

Special Report

EXPANSION, ACCREDITATION & OTHER INITIATIVES IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

Findings from the 2005 Group Membership Questionnaire

This special report focuses on the important topics of expansion, accreditation and other initiatives in early years settings addressed in the Group Membership Questionnaire 2005 (GMQ).

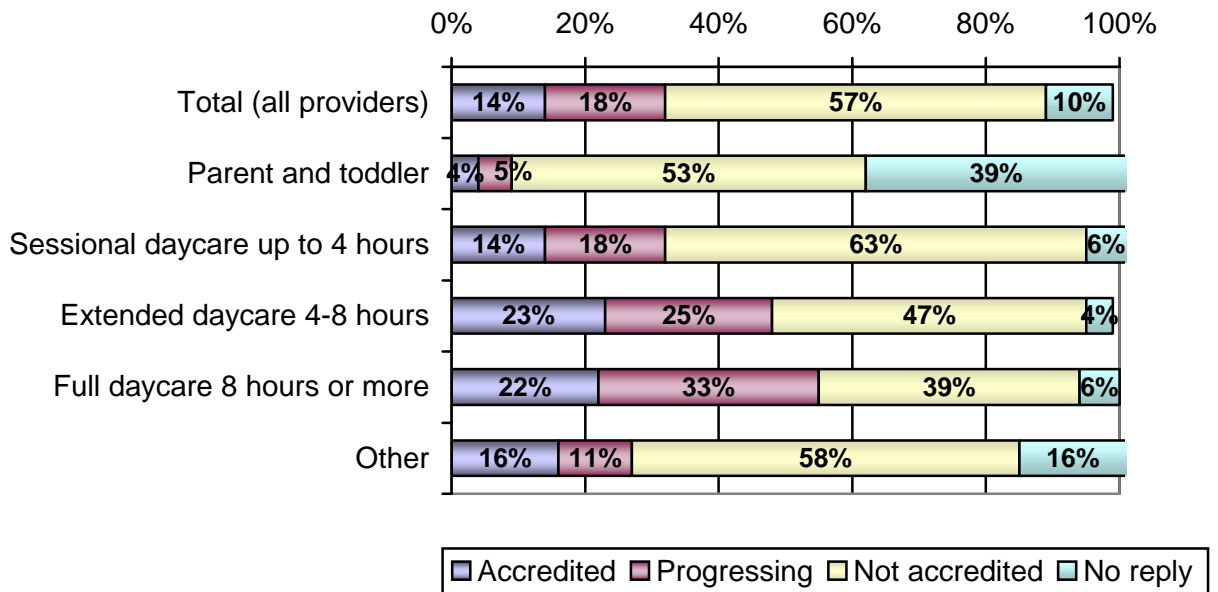
ACCREDITATION

Overall, 32% of groups are either accredited or progressing towards accreditation.

Differences by provider

Likelihood of progressing towards or having achieved accreditation is associated with the length of the sessions groups hold, with a greater likelihood that groups running longer sessions are accredited or progressing towards accreditation. In this way, P&T groups are the least likely to be accredited or progressing towards accreditation which is unsurprising due to their nature. In contrast full daycare and extended daycare providers are the most likely to be progressing towards accreditation or be accredited.

Proportion of groups accredited or progressing towards accreditation, by provider



Differences by region

Regionally, groups in London are the most likely to be accredited or progressing towards accreditation (46%) and groups in the North West are the least likely (25%). Across all other regions 27% to 35% of groups are accredited or progressing towards accreditation.

ACCREDITATION SCHEMES

Of those groups who are accredited or progressing towards accreditation over half are accredited with (or progressing towards) the Pre-school Learning Alliance *Aiming for Quality* scheme (58%). Other accreditation schemes groups report being accredited with or progressing towards accreditation with include Local Authority EYDCP schemes (25%), National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA - 3%), and Kids Club Network (1%). 10% are accredited with or are progressing towards other quality accreditation schemes.

Differences by provider

Different providers appear to prefer certain accreditation schemes to others, although the Alliance's scheme *Aiming for Quality* tends to attract the most mentions across the board. Providers of extended daycare are the most likely to be accredited with (or progressing towards accreditation with) the Alliance's *Aiming for Quality*.

