

# **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

## **Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2011**

Final report  
February 2011

## **Contents**

### **1 Introduction**

### **2 Methodology**

### **3 Gap analysis, key findings and priorities**

#### 3.1 Gap analysis

#### 3.2 Key findings

##### 3.2.1 Use of childcare

##### 3.2.2 Location of childcare

##### 3.2.3 Satisfaction with childcare used

##### 3.2.4 Unmet demand for childcare

##### 3.2.5 Times at which childcare is required

##### 3.2.6 Disabled children and children with additional needs

##### 3.2.7 Three and four year old free entitlement

##### 3.2.8 Information about parenting, activities or services for families

##### 3.2.9 The cost of childcare

##### 3.2.10 Labour market factors

##### 3.2.11 Other issues for consideration

#### 3.3 Priorities

### **4 Stockton-on-Tees in context**

#### 4.1 Population demographics

##### 4.1.1 Children with additional needs

#### 4.2 The labour and employment market in Stockton-on-Tees

##### 4.2.1 Economic activity

##### 4.2.2 Economic inactivity

##### 4.2.3 Patterns of work

##### 4.2.4 Working age benefits

##### 4.2.5 Income

##### 4.2.6 Indices of Multiple Deprivation

##### 4.2.7 Regeneration, housing and development

## **5 Parent/carer questionnaire survey findings**

- 5.1 Response levels
  - 5.1.1 Respondent profile
- 5.2 Current use of childcare
  - 5.2.1 Use of childcare by age of child
  - 5.2.2 Use of childcare by Integrated Service Area
  - 5.2.3 Use of childcare by household type
- 5.3 Location of childcare
  - 5.3.1 Influences on the location of childcare
- 5.4 Satisfaction with current childcare
  - 5.4.1 Satisfaction with the cost of current childcare
  - 5.4.2 Satisfaction with the location of childcare
- 5.5 Reasons for using childcare
- 5.6 Non childcare users
- 5.7 Unmet demand for childcare
  - 5.7.1 Current use of childcare and unmet need amongst childcare users by age of child – summary tables
- 5.8 Times at which childcare is required
- 5.9 Opinions about childcare
- 5.10 Costs
- 5.11 Early years entitlement for three and four year olds
- 5.12 Information about parenting, activities or services for families
- 5.13 Support for childcare costs
- 5.14 Parent/carer comments

## **6 Qualitative research with parents and carers in Stockton-on-Tees**

- 6.1 Current use of childcare
- 6.2 Current use and rationale for use of informal childcare
- 6.3 Holiday childcare
- 6.4 Future requirements and changing needs for childcare
- 6.5 Information, advice and guidance for parents
- 6.6 Support for the cost of childcare
- 6.7 Childcare availability

- 6.8 The cost of childcare
- 6.9 The quality of care
- 6.10 Experience of asylum seekers

## **7 Youth consultation – key findings**

- 7.1 Respondent profile
- 7.2 Preferences for after school activities
  - 7.2.1 Barriers to taking part in after school activities
- 7.3 Preferences for holiday activities
  - 7.3.1 Barriers to taking part in holiday activities
- 7.4 Views on childcare
- 7.5 Demand for out of school provision
- 7.6 Keeping in touch
- 7.7 Comments

## **8 Consultations with children – summary findings**

## **9 Consultation with Stockton-on-Tees employers**

- 9.1 Response profile
- 9.2 Patterns of work
- 9.3 Childcare as a barrier or facilitator to recruitment and retention
  - 9.3.1 Childcare barriers to recruitment
  - 9.3.2 Childcare as a facilitator to recruitment
  - 9.3.3 Childcare as a barrier to the retention of staff
- 9.4 Information and childcare support
- 9.5 Flexible working patterns
- 9.6 Interest in receiving impartial childcare information and advice
- 9.7 Comments

## **10 Interviews with key employers**

- 10.1 Background information
- 10.2 Support offered to employees
- 10.3 Information, advice and signposting to staff

- 10.4 The impact of support, advice and information provided on recruitment and retention
- 10.5 Future changes that may impact on the childcare needs of employees

## **11 Consultation with key stakeholders**

- 11.1 Labour market factors
- 11.2 Use of informal childcare
- 11.3 Cultural and faith issues
- 11.4 Availability of formal childcare
- 11.5 Affordability and cost
- 11.6 Provision for disabled children and children with additional needs
- 11.7 Location of childcare
- 11.8 Quality of childcare
- 11.9 Information and support

## **12 The supply of childcare**

- 12.1 Registered childcare
  - 12.1.1 Geographical distribution of childcare
- 12.2 Vacancies
- 12.3 Charges
  - 12.3.1 Comment
- 12.4 Opening times
- 12.5 Quality
- 12.6 Extended services

## **13 Childcare sufficiency in the Tees Valley**

### **Appendices**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Appendix one   | Methodology  |
| Appendix two   | Parent/carer questionnaire survey comments                       |
| Appendix three | Consultations with children aged 4 to 10 years old – full report |

## I Introduction

The Childcare Act (2006) requires Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, like all other local authorities in England, to ensure a sufficiency of childcare for working parents, parents studying or training, and for disabled children.

The duties in the act require the city council to shape and support the development of childcare provision in Stockton-on-Tees (section 11) in order to make it flexible, sustainable and responsive to the needs of the community. This role is described as a 'market management' function, whereby the local authority support the sector to meet the needs of parents, children and young people, along with other stakeholders.

The council also has a duty to undertake a detailed childcare sufficiency assessment (CSA) of the supply and demand for childcare in the area. In doing so, the council should consult with a range of stakeholders including parents/carers, children and young people, employers, community groups, schools and providers of childcare. In addition, the childcare sufficiency assessment should include a detailed analysis of local demographics. The assessment should generate an overall up-to-date picture of the supply, parents' use of, and demand for, childcare in the local authority area. The assessment's purpose is to then form a gap analysis identifying where childcare supply does not match the needs of families and communities.

Sufficient childcare is defined as<sup>1</sup>:

“Sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in the [local authority's] area who require childcare in order to enable them –

- a) To take up, or remain in, work, or
- b) To undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.”

In determining whether provision of childcare is sufficient a local authority:

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<sup>1</sup> Securing sufficient childcare DCSF April 2010

- a) Must have regard to the needs of parents in their area for:
- the provision of childcare in respect of which the childcare element of the working tax credit is payable, and;
  - the provision of childcare which is suitable for disabled children
- b) May have regard to any childcare, which they expect to be available outside their area.”

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council commissioned Hemsall’s in January 2010 to undertake all aspects of the childcare sufficiency assessment 2010 – 2011 on behalf of the Local Authority.

## 2. Methodology

Work has been undertaken with reference to four key areas:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>SUPPLY</b><br><b>Of local childcare provision</b>                               | <b>DEMAND</b><br><b>Identified by parents and employers<br/> for childcare</b>      |
| <b>TRENDS</b><br><b>In the local market now and<br/> anticipated in the future</b> | <b>NEED</b><br><b>Identified through analysis of supply,<br/> demand and trends</b> |

Following a formal tender process, the childcare sufficiency assessment started an initial meeting aimed at agreeing the detail of work, identifying key contacts and agreeing priority tasks.

A planning day was held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2010, attended by members of the Hemsall’s research team, and officers from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council representing: early years and childcare; Families Information Service (FIS); and extended schools. The planning

day was aimed at introducing the project, identifying the role of key partners and to provide key individuals with the opportunity to engage with, and shape, the CSA.

A range of qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect childcare needs and demand for the CSA. The methodology was designed to incorporate questionnaire surveys with a broad range of targeted one-to-one interviews and focus groups with parents/carers, target groups, children, young people, and professionals in Stockton-on-Tees. All fieldwork was completed between March and August 2010.

Questionnaires were distributed to employers, parents and carers, and early years and childcare providers. Questionnaire surveys were complemented by focus group discussions and interviews with parents/carers, key employers and stakeholders. Storytelling consultations were undertaken with younger children, and young people's focus groups were held with children aged 11-16 years old. Full details of consultation activities are shown in the appendices.

## **2.1 Acknowledgements**

Hempsall's gratefully acknowledges the support and co-operation of everyone involved with and contributing to the CSA.



### 3 Gap analysis, key findings and priorities

#### 3.1 Gap analysis

##### **Geographical Gaps:**

where a geographical area has a general shortage of supply

- There is a lower use of childcare in Central (South) Stockton and within that relatively high use of informal care only.
- There is identified unmet need amongst current users of childcare in all Integrated Service Areas (ISAs), with slightly lower levels of unmet need in Central (North).
- Qualitative research identifies a general need for childcare in the Port Clarence area.
- Based on local knowledge, there are gaps in provision in: Billingham (all childcare types); Ingleby Barwick (out of school and sessional care); Fairfield/Grangefield (out of school and sessional care); and Central North (full daycare and out of school following a recent closure).
- There are insufficient places for disadvantaged two year olds in Central North and Billingham.

##### **Income Gaps:**

where there is a shortage of affordable childcare for the income groups populating an area.

- The cost of childcare is an issue in the Billingham area 23% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with childcare costs (19% across the borough). However the area has the second highest levels of childcare use.
- Low income areas also have the lowest take up of Working Tax Credit childcare element.
- Higher income households reported difficulties with childcare costs.

**Specific Need Gaps:**

where there is a shortage of suitable places for disabled children, or children with other specific needs or requirements, including those from particular faiths or community groups

- Holiday and out of school childcare for disabled children and children with additional needs.
- Availability of childcare generally for disabled children and additional needs. Most notable gaps appear to be in the Central Stockton-on-Tees area.
- Availability of culturally appropriate childcare for families from BME backgrounds. Issues identified with venue types and locations of childcare, set amongst a context of a growing BME population [11.3].

**Time Gaps:**

where there is a shortage of childcare at a time that parents would wish to use childcare

- There is unmet demand for childcare between 5.30pm and 6.00pm on weekday evenings.
- 35% of respondents' partners work nights, evenings, weekends or shifts, childcare is therefore provided by the other partner limiting their employment choices and use of formal childcare (potentially increasing use of informal childcare and increasing unemployment).
- There is a mis-match in week day supply and evening/weekend and shift working.

**Age Gaps:**

where there is a shortage of childcare suitable to the needs and requirements of a certain age group (for example, school-aged children up to 18 years, if they are disabled). This may be difficult to detect if it is masked by over provision of childcare suitable for other age groups.

- Daycare provision for disadvantaged two year olds.
- After school and holiday childcare for children aged 5-10 years.
- A lack of appropriate provision for children aged 11 years and over.

### **Type Gaps:**

where there is a shortage in the type of childcare for which parents may be expressing a preference.

- Levels of use of informal childcare for children aged under two and over 11 years suggest a gap in provision.
- Extended schools data does not indicate much provision of childcare. Whilst parents request more provision, young people are expressing a preference for unsupervised and safe places to be, including after school and holiday provision.

### **Information Gaps:**

where information and knowledge is not reaching parents, or understanding is not developing into knowledge about provision and services on offer.

