expanded their service in the last three years (lower than average) and one in four had considered cutting back or closing down (slightly above the survey average).

School transport providers were less positive than those in other service areas in their general outlook for the future of their market, with a relatively high proportion (21 per cent) predicting a fall in volumes over the next three years. They also tended to think that more services would be taken in house rather than outsourced in the next three years.

Teacher Supply Agencies

Only 20 **teacher supply agencies** were interviewed in the survey, so findings should be treated with caution. Nevertheless, some patterns can be identified as follows.

Most of the agencies were in the private sector. Schools were the main source of funding (and usually the principal commissioning body), although three in five also received funding from local authorities. In contrast to other service areas, teacher supply agencies were more likely to agree than disagree that there is a level playing field between different sectors. However, they tended to feel the competition had become less fair in the previous years (rather than more fair) and often expected this trend to continue. Like those in other service areas, they were likely to say they had seen more, rather than fewer, services being taken in-house in recent years, with a related contraction in their market. However, they were relatively positive in their future outlook, with the majority expecting to see a rise in volumes in the next three years.

Appendix A - Survey design and methodology

Appendix A1 Sample

Sample population and definitions

The survey was designed to cover providers of key services for children, young people and families in England. Initial discussions were held between Department staff and the research team to assess which service areas should fall within the scope of the survey. As a result, it was agreed to focus the survey on services for children, young people and families where there were either known commissioning issues[52] or where significant new investment had been made by the Department (e.g. in new or emerging markets[53]). The inclusion of different services also relied on the availability of an appropriate source for obtaining a representative sample. The specific service areas covered by the survey are shown in Table A1.

Having established the service areas that were to be included, the next step was to define which types of provider were eligible for inclusion. This was more problematic for some service areas such as family and parenting support, which could potentially include a large range of different types of provider. As a result, it was decided that, for such services, the survey should be considered in relation to the level of need or 'tier' of the children and families that the service is targeted at, with a focus (where appropriate) on providers offering more targeted and specialist, as opposed to universal services.

It was also important to clarify the sampling unit that the survey should cover. In theory, a 'provider' could be a setting, centre, scheme, agency, department, organisation or individual. It was therefore decided to define eligible providers as entities that could potentially be commissioned to carry out services. Where providers operated on different levels (e.g. individual settings which are part of a larger organisation), it was agreed that the survey should focus on the lowest level that was involved in the commissioning of services.

Table A1 shows the types of service area included in the survey, as well as the source for obtaining a sample and the definition of eligible providers. As shown in the table, a combination of sources was used to sample some of the service areas, in order to produce a composite sample that would represent the population as fully as possible.

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[52] For example as identified in previous Government commissioned research reports.
[53] For example, short breaks.

Table A1 - Service areas, sample sources and definitions

Service area	Sample source	Definition/coverage
Children's homes	OFSTED	Providers identified as children's homes in OFSTED database
Special schools	DCSF internal listing[54]	Includes only residential non-maintained and independent special schools.
Fostering services	OFSTED	Fostering agencies (LA and independent); excludes OFSTED category of "private fostering arrangements"
Adoption services	OFSTED	LA adoption agencies, VAAs and ASAs
Short breaks for disabled children	1) Shared Care network	Listing of providers on Shared Care network website
	2) DCSF pathfinders	Details of providers supplied by DCSF pathfinders
Positive activities for young people	PAYP scheme management information database	Activity providers listed in database
Family and Parenting support	1) Parenting UK	Providers listed on website
	2) National Family and Parenting Institute	Providers listed on website
	3) DCSF 3rd sector contacts	DCSF list of providers
School transport	Confederation of Passenger Transport UK	Database of all member organisations
School supply teachers	REC quality mark	List of all organisations who have received or are in process of applying for quality mark (listed on website)

[54] The sample of residential special schools was taken from DCSF listings, as this was able to identify which were independent and non-maintained (this information is not available in the OFSTED data).

Sample cleaning and selection

Where multiple sources were used for a particular service area (short breaks and family / parenting support), details were merged into one sample file and records were de-duplicated.

Where sample records contained an address but no telephone number, an electronic telephone number search was carried out. Where no address or telephone number was listed, these cases were removed from the sample.

A small sample was drawn from each source for use in the cognitive interviewing stage (described below). Cases were removed from the main sample if they were used in the cognitive stage and either refused, had closed down, said that the research was not appropriate to them, or took part in the cognitive stage but then declined to take part in main stage. Other cases from the cognitive stage were retained.

All providers from different service areas were then merged into a single file. A final de-duplication process was carried out (as some providers could be included in more than one service area). This gave a total of 5,269 eligible providers. From this, 120 providers were selected for the pilot. All remaining cases were then used in the main sample with the exception of children's homes, where a random sample of 1,641 was drawn (because of the large number of providers in this service area). Numbers in each service area are shown in table A2.

Table A2 - Numbers sampled in each service area

	Number available	Number sampled for pilot	Number sampled for main stage
Children's homes	1956	25	1641
Residential special schools	130	12	118
Fostering	422	12	410
Adoption	249	12	237
Short breaks	392	20	372
Activities for young people	1181	25	1156
Family and parenting support	89	12	77
School transport	764	20	744
Teacher supply agencies	86	12	74
Total	5269	150	4829

Appendix A2 - Fieldwork and response rates

Prior to fieldwork, cognitive interviews were conducted with 20 providers. This informed the questionnaire development by testing respondents' understanding and interpretation of question wording and terminology, as well as their ability to answer questions about different issues. This also identified issues in the process of contacting providers and identifying an appropriate respondent. Participants were given £20 for their organisation as a thank you for their time and help.

Main fieldwork was conducted in two stages: an initial screening stage and a main interview stage. At the screening stage, all sampled providers were contacted by telephone to establish:

- whether the provider was eligible for the survey; specifically, whether it provided one of the services included in the survey, and (if a private or third sector provider) whether it had bid for or received funding from the local authority, other Children's Trust partners or from schools in the previous financial year (2008/09). This was the definition of eligibility agreed between the Department and the research team.

- who was the most appropriate individual to take part in the survey; interviewers asked for the person who dealt with the local authority, other Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for the service provided by their organisation. The interviewer then asked for contact details for this person.

Where the screening stage was successful in confirming eligibility and identifying an appropriate respondent, the provider was included in the sample for the main interview stage. Initially, a letter was sent to the named person, explaining the background and purpose of the survey and providing re-assurance about confidentiality. Interviewers then attempted to make contact in order to complete an interview. At the start of the interview, the screening questions were repeated in order to check eligibility.

Fieldwork for the screening stage took place between 10th March and 16th April 2009. In total, 3,438 providers were successfully screened for the main interview stage. Response details are shown in Table A3.

Table A3 - Response details for screening stage	Number (N)
TOTAL SAMPLE ISSUED	4939
OUT OF SCOPE:	781
Duplicate	77
Error with telephone number / unobtainable	461
Ineligible: failed criteria / no target person	88
Incorrect sample details	155
CONTACTABLE SAMPLE	4158
UNSUCCESSFUL:	720
Refusals	133
Unavailable for duration of fieldwork	41
Abandoned interview	17
Unresolved after several calls	529
COMPLETED INTERVIEWS[55]	3438
Response rate (on contactable sample)	**83%**

The main interview stage took place between 10th April and 8th June 2009. In total, 1,576 providers were interviewed. Response details are shown in Table A4.

[55] A 'completed interview' at the screener means that contact details were obtained for the person responsible for dealing with the commissioners in the local authority, Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for the sampled service. Interviewers did not always speak to the named contact in person and were sometimes given their contact details by a receptionist or colleague.

Table A4 - Response details for main stage interviewing

	Number (N)
TOTAL SAMPLE ISSUED	3436[56]
OUT OF SCOPE:	416
Duplicate	114
Error with telephone number / unobtainable	107
Ineligible: failed criteria / no target person	171
Incorrect sample details	24
CONTACTABLE SAMPLE	3020
UNSUCCESSFUL:	1444
Refusals	441
Unavailable for duration of fieldwork	104
Abandoned interview	26
Unresolved after several calls	873
COMPLETED INTERVIEWS:	1576
Children's homes	*475*
Residential special schools	*68*
Fostering	*167*
Adoption	*109*
Short breaks	*141*
Activities for young people	*348*
Family and parenting support	*51*
School transport	*197*
Teacher supply agencies	*20*
Response rate (on contactable sample)	**52%**

A pilot was carried out prior to main fieldwork, to test the survey process and the questionnaire. The pilot used the same two stage process (screening and main interview) as the main stage. A total of 35 interviews were obtained from the 97 contacts identified in the pilot sample building stage. The pilot fieldwork took place between the 5th and 10th November 2008 (screening stage) and the 25th November and 5th December 2008 (interview stage).

At both the pilot and main stages of the survey, interviews were conducted by telephone using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) by Kantar Operations'[57] fully trained telephone interviewers in Ealing.

[56] At the request of DCSF, two pieces of the sample screened at the screening stage were removed from sample issued for the mainstage fieldwork.

Appendix A3 - The questionnaire

At the start of the project, initial discussions were held with internal stakeholders to consider the issues that should be included in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was then developed in consultation between the Department and the research team.

The questionnaire had five discrete sections:

- Key provider characteristics
- Perceptions and experience of commissioning
- Key changes over last three years
- Entry, exit, expansion, retrenchment and respective barriers
- Expectations of the future.

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[57] BMRB is part of the Kantar Group, the information and consultancy arm of WPP, BMRB's parent company. In addition to BMRB, other market research agencies in the Kantar Group include Research International and Millward Brown, as well as a number of smaller, specialist organisations. In April 2004 the support services of the Kantar companies were grouped to form a shared resource called The Operations Centre, which later changed its name to Kantar Operations. The majority of BMRB's existing operational services, including field management, sampling and data processing continue to be based at BMRB's Head Office in Ealing but, while still wholly owned by WPP, the new operations centre is now a separate legal entity from BMRB. Kantar Operations continue to work to existing quality standards and BMRB continue to take responsibility for the quality of the work undertaken by their support services.