Accreditation schemes, by provider

	Percentage of providers accredited with or progressing towards...				
	Alliance <i>Aiming for Quality</i>	Kids Club Network	NDNA	Local Authority EYDCP scheme	Other schemes
Total	58%	1%	3%	25%	10%
Parent & Toddler	41%	0%	19%	30%	4%
Sessional daycare up to 4 hours	61%	0%	1%	26%	8%
Extended daycare 4–8 hours	65%	0%	1%	18%	13%
Full daycare 8 hours or more	45%	4%	11%	27%	11%
Other	40%	20%	20%	0%	0%

Differences by region

There are some regional differences in the choice of accreditation scheme. Affiliation to the *Aiming for Quality* accreditation scheme varies across regions from 51% of groups in the Eastern region to 65% of groups in the North West. Groups' affiliation to the Kids Club Network accreditation scheme is slightly higher in the Midlands and the North West than other regions, and is not used at all by groups in London, the North East and the South East. Affiliation to the NDNA accreditation scheme vary from 1% of groups in Eastern and South West regions, to 9% in the North East. Local Authority EYDCP accreditation schemes vary from 17% in the North West to 34% in the South West.

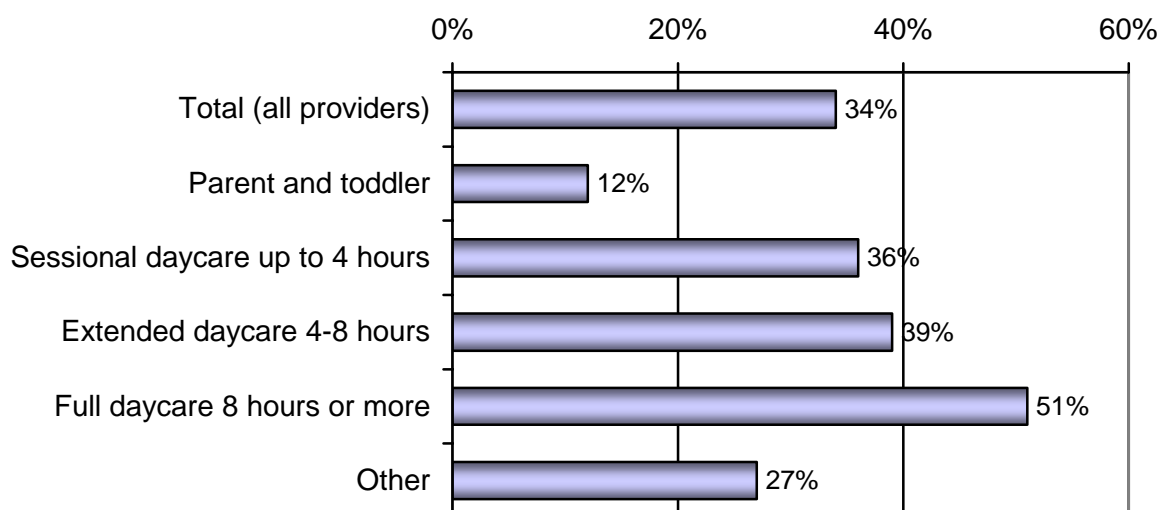
INTEREST IN ACCREDITATION

34% of groups who are not currently accredited by a quality assurance scheme are interested in becoming an accredited group.

Differences by provider

Interest levels in becoming accredited vary among providers, with full daycare providers showing the most interest (51%) and P&T groups showing the least interest (12%).

Interest in becoming accredited, by provider



Differences by region

Regionally, interest in becoming accredited varies moderately, ranging from 30% of groups in the North East to 39% in the South East.

RECENT EXPANSION

Overall, 28% of groups have expanded their provision in the last 12 months.

Differences by provider

Over one third of providers of extended daycare (43%) have expanded their provision in the last year, whereas P&T groups are the least likely to have expanded, 13% did so.