- There remains a need to consider how the FIS reaches parents and raises its profile to be the first port of call for all parents wanting childcare (and other) information.
- High preference for using informal childcare as a result of low confidence and trust in formal childcare suggests a need to promote choice, benefits and affordability of formal provision.
- Employers would benefit from clearer and more accessible information about childcare and support, with a direct route to the FIS.

## **3.2 Key findings**

### **3.2.1 Use of childcare**

The majority of parents/carers use childcare of some type for their child or children, formal, informal (friends and extended families) or a mixture of both; overall, 79% of respondents were using some form of childcare.

Respondents may have been using formal childcare for some children and informal only for others, or childcare for one child but no childcare for another; patterns of childcare take-up and use can be complex. Use and non-use differs within families for children in different age ranges. A parent/carer may, for example, use childcare for their 3 year old but not for their 7 year old. Or use formal childcare for a 6 year old and informal childcare for a 2 year old.

Of those using some form of childcare 24% (150 respondents) were only using informal childcare (for all children where there was more than one child being cared for).

Use of childcare is highest for children aged 2, 3 and 4 years of age, reflecting the impact of the free early years entitlement. Childcare use for older children, in particular those aged 11 to 14 years, is relatively very low – only 50% of parents/carers of a child or children in this age group use childcare, and where they do, it is more likely to be informal childcare than with other age groups.

Much lower use of childcare was reported in households with an annual income of below £10,000 a year.

Parents/carers use childcare for a variety of reasons, chief amongst them being because they work. Parents/carers also recognise and value the benefits of childcare for children, including opportunities to socialise with others.

Whereas the majority of parents/carers do use some form of childcare, one in five respondents were not using any form of childcare and amongst those that were, nearly a quarter (24%) were using informal childcare (friends and extended family) only.

Use of childcare is lower in Central (South) and Eastern area and in Central South where childcare is used, it is more likely to be informal childcare.

Respondents who had not used childcare in the past twelve months were asked why. Reasons varied but findings suggest that for a large proportion of respondents non use of childcare is a choice, or has been made possible by finding a childcare solution based on using informal childcare, sharing childcare responsibilities with a spouse or working around school hours. In focus group discussions with parents and carers, informal childcare was identified as preferable to formal childcare by some participants. This was not a preference based solely on cost but also on the value placed on familial care. For others however a lack of formal childcare was associated with limiting options and costs of childcare had influenced decisions not to work or to work around school hours.

### **3.2.2 Location of childcare**

The majority of parents/carers use childcare provision in Stockton-on-Tees; only 7% of survey respondents reported accessing all of their childcare provision outside of the borough. When choosing childcare proximity to the home is an important determinant, albeit school and proximity to work are also considerations.

Parent/carer survey findings suggest that for the majority, the location of childcare provision accessed is satisfactory. However, one in five survey respondents reported finding it difficult to get the type of childcare they want in their local area. This suggests that for some parents/carers, finding appropriate childcare can be a struggle, but when childcare is established, it meets needs in terms of its location.

Focus group participants identified gaps in provision in the Port Clarence area

### **3.2.3 Satisfaction with childcare used**

The majority of people using childcare are satisfied with their current childcare arrangements (89% of survey respondents).

### **3.2.4 Unmet demand for childcare**

In cases where parents/carers are not using childcare it is difficult to establish levels of unmet demand. Survey responses suggest that for the majority, non use of childcare is an active choice, for others, a pragmatic solution achieved by adjusting working patterns or working different hours than a spouse to ensure children's care needs are met.

Meeting childcare needs can be regarded as the outcome of sometimes complex juggling around school, informal childcare and formal provision that differs according to the number of children, their ages and any specific needs. The cost of childcare is identified as a barrier for a number of parents and carers and the decisions taken to work around school hours, or to not work or juggle working hours may mask unmet need. If childcare were less expensive or more affordable, it is probable that demand would increase.

Survey findings suggest that amongst non childcare users there may be some unmet demand but it is not generally high demand. There is no clear evidence of a lack of childcare provision to meet need and few respondents indicated barriers to take up.

However, 23% of all respondents and 28% of those already using childcare stated that they needed more childcare than they were already using. Further, 25% of all respondents would change their childcare if there was another choice.

The type of childcare required by those needing more childcare differs according to the age of the child. Day nursery and childminding provision was identified by parents/carers of very young children, day nursery and pre-school for parents/carers of 2 year olds and out of school and holiday provision for parents/carers of children aged 5 – 14 years. It should be noted that whilst unmet demand is identified, the percentages of parents/carers requiring additional childcare by type of provision is relatively small, particularly for parents/carers of children aged 3 and 4 years of age.

Older children (aged 11 years and older) do not themselves identify a need for childcare, preferring to spend their time when not in school with friends and without adults present. However, they do identify demand for youth clubs, holiday provision and after school clubs in their local area.

A relatively high percentage of survey respondents reported that there was insufficient childcare in their local area and that additional provision is required.

Stakeholders identified a shortage of crèche provision to support parents/carers accessing training and short courses. For job seekers, although there was reported to be scope for improving access to childcare information and support, and for increased take-up of childcare places and employment, gaps in supply were also evident, particularly during summer holidays.

### **3.2.5 Times at which childcare is required**

There is evidence of relatively high levels of work outside of 'standard office hours' (e.g. 9/9.30am to 5/5.30pm). The highest proportion of people using childcare need it between 8am and 6pm but there is also identified need for childcare outside of office hours, before 8am, at weekends and to cover shift work. Survey respondents identified a need for childcare from the end of the school day to 5.30/6pm, identifying this as a gap in current provision.

Childminding provision offers the greatest flexibility in terms of opening hours with a quarter of childminders working between the hours of 7/7.30am and 6/6.30 pm. There is very little weekend childcare available in Stockton-on-Tees and a lack of evening care and outside of childminders, early morning care.

### **3.2.6 Disabled children and children with additional needs**

Respondents to the parents' survey were caring for a total of 86 disabled children and children with additional needs, with the majority (52%) being in the 5-10 year old age range.

Of all the comments received from parents during the childcare sufficiency assessment, nine per cent (14) related specifically to the needs of disabled children and children with additional needs. The majority of these related to there being no suitable childcare being available to meet their children's needs, with the Central Stockton-on-Tees area having the largest number of comments about this issue.

Respondents reported a lack of suitable childcare for disabled children and additional needs as a reason for not using childcare. Five per cent of respondents said they could not find anything suitable for their children's needs. There was a reported difficulty in finding suitable out of school and holiday activities. In contrast, stakeholders consulted could not identify any gaps or barriers for disabled children's access to childcare. This is unusual and suggests two things; firstly that there may be no gaps in service provision; secondly that the issue is not as prominent as it could be.

Satisfaction levels with the cost of childcare were broadly similar between parents of disabled children others, the higher the household income the less satisfied they were with the cost of childcare (27% of respondents with a household income over £40,000 were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the cost of childcare).

Those parents who had accessed the Family Information Service spoke highly of the service they had received, describing it as a single information point and gateway.

### **3.2.7 Three and four year old entitlement**

The majority of parents/carers express a preference for accessing a free early years place 5 days a week/3 hours a day however, there is also preference for fewer days a week using more hours a day. The school nursery is the most preferred setting to access a place. Survey responses identify interest in stretching the offer of 570 weeks over more weeks a year.

The local authority has a duty to ensure that there are enough places to allow eligible children aged two, three and four to take up their offer of free childcare, regardless of parents' working or training status. In doing so, the local authority supports their statutory duty under section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Whilst not all providers offer flexibility, all children have been able to access the extended free entitlement of 15 hours since September 2010 in Stockton-on-Tees. Some families have been accessing this provision since September 2009 as part of the national pilot. The free entitlement in Stockton-on-Tees is offered through a diverse market of providers from the voluntary, private, independent and maintained sectors. There are 95 settings in the Directory of Providers of which 61% are maintained nursery classes, providing 86% of the



places that are available. The number of actual places available reported for summer 2010 is slightly lower than the registered places reported in section 12.1. This difference could be attributed to the fact that the day nurseries report high vacancy levels in section 12.2 and may reflect the fact that some providers chose to operate at a lower number of places than the maximum number of places they are registered for.

### Free entitlement provision summer 2010

| Provider Type      | Number of Providers | Number of PTE places available (summer 2010) |
|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| Nursery class      | 59                  | 3,220  |
| PVI                | 33                  | 428  |
| Independent school | 3                   | 113  |
| Total              | 95                  | 3,761  |

Source: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Stockton has a traditionally high take up of the free entitlement 100% of children benefit from a place which is higher than to the national figure of 97%.

All primary schools in Stockton-on-Tees have nursery classes; 91% of places taken up in January 2010 were accessed through maintained provision which is significantly higher than the national figure of 36%. Statistical First Release on the Provision for Children under five years in England (January 2010) indicates that 4,345 part-time equivalent places were filled in the maintained sector and 420 part-time equivalent places were accessed in the PVI sector (this figure is higher than the figure reported previously as this data includes four year olds in reception and other classes not designated as nursery classes).

Stockton-on-Tees has experienced growth in the take up of places since the last CSA. Statistical first release data indicates places taken in the PVI sector grew from 365 (2008) to 420 (2010). In the maintained sector, there has also been growth in take up from 3,775 places (2008) to 4,345 (2010).

## **Two year old entitlement**

The provision of free entitlement for two year olds is a relatively new government initiative. From 2008 pilot schemes were rolled out to test how this could be achieved and were made available for the most disadvantaged children. 25% of the most disadvantaged two year olds in every local authority have been able to access at least 10 hours per week of free provision from April 2009. In time, it is expected that such provision will be expanded towards the ultimate goal of universal provision.

Stockton-on-Tees' implementation started in September 2009; the authority received central government funding to deliver 74 places in 2009-10 and 74 places in 2010-11. The places are specifically linked to economic disadvantage and parents/carers must qualify for national and local criteria before a place is allocated. Stockton-on-Tees provided places through 12 providers who had Ofsted inspection outcomes of good, or who had a satisfactory grading and where willing to work with the locally authority on a focused improvement plan.

Parents can take 10 hours over 38 weeks. Over the two year period 172 children and their families have accessed the two year old entitlement in Stockton-on-Tees.

### **3.2.8 Information about parenting, activities or services for families**

Word of mouth (including work colleagues, friends and family) is an important source of family and parenting information.

Awareness of the Families Information Service (FIS) is not universal, either amongst parents/carers or amongst employers. In focus group discussions participants described having undertaken independent research to identify and explore childcare options. Where parents/carers are aware of the FIS the service is valued.

For newly arrived migrants the health visiting service was identified as an important source of information and advice.

Young people consulted for the CSA identified a lack of information as a barrier to participation in out of school activities. Suggestions for improving the availability of

information and preferences for how information could be received identified posters and leaflets as the most popular method.