Appendix A4 - Analysis of data

Once interviews had been conducted, data was collated and open-ended responses were coded. All code frames were approved before use. Tabulations of the data and an SPSS dataset were produced and checked.

Appendix B - Key provider characteristics

Table B1 shows the types of services within the scope of the survey of providers of services to children, young people and families and the number of interviews conducted with each type.

Table B1 - Services provided

	Type of service (No. of interviews)
Children's homes	*475*
Residential special schools	*68*
Fostering	*167*
Adoption	*109*
Short breaks	*141*
Activities for young people	*348*
Family and parenting support	*51*
School transport	*197*
Teacher supply agencies	*20*
TOTAL	*1,576*

Based on all survey respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Table B2 shows the proportion of providers that were part of the public, private or third sector[58]. On average, four in ten providers were private sector companies, a quarter were public sector organisations and a third were from the third sector. The table shows considerable variation by service area: providers of teacher supply and school transport were almost all private sector organisations, while providers of family and parenting support were mostly in the third sector. The majority of adoption service providers were in the public sector.

[58] At the start of the interview providers were asked whether they were a 'public sector organisation e.g. local authority, primary care trust, youth offending service', a 'private sector company' or a 'third sector' organisation (the latter defined as 'not public sector or private sector i.e. non-governmental, value driven, does not operate for profit and re-invests surpluses to further its objectives'). Based on their response, providers were categorised as a public, private or third sector provider for the purposes of the survey.

Table B2 - Sector

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Public sector organisation	*26*	36	3	22	65
Private sector company	*42*	54	46	62	11
Third sector	*32*	9	51	17	24
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Public sector organisation	51	36	10	3	5
Private sector company	4	8	6	96	90
Third sector	45	56	84	1	5
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Table B3 shows the structure of private and third sector organisations. On average, seven in ten were stand alone organisations, one in ten were a branch of a larger organisation and two in ten were part of a group. School transport providers, providers of activities for young people, adoption services and family and parenting support providers were more likely than average to be stand-alone organisations.

Table B3 - Structure of organisation: Private and third sector

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Stand alone	*68*	50	53	59	79
A branch	*12*	25	18	18	18
Part of a group	*19*	23	29	22	3
Unweighted		*302*	*66*	*131*	*38‡*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Stand alone	59	83	78	85	63
A branch	20	10	4	4	5
Part of a group	20	6	15	10	32
Unweighted	*69*	*222*	*46‡*	*191*	*19‡*

Based on all private and third sector survey respondents
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Table B4 shows the status of public sector services. Providers were most likely to be services within a department or directorate rather than a whole department or directorate or a public sector organisation in its own right.

Table B4 - Structure of organisation: Public sector

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
A service within a department or directorate within a public sector organisation	*63*	65	†	72	72
A department or directorate within a public sector organisation	*11*	6	†	11	10
A public sector organisation	*21*	24	†	14	18
Don't know	*5*	*5*	†	*3*	-
Unweighted	*492*	*173*	*2*	*36‡*	*71*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
A service within a department or directorate within a public sector organisation	67	59	†	†	†
A department or directorate within a public sector organisation	8	17	†	†	†
A public sector organisation	18	18	†	†	†
Don't know	7	6	†	†	†
Unweighted	*72*	*126*	*5*	*6*	*1*

Based on all public sector survey respondents
- No observations
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Where private and third sector providers were a branch of a larger organisation or were part of a group, the majority were commissioned to provide services in their own right rather than in conjunction with other branches, settings or larger organisations (Table B5).

Table B5 - Unit of funding: Private and third sector

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
In its own right	*80*	55	77	85	†
Only with other branches or settings	*2*	10	-	-	†
Through larger organisation as a whole	*11*	34	10	15	†
Don't know	*6*	*1*	*13*	-	†
Unweighted		*146*	*31‡*	*53*	*8*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
In its own right	75	74	†	89	†
Only with other branches or settings	7	-	†	-	†
Through larger organisation as a whole	4	11	†	4	†
Don't know	14	14	†	7	†
Unweighted	*28‡*	*35‡*	*9*	*27‡*	*7*

Based on all private or third sector survey respondents who were part of a group or branch
- No observations
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Amongst public sector providers that were part of a larger organisation, 23 per cent were commissioned to provide services in their own right, while the remainder were commissioned only as part of a service, as part of a department or directorate or through the larger organisation (Table B6). On average, one fifth of providers were unsure of the way in which they received funding.

Table B6 - Unit of funding: Public sector

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
In its own right	*23*	26	†	23	17
Only as part of service	*15*	19	†	10	9
Only as part of a department or directorate	*29*	29	†	27	34
Through larger organisation as a whole	*14*	*14*	†	*10*	*16*
Don't know	*19*	*12*	†	*30*	*24*
Unweighted		*123*	*1*	*30‡*	*58*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
In its own right	17	43	†	†	†
Only as part of service	22	24	†	†	†
Only as part of a department or directorate	35	9	†	†	†
Through larger organisation as a whole	11	12	†	†	†
Don't know	*15*	*12*	†	†	†
Unweighted	*54*	*95*	*3*	*0*	*0*

Based on all public sector survey respondents who are a department or directorate or a service within a department or directorate
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution
† Figures excluded as answer based on fewer than 10 respondents

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Table B7 shows that, on average, 61 per cent of providers were part of a wider infrastructure or umbrella organisation[59]. Providers of residential special schools, fostering services and adoption services were most likely to be a member of a wider infrastructure or umbrella organisation.

Table B7 - Whether provider is a member of an umbrella organisation

		Type of service			
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Yes	*61*	35	72	77	72
No	*34*	59	22	19	24
Don't know	*5*	*6*	*6*	*4*	*5*
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Yes	57	59	53	44	80
No	36	38	37	53	20
Don't know	7	3	10	3	-
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Table B8 shows the annual turnover or revenue of providers during the most recent financial year they had up to date figures for. Providers of residential special schools tended to have a higher turnover than those in other service areas. This reflects the fact that they were more likely than other providers to be part of a group (rather than a stand-alone organisation) and (as shown in Table B11) provide their service across the whole of England or the UK.

[59] For the purpose of this survey the term **umbrella organisation** refers to an association of (often related, industry-specific) institutions, who work together formally to coordinate activities or pool resources. In business, political, or other environments, one group, the umbrella organisation, provides resources and often an identity to the smaller organisations. Sometimes in this kind of arrangement, the umbrella organisation is to some degree responsible for the groups under its care. The umbrella organisation is able to represent the views of its members to local or national government. Umbrella organisations may be **national sector specific** e.g. the Local Government Association (LGA) in the public sector, or the National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NAVCCO) in the third sector; they may be **national service specific** e.g. British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (the umbrella group for adoption agencies); or they may be **local sector and service specific** e.g. chambers of commerce, voluntary organisations.

Turnover was generally lower than average amongst providers of activities for young people.

Table B8 - Annual turnover or revenue

		Type of service			
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Less than £50,000	*4*	3	1	2	8
Over £50,000 but less than £100,000	*6*	3	-	4	8
Over £100,00 but less than £500,000	*17*	21	1	12	8
Over £500,000 but less than £1m	*13*	18	1	11	16
Over £1m but less than £10m	*32*	17	76	34	24
Over £10m	*9*	6	7	13	17
Don't know	*19*	31	12	25	19
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Less than £50,000	3	11	6	3	-
Over £50,000 but less than £100,000	6	12	10	5	5
Over £100,00 but less than £500,000	24	32	24	22	10
Over £500,000 but less than £1m	18	9	10	18	15
Over £1m but less than £10m	18	17	25	29	45
Over £10m	11	4	12	11	-
Don't know	20	15	14	13	25
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents
- No observations
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

On average, six in ten providers had less than 50 paid staff working in their organisations (as shown in Table B9), while one in seven had 250 or more paid staff.

This was generally consistent across different service areas, although providers of residential special schools tended to have more staff than other types of provider.

Table B9 - Number of paid staff

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
0	*1*	*	-	-	5
1-9	*22*	11	-	30	16
10-49	*36*	57	12	38	39
50-249	*21*	15	65	17	11
250-999	*7*	4	18	5	5
1000+	*7*	5	1	7	16
Don't know	*6*	7	4	4	10
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
0	-	2	2	2	-
1-9	18	35	25	27	40
10-49	43	35	39	46	15
50-249	18	16	22	11	15
250-999	5	4	2	6	15
1000+	11	5	10	7	-
Don't know	6	4	-	3	15
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents
* Less than 0.5 per cent
\- No observations
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

On average, three fifths of providers did not have any volunteers or unpaid staff working for their organisation, while 11 per cent had 50 or more (Table B10).

Providers of activities for young people and family and parenting support were most likely to have volunteers or unpaid staff. This reflects the large proportion of third sector providers in these service areas.

Table B10 - Number of volunteers or unpaid staff

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
0	*59*	81	47	77	62
1-9	*16*	12	29	10	8
10-49	*12*	2	18	5	9
50-249	*7*	*	4	2	8
250-999	*2*	*	-	1	-
1000+	*2*	1	-	1	2
Don't know	*3*	3	1	3	10
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
0	40	15	16	95	95
1-9	16	39	25	4	5
10-49	18	28	24	1	-
50-249	11	11	22	-	-
250-999	5	3	6	-	-
1000+	5	1	4	-	-
Don't know	5	3	4	1	-
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents who received government funding in 2008/09
* Less than 0.5 per cent
- No observations
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Table B11 shows the geographic area providers offered their service within. On average, around one in three providers offered their service within a single local authority, while more than one in five offered their service across the whole of England or the UK or internationally.

