

## Special Report

# THE WORKFORCE – TRAINING, QUALIFICATIONS AND PAY:

## Findings from the 2004 Group Membership Questionnaire

The Group Membership Questionnaire (GMQ), the Alliance’s annual survey of its member groups, gathers information on many important questions and topics. This information provides the Alliance with a picture of our member groups and their experiences and of the sector. It is also valuable data for you and your pre-school. In this month’s special feature **Lia Antoniou** reveals statistics regarding the workforce.

### Workforce Numbers by Childcare Provider:

Unsurprisingly, the GMQ indicates that those member groups that provide shorter sessions (e.g. parent and toddler groups, sessional daycare providers) also employ fewer staff and have fewer staff present at any one time compared to those that offer longer sessions. Based on the 3,939 respondents to the GMQ, *Figure 1* illustrates the number of staff employed and present at any one time according to the childcare provider type that they work in:

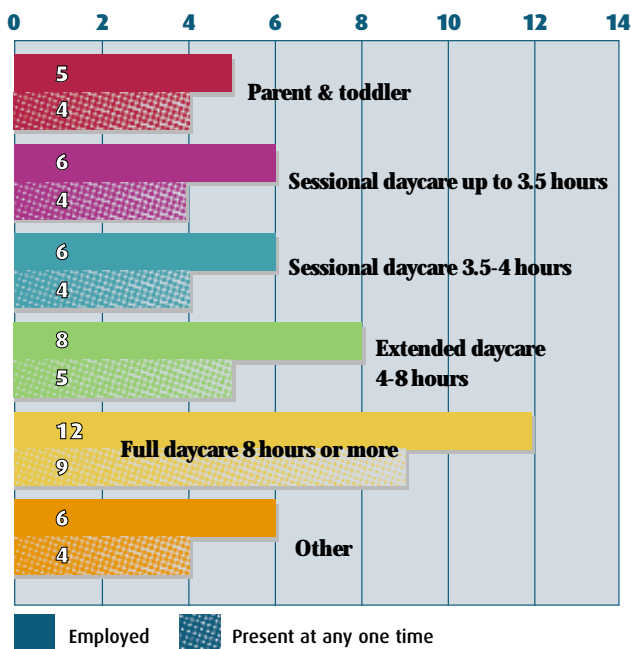


Figure 1: Number of staff Base: Total sample n = 3939

There are however some significant regional variations. For example, full daycare groups in the London region tend to employ 10 people and have 7 present at any one time (slightly below the national average presented in *Figure 1*), while full daycare groups in the North East employ 16 staff and have 13 present at any one time.

### Workforce Composition:

#### GENDER

The data analysis of the GMQ suggests that 5 per cent of the early years workforce is male in Alliance member groups. This figure is around 2 to 3 percentage points above the national average, suggesting that Alliance member groups are proactive in attracting males into the childcare workforce.

Regional and childcare provider figures are even more impressive: 19 per cent of full daycare settings employ at least one male and in London 10 per cent of all childcare providers employ males (excluding parent and toddler groups).

#### ETHNICITY

Overall, the vast majority of workers in Alliance member settings are of white British origin. However, there are also noteworthy distinctions between providers and regions.

Parent and toddler (P&T) groups are the least likely of all childcare settings to employ staff from black and minority ethnic groups. Full daycare groups are the most likely, with 9 per cent of groups employing at least one member of staff that classify themselves as black Caribbean and Indian and 7 per cent employing at least one member of staff that classify themselves as black African.

Staff that classified themselves as belonging to black and ethnic minority groups are better represented in inner city and suburban areas. This finding is unsurprising given that black and ethnic minority groups tend to be concentrated in inner city and suburban areas. London is an example of this, with greater black and ethnic minority groups’ representation in the early years workforce; in London 16 per cent of groups have at least one member of staff that classifies themselves as Indian, 12 per cent of groups have at least one member of staff classified as black Caribbean, 11 per cent black African, 10 per cent mixed and 20 per cent other (including other European Union citizens). The Midlands region also appears as an exception with 5 per cent of member groups employing at least one member of staff that categorise themselves as Indian. Groups in the South West are the least likely to employ staff from black and ethnic minority groups.