### **3.2.9 The cost of childcare**

Cost of childcare is identified as an issue by a large minority (1 in 5), and in particular those living in the Billingham area. Childcare costs in Billingham are comparable to other areas across Stockton-on-Tees. The relationship between household income and satisfaction with the cost of childcare arrangements is not straightforward. Higher income households were more likely to be dissatisfied with the cost of their current childcare arrangements. A smaller percentage of lower income families expressed dissatisfaction with the cost of their childcare arrangements and a higher percentage were unable to offer an opinion. In the case of lower income families there is lower use of childcare overall which may account for the higher proportion of 'no opinion' responses.

There is a general perception of childcare costs being high. Focus group discussions identified affordability issues that have impacted on childcare and lifestyle choices (for example, choosing to not return to work because childcare costs would be too high).

The single biggest childcare barrier to recruiting and retaining staff identified by employers was cost of childcare. Despite that there is little evidence (outside of major employers such as the local authority and the Health Trust) of employers offering employees support in terms of information and advice, childcare subsidies or flexible working arrangements. In part this may be attributable to low levels of knowledge and awareness of information and support available and how it might support employees and employers alike. In-depth interviews with employers (and in particular the NHS Trust) identify examples of good practice.

### **3.2.10 Labour market factors**

Consultations with parents/carers and employers identified relatively high levels of employment outside of 'standard office hours', including shift patterns, weekend work and nights. Employers identified the times at which childcare is available as a challenge in terms of recruiting and retaining staff, particularly for non standard hours work.

The employer survey identified that the percentage of employees working less than 16 hours a week was low (an estimated 4%) but significant in that these staff members would not be eligible for Working Tax Credits or the childcare element of WTC to help support the cost of childcare. Often people working part-time will hold more than one part-time job and this can mask the real hours worked (and consequently a demand for childcare).

### **3.2.11 Other issues for consideration**

The demographic profile of the borough is changing with a predicted increase in the Black and Minority ethnic (BME) community. Cultural norms and expectations may provide barriers to the take-up of childcare with physical arrangements (e.g. women only activities), venue location and cultural links to venues being identified by stakeholders as important considerations to overcoming barriers to inclusion and promoting access to childcare and use of other services

At the time of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Stockton-on-Tees was experiencing relatively high levels of unemployment, particularly amongst women. Data also shows that over a third of dependent children were living in single parent households. Research was undertaken before the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review (the outcomes of which are predicted to impact on employment, particularly within the public sector in the shorter term) and before the change in benefits impacting on single parents. Whilst Stockton-on-Tees is less reliant on public sector employment than other local authorities in the North East, public sector work remains the single biggest source of employment.

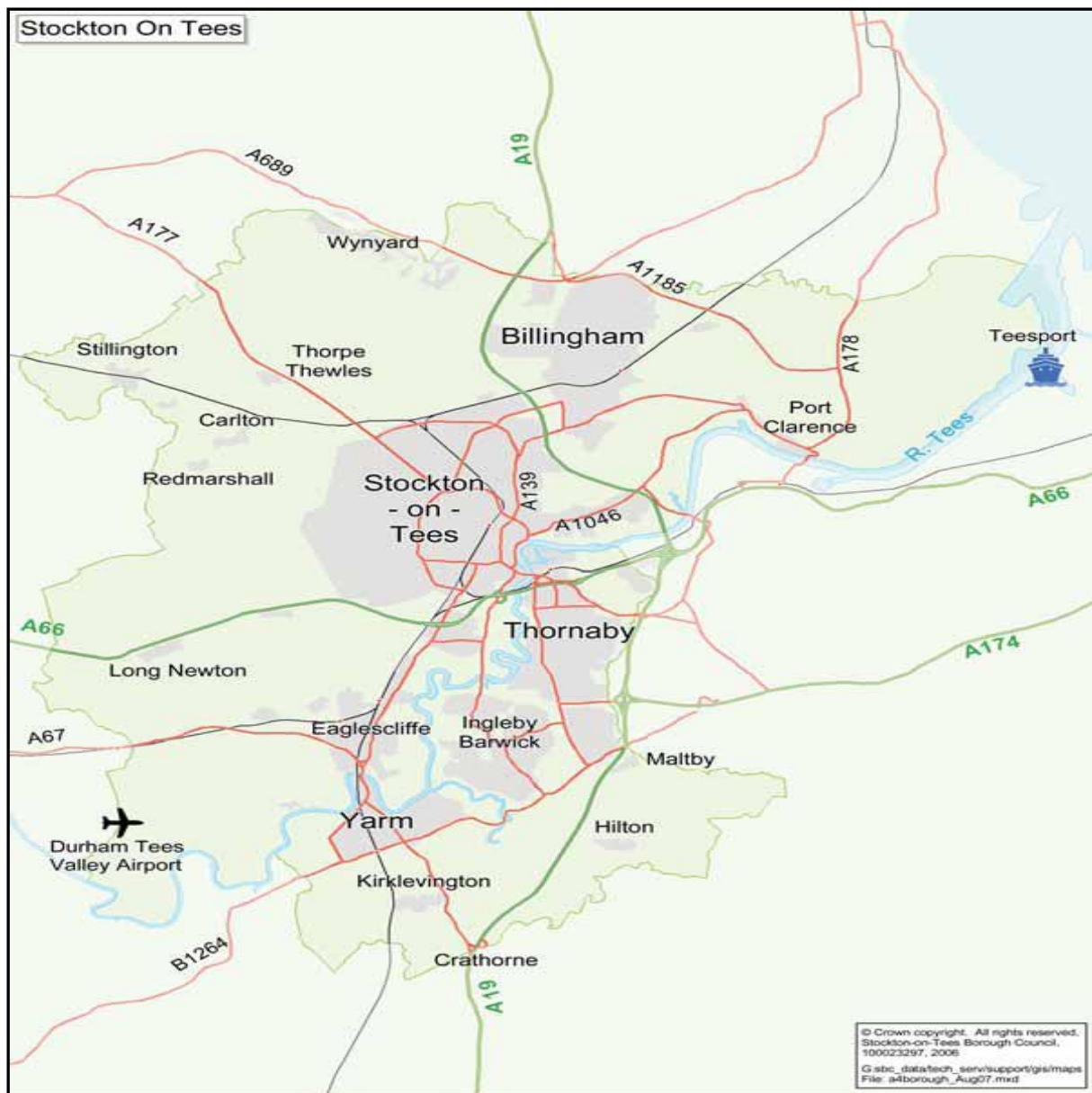
A change in benefit entitlements affecting single parents will be likely to increase the number and percentage of people registered as unemployed and seeking work. Both of these factors are likely to impact on demand for childcare over the next few years. Additionally Tax Credits will be affected, with the threshold for eligibility being raised from an adult in the household working for a minimum of 16 hours a week to 24 hours a week minimum, and to the childcare element covering up to 70% of childcare costs from the previous maximum of 80%.

### **3.3 Priorities**

The priorities for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's sufficiency action plan will be identified in partnership with the local authority prior to completion of this report.

## 4 Stockton-on-Tees in context

### 4.1 Population demographics



Stockton-on-Tees is located at the heart of the Tees Valley in the North East of England. The area has a total estimated population of 194,400 (ONS 2006 mid-year population estimates); the resident population is increasing – from 189,100 in 2006 with growth predicted to continue. The child population (aged 0-14 years) is predicted to remain fairly static, increasing marginally between 2010 and 2015:

### Estimated resident population (percent of total population)

| Age range        | 2006<br>'000s | 2010<br>'000s | 2012<br>'000s | 2015<br>'000s |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 0-4 years        | 10.7 (5.6%)   | 11.8 (6.1%)   | 12.1 (6.1%)   | 12.3 (6.1%)   |
| 5-9 years        | 11.4 (6.0%)   | 10.8 (5.6%)   | 11.8 (6.0%)   | 12.2 (6.1%)   |
| 10-14 years      | 12.8 (6.8%)   | 12.0 (6.2%)   | 11.1(5.6%)    | 11.1 (5.5%)   |
| Total population | 189.1 (100%)  | 194.4 (100%)  | 197.3 (100%)  | 201.5 (100%)  |

Source: ONS mid-year population estimates 2006: supplied by Tees Valley Unlimited April 2010

Almost 5% of the population is from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) community and this is expected to increase. The majority of people living in Stockton-on-Tees who identify themselves as belonging to a minority ethnic group are of Asian/Asian British origin<sup>2</sup>.

The delivery of services for young people is brought together in four Integrated Service Areas (ISAs): Billingham, Central (North), Central (South), and South. For the purposes of this report the South area has been divided into East and West.

The child population (aged 0-15 years old) is greatest in Eastern ISA and lowest in Western ISA:

### Estimated child population as a percentage of total by Integrated Service Area

| Integrated Service Area | Estimated population 0-15 years* | % of population 0-15 years |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Billingham              | 6,875                            | 18.4%                      |
| Central (North)         | 8,475                            | 22.7%                      |
| Central (South)         | 7,870                            | 21.1%                      |
| Eastern                 | 9,980                            | 26.8%                      |
| Western                 | 4,085                            | 11.0%                      |
| Overall                 | 37,285                           | 100%                       |

Source: ONS data prepared at ward level by Tees Valley Unlimited

\*Note: age range presented 0-15 is different from previous tables

<sup>2</sup> Audit Commission December 2009 'Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council-On-Tees overview'  
[www.oneplace.audit-commission.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/Pages/areaoverview.aspx?region=52&area=411](http://www.oneplace.audit-commission.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/Pages/areaoverview.aspx?region=52&area=411)

In 2006, 10.6% of all households were single parent households. Across Stockton-on-Tees over a third of all dependent children were living in a single parent household (37.3%).

According to 2008 data<sup>3</sup>, 20% of children were living in households in receipt of key out of work benefits. This ranks Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council at 106 out of 377 local authorities in GB (where 1 = the worst in the country).

#### **4.1.1 Children with additional needs**

In 2010 there were a total of 825 pupils in Stockton-on-Tees who had a statement of special educational needs and a further 149 pupils under School Action Plus.

As at 31 March 2010 there were a total of 287 Looked After Children in Stockton-on-Tees. The majority of Looked After Children placed with a foster carer were placed within the borough (75%).

#### **4.2 The labour and employment market in Stockton-on-Tees**

Over the last 30 years employment in the Borough has declined in traditional industries such as manufacturing and engineering. In 1991 24,000 people were employed in manufacturing in the Borough, against a figure of 10,000 in 2005. Set against this there has been a 50% increase in service sector jobs over the same period (Source: Regeneration Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council 2007-2012).

The pattern of full-time and part-time work in Stockton-on-Tees is in line with the North East and Great Britain (GB) as a whole. 68% of all employee jobs are full-time, 32% part-time (source: ONS annual business enquiry employee analysis 2008).