Providers of short breaks and activities for young people were most likely to operate within a single local authority area, while providers of residential special schools and family and parenting support were most likely to have a national or international presence.

Table B11 - Geographic area service provided within

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Within a single local authority (district or county)	*35*	43	1	17	41
Within one region (e.g. the South West)	*23*	17	13	31	31
Across multiple regions	*19*	16	32	33	9
Across the whole of England or the UK	*18*	22	49	14	17
International	*4*	2	4	4	2
Don't know	*1*	*	-	2	-
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*
	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Within a single local authority (district or county)	62	59	31	44	15
Within one region (e.g. the South West)	19	24	16	29	30
Across multiple regions	9	8	8	17	40
Across the whole of England or the UK	7	5	33	5	10
International	1	3	12	5	5
Don't know	2	1	-	1	-
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents who received government funding in 2008/09
*   Less than 0.5 per cent
-   No observations
‡   Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

The majority of service providers had been offering services for more than ten years, as shown in Table B12.

Providers of residential special schools, school transport and adoption services were most likely to have been providing their service for more than ten years.

Table B12 - How long provided service

	Type of service				
	Average (%)	Children's homes (%)	Residential special schools (%)	Fostering (%)	Adoption (%)
Less than one year	*1*	2	-	1	2
More than one, less than two	*2*	4	3	4	-
More than two, less than three	*1*	5	1	3	2
More than three, less than four	*4*	6	1	4	2
More than four, less than five	*3*	5	-	5	1
Between five and ten	*23*	29	3	34	6
More than ten years	*66*	48	91	49	87
Don't know	*1*	1	-	1	-
Unweighted		*475*	*68*	*167*	*109*

	Short breaks (%)	Activities for young people (%)	Family and parenting support (%)	School transport (%)	Teacher supply agencies (%)
Less than one year	4	-	-	2	-
More than one, less than two	-	*	2	1	-
More than two, less than three	1	1	-	1	-
More than three, less than four	3	*	6	1	10
More than four, less than five	1	2	2	1	10
Between five and ten	16	23	24	8	60
More than ten years	74	72	65	87	20
Don't know	1	1	2	-	-
Unweighted	*141*	*348*	*51*	*197*	*20‡*

Based on all survey respondents who received government funding in 2008/09
* Less than 0.5 per cent
\- No observations
‡ Findings based on fewer than 50 respondents; figures should be treated with caution

Source: Survey of providers of services to children, young people and families

Appendix C - Survey documents

Appendix C1 - Screener Questionnaire

Good morning / afternoon, my name is _____ calling on behalf of BMRB, an independent market research organisation, for the Department for Children, Schools and Families. In the next few months we will be conducting a survey among providers of services for children, young people and families [*For in-house providers add:* and this will include in-house providers of these services].

At this stage we would just like to check some details so that we can send you some more information about it.

IF NECESSARY: The survey is voluntary, and if having seen the information your organisation does not wish to take part you can let us know when we next call, or you can let us know by calling us

IF NECESSARY: The results will be used to inform the Department's commissioning and market development policy and, if the survey is repeated on a regular basis, enable change to be tracked over time.

IF Private / Voluntary / Independent provider sample

IF NECESSARY: The survey is being carried out to help the Government to better understand the perceptions and experiences of providers with regard to how they are commissioned by local authorities and their Children's Trust partners. For example, it will seek to capture experiences of tendering and bidding for grants or contracts, perceptions of how level the playing field is, and expectations for the future.

IF In-house provider sample

IF NECESSARY: The survey is being carried out to help the Department to better understand the relationships that exist between service providers and those who are responsible for commissioning these services and we are therefore keen to include in-house providers as well as those in the private, voluntary and independent sectors.

PROCEED IF SPEAKING TO SOMEONE REPRESENTING THE ORGANISATION, AND IF THEY ARE WILLING TO CONTINUE.

ASK ALL

QCHECK Can I just check, does <provider name> provide <selected service> services?

INTERVIEWER: REFER TO "TYPES OF SERVICE OFFERED" ON BACKGROUND NOTES IF NECESSARY

Yes
No
Don't know

IF QCHECK=DK ASK Qtrans1

Qtrans1 Is there someone we can speak to who might know whether your organisation provides <selected service>?

Yes - transfer now
Yes - make appointment to call back
No - Terminate

IF NO AT QCHECK, ASK QCHECK2

QCHECK2 And does <provider name> provide any of these services?

READ OUT, CODE AS MANY AS APPLY.

(NOTE: Exclude the service included at QCHECK from list below).

INTERVIEWER: REFER TO “TYPES OF SERVICE OFFERED” ON BACKGROUND NOTES IF NECESSARY

Children’s homes
Residential special schools
Fostering services
Adoption services
Short breaks for disabled children
Activities for young people
Family and parenting support
School transport
Teacher supply agencies
Other specify
None of these

IF QCHECK2=None of these, TERMINATE INTERVIEW

IF MORE THAN ONE SELECTED AT QCHECK2, ASK QMANY

QMANY Of these services which is the main service that <provider name> offers?

READ OUT LIST OF SERVICES PROVIDED IF NECESSARY

IF QCHECK = 1 ASK QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO ORIGINAL SELECTED SERVICE

IF QCHECK = 2 AND QCHECK2 = 1 SERVICE ONLY, ASK QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO SERVICE MENTIONED AT QCHECK2

IF QCHECK = 2 AND QCHECK2 = MORE THAN 1 SERVICE, ASK QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO SERVICE MENTIONED AT QMANY

IF Private / Voluntary / Independent provider sample AND QCHECK=yes OR ANY ANSWER EXCEPT ‘NONE OF THESE’ AT QCHECK2, ASK QORG

QORG Has your organisation received any funding or income from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or from schools for <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany> in the last financial year 2008-2009?

IF RESPONDENT UNABLE TO ANSWER IN TERMS OF 'last financial year' ASK ABOUT 'last 12 months'.

IF NECESSARY: Funding or income can include grants, contracts, service level agreements or individual placement payments. REFER TO "EXAMPLES OF FUNDING" IF NECESSARY.

IF NECESSARY: By Children's Trust partners I mean the Police, Probation Board, Youth Offending Team, Health Authority and Primary Care Trust, Connexions, and the Learning and Skills Council

Yes
No
Don't know

IF QORG=DK, ASK Qtrans2

Qtrans2 Is there someone we can speak to who might know whether your organisation receives any of these sources of funding for <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany>?

Yes - transfer now
Yes - make appointment to call back
No - Terminate

IF QORG = no, ASK QBID

QBID Has your organisation bid or tendered for work from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools for <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany> in the last financial year 2008-2009?

IF RESPONDENT UNABLE TO ANSWER IN TERMS OF 'last financial year' ASK ABOUT 'last 12 months'.

Yes
No
Don't know

IF QBID=DK, ASK Qtrans3

Qtrans3 Is there someone we can speak to who might know whether your organisation has bid or tendered for work from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or from schools for <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany> in the last financial year?

Yes - transfer now
Yes - make appointment to call back
No - Terminate

IF QBID = no, ASK QRET

QRET Can I just confirm that your organisation has not bid for or received any funding or income from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or from schools for <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany> in the last financial year 2008-2009?

IF RESPONDENT UNABLE TO ANSWER IN TERMS OF 'last financial year' ASK ABOUT 'last 12 months'.

Organisation **has not** bid for or received any funding from these bodies
Organisation **has** bid for or received funding from these bodies
Don't know

IF QRET= Organisation has not bid for or received any funding from these bodies, TERMINATE INTERVIEW

QRET=DK, ASK Qtrans4

Qtrans4 Is there someone we can speak to who might know whether your organisation has bid for or received any funding from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or from schools for <selected service>/<qcheck2>/**<**qmany> in the last financial year?

Yes - transfer now
Yes - make appointment to call back
No - Terminate

IF QORG = Yes OR QBID = Yes OR QRET = Organisation has bid for or received funding from these bodies ASK QCONA

QCONA In the survey we will need to speak to the person who deals with the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for your organisation's <selected service>/<qcheck2>/**<qmany>** Can you tell me who in your organisation would be best placed to do this?

IF NECESSARY: this includes the role of bidding / tendering for work.

IF NECESSARY: this person could be based at another location, for example the head office if your organisation has more than one setting

IF RESPONDENT REQUIRES MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SURVEY: the survey looks at things like providers' experiences of tendering and bidding for grants or contracts and perceptions of how level the playing field is.

Yes, I can tell you
Yes, but I need to check
No, no-one has this role
Refused (i.e. I won't tell you even if I do know)
Don't know

IF QORG = No, no-one has this role, TERMINATE INTERVIEW

IF In-house provider sample AND QCHECK=yes OR ANY ANSWER EXCEPT 'NONE OF THESE' AT QCHECK2, ASK QCONB

QCONB In the survey we will need to speak to the person who deals with the commissioners in the local authority or Children's Trust partners in relation to securing funding for <selected service>/<qcheck>/<qmany>. Can you tell me who in your organisation this is?

IF NECESSARY: this person could be based at another location

IF RESPONDENT REQUIRES MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SURVEY: the survey looks at aspects of the relationship between service providers and the part of the local authority, or its Children's Trust partners, that is responsible for commissioning services.

Yes, I can tell you
Yes, but I need to check
No, no-one has this role (INTERVIEW ENDS)
Refused (i.e. I won't tell you even if I do know)
Don't know

If QCONA = Don't know OR QCONB=Don't Know, ASK QCONCHK

QCONCHK Is it possible to check who is the best person to speak to in relation to funding for your organisation's <selected service>/<qcheck2>/**<**qmany**>**?

IF NECESSARY: this includes the role of bidding / tendering for work.