Recent expansion, by provider

	Percentage of groups that have expanded in the last 12 months
Total	28%
Parent & Toddler	13%
Sessional daycare up to 4 hours	27%
Extended daycare 4–8 hours	43%
Full daycare 8 hours or more	36%
Other	16%

Those groups who have undertaken some expansion in the last 12 months largely chose to expand by taking on younger children (31%), opening for longer hours (30%), or opening a lunch club (27%). Other routes of expansion include opening a lunch club, opening a new group, providing extra sessions and creating new places.

Differences by region

Although expansion is relatively evenly distributed across the regions, providers in the South West are the most likely to have expanded their provision (34%) while those in London are least likely (24%).

FUTURE EXPANSION

22% of groups are interested in finding out how the Alliance can support any future expansion plans, whether they had already expanded in the last 12 months or not. On average, groups are looking to expand in 2.2 ways. Types of expansion that are of interest to groups include opening for longer hours (45%), opening a lunch club (31%), opening a holiday scheme (22%) and opening a breakfast club (21%).

Differences by provider

Interest was broadly similar across daycare settings, although there was greater interest from full daycare providers than by P&T groups.

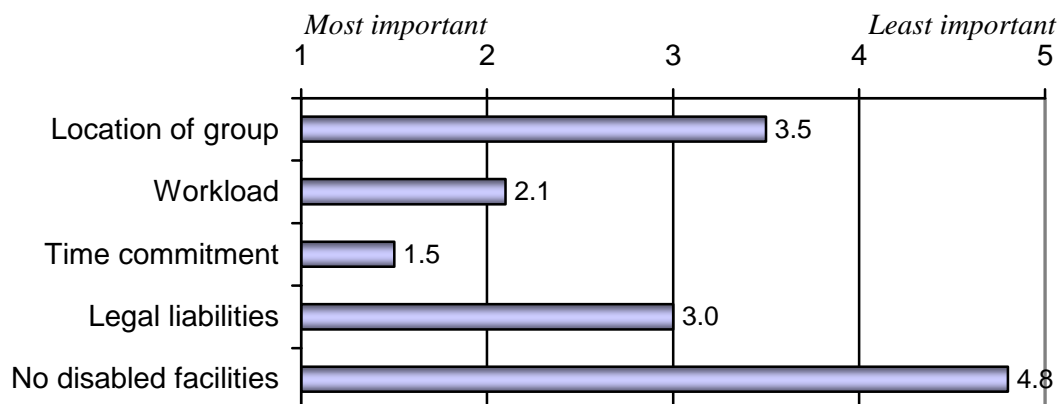
Differences by region

At a regional level, interest in future expansion ranged from 18% in the Eastern region to 26% in the South West.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

The most important factor impacting on groups' ability to attract volunteers is time commitment, followed by workload. The least important is the absence of disabled facilities. This is observed across all providers and regions.

Factors impacting on ability to recruit volunteers



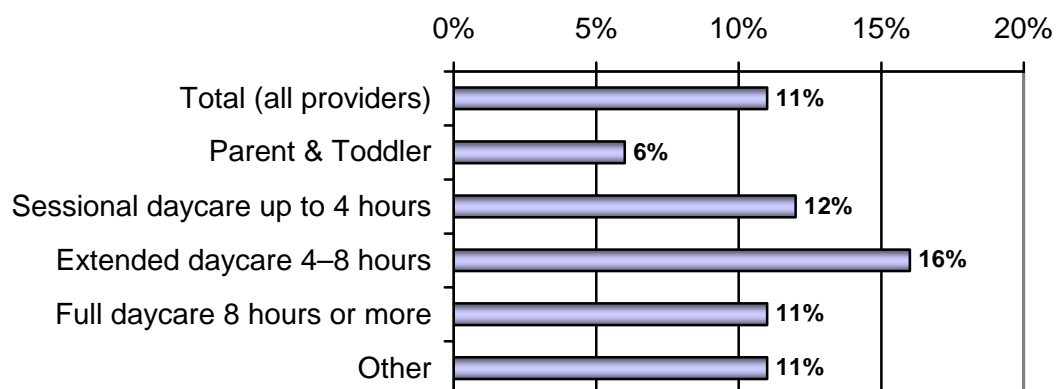
INCORPORATION AS A CHARITY

11% of groups are interested in becoming incorporated as a charitable company

Differences by provider

Interest was lowest among P&T groups (6%) and highest among providers of extended daycare (16%).