The largest single employment sector is public admin, education and health, accounting for 25.8% of employee jobs. The employment sector is not as reliant on public service employment as other local authority areas in the North East which averages at nearly a third across the region. Other service industries, including distribution, hotels and

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<sup>3</sup> Department of Work and Pensions 2008, cited on [www.poverty.org.uk](http://www.poverty.org.uk)



restaurants and finance, IT and other business activities are also large scale employment sectors in the borough:

### Employee jobs by industry (2008)

| Industry                                  | % of total employee jobs |            |               |
|---|--------------------------|------------|---------------|
|   | Stockton-on-Tees         | North East | Great Britain |
| Manufacturing                             | 12.1%                    | 12.0%      | 10.2%         |
| Construction                              | 7.9%                     | 5.6%       | 4.8%          |
| Services                                  | 78.8%                    | 81.0%      | 83.5%         |
| Of which:                                 |                          |            |               |
| Distribution, hotels and restaurants      | 22.9%                    | 22.1%      | 23.4%         |
| Transport and communications              | 6.5%                     | 5.3%       | 5.8%          |
| Finance, IT and other business activities | 19.2%                    | 16.6%      | 22.0%         |
| Public admin, education and health        | 25.8%                    | 32.2%      | 27.0%         |
| Other services                            | 4.5%                     | 4.8%       | 5.3%          |

Source: ONS annual business enquiry employee analysis (NOMIS)

#### 4.2.1 Economic activity

Economic activity refers to the number or percentage of people of working age who are either in employment or who are unemployed. Economic activity rates in Stockton-on-Tees are higher than the North East region and GB as a whole. A lower percentage of people in employment are self employed compared to the North East region and GB as a whole.

Unemployment levels in Stockton-on-Tees are relatively high (9% compared to 9.8% in the North East and 7.9% in GB). Unemployment levels are higher for women than for men:

### Economic activity rates April 2009 – March 2010

|                     | Stockton-on-Tees | North East | Great Britain |
|---------------------|------------------|------------|---------------|
| All people:         |                  |            |               |
| Economically active | 77.2%            | 73.0%      | 76.5%         |
| In employment       | 70.7%            | 65.8%      | 70.3%         |
| Employees           | 65.2%            | 59.4%      | 60.9%         |
| Self employed       | 5.3%             | 5.9%       | 9.0%          |
| Unemployed          | 9.0%             | 9.8%       | 7.9%          |

Source: ONS annual population survey (NOMIS). Percentage is a proportion of economically active

### 4.2.2 Economic inactivity

Economic inactivity refers to people who are neither in work nor employed. This group includes, for example, those looking after a home or retired. Economic inactivity rates in Stockton-on-Tees are lower than found across the North East region and slightly lower than found across GB.

### Economic inactivity rates April 2009 – March 2010

|   | Stockton-on-Tees | North East | Great Britain |
|---|------------------|------------|---------------|
| All people:<br>economically<br>inactive | 22.8%            | 27.0%      | 23.5%         |
| Wanting a job                           | 5.0%             | 7.0%       | 5.6%          |
| Not wanting a job                       | 17.9%            | 20.0%      | 17.9%         |
| Males: economically<br>inactive         | 18.5%            | 21.8%      | 17.3%         |
| Wanting a job                           | 4.0%             | 6.4%       | 4.8%          |
| Not wanting a job                       | 14.4%            | 15.4%      | 12.5%         |
| Females: economic<br>inactivity         | 27.1%            | 32.0%      | 29.7%         |
| Wanting a job                           | 5.9%             | 7.5%       | 6.4%          |
| Not wanting a job                       | 21.1%            | 24.5%      | 23.3%         |

Source: ONS annual population survey (NOMIS)

### 4.2.3 Patterns of work

A slightly higher percentage of employee jobs are full-time compared to the North East region and GB:

#### Patterns of work

| Total employee jobs | Stockton-on-Tees | North East | Great Britain |
|---------------------|------------------|------------|---------------|
| Full time           | 70.6%            | 68.2%      | 68.8%         |
| Part-time           | 29.4%            | 31.8%      | 31.2%         |

Source: ONS annual business inquiry employee analysis (NOMIS)

### 4.2.4 Working age benefits

Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) is payable to people under pensionable age who are available for, and actively seeking, work. As of September 2010 there were a total of 6,137 people claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) in Stockton-on-Tees, 4.9% of the working age population. JSA claimant levels were relatively high particularly amongst men:

#### JSA claimants by age and gender (September 2010)

|                  | Stockton-on-Tees | North East | Great Britain |
|------------------|------------------|------------|---------------|
| All claimants    | 4.9%             | 4.7%       | 3.5%          |
| Males            | 7.3%             | 6.7%       | 4.9%          |
| Females          | 2.6%             | 2.7%       | 2.2%          |
| Aged 18-24 years | 32.5%            | 31.8%      | 29.3%         |
| Aged 25-49 years | 53.0%            | 53.4%      | 55.3%         |
| Aged 50 and over | 14.4%            | 14.6%      | 15.1%         |

Source: ONS claimant count (NOMIS)

Department for Work and Pensions data (2009) shows that 17.4% of the working age population were in receipt of key out of work benefits. This is high in comparison to the North East region and rates across the country as a whole, with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council being ranked at 81 out of 377 local authority areas in GB. Key out of work benefits include JSA, Income Support, Incapacity Benefits, Lone Parent and others on income related benefits.

#### 4.2.5 Income

Average gross weekly pay in Stockton-on-Tees is £477.60, more than the average for the North East region (£443.10) and lower than GB as a whole (£501.80):

#### Average gross weekly pay 2010

| Gross weekly pay  | Stockton-on-Tees | North East | Great Britain |
|-------------------|------------------|------------|---------------|
| Full time workers | £477.60          | £443.10    | £501.80       |
| Male FT workers   | £536.50          | £483.80    | £541.90       |
| Female FT workers | £397.20          | £394.80    | £440.00       |

Source: ONS annual survey of hours and earnings – resident analysis (NOMIS)

Whilst average (median) weekly pay is relatively high, over a quarter of employees are paid less than £7 per hour (26.3%) ranking Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council at 67 out of 377 local authorities in Great Britain (with 1 being ranked as the highest in terms of percentages of employees earning less than £7 per hour)<sup>4</sup>.

Conventionally, low income households are defined as those with a household income of less than 60% of the national median household income<sup>5</sup>. The median household income for the whole population in 2008/09 was £407 per week (before housing costs), equating to £21,164 per annum. Using the conventional definition, low income families would be those with a household income of less than £12,698 a year (£244.20 a week) before housing costs<sup>6</sup>. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) May 2010 report 'Households Below Average Income' notes that families with children, particularly lone parent families, are more likely to be in low-income households than their childless counterparts.

#### 4.2.6 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

Stockton-on-Tees is a borough of contrasts. There are areas of relatively high deprivation – half of the 26 wards in Stockton-on-Tees fall into the top 10% most deprived according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2007) with a cluster of most deprived wards in Central

<sup>4</sup> ONS annual survey of hours and earnings, November 2009 (average 2007 to 2009), cited on [www.poverty.org.uk](http://www.poverty.org.uk)

<sup>5</sup> Definition of low income [www.poverty.org.uk](http://www.poverty.org.uk)

<sup>6</sup> Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Resource Centre May 2010: 'Households Below Average Income' [www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai.asp)

Stockton-on-Tees. A further 3 wards fall into the top 20% most deprived wards in the country.

In contrast there are areas of relative affluence, including for example, Yarm, Norton West, Ingleby Barwick, Eaglescliffe, Fairfield and Billingham West, that sit alongside areas of deprivation.

Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level IMD are summarised at district level using six different measures which allows districts (local authority areas) to be ranked according to how deprived they are relative to other districts. The North East region generally has high levels of relative deprivation; nearly 18% of its LSOAs are amongst the 10% most deprived in England. Whilst Stockton-on-Tees fairs better than some of its neighbouring local authorities overall, and there are strong indications of an improving picture, there are concentrations of very deprived LSOAs across the borough<sup>7</sup>.

The six measures are:

- **The local concentration** measure shows the severity of multiple deprivation in each authority, measuring ‘hot spots’ of deprivation.
- **The extent** measure is the proportion of a district’s population that lives in the most deprived LSOAs in England.
- **The ‘average scores’** and **‘average ranks’** measures are two ways of depicting the average level of deprivation across the entire district.
- **The income scale** and **employment scale** measures show the number of people experiencing income and employment deprivation respectively.

Stockton-on-Tees rankings have improved between 2004 and 2007 (they have increased; for example the local concentration rank has increased from 17 in 2004 to 33 in 2007). In terms of the Rank of Average Score – which can be regarded as approximate to an overall measure of deprivation across the borough, Stockton-on-Tees ranked 98 in 2007 (compared to 75 in 2004) and now has the highest rank (lowest level of deprivation) out of all Tees Valley local authority areas.

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<sup>7</sup> English Indices of Deprivation 2007, Communities and Local Government

### Stockton-on-Tees position in each district level measure

|      | <b>Local concentration</b> | <b>Extent</b> | <b>Average Score</b> | <b>Average Rank</b> | <b>Income Scale</b> | <b>Employment Scale</b> |
|------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Rank | 33                         | 77            | 98                   | 138                 | 75                  | 62                      |

Source: Communities and Local Government, English Indices of Deprivation 2007

#### 4.2.7 Regeneration, housing and development

The Regeneration Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees 2007-2012 identifies a number of developments that could impact on childcare sufficiency. These include:

- North Shore, Southern Gateway and Bowesfield Riverside – regeneration to deliver mixed-use developments, housing and leisure facilities;
- £45 million redevelopment at Billingham town centre scheduled for completion 2013;
- an area action plan for Yarm and Eaglescliffe to strengthen Yarm’s role as a commercial centre;
- expansion of Durham Tees Valley airport; housing developments in Hardwick, Mandale and Parkfield.

## 5 Parent/carer questionnaire survey key findings

### 5.1 Response levels

A total of 797 completed questionnaires were received by the deadline of 9<sup>th</sup> August 2010. The majority of questionnaires (434, 54%) were completed by parents/carers using a self-complete questionnaire distributed via schools, the Families Information Service or Aiming High. 23% of questionnaires (182) were as a result of supported completion by parents/carers attending groups (for example, parent and toddler groups, BME groups etc.). 17% of questionnaires (136) were returned by children's centres that supported parents/carers to participate in the survey and 6% of questionnaires (45) were completed on-line by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council staff.

Responses were received from across the local authority area; in some cases respondents declined to provide a postcode or it was not possible to match the postcode provided to a locality area (either because it was incomplete or because it was not identified in the list of Stockton-on-Tees postcodes). The Central (North) Integrated Service Area (ISA) had the highest number of questionnaire returns (27%), followed by Central (South) (25% of returns). The lowest number of matched returns was recorded in the Western locality area.