IF NECESSARY: this person could be based at another location, for example the head office if your organisation has more than one setting

Yes
No (INTERVIEW ENDS)
Don't know

IF QCONA = Yes, but I need to check OR QCONB = Yes, but I need to check OR QCONCHK = Yes, ASK QSPK

QSPK I'll call back when you've checked who it is we would need to speak to. When would be the best time to call back? GO TO APPOINTMENT SCREEN

IF QCONA = refused OR QCONB=refused OR QCONCHK = Don't know, ASK QREF

QREF I understand. The survey is completely voluntary but if it is to have any credibility with the government, then we need the opinions of as many providers as possible. Could I send out the information and if after seeing it your organisation still does not wish to take part, you could let us know the next time we call. Alternatively you can call the number on the letter should you decide not to take part or if you require further information

Yes
No

IF QREF=No, TERMINATE INTERVIEW

IF QCONA = yes, I can tell you or QCONB = yes, I can tell you OR QREF = yes, ASK QDETAIL

QDETAIL Please can I have [IF QCON = yes, I can tell you: their / IF QREF = yes: your] name?

IF NECESSARY: This is the person who deals with the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for your organisation's <selected service>/<qcheck2>/**<**qmany**>**.

IF QCONA=1 OR QCONB=1 OR QREF=1, ASK QDET

QDET Please can I have [IF QCONA/QCONB = yes, I can tell you: their / IF QREF = yes: your] job title?

IF NECESSARY: This is the person who deals with the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for your organisation's <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany>
.

IF QCONA=1 OR QCONB=1 OR QREF=1, ASK Qdetai2

Qdetai2 Please can I have [IF QCONA/QCONB = yes, I can tell you: their / IF QREF = yes: your] phone number?

IF NECESSARY: This is the person who deals with the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for your organisation's <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany>.

IF QCONA=1 OR QCONB=1, ASK QDET2

QDET2 And what is the name of the organisation where this person is based?
IF NECESSARY: This is the person who deals with the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for your organisation's <selected service>/<qcheck2>/**<qmany>**.

IF QCONA=1 OR QCONB=1, ASK Qaddres

Qaddres I also need the address where <named contact> is based.

IF NECESSARY: This is the person who deals with the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for your organisation's <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany>.

IF QCONA=1 OR QCONB=1 OR QREF=1, ASK QYOU
QYOU Is the contact you have been given the person you are speaking to now?

Yes
No

IF QYOU = yes, TERMINATE INTERVIEW

IF QYOU = no ASK QNAMED

QNAMED May I speak to <named contact> to confirm that they are the best person to contact about the survey. Are you able to transfer me or should I call them?

Available now - transfer
Not available now (interview ends)

CALLING NAMED CONTACT

Good morning / afternoon, my name is _____ calling on behalf of BMRB, an independent market research organisation, for the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

May I speak to <named contact>?

IF NECESSARY: In the next few months we will be conducting a survey among providers of services for children, young people and families.

IF Private / Voluntary / Independent provider sample

IF NECESSARY: The survey is being carried out to help the Government to better understand the perceptions and experiences of providers with regard to how they are commissioned by local authorities and their Children's Trust partners. For example, it will seek to capture experiences of tendering and bidding for grants or contracts, perceptions of how level the playing field is, and expectations for the future. The results will be used to inform the Department's commissioning and market development policy and, if the survey is repeated on a regular basis, enable change to be tracked over time.

IF In-house provider sample

IF NECESSARY: The survey is being carried out to help the Department to better understand the relationships that exist between service providers and those who are responsible for commissioning these services and we are therefore keen to include in-house providers as well as those in the private, voluntary and independent sectors. The results will be used to inform the Department's commissioning and market development policy and, if the survey is repeated on a regular basis, enable change to be tracked over time.

PROCEED WHEN SPEAKING TO NAMED CONTACT

In the next few months we will be conducting a survey among providers of services for children, young people and families.

IF Private / Voluntary / Independent provider sample

In the survey we will need to speak to the person who deals with the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for your organisation's <selected service>/<qcheck2>/<qmany>.

IF NECESSARY: this includes the role of bidding / tendering for work.

IF RESPONDENT REQUIRES MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SURVEY: The survey is being carried out to help the Government to better understand the perceptions and experiences of providers with regard to how they are commissioned by local authorities and their Children's Trust partners. For example, it will seek to capture experiences of tendering and bidding for grants or contracts, perceptions of how level the playing field is, and expectations for the future.

IF NECESSARY: The results will be used to inform the Department's commissioning and market development policy and, if the survey is repeated on a regular basis, enable change to be tracked over time.

IF In-house provider sample

In the next few months we will be conducting a survey among providers of services for children, young people and families. In the survey we will need to speak to the person who deals with the commissioners in the local authority or Children's Trust partners in relation to securing funding for <selected service>/<qcheck>/<qmany>..

IF RESPONDENT REQUIRES MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SURVEY: The survey is being carried out to help the Department to better understand the relationships that exist between service providers and those who are responsible for commissioning these services and we are therefore keen to include in-house providers as well as those in the private, voluntary and independent sectors

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QBEST Would you be the person to contact in relation to this survey?

Yes - CONFIRM CONTACT DETAILS
No - IDENTIFY BEST PERSON TO CONTACT AND RETURN TO THE START OF 'CALLING NAMED CONTACT' QUESTIONING; GO TO QCONA
Refused - ASK QREF, IF 'REFUSE'/'NO' INTERVIEW ENDS, IF 'YES' CONFIRM CONTACT DETAILS

Appendix C2 - Advance Letter to Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector Providers

<contact name QDETAIL>
<contact job title QDET>
<best person organisation name QDET2>
< Best Person address1 ADD1>
< Best Person address2 ADD2 >
< Best Person address3 ADD3>
< Best Person address4 TOWN>
< Best Person address4 COUNTY>
< Best Person postcode POSTCODE>

30 March 2009

Our reference: <extract serial number SERIAL> / 45107306

Dear <contact name QDETAIL>,

DCSF Survey of Providers of Services to Children, Young People and Families

The Department for Children, Schools and Families is conducting a major survey of providers of services for children, young people and families. The aim of this survey is to help the Government to better understand the experiences and views of providers in relation to how they are commissioned by local authorities, their Children's Trust partners and schools.

The Department has contracted BMRB Social Research to carry out the survey, starting in April 2009. An interviewer on behalf of BMRB has recently telephoned <original contact>, <original addr1> in order to establish the name of the person responsible for dealing with the commissioners in the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools in relation to funding for this organisation's <extracted derived variable> provision. This includes bidding and tendering for work. We understand that your role includes responsibility for this area and we are therefore interested in speaking to you.

An interviewer on behalf of BMRB will be telephoning you in a few weeks to go through the survey with you (this should take on average 20 minutes). The interview will cover the questions on the enclosed Information Sheet as well as some other topics. It would be helpful if you could fill in the answers on the Information Sheet in advance of the interview and keep it in a safe place so that you can refer to it when the interviewer calls. Please do **<u>not</u>** send the Information Sheet back to us.

It is very important to us that your views and experiences of tendering and bidding for grants and contracts are incorporated into this study. This will ensure that the research reflects a true picture of providers' perceptions and experiences in relation to how they are commissioned by local authorities, their Children's Trust partners and schools. The results of the survey will be used to inform the Department's commissioning and market policy. I very much hope that you will be able to help us by agreeing to take part.

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www.bmrb.co.uk

A division of the
Millward Brown Group

BMRB Limited
Registered in England
Number 275304
Registered office as above

All information collected will be treated as totally confidential. Your identity and your employer will not be disclosed in any way.

If you have any queries about the survey, please call Eleni Romanou at BMRB on 020 8433 4429.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Phillips

Rachel Phillips
Senior Associate Director
BMRB Social Research

Appendix C3 - Advance Letter to In-house Providers

<contact name QDETAIL>
<contact job title QDET>
<best person organisation name QDET2>
< Best Person address1 ADD1>
< Best Person address2 ADD2 >
< Best Person address3 ADD3>
< Best Person address4 TOWN>
< Best Person address4 COUNTY>
< Best Person postcode POSTCODE>

30 March 2009

Our reference: <extract serial number SERIAL> / 45107306

Dear <contact name QDETAIL>,

DCSF Survey of Providers of Services to Children, Young People and Families

The Department for Children, Schools and Families is conducting a major survey of providers of services for children, young people and families. The aim of this survey is to help the Department to better understand the relationships that exist between service providers and those who are responsible for commissioning these services and we are therefore keen to include in-house providers as well as those in the private, voluntary and independent sectors.

The Department has contracted BMRB Social Research to carry out the survey, starting in April 2009. An interviewer on behalf of BMRB has recently telephoned <original contact>, <original addr1> in order to establish the name of the person responsible for dealing with the commissioners in the local authority or their Children's Trust partners in relation to funding for this organisation's <extracted derived variable> provision. This includes bidding and tendering for work. We understand that your role includes responsibility for this area and we are therefore interested in speaking to you.

An interviewer on behalf of BMRB will be telephoning you in a few weeks to go through the survey with you (this should take on average 20 minutes). The interview will cover the questions on the enclosed Information Sheet as well as some other topics. It would be helpful if you could fill in the answers on the Information Sheet in advance of the interview and keep it in a safe place so that you can refer to it when the interviewer calls. Please do <u>not</u> send the Information Sheet back to us.

It is very important to us that your views and experiences of tendering and bidding for service level agreements and other similar arrangements are incorporated into this study. This will ensure that the research reflects a true picture of both in-house and private, voluntary and independent providers' perceptions and experiences in relation to how they are commissioned by local authorities and their Children's Trust partners. The results of the survey will be used to inform the Department's commissioning and market policy. I very much hope that you will be able to help us by agreeing to take part.

British Market
Research Bureau
Ealing Gateway
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Ealing London W5 2BP

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If you have any queries about the survey, please call Eleni Romanou at BMRB on 020 8433 4429.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Phillips
Senior Associate Director
BMRB Social Research

Appendix C4 - Information sheet

INFORMATION SHEET

Survey of Providers of Services to Children, Young People and Families

Please complete this form in advance of your interview as best you can.