Interest in incorporation as a charity, by provider



Differences by region

Regionally, levels of interest in becoming incorporated as a charity range from around 10% in the Eastern, Midlands, South East and South West, to around 15% in London, the North East and North West.

NEIGHBOURHOOD NURSERIES INITIATIVE

Only 1% of groups are currently receiving funding from the Government's Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative.

Differences by provider

Unsurprisingly, providers of full daycare are the most likely to be in receipt of NNI funding (6%). The distribution of NNI funding across regions shows a consistent picture although London and the North East are marginally more likely to be receiving these funds (2%).

Of groups who had received NNI funding 29 places on average have been created per group. The minimum number of places created in any one group as a result of NNI funding is 2 and the maximum is 60. The majority of places (80%) have been created by full daycare providers.

SURE START

48% of groups are located in a Sure Start area. Of all members located in a Sure Start area only 30% were actually involved in their local initiative and this trend was observed across all types of provider. Groups are involved in the Sure Start Initiative through funding from Sure Start (14%), attending meetings/courses/training (6-7% in each case) and receiving information/advertising events/providing a toy library/visits from Sure Start (2% in each case).

Differences by provider

P&T groups are twice as likely as any type of daycare setting to be funded by Sure Start. Only sessional and extended daycare providers have attended training courses, while all provider types have attended meetings.

Differences by region

There are some differences in Sure Start involvement at the regional level. Involvement is greatest in the North West (37%) and lowest in the Eastern region (24%). Involvement in the Sure Start initiative is most likely to take the form of Sure Start funding.

Involvement in Sure Start initiative, by region

	% of providers involved
Total	30%
Eastern	26%
London	28%
Midlands	24%
North East	28%
North West	37%
South East	29%
South West	33%

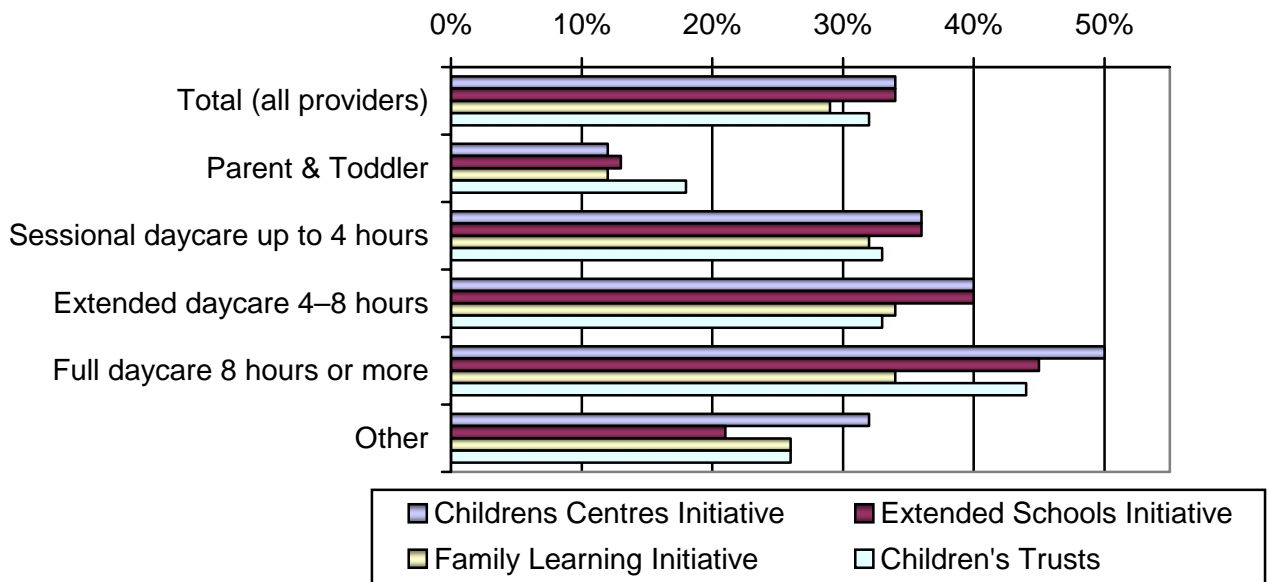
AWARENESS OF RECENT INITIATIVES

Overall, around one third of groups are aware of recent early years initiatives, although awareness of the Family Learning Initiative was slightly lower.