#### Response levels by integrated service area

| Integrated service area   | Number of returns | Percentage of total returns |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Billingham  | 114               | 14%                         |
| Central (North)   | 213               | 27%                         |
| Central (South)   | 198               | 25%                         |
| Eastern   | 127               | 16%                         |
| Western   | 76                | 10%                         |
| Not stated (no postcode supplied or postcode not matched to Stockton-on-Tees wards) | 69                | 9%                          |
| <b>Total returns</b>  | <b>797</b>        | <b>100%</b>                 |

### 5.1.1 Respondent profile

The majority of respondents were White/White British (88% of total) in line with population demographics. Asian/Asian British respondents accounted for 8% of total, representing the largest Black and Minority Ethnic group.

### Household composition

23% of households (181) were headed by a single parent. Over half of all respondents (58%, 457 respondents) were caring for a child aged between 5 and 10 years of age, however, the majority of respondents were caring for more than one child and children of different age ranges.

### Age range of children cared for

| Age range                     | Number of respondents caring for a child or children in age range | Percentage of respondents |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 0 – 1 year                    | 220   | 28%                       |
| 2 years                       | 177   | 23%                       |
| 3 – 4 years                   | 222   | 28%                       |
| 5 – 10 years                  | 457   | 58%                       |
| 11 – 14 years                 | 170   | 22%                       |
| 15 – 18 years (disabled only) | 8   | 1%                        |

Base: 785, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

In total respondents were caring for 1,466 children aged between 0 and 14 years old and 8 disabled children or children with additional needs aged 15 to 18 years old. Children aged between 5 and 10 years old accounted for 41% of the total number of children cared for. Children aged under 5 years old accounted for 44% of all children cared for and 11-14 year olds, 15%:



### Ages of children cared for

| Age range         | 0 – 1 year | 2 years | 3 – 4 years | 5 – 10 years | 11 – 14 years | 15-18 disabled children |
|-------------------|------------|---------|-------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Number</b>     | 227        | 183     | 238         | 599          | 212           | 8                       |
| <b>Percentage</b> | 16%        | 13%     | 16%         | 41%          | 15%           | 0.5%                    |

Base: 1,467, percentages rounded

Respondents were caring for a total of 86 disabled children and children with additional needs:

### Age ranges of disabled children and children with additional needs cared for

| Age range         | 0 – 1 year | 2 years | 3 – 4 years | 5 – 10 years | 11 – 14 years | 15 – 18 years |
|-------------------|------------|---------|-------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Number</b>     | 5          | 2       | 7           | 45           | 19            | 8             |
| <b>Percentage</b> | 6%         | 2%      | 8%          | 52%          | 22%           | 9%            |

Base: 86, percentages rounded

### Employment and household income

15% of respondents (118) were living in a workless household (defined here as one where no adult is in paid employment).

Respondents were asked to describe their employment status and that of their partner if appropriate. 77% of respondents were living with a partner at the time of the survey and 84% of partners were working. A much higher percentage of respondents' partners were working full-time (81% compared to 36% of respondents) and conversely a lower percentage was working part-time (6% compared to 38% of respondents). A number of those working part-time might hold more than one job (a finding from qualitative research to inform the CSA) resulting in cumulative hours in line with full-time work.

15% of respondents and 7% of partners were unemployed at the time of the survey; data shows that in a number of couple households both partners were unemployed or households where the respondent is working part-time but the partner is unemployed.

## Employment status – respondents and respondents’ partner

| Employment status                         | Respondents | Partner of respondents (where applicable) |
|---|-------------|---|
| Working full-time (30+ hours a week)      | 33%         | 74%                                       |
| Working part-time (16 to 29 hours a week) | 29%         | 4%  |
| Registered unemployed                     | 15%         | 7%  |
| Training for work                         | 8%          | 2%  |
| Studying                                  | 8%          | 2%  |
| Working part-time (under 16 hours a week) | 7%          | 1%  |
| Self-employed full-time                   | 3%          | 7%  |
| Self-employed part-time                   | 2%          | 1%  |
| Other                                     | 8%          | 2%  |

Base: respondents, 734; respondents’ partners 587. Percentages rounded

Other includes: disabled; carer; housewife/home-maker; retired; voluntary worker; sick/ill health; work abroad; career break; maternity leave

## Working patterns

Respondents were asked what their and/or their partner’s working patterns were. Findings identify a variety of working patterns, including relatively high incidence of working outside of traditional office hours.

Over a third of respondents (35%) and 45% of respondent’s partners were working nights, evenings, weekends and shift patterns.

A relatively high percentage of respondents, and their partners where appropriate, worked traditional office hours with flexible working (35% of respondents; 26% of respondent’s partners). Amongst respondents, and to a lesser extent, respondent’s partners, there was evidence of working around school hours (including working from home, term-time working and hours around school).

## Patterns of work (respondents and partner)

| Patterns of work                                  | Respondents | Partner of respondents<br>(where applicable) |
|---|-------------|--|
| Traditional office hours with flexible working    | 35%         | 26%  |
| Traditional office hours with no flexible working | 21%         | 39%  |
| Shift work  | 14%         | 22%  |
| Term-time only                                    | 12%         | 3%   |
| Fit work around school hours                      | 11%         | 1%   |
| Weekends  | 8%          | 8%   |
| Evenings  | 7%          | 7%   |
| Nights  | 6%          | 8%   |
| Work from home                                    | 5%          | 3%   |

Base: Respondents, 518; respondent's partners 490, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

## Household income

Respondents were asked to indicate their total household income, including benefits. Over a third of respondents (36%) declined to answer the question. Where information was provided responses reveal considerable differences in household income across the local authority area and between localities. Over a quarter of participating households (26%) had an income (including benefits) of less than £20,000 a year and 21% declared a household income of in excess of £50,000 a year.

Conventionally low income households are defined as those with a household income of less than 60% of the national median household income<sup>8</sup>. The median household income for the whole population in 2008/09 was £407 per week (before housing costs), equating to £21,164 per annum. Using the conventional definition, low income families would be those with a household income of less than £12,698 a year (£244.20 a week) before housing

<sup>8</sup> Definition of low income [www.poverty.org.uk](http://www.poverty.org.uk)

costs<sup>9</sup>. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) May 2010 report 'Households Below Average Income' notes that families with children, particularly lone parent families, are more likely to be in low-income households than their childless counterparts.

### Reported household income

| Income band (per year) | Less than £10,000 | £10,000 to £20,000 | £20,001 to £30,000 | £30,001 to £40,000 | £40,001 to £50,000 | £50,001 to £66,000 | Over £66,000 |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| % of respondents       | 12%               | 15%                | 19%                | 17%                | 17%                | 13%                | 8%           |

Base: 514, excludes non respondents, percentages rounded

Reported household income was highest in Eastern and Western ISAs (where 49% and 69% of respondents respectively reported household incomes of in excess of £40,000 a year) and lowest in Billingham (where 36% of respondents reported a household income of less than £20,000 a year):

### Reported household income by integrated service area

| Integrated service area | Percentage of households reporting an annual income of: |                    |                  |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------|------------------|
|                         | £0 to £20,000   | £20,001 to £40,000 | £40,001 and over |
| Billingham              | 36%   | 43%                | 21%              |
| Central (North)         | 30%   | 39%                | 31%              |
| Central (South)         | 32%   | 35%                | 33%              |
| Eastern                 | 24%   | 27%                | 49%              |
| Western                 | 8%  | 23%                | 68%              |
|                         |   |                    |                  |
| <b>Overall</b>          | 26%   | 36%                | 38%              |

Base: overall 514, locality areas 486, excludes non respondents. Percentages rounded

<sup>9</sup> Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Resource Centre May 2010: 'Households Below Average Income' [www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai.asp)

## 5.2 Current use of childcare

Overall, 79% of respondents were using some form of childcare, formal, informal (extended family and friends) or both.

Respondents may have been using formal childcare for some children and informal only for others, or childcare for one child but no childcare for another; patterns of childcare take-up and use can be complex.

Of those using some form of childcare 24% (150 respondents) were only using informal childcare (for all children where there was more than one child being cared for).

### Use of childcare

| Use of childcare by type   | % all respondents | % respondents using childcare |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| All types  | 79%               | n/a                           |
| Formal childcare (includes those using both formal and informal childcare) | 60%               | 76%                           |
| Informal childcare only (extended family and friends)                      | 19%               | 24%                           |

Base: all respondents, 797; respondents using childcare, 633. Percentages rounded

### 5.2.1 Use of childcare by age of child

Use of childcare differed according to the age of the child/ren being cared for. Use of any form of childcare was highest for children aged 3 and 4 years old (76% of parents/carers of a child in this age range were using some form of childcare) and lowest for parents/carers of older children (50% of respondents with a child age between 11 and 14 years old were using childcare).

Use of informal childcare was lowest for children aged 2, 3 and 4 years of age, reflecting the impact of the free early years entitlement). A lower percentage of parents/carers of children aged 5-10 years and in particular 11-14 years were using childcare of any kind;

within that higher percentage of parents/carers of children aged 5-10 years and much higher percentages of parents/carers with a child aged 11-14 years were only using informal childcare (32% and 44% respectively compared to 24% overall).

### Use of childcare by age of child

| <b>Age range</b>     | <b>Percentage of all respondents using childcare</b> | <b>Percentage of respondents using some form of childcare only using formal childcare</b> | <b>Percentage of respondents using some form of childcare only using informal childcare (extended family and/or friends)</b> |
|----------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>0 – 1 year</b>    | 61%  | 18%   | 30%  |
| <b>2 years</b>       | 68%  | 10%   | 15%  |
| <b>3 – 4 years</b>   | 76%  | 6%  | 8%   |
| <b>5 – 10 years</b>  | 65%  | 21%   | 32%  |
| <b>11 – 14 years</b> | 50%  | 22%   | 44%  |
| <b>Overall</b>       | 79%  | 19%   | 24%  |

Base: all respondents, 797; respondents using childcare, 630. Percentages rounded  
 Respondents with a child or children in different age groups will be double-counted in the table above

Relatively large numbers of parents/carers using childcare used a mix of childcare provision appropriate to the age of the child. On average parents/carers were using between 1 and 2 different types of childcare (including formal and informal) however some parents/carers were using a mix of childcare for each child:

### Number of different types of childcare used by age of child

| Age of child  | Percentage of respondents using: |     |     |     |    |    |
|---------------|----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|
|               | No childcare                     | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4  | 5+ |
| 0 – 1 year    | 39%                              | 40% | 15% | 5%  | 1% | 0% |
| 2 years       | 32%                              | 42% | 18% | 6%  | 2% | 1% |
| 3 – 4 years   | 24%                              | 41% | 19% | 14% | 2% | 0% |
| 5 – 10 years  | 35%                              | 33% | 17% | 8%  | 4% | 4% |
| 11 – 14 years | 50%                              | 26% | 16% | 4%  | 3% | 2% |

Base: all respondents 797. Percentages rounded

### 5.2.2 Use of childcare by integrated service area

Use of any form of childcare was lowest in Central (South) and Eastern (24% of respondents living in these localities did not use any form of childcare) and in Central (South) where respondents were using childcare it was more likely to be informal childcare only.