The interviewer will collect your answers during the telephone interview as well as asking you about some other topics. Please keep the form in a safe place after completing it, so that you can refer to it when the interviewer calls. **Please do not send it back to us.**

The terms 'service provider' and 'service' are used in many of the questions – this refers to the organisation and service that we have selected (see accompanying letter).

If you are responsible for securing the funding for more than one organisation and/or service, please remember to answer only in relation to the organisation and service that we have selected (see accompanying letter).

Organisation – Background Information

WHEN ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS, IF THE SERVICE PROVIDER IS:

A BRANCH: PLEASE THINK ABOUT THE ORGANISATION AS A WHOLE, NOT JUST THE BRANCH

PART OF A GROUP OF ORGANISATIONS: PLEASE THINK ABOUT ALL THE COMPANIES IN THE GROUP

A DEPARTMENT OR DIRECTORATE WITHIN A PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANISATION (OR A SERVICE WITHIN A DEPARTMENT OR DIRECTORATE): PLEASE THINK ABOUT THE ORGANISATION AS A WHOLE, NOT JUST THE SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OR DIRECTORATE

We would like to establish the size and scale of the service provider's operations.

Q1 – What is the approximate annual turnover or revenue of the service provider in the most recent financial year that you have figures for?

? Less than £50,000
? Over £50,000 but less than £100,000
? Over £100,000 but less than £500,000
? Over £500,000 but less than £1 million
? Over £1 million but less than £10 million
? Over £10 million

Q2 - How many people are on the payroll for the whole organisation? (i.e. this site and all others)

? No paid staff
? 1-9
? 10-49
? 50-249
? 250-999
? 1000+

Q3 - How many volunteers or unpaid staff work for the whole organisation? (i.e. this site and all others)

? No volunteers or unpaid staff
? 1-9
? 10-49
? 50-249
? 250-999
? 1000+

Funding/Income

If any government funding or income was received for the service in the financial year 2008-09 (i.e. income or funding from the local authority, their children's trust partners, schools or central Government) answer Q4:

Q4 – What percentage of funding or income for the service came from government sources in the financial year 2008-2009? (This includes local and national government funding.)

- ? 100%
- ? Between 76% and 99%
- ? Between 51% and 75%
- ? Between 26% and 50%
- ? Between 11% and 25%
- ? Less than 10%

If government funding or income for the service is received in a mixture of different ways, answer Q5-8:

Q5 – In the last financial year, approximately what percentage of your government funding or income for the service came in the form of grants?

- ? Between 76% and 99%
- ? Between 51% and 75%
- ? Between 26% and 50%
- ? Between 1% and 25%
- ? None

Q6 – In the last financial year, approximately what percentage of your government funding or income for the service came in the form of contracts?

- ? Between 76% and 99%
- ? Between 51% and 75%
- ? Between 26% and 50%
- ? Between 1% and 25%
- ? None

Q7 – In the last financial year, approximately what percentage of your government funding or income for the service came in the form of service level agreements?

- ? Between 76% and 99%
- ? Between 51% and 75%
- ? Between 26% and 50%
- ? Between 1% and 25%
- ? None

Q8 – In the last financial year, approximately what percentage of your government funding or income for the service came in some other form?

- ? Between 76% and 99%
- ? Between 51% and 75%
- ? Between 26% and 50%
- ? Between 1% and 25%
- ? None

Appendix C5 - Main questionnaire

Key provider characteristics

I'd like to start by checking some details about the services provided by <provider name>.

ASK ALL

Q1. Can I check, does <provider name> provide <sampled service>?

REFER TO "TYPES OF SERVICE OFFERED" ON BACKGROUND NOTES IF NECESSARY

Yes
No

IF Q1 = 'No' ASK Q3

Q3. Does <provider name> provide any of these services?
(NOTE: EXCLUDE THE SERVICE INCLUDED AT Q1 FROM LIST BELOW).

READ OUT. CODE AS MANY AS APPLY
REFER TO "TYPES OF SERVICE OFFERED" ON BACKGROUND NOTES IF NECESSARY

Children's homes
Residential special schools
Fostering services
Adoption services
Short breaks for disabled children
Activities for young people
Family and parenting support
School transport
Teacher supply agencies
Other specify
None of these

IF NO RELEVANT SERVICES PROVIDED INTERVIEW ENDS (I.E. Q3 = 'None of these' OR [Q3 = 'Other specify' AND NOT = 'Children's homes' AND NOT = 'Residential special schools' AND NOT = 'Fostering services' AND NOT = 'Adoption services' AND NOT = 'Short breaks for disabled children' AND NOT = 'Activities for young people' AND NOT = 'Family and parenting support' AND NOT 'School transport' AND NOT = 'Teacher supply agencies'])

IF Q3 = MORE THAN 1 SERVICE (EXCLUDING 'OTHER' SERVICES), ASK Q4

Q4. Of these services, which is the main service that <provider name> offers?
READ OUT LIST OF SERVICES PROVIDED IF NECESSARY

ALL WHO PROVIDE RELEVANT SERVICE AT Qs1-3:

For the purposes of this survey we would like you to focus on <selected service>.

IF Private / Voluntary / Independent provider sample, ASK QORG
QORG Has <provider name> received any funding or income from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or from schools for <selected service> in the last financial year 2008-2009?

IF RESPONDENT IS UNABLE TO ANSWER IN TERMS OF THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR ASK ABOUT THE LAST 12 MONTHS

IF NECESSARY: Funding or income can include grants, contracts, service level agreements or individual placement payments. REFER TO "EXAMPLES OF FUNDING" IF NECESSARY.

IF NECESSARY: By Children's Trust partners I mean the Police, Probation Board, Youth Offending Team, Health Authority and Primary Care Trust, Connexions, and the Learning and Skills Council

Yes
No

IF QORG = 'No', ASK QBID

QBID Has <provider name> bid or tendered for work from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or schools for <selected service> in the financial year (2008-2009)?

IF RESPONDENT IS UNABLE TO ANSWER IN TERMS OF THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR ASK ABOUT THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Yes
No

IF QBID = 'no' ASK QRET

QRET Can I just confirm that <provider name> has not bid for or received any funding or income from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or from schools for <selected service> in the last financial year?

IF RESPONDENT IS UNABLE TO ANSWER IN TERMS OF THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR ASK ABOUT THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Organisation **has not** bid for or received any funding from these bodies
Organisation **has** bid for or received funding from these bodies

---

IF QRET= Organisation has not bid for or received any funding from these bodies, TERMINATE INTERVIEW

ASK ALL

I'd now like to ask some questions about <provider name> and the services it provides.

ASK ALL

Q7. Is <provider name> part of: the public sector, the private sector or the third sector?
PROMPT TO PRE-CODE - ONLY CODE ONE

IF NECESSARY: The third sector is not public sector or private sector i.e. it is non-governmental, value driven, does not operate for profit and re-invests surpluses to further its objectives.

Public sector organisation e.g. local authority, primary care trust, youth offending service
Private sector company
Third sector

IF Q7 = 'Private sector company' OR 'Third sector', ASK Q9

Q9. Is <provider name> a stand-alone organisation, a branch i.e. part of a larger organisation, or, part of a group of organisations?

IF NECESSARY: An example of an organisation belonging to a group of organisations would be Eastern County Buses which is part of the First Group of companies

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

Stand-alone organisation
A branch
Part of a group
Don't know

IF Q9 = 'Part of a group' OR 'A branch', ASK Q11

Q11. How does <provider name> receive funding or income. Is it usually commissioned to provide services in its own right, or is it only commissioned to provide services together with other branches / settings or through the larger organisation as a whole.

In its own right
Only with other branches / settings
Through larger organisation as a whole
Don't know

IF Q9 = 'Stand-alone organisation' OR Q11 = 'In its own right' - ASK ALL QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW IN RELATION TO PROVIDER NAME

IF Q11 = ‘Only with other branches / settings’, ASK Q12

Q12. Can you tell me the name or a description of the group of branches or settings that receive funding, so that I can refer to this during the interview?

TYPE IN RESPONSE
Don’t know

IF Q11 = ‘Through larger organisation as a whole’, ASK Q13

Q13. What is the name of this larger organisation?

TYPE IN RESPONSE
Don’t know

USE RESPONSES AT Q12 OR Q13 AS TEXT FILLS WHEN REFERRING TO LOWEST LEVEL THAT CAN BE COMMISSIONED

IF Q7 = ‘Public sector organisation’, ASK Q14

Q14. Which of the following applies to <provider name>? Is it …..

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

A service within a department / directorate within a public sector organisation
A department or directorate within a public sector organisation
A public sector organisation e.g. local authority, primary care trust, police authority (a stand-alone organisation)
Don’t know

IF Q14 = ‘A department or directorate’ OR ‘A service within a department / directorate’ ASK Q15

Q15. Does <provider name> ever receive funding, or is it commissioned, to provide services....?

READ OUT – ONLY CODE ONE

In its own right
Only as part of service
Only as part of department / directorate
Through the larger organisation as a whole
Don’t know

IF Q14 = ‘A public sector organisation (stand alone organisation)’ or Q15= ‘In its own right’ - ASK QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW IN RELATION TO PROVIDER NAME

IF Q15= ‘Only as part of service’ or ‘Only as part of department / directorate’, ASK Q16

Q16. Can you tell me the name or a description of the service or department or directorate that receives funding, so that I can refer to this during the interview?

TYPE IN RESPONSE
Don’t know

IF Q15 = ‘Through the larger organisation as a whole’, ASK Q16a

Q16a. What is the name of this larger organisation?