## DISABILITY

Only 2 per cent of member group respondents to the GMQ state that they have pre-school practitioners with a registered disability. Full daycare settings are more likely to employ registered disabled staff, with 6 per cent employing at least one disabled member of staff. Groups in London are also more likely to employ staff with a disability, with 4 per cent employing at least one disabled staff member.

## Qualifications and Training:

### STAFF QUALIFICATION LEVELS

P&T groups have the fewest absolute number of staff qualified to level 3 or higher. However, even among P&T groups an average number of at least 2 staff have level 3 or higher qualifications. Full daycare providers have the highest absolute number of staff qualified to level 3, as *Figure 2* below illustrates:

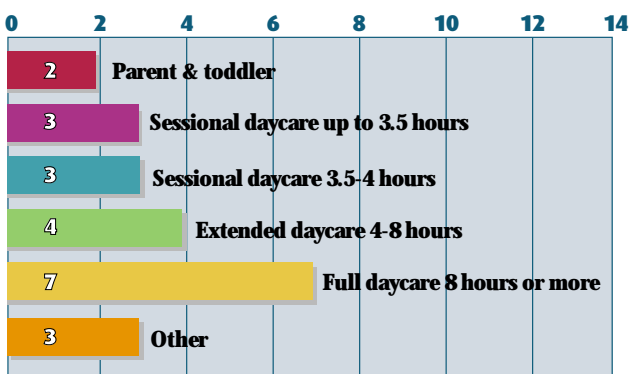


Figure 2: Staff qualified to level 3 or above Base: Total sample n = 3939

## REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

As well as the differences visible by childcare provider, the data analysis suggests that there are differences in staff qualification levels by region. For example, while the national average for full daycare is 7 members of staff with level 3 or above qualifications, in the North West and the North East that figure is 8 and 9 respectively.

## GROUP MANAGEMENT

Group managers with at least a level 3 qualification are more common in sessional daycare of between 3.5 to 4 hours (79 per cent) and in sessional daycare of up to 4 hours (74 per cent). Managers with level 4 or 5 qualifications are more common in extended daycare (23 per cent) and in full daycare settings (26 per cent).

The group manager is most likely to be qualified above level 3 in the North West and most likely to be qualified below level 3 in the North East.

Deputy managers in sessional daycare of 3.5 to 4 hours are as qualified as the managers in these settings; however in sessional daycare settings of up to 3.5 hours they are less likely to have achieved level 3 qualifications. Extended daycare and full daycare settings are the most likely groups to have deputy managers qualified to level 4 or 5, although this is to a lesser extent than the managers.

Similar to the trend observed with the group managers, deputy managers qualified to level 3 are more visible in London and the North West and less visible in the North East, Midlands and Eastern region.

The survey also showed that there is a higher incidence of staff qualified at level 3 in settings operating as charities as oppose to those operating as private businesses (71 per cent vs. 64 per cent).

## BARRIERS TO TRAINING

21 per cent of groups had at least 3 staff accessing the 'Continuing Professional Development' course and 19 per cent had at least 3 staff gaining early years qualifications. Whilst these figures show that staff in many groups are actively engaged in training, the survey indicates that there are numerous barriers to further training. More worryingly perhaps, these barriers appear across the board of childcare providers, although – and as expected – only 25 per cent of P&T groups responded to this question.

Across all member groups, barriers to training are ranked as follows:

- > **47 per cent state lack of time**  
This is highest in London at 53 per cent and around 46-47 per cent in all other areas.
- > **39 per cent mention the location of the training provision**  
This problem is highest in the Eastern region at 45 per cent and lowest in London at 16 per cent.
- > **32 per cent cite financial difficulties**  
This is again highest in London at 40 per cent and lowest in the South East at 27 per cent.
- > **26 per cent note the lack of suitable courses available.**  
This is highest in the South East at 32 per cent and lowest in London at 20 per cent unable to access suitable courses.

## Rates of Pay:

The analysis of the hourly rates of pay highlighted few differences across the different types of providers. However, of the 3,939 respondents, 31 per cent (around 1,221 respondents) did not reply to this question. While questions on pay are sensitive subjects, it is of crucial importance that member groups fill in this section as it enables us to have an understanding of the national and regional picture on this topic.