#### Use of childcare by integrated service area

|   | Billingham | Central (North) | Central (South) | Eastern | Western | Overall |
|---|------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Percentage of respondents using some form of childcare      | 83%        | 79%             | 76%             | 76%     | 88%     | 79%     |
| Percentage of childcare users using informal childcare only | 20%        | 23%             | 28%             | 21%     | 22%     | 24%     |

Base: use, all respondents 797; informal childcare, childcare users, 630, percentages rounded

### 5.2.3 Use of childcare by household type

Patterns of childcare use were broadly similar across all types of households. A slightly higher percentage of single parent households were using some form of childcare (84%

compared to 79% overall) and within that a lower percentage were using informal childcare only (21% compared to 24% overall).

Use of childcare across different household income levels was similar with the exception of much lower use of childcare in households reporting an income of less than £10,000 a year and higher use for households reporting an income of between £50,000 and £66,000 a year:

### Use of childcare by household income

| Household income                                       | £0-£10,000 | £10,001-£20,000 | £20,001-£30,000 | £30,001-£40,000 | £40,001-£50,000 | £50,001-£66,000 | Over £66,000 |
|--|------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Percentage of respondents using some form of childcare | 68%        | 83%             | 85%             | 84%             | 81%             | 91%             | 83%          |

Base: 514, percentages rounded

A lower percentage of workless households were using childcare at the time of the survey compared to working households.

### Use of childcare Working vs. Workless households

|  | Households with at least one adult in work ('working households') | Household with no adult in employment ('workless household') | Overall |
|--|---|--|---------|
| Percentage of respondents using some form of childcare | 83%   | 68%  | 79%     |

Base: all respondents 797; working households 643; workless households 118. Percentages rounded

Use of childcare was lower amongst workless households however, whilst sample sizes are small (and therefore findings should be treated with caution) data suggests broadly similar



use of formal and informal childcare amongst working and workless households albeit slightly higher percentages of workless households with a child aged 2 years and a child aged 11 to 14 years were using informal childcare only:

### Use of informal childcare Workless vs. Working households

| Respondents with a child aged: | % of respondents using childcare only using friends and family |                    |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------|
|                                | Workless households  | Working households |
| 0 – 1 year                     | 29%  | 30%                |
| 2 years                        | 12%  | 17%                |
| 3 – 4 years                    | 9%   | 11%                |
| 5 – 10 years                   | 32%  | 29%                |
| 11 – 14 years                  | 44%  | 56%                |

Note: Respondents with a child or children in different age groups will be double-counted in the table above

### 5.3 Location of childcare

Respondents were asked how much of their childcare is based in the Stockton-on-Tees area. Findings suggest that for the majority, childcare is accessed locally. 82% (510 respondents) reported that all of the childcare used was in the borough; 10% (65 respondents) stated that some of their childcare was located in Stockton-on-Tees and; 7% (45 respondents) indicated that the childcare they used was located outside of the borough.

#### 5.3.1 Influences on the location of childcare

Respondents were asked what was important to them when choosing childcare. For the majority (80%) proximity to the home was important, albeit proximity to school and work were also considerations (selected as important by 33% and 22% respectively). Influences on the choice of location were similar across all age ranges of children cared for.

### 5.4 Satisfaction with current childcare

In general respondents were satisfied with their childcare arrangements; 89% (572 respondents) reported being satisfied or very satisfied generally with their childcare arrangements. A small minority (6%, 37 respondents) were either dissatisfied (5%) or very dissatisfied (1%) generally with their childcare arrangements.

### 5.4.1 Satisfaction with the cost of childcare

Two thirds of respondents were satisfied with the cost of their childcare arrangements and whilst this represents a majority, a large minority (1 in 5 or 19%) were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the cost of their current childcare.

Satisfaction levels with the cost of childcare arrangements were very similar across all ISAs however; a higher percentage of respondents living in Billingham reported dissatisfaction:

#### Satisfaction with the cost of childcare arrangements by integrated service area

| <b>% of respondents who were:</b> | <b>Very satisfied</b> | <b>Satisfied</b> | <b>No opinion</b> | <b>Dissatisfied</b> | <b>Very dissatisfied</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Billingham</b>                 | 33%                   | 32%              | 12%               | 22%                 | 1%                       |
| <b>Central (North)</b>            | 37%                   | 31%              | 16%               | 13%                 | 3%                       |
| <b>Central (South)</b>            | 34%                   | 29%              | 21%               | 15%                 | 1%                       |
| <b>Eastern</b>                    | 40%                   | 29%              | 11%               | 15%                 | 4%                       |
| <b>Western</b>                    | 32%                   | 37%              | 8%                | 15%                 | 6%                       |
| <b>Overall</b>                    | 30%                   | 31%              | 15%               | 16%                 | 3%                       |

Base: all respondents, 602; respondents by ISA 554. Percentages rounded

The relationship between household income and satisfaction with the cost of childcare arrangements is not straightforward. Higher income households were more likely to be dissatisfied with the cost of their current childcare arrangements. A smaller percentage of lower income families expressed dissatisfaction with the cost of their childcare arrangements and a higher percentage were unable to offer an opinion. In the case of lower income families there is lower use of childcare overall which may account for the higher proportion of 'no opinion' responses.

Households with an income of between £20,000 and £40,000 reported the highest levels of satisfaction with their current childcare costs.

### Satisfaction with the cost of childcare arrangements by household income

| % of respondents who were: | Very satisfied | Satisfied  | No opinion | Dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied |
|----------------------------|----------------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|
| £0 - £20,000               | 40%            | 25%        | 16%        | 19%          | 1%                |
| £20,001 - £40,000          | 33%            | 38%        | 12%        | 14%          | 4%                |
| £40,001 and over           | 29%            | 34%        | 11%        | 23%          | 4%                |
| <b>Overall</b>             | <b>30%</b>     | <b>31%</b> | <b>15%</b> | <b>16%</b>   | <b>3%</b>         |

Base: all respondents, 602; household income, 419. Percentages rounded

Satisfaction with the cost of childcare arrangements was similar across all age ranges of children and for parents/carers of disabled children and children with additional needs compared to all respondents.

#### 5.4.2 Satisfaction with the location of childcare

Overall 87% of respondents (544) were satisfied with the location of their childcare arrangements; a small percentage (5%) was dissatisfied. Satisfaction with location of childcare arrangements was lower in Billingham than in other ISAs:

#### Satisfaction with the location of childcare arrangements – by integrated service area and overall

| Integrated service area | Percentage of respondents who were: |            |            |              |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|
|                         | Very satisfied                      | Satisfied  | No opinion | Dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied |
| <b>Billingham</b>       | 56%                                 | 27%        | 7%         | 6%           | 3%                |
| <b>Central (North)</b>  | 61%                                 | 30%        | 4%         | 4%           | 1%                |
| <b>Central (South)</b>  | 51%                                 | 32%        | 12%        | 4%           | 1%                |
| <b>Eastern</b>          | 59%                                 | 31%        | 5%         | 4%           | 1%                |
| <b>Western</b>          | 57%                                 | 32%        | 7%         | 3%           | 0%                |
|                         |                                     |            |            |              |                   |
| <b>Overall</b>          | <b>57%</b>                          | <b>30%</b> | <b>7%</b>  | <b>4%</b>    | <b>1%</b>         |

Base: all respondents 625; respondents by ISA 576. Percentages rounded

Satisfaction with the location of childcare was broadly similar across all age ranges.

## 5.5 Reasons for using childcare

Parents/carers use childcare for a number of different reasons, often for more than one reason. The majority of survey respondents use childcare because they work (71%, 491 respondents). A third (34%, 238) use childcare because it is good for their child and a third (33%, 230 respondents) use childcare so their child can play with other children.

### Reasons for using childcare

| Reason                              | % respondents stating |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Go to work                          | 71%                   |
| Good for my child                   | 34%                   |
| Child can play with other children  | 33%                   |
| Give me a break                     | 16%                   |
| Studying                            | 8%                    |
| Attending dentist/doctor/interviews | 8%                    |
| Other                               | 2%                    |

Base: 694, percentages rounded. Multiple responses.

Other reasons given for using childcare included (verbatim):

- Autistic children need to understand concepts of appropriate behaviour, social interaction and a boost to their self esteem;
- Give them a break too!
- Gives child day structure, teaches children socially acceptable behaviour
- Husband works away
- I would like to go back to work
- It enables me to get out of the house
- My child has special needs - help to play with other children, interact more, social play
- So his sister can have time with us
- Social events
- Spend time with husband away from home

## 5.6 Non childcare users

One in five respondents (21%, 164 respondents) were not using any form of childcare at the time of the survey. Of those using childcare nearly a quarter (24%) were using informal childcare (extended family and friends) only.

In this section the focus is on those reporting that they did not use any childcare, formal or informal.

A higher proportion of respondents living in Central (South) and Eastern integrated service areas were not using any form of childcare (24% compared to 21% overall); highest use of childcare was found in Western:

### Non-users of childcare by integrated service area

| <b>Integrated service area</b> | <b>Number of respondents who were not using any form of childcare</b> | <b>Percentage of respondents</b> |
|--------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Billingham</b>              | 19  | 17%                              |
| <b>Central (North)</b>         | 45  | 21%                              |
| <b>Central (South)</b>         | 48  | 24%                              |
| <b>Eastern</b>                 | 30  | 24%                              |
| <b>Western</b>                 | 9   | 11%                              |
| <b>Overall</b>                 | 164   | 21%                              |

Base: all respondents 164, percentages rounded

In the following table use of childcare has been analysed by age of child, rather than by whether or not a parent/carer is using childcare for at least one child. Whereas 21% of respondents were not using any form of childcare, others may have been using childcare for one child but not for another.

Non use of childcare was lowest amongst parents/carers with a child aged 3 or 4 years old (reflecting the take up of the early years entitlement) and highest amongst parents/carers of a child aged 11 to 14 years old.

### Non-users of childcare by age of child

| <b>Age range of children cared for</b> | <b>Number of respondents who were not using any form of childcare</b> | <b>Percentage of respondents</b> |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>0 – 1 year</b>                      | 86  | 39%                              |
| <b>2 years</b>                         | 56  | 32%                              |
| <b>3 – 4 years</b>                     | 53  | 24%                              |
| <b>5 – 10 years</b>                    | 160   | 35%                              |
| <b>11 – 14 years</b>                   | 85  | 50%                              |

Base: all respondents 797, percentages rounded

Respondents who had not used childcare in the past twelve months were asked why. Reasons varied but findings suggest that for a large proportion of respondents non use of childcare is a choice, or has been made possible by finding a childcare solution based on using informal childcare, sharing childcare responsibilities with a spouse or working around school hours.

Here it is hard to establish unmet need. A number of respondents answering this question were using informal childcare and it cannot be assumed that the use of informal childcare is as a result of a lack of choice or options. Previous findings show that 89% of those using childcare were generally satisfied with their childcare arrangements, and that includes those only using informal childcare.

In the following table, responses indicating that childcare is not used through choice or as a result of childcare solutions having been found are shown. Barriers and potential unmet need are discussed in the following section.