TYPE IN RESPONSE
Don’t know

USE RESPONSES AT Q16 OR Q16a AS TEXT FILLS WHEN REFERRING TO LOWEST LEVEL THAT CAN BE COMMISSIONED

ASK ALL

Q16b.
[IF Q9 = ‘branch’ OR ‘part of group’ OR Q14 = ‘department or directorate’ OR ‘service within a department or directorate’]: Thinking about <selected service>, do you or the organisation of which your branch or setting is part subscribe to or are members of any infrastructure or umbrella organisations?

[ELSE:] Thinking about <selected service>, do you subscribe to or are you a member of any infrastructure or umbrella organisations?

Yes
No
Don’t know

IF Q16b = ‘Yes’, ASK Q16c
Q16c. Which ones?

TYPE IN RESPONSE
Don’t know

ASK ALL

IF Q9 = 2 (‘A branch’) SAY: Please think about the organisation as a whole not just your branch when answering these questions.

IF Q9 = 3 (‘Part of a group’) SAY: Please think about all the companies in the group when answering these questions.

IF Q14 = 1 (‘A service’) SAY: Please think about the organisation as a whole not just your service when answering these questions.

IF Q14 = 2 (‘A department/directorate’) SAY: Please think about the organisation as a whole not just your department/directorate when answering these questions.

ASK ALL

We would like to establish the size and scale of <provider name>’s operations.

INTERVIEWER: If global company/group of companies we would like these figures.

Please could you tell us approximate figures for the following:

ASK ALL

Q18a. Annual turnover or revenue in the most recent financial year that you have figures for.

READ OUT IF NECESSARY

IF NECESSARY: This corresponds with question one on the Information Sheet we sent you.

Less than £50,000
Over £50,000 but less than £100,000
Over £100,000 but less than £500,000
Over £500,000 but less than £1m
Over £1m but less than £10m
Over £10m
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q18b. Number of Paid staff

READ OUT IF NECESSARY – ONLY CODE ONE

IF NECESSARY: This corresponds with question two on the Information Sheet we sent you.

0
1-9
10-49
50-249
250 – 999
1000+
Don't know

ASK ALL

Q18c. Number of volunteers or unpaid staff working for <provider name>

READ OUT IF NECESSARY – ONLY CODE ONE

IF NECESSARY: This corresponds with question three on the Information Sheet we sent you.

0
1-9
10-49
50-249
250 – 999
1000+
Don't know

ASK ALL

IF Q9 = 'A branch' SAY: Still thinking about the organisation as a whole…

IF Q9 = 'Part of a group' SAY: Still thinking about all the companies in the group…

IF Q14 = 'A service' SAY: Still thinking about the organisation as a whole not just your service when answering these questions…

IF Q14 = 'A department/directorate' SAY: Still thinking about the organisation as a whole not just your department / directorate when answering these questions…

ASK ALL

Q19. Over what geographic area do you provide <selected service>?

READ OUT. ONLY CODE ONE

Within a single local authority (district or county)
Within one region (e.g. the South West)
Across multiple regions
Across the whole of England or the UK
International
Don't know

IF Q1 = 'Yes' OR Q3 = OFFERS MORE THAN ONE SERVICE, SAY…

IF Q9 = 'A branch' SAY: Still thinking about the organisation as a whole not just your branch…

IF Q9 = 'Part of a group' SAY: Still thinking about all the companies in the group…

IF Q14 = 'A service' SAY: Still thinking about the organisation as a whole not just your service when answering these questions.

IF Q14 = 'A department/directorate' SAY: Still thinking about the organisation as a whole not just your department/directorate when answering these questions.

Now thinking of only <selected service>…

IF Q1 = 'Yes' OR Q3 = OFFERS MORE THAN ONE SERVICE, ASK Q20

Q20. Is <selected service> one of the main services that <provider name> offers? Is it …

READ OUT

The main service provided
One of the main services provided
Not one of the main services provided
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know

ASK ALL

Q20a. Approximately how long has <provider name> been providing <selected service>?

PROMPT TO PRECODES.

Less than one year
More than one, less than two
More than two, less than three
More than three, less than four
More than four, less than five
Between five and ten
More than ten years
Don't know

IF Q7 = 'Private sector company' OR 'Third sector company', ASK Q21

Q21. We want to find out, in general terms, how <provider name/q12/q13/q16/q16a)> derived sources of funding or income for <selected service> for the financial year 2008-2009. From which bodies did you receive funding or income:

READ OUT CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Joint funding bodies
Local authorities
Other Children's Trust partners e.g. Primary Care Trusts
Schools
Central Government e.g. government departments - health; children, schools and families;
Local charities
National charities e.g. National Lottery
Charitable foundations / Trusts
Personal donations
Users of services, e.g. direct payments from children, young people or families
Other types of organisation
Don't know

IF Q7<>1 (PUBLIC SECTOR) AND QORG=1 (YES) AND Q21 <> 1 AND Q21 <> 2 AND Q21 <> 3 AND Q21 <> 4 AND Q21 <> 5
(I.E. NOT JOINT FUNDING BODIES, LOCAL AUTHORITIES, OTHER CHILDREN'S TRUST PARTNERS, SCHOOLS OR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT),
ASK Q21A

Q21a. Are you sure your organisation has not received any funding or income from the local authority, their Children's Trust partners or from schools or central Government for <selected service> in the last financial year?

IF RESPONDENT IS UNABLE TO ANSWER IN TERMS OF THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR ASK ABOUT THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Have not received any funding
Have received income (GO BACK TO Q21)

IF Q21 = 'Joint funding bodies' OR 'Local authorities' OR 'Other Children's Trust Partners' OR 'Schools' OR 'Central Government) AND (Q7 = 'Private sector company' OR 'Third sector company'), ASK Q22

Q22. You said that you received funding or income from government sources, that is .... <DISPLAY RELEVANT ANSWERS THAT HAVE BEEN CODED AT Q21>.What percentage of funding or income for <selected service> came from government sources in the financial year 2008-2009?

PROMPT TO PRECODES. CODE ONLY ONE

IF NECESSARY: This corresponds with question four on the Information Sheet we sent you.

100%
Between 76% and 99%
Between 51% and 75%
Between 26% and 50%
Between 11% and 25%
Less than 10%
Don't know

IF Q21 = ‘Joint funding bodies’ OR ‘Local authorities’ OR ‘Other Children’s Trust Partners’ OR ‘Schools’ OR ‘Central Government) OR Q7 = Public sector organisation, ASK Q23

Q23. In what forms did you receive Government funding or income for [selected service] in the last financial year 2008-2009?

IF NECESSARY: That is, funding or income from <DISPLAY RELEVANT ANSWERS THAT HAVE BEEN CODED AT Q21>. [show only if Q7 = ‘Private sector company’ OR ‘Third sector company’]

REFER TO GLOSSARY IN BACKGROUND NOTES FOR DESCRIPTIONS OF GRANTS, CONTRACTS AND SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Grants
Contracts
Service-level agreements
Other (specify)
Don’t know

IF Q23 MULTICODED (If Q23 = more than one response) ASK Q24 FOR EACH ITEM MENTIONED AT Q23

Q24. In the last financial year, approximately what percentage of your Government funding or income for [selected service] came in the form of….?

- Grants
- Contracts
- Service-level agreements
- Other

IF NECESSARY: That is, funding or income from <DISPLAY RELEVANT ANSWERS THAT HAVE BEEN CODED AT Q21>. [show only if Q7 = ‘Private sector company’ OR ‘Third sector company’]

IF NECESSARY: This corresponds with question <five/six/seven/eight> on the Information Sheet we sent you.

PROMPT TO PRE-CODE – CODE ONLY ONE

Between 76% and 99%
Between 51% - 75%
Between 26%-50%
Between 1% and 25%
Don’t know

Perceptions and experience of commissioning

IF Q7 = ‘Private sector company’ OR ‘Third sector company’, SAY…
I’d now like to ask you about your experiences of funding and commissioning.

IF Q7 = ‘Private sector company’ OR ‘Third sector company’, ASK Q27

Q27. Which of the following commissioning or awarding bodies did <provider name/q12/q13/q16/q16a> work with in the last financial year (2008-2009)? By ‘work with’ I mean either receiving funding or income, or submitting a tender or applying for funding, even if you were not successful.

IF NECESSARY: Thinking about <service sampled> only

READ OUT, CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Local authorities
Primary Care Trusts
Youth Offending Service
Joint funding - two or more funding bodies e.g. primary care trust and local authority)
Individual schools
School clusters (anything between an individual school and all schools in the local authority)
Other (specify)
None
Don’t know

IF Q27 = DK THEN TERMINATE INTERVIEW

IF Q27 = ‘None’, ASK Q28

Q28. You said earlier that you received funding or income from one of these organisations [IF YES AT QORG]/ bid or tendered for work from one of these organisations [IF YES AT QBID]/ bid for or received funding from these bodies [IF ‘HAS’ AT QRET]. Can I just confirm whether <provider name/ q12/q13/q16/q16a > has received any funding or income from any of these bodies, or has submitted a tender or applied for funding in the last financial year?

READ OUT IF NECESSARY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Local authorities
Primary Care Trusts
Youth Offending Service
Joint funding - two or more funding bodies e.g. primary care trust and local authority)
Individual schools
School clusters (anything between an individual school and all schools in the local authority)
Other (specify)
None
Don’t know

IF Q28 = ‘None’ THEN TERMINATE INTERVIEW

IF Q28 = DK THEN TERMINATE INTERVIEW

IF Q27 OR Q28 = MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE, ASK Q29

Q29. Which of the commissioning or awarding bodies did <provider name/ q12/q13/q16/q16a > work with most often in the last financial year?

