

# INCLUSION IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

## Findings from the 2004 Group Membership Questionnaire

This month's special report focuses on the important topic of inclusion. **Lia Antoniou** presents some of the key findings on inclusion from the Group Membership Questionnaire (GMQ). Read on to see how your pre-school compares with similar providers and across the country.

### PARENTS WITH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Overall 43 per cent of the 3,939 respondents to the GMQ report that some parents of children attending their groups have English as a second language. On average this gives around four parents with English as a second language across all daycare providers.

#### Differences by provider type

There are significant differences between providers regarding the number of parents with English as a second language.

**Parent and Toddler Groups** (P&T) are the least likely to care for children with parents that have English as a second language – only 23 per cent of all P&T groups have such parents. The P&T groups that do have such parents typically have a relatively high number per group, an average of four parents.

Providers of **sessional daycare** (both up to 3.5 hours and between 3.5 and 4 hours) and **extended daycare** display profiles that are similar to each other. Between 44-49 per cent of these providers have parents with English as a second language. This averages at around three parents per provider.

Unsurprisingly, **full daycare** is the most likely early years provider to have parents with English as a second language, with 61 per cent of full daycare having such parents, averaging at five parents per setting.

#### Differences by region

**London** is predictably the region which has the highest number of groups with parents who have English as a second language – 79 per cent of groups. This translates to around nine parents with English as a second language per setting. This reflects the more cosmopolitan nature of the capital, which, as we saw in earlier articles, is also most likely to employ staff from minority ethnic groups.

Groups in the **South East** are the second most likely region to have parents with English as a second language. However, despite 51 per cent of groups having such parents, the South East has one of lowest numbers per group, averaging at around two parents per setting.

Groups in the **North East** and the **South West** are the least likely to care for children with parents with English as a second language, averaging at two parents per setting in these regions.

Interestingly, we found that groups in areas of deprivation (22 per cent of the total sample) are slightly more likely to have parents with English as a second language: 49 per cent compared to 41 per cent in more affluent areas. This averages at around five parents with English as a second language in areas of deprivation while the figure is three parents in more affluent areas.

### CHILDREN WITH AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Overall 35 per cent of respondents have children in their group who speak an additional language. This averages at four children per group.

#### Differences by provider type

Again, across early years providers there are significant differences. **P&T groups** are the least likely to care for children who speak an additional language, with only 17 per cent having such children. However, as in the previous section, the number of children per group is high at around five. This suggests that while only a few P&T groups have children with an additional language, when those children do access a P&T group they do so in high numbers.

Providers of **sessional daycare** and **extended daycare** again display similar profiles with between 37-40 per cent of such providers having children with an additional language, averaging at between three and four children per setting.

47 per cent of **full daycare** providers have children with an additional language, indicating that they are the most likely to have such children out of all daycare types. Nonetheless, the average number of such children in full daycare is four children per setting and is similar to that observed in extended daycare.

## PARENTS WITH LITERACY AND NUMERACY NEEDS

17 per cent of all respondents to the questionnaire report that they have some parents accessing their settings with literacy and numeracy needs. This averages at around three parents per setting. Here, too, there are wide differences across provider types.

### Differences by provider type

**P&T groups** tend to have fewer parents with literacy and numeracy needs and two-thirds of all P&T groups cite no such parents. This figure may however mask a lack of identification of these parental needs in P&T groups. In P&T groups where parents with literacy and numeracy needs are present, the number is relatively high at almost six parents per P&T group.

Providers of **sessional daycare** and **extended daycare** display similar profiles with around 18-23 per cent of such settings having parents with literacy and numeracy needs, averaging at around three parents per setting.

22 per cent of **full daycare** providers have parents with literacy and numeracy needs, averaging at just over five parents per setting.

### Differences by region

Even greater differences are observable at the regional level. Groups in the **Midlands** are the least likely to have parents with literacy and numeracy needs, averaging at three parents per setting in this region.

Groups in **London** are the most likely at 27 per cent and averaging at around five parents per setting.

While only 14 per cent of groups in the **North East** and **North West** have parents with literacy and numeracy needs, the average number of parents per group is quite high at four parents per setting.

Groups that are situated in areas of deprivation are three times more likely to have parents with literacy and numeracy needs: 36 per cent compared to 12 per cent for those located in more affluent areas.

## CHILDREN WITH AN IDENTIFIABLE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED

Overall, 35 per cent of respondents have children in their groups with an identifiable SEN, averaging at around three children per group.

### Differences by provider type

**P&T groups** are the least likely to have children with SEN (8 per cent of all P&T groups). However, the average number of children with SEN per P&T group is three, in line with the national average.

Around 40 per cent of **sessional daycare** providers have children with SEN, also with an average of three per group.

**Extended daycare** providers are the most likely provider to have children with SEN on their registers (44 per cent), averaging slightly above three children per group.

While **full daycare** has the same average number of three children per group, the number of full daycare settings with children with SEN is 41 per cent.

Across all types of providers that have children with SEN there are around one to two children at the Early Years Action stage of the Special Needs Code of Practice, around one to two at the Early Years Action Plus stage and one at the Statutory Assessment and/or Statement of Educational Needs stage.

### Differences by region

The regional picture is also interesting. Groups in the **North East** are the least likely to care for children with SEN (26 per cent of all groups, around two children per setting), while 41 per cent of groups in the **South East** have children with SEN, averaging at just over three children per setting.

Groups in perceived areas of deprivation are slightly more likely than those in more affluent areas to care for children with SEN. 41 per cent of all groups in areas of deprivation have children with SEN, while only 33 per cent of all groups in more affluent areas have such children. This evidence strongly suggests that the presence and number of children with SEN is to some degree related to the area's wealth or deprivation. The average numbers are around four children with SEN in areas of deprivation compared to around two in other areas.

Providers in the **North West** and **South East** are the most likely to have at least one child at the Early Years Action stage and one at the Early Years Action Plus stage. However, groups in the **South East** are the least likely to have children with a Statement of Educational Needs.

In contrast, providers in the **North East** are the least likely to have a child at the Early Years Action, Early Years Action Plus and Statutory Assessment stages, but they are the most likely to have children at the Statement of Educational Needs stage.

Next month's special report will focus on expansion, bringing you all the key findings on how some groups have expanded and how others would like to expand.