**Percentage of respondents not using childcare where findings indicate choice or compromise solutions**

| <b>Reason for not using childcare</b>              | <b>Percentage of those responding</b> |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Friends or other relatives look after the children | 43%                                   |
| Choose to look after the children oneself          | 34%                                   |
| Partner/spouse looks after the children            | 23%                                   |
| Have flexible working arrangements                 | 9%                                    |

Base: 329, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

A small percentage of respondents indicated that they did not require childcare:

**Percentage of respondents not using childcare where findings indicate childcare is/was not needed**

| <b>Reason for not using childcare</b> | <b>Percentage of those responding</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Maternity leave                       | 3%                                    |
| Child is at school                    | 2%                                    |
| Child old enough/childcare not needed | 2%                                    |
| Child carer (respondent)              | 2%                                    |
| Other                                 | 2%                                    |

Base: 329, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Other includes: pregnant; child too young; use childcare in another area; starting soon

In a small percentage of cases findings do suggest unmet need, albeit numbers are very small:

**Percentage of respondents not using childcare where findings indicate barriers to use**

| <b>Reason for not using childcare</b>            | <b>Percentage of those responding (number)</b> |
|--|--|
| Nothing suitable for my child's additional needs | 5%   |
| Unable to find suitable childcare                | 5%   |
| Childcare is too expensive                       | 3%   |
| Other  | 1%   |

Base: 329, percentages rounded. Multiple responses. Other includes: "lied to"; sick; lack information

**5.7 Unmet demand for childcare**

Findings suggest that amongst non childcare users there may be some unmet demand but it is not generally high demand. There is no clear evidence of a lack of childcare provision to meet need and few respondents indicated barriers to take up.

However, 23% of all respondents and 28% of those already using childcare stated that they needed more childcare than they were already using. Further, 25% of all respondents would change their childcare if there was another choice.

The percentage of respondents living in each integrated service area indicating that they needed more childcare than they were already using was the same, with the exception of respondents in Central North were a lower percentage required more childcare (20% compared to 24% in all other areas and 23% overall).

Responses indicate higher levels of unmet need for older children (aged 5 to 14 years):



**Percentage of all respondents stating they needed more childcare than they were already using**

| <b>Age range</b>  | <b>0 – 1<br/>year</b> | <b>2<br/>years</b> | <b>3 – 4<br/>years</b> | <b>5 – 10<br/>years</b> | <b>11 – 14<br/>years</b> | <b>Overall</b> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Percentage of respondents needing more childcare</b> | 24%                   | 18%                | 20%                    | 28%                     | 25%                      | 23%            |

Base: all respondents, 797, percentages rounded

Adjusting data to look at responses from those using childcare (formal or informal) shows a higher percentage of parents/carers stating they need more childcare than they are already using. In particular it highlights unmet need amongst parents and carers of children aged 5 - 10 years and 11- 14 years.

**Percentage of respondents currently using childcare stating they needed more childcare than they were already using**

| <b>Age range</b>  | <b>0 – 1<br/>year</b> | <b>2 years</b> | <b>3 – 4<br/>years</b> | <b>5 – 10<br/>years</b> | <b>11 – 14<br/>years</b> | <b>Overall</b> |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Percentage of respondents needing more childcare</b> | 29%                   | 23%            | 23%                    | 36%                     | 32%                      | 30%            |

Base: 806, percentages rounded.

The type of childcare required by those needing more childcare differs according to the age of the child. Day nursery and childminding provision was identified by parents/carers of very young children, day nursery and pre-school for parents/carers of 2 year olds and out of school and holiday provision for parents/carers of children aged 5 – 14 years. It should be noted that whilst unmet demand is identified, the percentages of parents/carers requiring additional childcare by type of provision is relatively small, particularly for parents/carers of children aged 3 and 4 years of age.

### 5.7.1 Current use of childcare and unmet need by age of child – summary tables

Note: for all tables parents/carers may care for children in more than one age group

#### Parents/carers of children aged 0 – 1 year

- 61% of parents/carers of a child aged 0 – 1 year use some form of childcare, of whom, 30% use friends and/or family only (18% of all parents/carers with a child in this age range)
- 29% of those using childcare and 24% of all respondents need more childcare than they are already using
- The highest level of demand is for day nursery and childminding provision:

| Type of provision | Number currently using | % of all respondents with a child in the relevant age range | % of all respondents using childcare for a child in the relevant age range | Number of those currently using who need more | % of those currently using |
|-------------------|------------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| Childminding      | 33                     | 15%   | 25%  | 9   | 7%                         |
| Preschool         | 7                      | 3%  | 5%   | 3   | 2%                         |
| Day nursery       | 50                     | 23%   | 37%  | 13  | 10%                        |
| Crèche            | 15                     | 7%  | 11%  | 7   | 5%                         |
| Family            | 75                     | 34%   | 56%  | n/a   | n/a                        |
| Friends           | 14                     | 6%  | 10%  | n/a   | n/a                        |

Base: all respondents 220; users of childcare 134. Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

## Parents/carers of children aged 2 years

- 68% of parents/carers of a child aged 2 years use some form of childcare, of whom, 15% use friends and/or family only (10% of all parents/carers with a child in this age range)
- 23% of those using childcare and 18% of all respondents need more childcare than they are already using
- The highest level of demand is for day nursery and pre-school provision:

| <b>Type of provision</b> | <b>Number currently using</b> | <b>% of all respondents with a child in the relevant age range</b> | <b>% of all respondents using childcare for a child in the relevant age range</b> | <b>Number of those currently using who need more (formal only)</b> | <b>% of those currently using</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Childminding             | 17                            | 10%  | 14%   | 5  | 4%                                |
| Preschool                | 26                            | 15%  | 21%   | 10   | 8%                                |
| Day nursery              | 62                            | 35%  | 51%   | 10   | 8%                                |
| School nursery           | 3                             | 2%   | 2%  | 4  | 3%                                |
| Crèche                   | 15                            | 8%   | 12%   | 3  | 2%                                |
| Family                   | 58                            | 33%  | 48%   | n/a  | n/a                               |
| Friends                  | 11                            | 6%   | 9%  | n/a  | n/a                               |

Base: all respondents 177; users of childcare 121. Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

## Parents/carers of children aged 3 – 4 years

- 76% of parents/carers of a child aged 3 - 4 years use some form of childcare, of whom, 8% use friends and/or family only (6% of all parents/carers with a child in this age range)
- 23% of those using childcare and 20% of all respondents need more childcare than they are already using
- Findings indicate very little unmet demand amongst current users with a child in the 3 – 4 year old age range:

| Type of provision | Number currently using | % of all respondents with a child in the relevant age range | % of all respondents using childcare for a child in the relevant age range | Number of those currently using who need more (formal only) | % of those currently using childcare |
|-------------------|------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Childminding      | 20                     | 9%  | 12%  | 9   | 5%                                   |
| Preschool         | 30                     | 14%   | 18%  | 2   | 1%                                   |
| Day nursery       | 65                     | 29%   | 38%  | 4   | 2%                                   |
| School nursery    | 83                     | 37%   | 49%  | 1   | 1%                                   |
| Crèche            | 4                      | 2%  | 2%   | 0   | 0%                                   |
| Family            | 66                     | 30%   | 39%  | n/a   | n/a                                  |
| Friends           | 8                      | 4%  | 5%   | n/a   | n/a                                  |

Base: all respondents 222; users of childcare 169. Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

## Parents/carers of children aged 5 - 10 years

- 65% of parents/carers of a child aged 5 - 10 years use some form of childcare, of whom, 32% use friends and/or family only (21% of all parents/carers with a child in this age range)
- 36% of those using childcare and 28% of all respondents need more childcare than they are already using
- Highest levels of demand are for after school clubs and holiday provision.

| Type of provision     | Number currently using | % of all respondents with a child in the relevant age range | % of all respondents using childcare for a child in the relevant age range | Number of those currently using who need more (formal only) | % of those currently using childcare |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Childminding          | 40                     | 9%  | 13%  | 15  | 5%                                   |
| Breakfast club        | 83                     | 18%   | 28%  | 18  | 6%                                   |
| After school club     | 78                     | 17%   | 26%  | 42  | 14%                                  |
| After school activity | 62                     | 14%   | 21%  | 30  | 10%                                  |
| Holiday club          | 58                     | 13%   | 20%  | 42  | 14%                                  |
| Family                | 182                    | 40%   | 61%  | n/a   | n/a                                  |
| Friends               | 57                     | 12%   | 19%  | n/a   | n/a                                  |

Base: all respondents 457 ; users of childcare 297. Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

## Parents/carers of children aged 11 - 14 years

- 50% of parents/carers of a child aged 11 – 14 years use some form of childcare, of whom, 44% use friends and/or family only (22% of all parents/carers with a child in this age range)
- 32% of those using childcare and 25% of all respondents need more childcare than they are already using
- Highest levels of demand are for after school clubs, after school activities and holiday provision.

| <b>Type of provision</b> | <b>Number currently using</b> | <b>% of all respondents with a child in the relevant age range</b> | <b>% of all respondents using childcare for a child in the relevant age range</b> | <b>Number of those currently using who need more (formal only)</b> | <b>% of those currently using childcare</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Childminding             | 8                             | 5%   | 9%  | 1  | 1%  |
| Breakfast club           | 9                             | 5%   | 11%   | 2  | 2%  |
| After school club        | 12                            | 7%   | 14%   | 9  | 11%   |
| After school activity    | 23                            | 14%  | 27%   | 9  | 11%   |
| Holiday club             | 18                            | 11%  | 21%   | 12   | 14%   |
| Family                   | 55                            | 32%  | 65%   | n/a  | n/a   |
| Friends                  | 22                            | 13%  | 26%   | n/a  | n/a   |

Base: all respondents 170; users of childcare 85. Percentages rounded. Multiple responses

## 5.8 Times at which childcare is required

The highest percentages of parents/carers need childcare all day between the hours of 8am and 6pm. This is consistent with reported working patterns where the highest percentage of respondents report working office hours. There is a need for childcare outside of standard office hours, including in the evenings, before 8am, at weekends and to cover shift patterns. A relatively high proportion of respondents identified a requirement for childcare from the end of the school day to 5.30/6pm. This was not provided as a response option but was offered as an additional time by respondents, suggesting that this is an important time in terms of when childcare is needed. A high percentage of respondents (relatively speaking) identified a need for emergency or occasional childcare (17%).