Local authorities
Primary Care Trusts
Youth Offending Service
Joint funding - two or more funding bodies e.g. primary care trust and local authority)
Individual schools
School clusters (anything between an individual school and all schools in the local authority)
Other (specify)
Don't know

IF Q29 = Other or DK, another response from Q27 selected by CATI at random

---

ASK ALL

For the purposes of this survey we would like you to focus on your experiences of working with <principal commissioning or awarding body[60]>. If you worked with more than one <principal commissioning or awarding body> in the last 12 months, please think of the one you worked with most often. If you worked with them on more than one occasion we would like your overall impressions.

ASK ALL

Q30. Can I check, which of the following forms of funding or income did <provider name/ q12/q13/q16/q16a > receive from <principal commissioning or awarding body> in the last financial year?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

REFER TO GLOSSARY IN BACKGROUND NOTES FOR DESCRIPTIONS OF GRANTS, CONTRACTS AND SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

Grant funding
Contract funding
Service level agreement
Other
Don't know

[60] Principal commissioning body for public sector providers (i.e. Q7 = 'Public sector organisation') is 'Local authorities'

IF Q30 = ‘Grant funding’ OR ‘Contract funding’, ASK Q35

Q35. Has the <principal commissioning or awarding body> involved you / your colleagues in assessing the needs of users of <selected service> in the area you cover?

IF NECESSARY: By ‘users’ I mean children, young people and families.

Yes
No
Don’t know

IF Q35 = Yes, ASK Q35a

Q35a. Have you had...

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

IF NECESSARY: By ‘users’ I mean children, young people and families.

A high level of involvement (for example, provided feedback from users and frontline professionals, represented on working group)
Some involvement (for example, discussed needs with commissioners)
A little involvement (for example, responded to consultation documents)
Don’t know

IF Q30 = ‘Grant funding’ OR ‘Contract funding’, ASK Q37

Q37. Has the <principal commissioning or awarding body> involved you / your colleagues in planning services for <selected service>?

Yes
No
Don’t know

IF = Yes, ASK Q37A

Q37a. Have you had .....?

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

IF NECESSARY: By ‘users’ I mean children, young people and families.

A high level of involvement (for example, provided feedback from users and frontline professionals, represented on working group)
Some involvement (for example, discussed needs with commissioners)
A little involvement (for example, responded to consultation documents)
Don’t know

IF Q30 = ‘Grant funding’ OR ‘Contract funding’, ASK Q38

Q38. Has the <principal commissioning or awarding body>involved you / your colleagues in designing or redesigning services for <selected service>?

Yes
No
Don't know

IF = Yes, ASK Q38A

Q38a. Have you had .....?

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

A high level of involvement (for example, represented on planning group)
Some involvement (for example, attended meetings to express your views)
A little involvement (for example, responded to consultation document)
Don't know

IF Q30 = 'grant funding' OR Q30 = 'contract funding' OR Q30 = 'service level agreement' AND PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONING BODY <> 'individual schools' AND PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONING BODY <> 'school cluster', SAY…

We would like to find out about your experience of <applying for grants> <tendering and contracting> <service level agreement documents> with the body represented by the <principal commissioner>[61].

IF Q30 = 'grant funding' OR Q30 = 'contract funding' OR Q30 = 'service level agreement' AND PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONING BODY <> 'individual schools' AND PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONING BODY <> 'school cluster', ASK Q39

Q39. In general how easy is it to understand the information in <grant applications> <tendering documents> <service level agreement documents> for your service?

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

Very easy
Fairly easy
Not very easy
Not at all easy
(DO NOT READ OUT) It varies
Don't know

IF Q30 = 'grant funding' OR Q30 = 'contract funding' OR Q30 = 'service level agreement' AND PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONING BODY <> 'individual schools' AND PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONING BODY <> 'school cluster', ASK Q40

[61] Principal Commissioning Body = q29 (if more than one body mentioned at q27 or q28) or q27 (if only 1 body mentioned at q27) or q28 (if only 1 body mentioned at q28) or as chosen as random by the CATI if q29 = DK

Q40. And in general do you find that there is enough information in <grant applications> <tendering documents> <service level agreement documents>?

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

Too much
About right
Too little
(DO NOT READ OUT) It varies
Don't know

IF PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONING BODY <> 'individual schools' AND PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONING BODY <> 'school cluster', ASK Q42

Q42 Which if any of the following types of support has <provider name/ q12/q13/q16/q16a > been offered by the <principal commissioner> in the financial year?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Written guidance about the commissioning strategy and process
Training sessions to familiarise you with the commissioning process
Advice by a knowledgeable practitioner
Start-up funding to help you develop a new service
Specific advice given on request
(DO NOT READ OUT) No support provided
Other
Don't know

ASK ALL

Q43 In the last financial year, how many tenders or bids for <type of service> did <provider name/ q12/q13/q16/q16a > submit to the <principal commissioning or awarding body>?

IF NECESSARY: This could be tenders or bids for services or programmes of work, or for individual placements.

ENTER NUMBER
Don't know

IF Q43>0 , ASK Q44

Q44. In the last financial year, how many were successful?

ENTER NUMBER
Don't know

IF Q44 >0, ASK Q45

Q45. Why do you think your tender bid(s) was/were successful?

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Had relevant knowledge and / or expertise
Met the objectives / understood the priorities
Price was acceptable / value for money
Good quality service / met quality standards
Have a proven track record
Have staff with relevant experience and qualifications
Established partnerships with other agencies
Other specify
Don't know

IF Q44 < Q43 (I.E. 1 OR MORE UNSUCCESSFUL) ASK Q46

Q46. When your tender bid(s) was (were) unsuccessful, were you provided with feedback when you requested it?

Yes - always
Yes - sometimes
No - never
Don't know

IF Q46 = 'Yes - always' OR 'Yes - sometimes', ASK Q47

Q47. Generally, what reasons were you given for your unsuccessful bid(s)?

DO NOT PROMPT CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Lack of experience or expertise
Tender did not meet essential requirements
Price too expensive
Service of insufficient quality
Experience and qualifications of staff not appropriate for service
Funding body concern about the management of the service
Tender submitted after closing date
Other specify
Don't know

IF Q46 = ‘No - never’, ASK Q48

Q48. Generally, why do you think your bid(s) was (were) unsuccessful?

DO NOT PROMPT CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Lack of experience or expertise
Tender did not meet essential requirements
Price too expensive
Service of insufficient quality
Experience and qualifications of staff not appropriate for service
Funding body concern about the management of the service
Tender submitted after closing date
Other specify
Don’t know

IF Q44 = 0 ASK Q49

Q49. In general, what do you think are the factors that most contribute to success in tendering?

DO PROMPT CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Relevant knowledge and / or expertise
Meeting the objectives / understanding the priorities
Acceptable price / value for money
Good quality service / met quality standards
Having a proven track record
Staff with relevant experience and qualifications.
Established partnerships with other agencies.
Other specify
Don’t know

IF Q43>0 , ASK Q50

Q50. In general, what do you think are the main barriers to success in tendering for organisations like yours?

READ OUT CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Short timescale to submit bid
High cost of preparing a tender bid
Not being well established / known in the market
In-house services have an inherent advantage
Insufficient access to data / information
Insufficient skills necessary to bid successfully
Approach to cost comparisons e.g. extent to which overheads are costed
The amount of information requested by the commissioner or awarding body
Other
Don’t know

IF Q30 = contract funding, ASK Q51

Q51. Thinking of your experience overall of the contracts you have gained in the last financial year, were these contracts....?:

- based on specified outcomes for service users i.e. children, young people and families
- standardised in some way e.g. through national contracts
- of an appropriate duration

Yes
No
Don't know

IF Q51 'of an appropriate duration' = 'No', ASK Q51a

Q51a. You said that the contracts were not of an appropriate duration. Were they generally too long or too short?

ONE CODE ONLY

Too long
Too short
DO NOT PROMPT: It varies
Don't know

IF Q30 = contract funding, ASK Q52

Q52. Again thinking about your experience overall, how have contracts been monitored in the last financial year?

- Have specified milestones and reporting times been linked to payment
- Have outputs been reported to the contract manager at the end of the contract
  IF NECESSARY: 'Outputs' relate to the level of service and are often expressed in terms of service availability, volume, speed, delivery or quality. Examples of outputs are: 'the number of children attending per day' or 'all assessments to be undertaken within a specified time'.
- Have outcomes been reported to the contract manager at the end of the contract
  IF NECESSARY: 'Outcomes' are end states. They can be states of well-being or the desired positive result or impact of a service over time for an individual or population as a whole. Examples of outcomes are: 'improved educational attainment for looked after children' or 'all children have security, stability and are cared for'.
- Have contracts required a satisfaction survey of users i.e. children, young people and families
- Have contracts required feedback from frontline professionals
- Have progress reports been provided to the contract manager
- Has feedback been received from the commissioner

Yes
No
Don't know

IF Q30 = ‘Contract funding’ AND Q7 = ‘Third sector’, ASK Q53

Q53. In general, do you think that the monitoring arrangements on contracts were in proportion to the size or value of the contract?

Yes
No
Don’t know

IF Q30 = ‘Contract funding’ AND Q7 = ‘Third sector’, ASK Q54

Q54. Thinking about your experience overall - Was your service contracted in accordance with the principles of Compact agreements, both national and local?

IF NECESSARY: Compact agreements describe the working relationship between the third sector and the statutory sector, and explains what each group can expect of each other.

Yes
No
It varies
Don’t know

IF Q54 = ‘No’, ASK Q55

Q55. In what ways was it not in accordance with Compact?

PROMPT TO PRECODES

Service not paid on a full cost basis
Payment not in advance of expenditure
Payment late
Funding ended without proper notice
Full consultation period not adhered to (12 weeks)
Black and Minority Ethnic and/or community organisations not consulted in a meaningful way
Charities not involved in designing new programmes of work
Other specify
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q56. Has <provider name/ q12/q13/q16/q16a > experienced de-commissioning of <type of service> in the last financial year?