Differences by provider

P&T groups tend to be the least aware of initiatives while full daycare providers show the highest awareness. P&T groups are primarily aware of Children's Trusts, while providers in daycare settings are primarily aware of the Children's Centres Initiative.

Awareness of initiatives, by provider



Differences by region

Regionally, overall awareness tends to be highest in London and the North West, and lowest in the South East. At the individual initiative level:

- Awareness of the Children’s Centres Initiative is lowest in the South East (31%) and highest in London and the North West (42%)
- Awareness of the Extended Schools’ Initiative is lowest in the South East (28%) and highest in London and the North East (39%)
- Awareness of the Family Learning Initiative is lowest in the Eastern region (26%) and highest in London and the North West (34 %%)
- Awareness of the Children’s Trust is lowest in the South East (28%) and highest in London (40%).

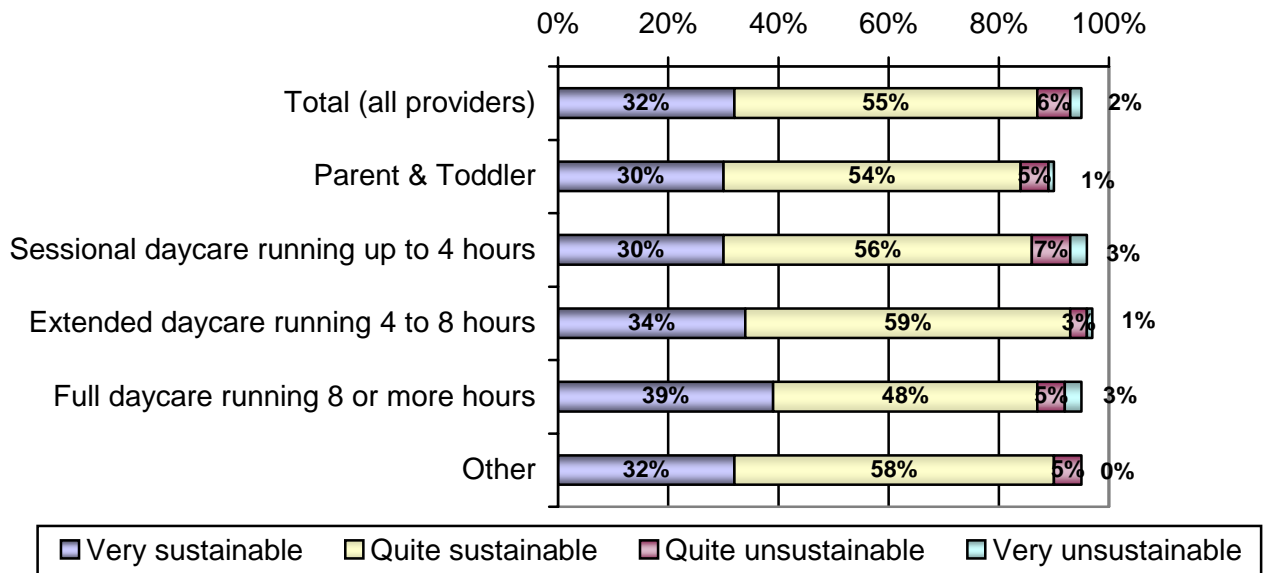
SUSTAINABILITY

Over three quarters of groups responding (87%) feel that their group is very or quite sustainable. These positive perceptions of sustainability are similar regardless of region, although groups in the Midlands and the North East are slightly less likely to perceive themselves as sustainable or quite sustainable (around 80% did).

Differences by provider

Although full daycare providers are the most likely to feel that their group is very sustainable (39%) they are also the most likely to feel that their groups are very unsustainable (3%).

Perceptions of sustainability, by provider



The next special report will focus on finance, bringing you all the key findings on the Nursery Education Grant (NEG), rent, group incomings and outgoings and fundraising.

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