*Figure 3* below illustrates the national average for positions across childcare provider type:

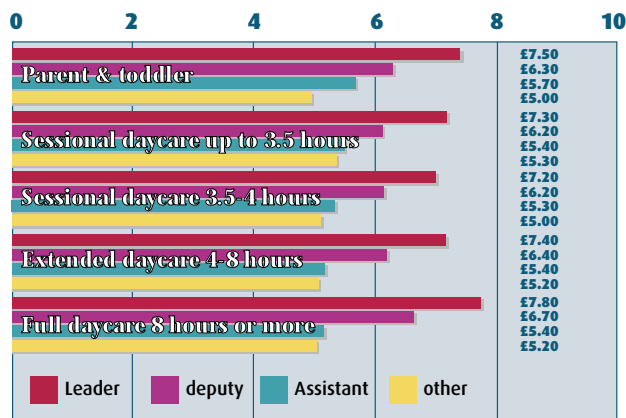


Figure 3: Average pay Base: Total sample n = 3939

	Eastern	London	Midlands	North East	North West	South East	South West
Leader	£7.20	£8.80	£6.80	£6.70	£7.20	£7.70	£7.20
Deputy	£6.20	£7.70	£5.80	£5.80	£6.10	£6.50	£6.10
Assistant	£5.30	£6.60	£5.10	£5.10	£5.30	£5.50	£5.20
Other	£5.20	£5.70	£5.00	£5.00	£5.00	£5.40	£5.20

Table 1: Average hourly rates of pay per staff member per region.

As the table below demonstrates, there are minimal differences between different types of providers' rates of pay. However, differences in rates of pay based on staff role are more clearly visible at the regional level, with hourly rates being consistently higher in London and consistently lower in the North East and the Midlands. Table 1 indicates the regional hourly rates of pay.

### Recruiting and Retaining Staff: Impacting Factors

The GMQ also acquired information on the factors that impact on member groups' ability to recruit and retain staff. Respondents were asked to rank factors in order of importance, with 1 signifying the most important factor. In the tables below, the closer the average rank is to 1, the greater the importance of the factor.

Unsurprisingly, rates of pay are the most significant factors impacting on member pre-schools' ability to recruit and retain early years workers. 14 per cent of member groups cite this as the main factor for difficulties recruiting staff and 12 per cent as the main reason for difficulties retaining staff. Access for disabled staff was ranked as the factor having the least impact on recruitment and retention. Other factors, such as location and available places, impact more on groups' ability to recruit staff, while location and opportunities for promotion are the main reasons that impact on groups' ability to retain staff.

% most important	% least important	Average rank	Response rate
<b>Rate of pay 28%</b>	<b>Rate of pay 2%</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Location 10%</b>	<b>Location 5%</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Inflexible hours 5%</b>	<b>Inflexible hours 5%</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Available places 11%</b>	<b>Available places 4%</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Disabled access 1%</b>	<b>Disabled access 27%</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>37%</b>

Table 2: Recruiting Staff – Impacting Factors (All provider types)

Interestingly, despite these factors that impact on pre-schools' ability to recruit and retain staff and the acknowledged 180,000 shortfall in early years workers, staff vacancies are reported by only 11 per cent of respondents. There are nonetheless significant differences in where these staff vacancies appear.

Full daycare settings report the highest number of staff vacancies, with 30 per cent stating that they have positions that must be filled. Around 1 in 10 sessional (both up to 3.5 hours and between 3.5 to 4 hours) and extended daycare settings also report vacancies.

At the regional level there is very little difference, although here too we notice some exceptions. The level of staff vacancies in the North West is 6 per cent, significantly lower than the national average of 11 per cent. London, with vacancies at 14 per cent, is somewhat higher than the national average.

We hope that you have found this special feature article on the early years workforce helpful to you in your roles. Next month's feature will consider the important topics of inclusion and expansion.

The 2005 Group Membership Questionnaire will be arriving in late-February/early-March at your pre-school. Please help us to help you by completing and returning your questionnaire; by doing so we guarantee that your pre-school's voice will be represented. ■

% most important	% least important	Average rank	Response rate
<b>Rate of pay 27%</b>	<b>Rate of pay 2%</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Location 9%</b>	<b>Location 4%</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Inflexible hours 4%</b>	<b>Inflexible hours 4%</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Opportunities for promotion 5%</b>	<b>Opportunities for promotion 3%</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Disabled access 1%</b>	<b>Disabled access 24%</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>31%</b>

Table 3: Retaining Staff – Impacting Factors (All provider types)