IF NECESSARY: By decommissioning I mean the overall process of planning and managing the termination of a previously commissioned service resulting in the existing provider no longer delivering that service when it would otherwise have expected to do so.

IF NECESSARY: For example, the service is not capable of effectively meeting the needs of service users i.e. children, young people and families, or there has been a large and unexpected fall in demand. It does not include the contract coming to its natural end.

Yes
No
Don’t know

IF Q56 = ‘Yes’, ASK Q57

Q57. What reasons were you given?

PROMPT TO PRECODES

Priorities for allocating funding changed
Need assessment showed service no longer needed
Funding for service no longer available
Funding body concerned about quality of the service
Funding body concerned about management of the service
Service taken back in-house
Service specification no longer fits with aims of the organisation
No reason/feedback given
Other
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q58. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement about the <service sampled> area in which you operate.

IF NECESSARY: Is that strongly or tend to (dis) agree?

READ OUT – CODE ONE ONLY

- There is a level playing field between public, private and third sector providers.
  IF NECESSARY: this means that organisations from different sectors are able to compete for services on an equal basis.

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree
Don’t know

IF Q58 = ‘Tend to disagree’ OR ‘Strongly disagree’, ASK Q58a

Q58a. Which sector or sectors do you feel are disadvantaged?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Public sector
Private sector
Third sector
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q60. What do you think is the most important factor for commissioning bodies in ensuring a level playing field between public, private and third sector providers?

IF NECESSARY: A 'level playing field' means that organisations from different sectors are able to compete for services on an equal basis.

PROMPT TO PRE-CODE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

No conflict of interest - e.g. between commissioner / purchaser and provider
Clear commissioning process
Better / open relationships / communication
Fair / transparent price / cost comparisons
Sufficient time to prepare bids
Same standards to be applied to all sectors
Other (specify)
Don't know

Key changes over last three years

IF Q30 NOT = 'Contract funding', ASK Q61

Q61. Has <provider name/ q12/q13/q16/q16a > received any contract funding from <principal commissioner> for <selected service> in the last three years?

Yes
No
Don't know

IF Q30 = 'Contract funding' OR Q61 = 'Yes', ASK Q62

Q62. In your experience, over the last three years has there been a change in the overall value of contracts put out to tender by <principal commissioner> for the <selected service>? Has there been…

READ OUT, ONLY CODE ONE

A significant increase
Slight increase
No difference
Slight decrease
Significant decrease
Don't know

IF Q7 = ‘Third sector’, ASK Q65

Q65. Over the last three years, how do you think the balance of your funding, in terms of the proportions of grant-funded and contracted services, has changed? Has there been a .... ?

READ OUT, ONLY CODE ONE

Large shift from grants to contracts
Small shift from grants to contracts
No noticeable change
Small shift from contracts to grants
Large shift from contracts to grants
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q66. Over the last three years has there been a change in the proportion of funding that comes from government, both local and national?

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

Yes - smaller proportion of funding
No change - Same funding
Yes - higher proportion of funding
DO NOT READ OUT: Don’t receive government funding anyway
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q67. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements in relation to the way <selected service> has been commissioned over the last three years.

IF NECESSARY: Is that strongly or tend to (dis) agree?

IF NECESSARY: This applies to both contract and grant funding

- The degree of provider involvement in needs assessment, planning and service design has increased
- The clarity of tendering documents/awards applications has improved
- The support offered by the commissioner/awarding body including guidance, capacity building, etc. has improved
- Monitoring arrangements have improved
- (ASK THIRD SECTOR ONLY) Compact Compliance has improved
- (ASK ONLY IF CONTRACT FUNDED: Q30 = contract funding or Q61 = yes) Contracts have improved in terms of the quality and appropriateness of their content

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q68 In your view, has competition between providers become more fair or less fair over the last three years?

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

IF “MORE” OR “LESS”, ASK: Is that a little or a lot?

A lot fairer
A little fairer
No change
A little less fair
A lot less fair
Don’t know

IF Q68 = ‘No change’, ASK Q68A

Q68a Would you say it has always been fair or always been unfair?

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

Always been fair
Always been unfair
Always been neither fair nor unfair
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q69 Over the last three years, have you noticed a difference in the extent to which <selected service> has been provided in-house? Would you say ...?

READ OUT - CODE ONLY ONE

IF NECESSARY: By provided in-house I mean local authorities or their Children’s Trust Partners restricting service provision to their own departments or settings, rather than allowing other organisations to provide services.

More services have been provided in house
Fewer services have been provided in house
No difference
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q70. In terms of size, how has the market for <selected service> changed over the last three years? Would you say ....?

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY

ADD IF NECESSARY: By contracted I mean it has become smaller.

The market has contracted significantly
The market has contracted slightly
The market has stayed the same
The market has grown slightly
The market has grown significantly
Don't know

Entry, exit, expansion, retrenchment and respective barriers

IF Q20a = 'Less than one year' OR 'More than one, less than two' OR 'More than two, less than three', ASK Q76

Q76. What were the main factors which prompted you to start providing <selected service>?

DO NOT PROMPT

Identified gap in the market
Rise in demand
Increase in funding / funding was available
Looking to set up a new service at the time
Other specify
Don't know

IF Q20a = 'Less than one year' OR 'More than one, less than two' OR 'More than two, less than three', ASK Q77

Q77. What were the main barriers, if any, that you had to overcome in starting to provide this service?

DO NOT PROMPT

Insufficient funding
Risk factors
Regulation/bureaucracy *e.g. expense of regulation, Ofsted, employment law*
Workforce issues
Difficulties with tendering/bidding process
No previous experience in specific service area
Competition from the 'big players' e.g. private sector, big charities
Resource issues: Lack of suitable premises, High fixed costs
Playing field not level
Other specify
None
Don't know

ASK ALL

Q80. Has <provider> expanded its provision of <selected service> in the last three years?

Yes
No
Don't know

IF Q80 = 'Yes', ASK Q81

Q81. What were the main factors which prompted you to do so?

DO NOT PROMPT

Identified gap in the market
Rise in demand
Increase in funding/funding was available
Other specify
Don't know

IF Q80 = 'Yes', ASK Q82

Q82. What were the main barriers, if any, that you had to overcome in expanding <selected service>?

DO NOT PROMPT

Insufficient funding
Risk factors
Regulation / bureaucracy e.g. *expense of regulation, Ofsted, employment law*
Workforce issues
Difficulties with tendering / bidding process
No previous experience in specific service area
Competition from the 'big players' e.g. private sector, big charities
Resource issues: Lack of suitable premises, High fixed costs
Playing field not level
Other specify
None
Don't know

IF Q80 = ‘No’ OR ‘Don’t know’, ASK Q82A

Q82a. What are the main factors, if any, that would encourage you to expand <selected service> now or in the future?

DO NOT PROMPT

Identified gap in the market
Rise in demand
Increase in funding / funding available
Other specify
None
Don’t know

IF Q82A NOT = ‘None’, ASK Q83

Q83. What do you think would be the main barriers, if any, to overcome if you wanted to expand <selected service> ?

DO NOT PROMPT

Lack of demand
Insufficient funding
Risk factors
Regulation / bureaucracy e.g. *expense of regulation, Ofsted, employment law*
Workforce issues
Difficulties with tendering/bidding process
No previous experience in specific service area
Competition from the ‘big players’ e.g. private sector, big charities
Resource issues: Lack of suitable premises, High fixed costs
Playing field not level
Other specify
None
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q84 Has <provider> considered doing any of the following in the last three years in relation to <selected service>?…

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Cutting back
Closing down
Neither
Don’t know

IF Q84 = ‘Cutting back’ OR ‘Closing down’, ASK Q84A

Q84a What were the main reasons for this?

DO NOT PROMPT

Fall in demand
Insufficient funding
Service wasn’t cost effective
Service no longer meets Local Authority plans
Workforce issues
Regulation/bureaucracy *e.g. expense of regulation, Ofsted, employment law*
Existing service decommissioned
Problems with contracts e.g. short term
Other specify
Don’t know

IF selected service = Fostering, ASK Q86

Q86. I would like to ask you about a specific government initiative to prevent children being taken into care - it’s called: multisystematic therapy (MST). Does this initiative encourage you to expand or reduce the services that you offer?

Services will stay the same
Expand services
Reduce services
Not heard of initiative
Don’t know

Expectations of the future

ASK ALL

Finally, some questions on your expectations for the future.

ASK ALL

Q87. Thinking about the market for <type of service>, what is your view about the general outlook over the next three years? Is it ...?

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

Very positive
Fairly positive
Neither positive or negative
Fairly negative
Very negative
Don’t know

ASK ALL

Q90. Do you expect <provider name> to still be providing <service sampled> in three years time?

Yes
No
Don't know

IF Q90 = yes, ASK Q90a

Q90a. And do you expect the volume of service provided will have .....?

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

Increased
Stayed the same
Decreased
Don't know

IF Q90 = 'Yes' OR 'Don't know', ASK Q91

Q91. And do you expect <provider name> to make significant changes to the services offered over the next three years? Do you .....?

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY

ADD IF NECESSARY: This applies to all services provided by <provider name>, not just <selected service>.

Expect to diversify into new services
Expect to stay the same
Expect to rationalise the range of services offered
Don't know

ASK ALL

Q92. Over the next three years do you expect the public sector to outsource more services or provide more services in-house?

IF NECESSARY: This applies to all services provided by <provider name>, not just <selected service>.

PROMPT TO PRECODES. CODE ONE ONLY

Expect more services to be outsourced
Expect more services to be provided in-house
Expect no changes in how services are provided
Don't know

ASK ALL

Q93. Over the next three years, in term of fairness of competition between public, private and third sector providers, do you anticipate it becoming…?

READ OUT - ONLY CODE ONE

Less fair
More fair
No different
Don’t know

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