### Times at which childcare is required

| <b>Time</b>                    | <b>Percentage of respondents requiring childcare</b> | <b>Time</b>   | <b>Percentage of respondents requiring childcare</b> |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Before 8am                     | 15%  | All day between 8am-6pm                               | 32%  |
| Mornings<br>e.g. 8am–12 noon   | 12%  | Weekend childcare                                     | 7%   |
| All day between<br>8am–3pm     | 17%  | Emergency/occasional<br>childcare                     | 16%  |
| After 6pm                      | 7%   | To cover varying shift<br>patterns                    | 9%   |
| Overnight childcare            | 3%   | After school/late afternoon                           | 12%  |
| Lunch time childcare           | 3%   | School holidays                                       | 2%   |
| 8am to 9am                     | 12%  | Out of school (including<br>after school and holiday) | 1%   |
| Afternoons<br>e.g. 12.30pm-3pm | 9%   | Other   | 3%   |

Base: 671, percentages rounded. Multiple responses. Other includes: afternoons; all day; ad hoc; mornings; weekends

## 5.9 Opinions about childcare

Respondents were asked to rate a small number of statements relating to the provision of childcare in their local area. Ratings ranged from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’ on a five point scale. A relatively high proportion of respondents chose not to provide an indication of the opinions about childcare in their local area, which may reflect relatively high levels of non-use. Data in the following tables has been adjusted to account for non-respondents. The tables show the extent to which respondents agreed with a statement, and a mean rating. The mean rating provides a summary assessment – a mean rating of 1 would indicate complete agreement with the statement, a mean rating of 5, complete disagreement.

### Accessibility and choice of childcare

The majority of respondents indicate they have found it easy to get the type of childcare they want locally, however, one in five (21%) indicate this has not been the case:

| Statement   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Mean rating |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|
| I have found it easy to get the type of childcare I want in my local area | 19%            | 42%   | 18%                        | 16%      | 5%                | 2.54        |

Base: 694, percentages rounded

Similarly, 27% do not feel that there is enough choice of childcare in their local area and 22% feel there should be more childcare available locally:



| <b>Statement</b>   | <b>Strongly agree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Strongly disagree</b> | <b>Mean rating</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>There is enough choice of childcare in my local area</b>    | 10%                   | 34%          | 30%                               | 22%             | 5%                       | 2.8                |
| <b>There is plenty of childcare available in my local area</b> | 12%                   | 41%          | 25%                               | 17%             | 5%                       | 2.6                |

Base: choice of childcare 694; sufficiency of childcare 699. Percentages rounded

Supporting these findings, 45% of respondents report feeling there should be more childcare available locally:

| <b>Statement</b>                                       | <b>Strongly agree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Strongly disagree</b> | <b>Mean rating</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>There should be more childcare in my local area</b> | 14%                   | 31%          | 40%                               | 12%             | 2%                       | 2.6                |

Base: 688, percentages rounded

A relatively high percentage of respondents reported a lack of availability and choice and one in four (25%) would change their childcare if there was another choice. This suggests that for some parents/carers current use of childcare is a compromise as a result of a lack of options.

| <b>Statement</b>   | <b>Strongly agree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Strongly disagree</b> | <b>Mean rating</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>I would change my childcare if there was another choice</b> | 7%                    | 18%          | 28%                               | 30%             | 17%                      | 2.5                |

Base: 677, percentages rounded

### 5.10 Costs

Previous findings showed that 19% of respondents were dissatisfied with the cost of their childcare arrangements, and 61% were satisfied. Responses to the statement about the costs of childcare suggest that whereas the majority of those using childcare are satisfied with the cost of that childcare, there is a general perception of childcare costs being high.

Less than a third of respondents (31%) agreed with the statement ‘childcare costs are reasonable’ and a high percentage (43%) disagreed:

| <b>Statement</b>                      | <b>Strongly agree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Strongly disagree</b> | <b>Mean rating</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Childcare costs are reasonable</b> | 6%                    | 25%          | 26%                               | 30%             | 13%                      | 3.2                |

Base: 692, percentages rounded

### 5.11 Early years entitlement for three and four year olds

Respondents with a child aged two, three or four years old were asked a series of questions regarding their knowledge and use of, and preferences for, the free flexible early years entitlement of 15 hours a week for all eligible children aged three and four years old (a child becomes eligible from the term following their third birthday until they enter reception class in school).

Parents/carers of a child aged two were asked how they thought they might like to use a place when their child becomes eligible. Parents/carers of a child aged three or four were asked about their preferences for take up of the free entitlement now.

A total of 177 respondents (22% of all respondents) had a child or children aged two years old and 222 (28% of total) had a child or children aged three or four years old.

A number of respondents who had not indicated they were the parent/carer of a child in the relevant age range chose to respond to early years entitlement questions and some parents/carers of a child aged two years chose to answer questions only directed at parents/carers of a child aged three and four years old. Responses are shown below.

53% of parents/carers with a child aged three or four years of age stated they were using their free nursery place. Take-up of the free entitlement in Stockton-on-Tees is high (take up of the free early years entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds in Stockton-on-Tees is over 90%) and it is possible a number of parents/carers know the free entitlement by another name (e.g. nursery grant; nursery place; nursery education place etc.).

Respondents were asked why they chose not to use their free nursery place, or chose to use less than 15 hours a week. A large number of parents/carers with a 2 year old child also responded and consequently that primary reason for not taking up a place was because the child was not yet 3 years old. Some respondents also indicated they were unaware of the free entitlement:

“Did not know we were entitled to free childcare - child not yet three”

“There isn't one and I haven't been told”

“Just turned three, did not know about free places”

A number of respondents (19) commented on a lack of provision or flexible hours:

“Do not get full 38 weeks as school closes a day early for nursery children at end of term”.

“No places available for three year old locally”.

“My daughter turned three in Jan 2010. I have tried all local playgroups and nurseries, there is no space. Have registered her with playgroup and nursery since she was a few months old”.

Respondents were asked how they would like to use their free nursery place. The preference amongst the majority of respondents answering the question was for five days a week (three hours a day). Nearly a quarter (23%) would prefer to access their place for three days a week:

#### **Preferences for flexible take-up**

| <b>Flexible options</b>       | <b>Percentage of respondents selecting</b> |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 5 days a week (3 hours a day) | 54%  |
| 3 days a week                 | 23%  |
| 1 or 2 days a week            | 17%  |
| 4 days a week                 | 6%   |

Base: 430, percentages rounded.

#### **Preferences for times of day**

The majority of respondents (47%) expressed a preference for half day sessions (either morning or afternoon) and nearly a third (29%) would prefer to use their free nursery place between 9am and 3pm:

### Preference for times of day to use the free nursery place

|   | Times of day |           |  |
|---|--------------|-----------|--|
| Percentage of respondents expressing a preference for | 9am – 3pm    | 8am – 6pm | Half day (either morning or afternoon) |
|   |              | 25%       | 16%                                    |

Base: 425, percentages rounded

### Preference for setting

The majority of respondents (59%) would prefer to use a school nursery for their free nursery place and 17% preferred to access a place across a combination of settings:

### Preference for setting to use the free nursery place

|   | Type of setting |             |                         |             |                         |
|---|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Percentage of respondents expressing a preference for | School nursery  | Day nursery | Pre-school or playgroup | Childminder | Combination of settings |
|   |                 | 59%         | 14%                     | 7%          | 9%                      |

Base: 443, percentages rounded

### Stretch

Currently (August 2010) the free early years entitlement (free nursery place) can be taken over 38 weeks a year (equating to 15 hours a week). From September 2012, the 15 hours can be stretched to allow parents/carers to take fewer hours a week and for more weeks of the year (for example, 12 hours a week for 47 weeks).

Respondents were asked if they would be interested in spreading their nursery place over fewer hours a week across more weeks a year and provided with a list of options/combinations (as shown in the following table). The most popular option was the

status quo – 15 hours a week over 38 weeks a year. However, responses also indicate a demand for stretch with the most popular being 12 hours a week over 47 weeks a year.

| <b>Stretch options offered – percentage of respondents selecting</b> |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>12 hours a week<br/>over 47 weeks a<br/>year</b>                  | <b>13 hours a week<br/>over 44 weeks a<br/>year</b> | <b>14 hours a week<br/>over 41 weeks a<br/>year</b> | <b>15 hours a week<br/>over 38 weeks a<br/>year</b> |
| 34%  | 4%  | 5%  | 57%   |

Base: 421, percentage rounded

### **5.12 Information**

Word of mouth (including work colleagues, friends and family) is an important source of information about parenting or for families. 71% of respondents received information from friends and family representing the most common source of information. Schools are a source of information for 26% of respondents; 37% received information through the health visitor and over a third (37%) via the internet. The Families Information Service (FIS) was identified as a source of information about parenting or for families by 16% of respondents.

### Accessing information about parenting, activities or services for families

| Information source  | Number of respondents citing | Percentage of respondents |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Friends and family  | 540                          | 71%                       |
| Internet  | 283                          | 37%                       |
| Health visiting   | 218                          | 29%                       |
| Child's school  | 196                          | 26%                       |
| Families Information Service  | 123                          | 16%                       |
| Local library   | 45                           | 6%                        |
| Childcare providers including sure start/children's centres             | 30                           | 4%                        |
| Other health services/home visiting                                     | 9                            | 1%                        |
| Support services (e.g. parent support; carer support; disabled support) | 9                            | 1%                        |
| Media   | 7                            | 1%                        |
| Other   | 15                           | 2%                        |

Base: 757, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Other includes: TV 'super nanny'; past experiences; myself/self; childcare courses and church; interpreter; work; college/FE

43% of respondents (339) reported knowing about the FIS and of those, half (50%) had contacted the service.

### Reasons for contacting the FIS

The most common reason cited for contacting the FIS was because the respondent was looking for childcare, or for activities for their child/ren.

### Reasons for contacting the FIS in the past 12 months

| Reason   | Number of respondents citing | Percentage of respondents |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Looking for childcare                              | 143                          | 63%                       |
| Looking for children's activities                  | 46                           | 20%                       |
| Benefits advice                                    | 22                           | 10%                       |
| Information on school/schooling                    | 23                           | 10%                       |
| Parenting support                                  | 17                           | 8%                        |
| Support for the cost of childcare                  | 8                            | 4%                        |
| Support for a child/children with additional needs | 10                           | 4%                        |
| As a childcare worker                              | 5                            | 2%                        |
| Looking for respite care/support                   | 2                            | 1%                        |
| Other  | 9                            | 4%                        |

Base: 226, percentages rounded. Multiple responses.

Other includes: safe taxi company (for pick up/drop off); signed up for text messaging; NE Grant information; locate other agencies; through work

The service was rated highly by the majority of people contacting it:

- 71% reported the Families Information Service was very helpful;
- 27% reported it to be of some help and;
- A small percentage (2%, 4 respondents) felt the service had been unhelpful

Base: 172, percentages rounded.

### 5.13 Support for childcare costs

Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of possible options if they were receiving help towards childcare costs. 377 respondents (47% of total) chose not to answer the question. Given that 40% of all respondents and 24% of those using childcare were not



using formal childcare, it can be assumed that the majority of those choosing not to respond to the question about childcare support were non-users of formal childcare.

Findings should be treated with caution however. For example, 53% of those responding to the question stated they were in receipt of Child Tax Credit; however, this is a universal entitlement for families responsible for at least one child (as at the time of writing). 17% reported being in receipt of 3 and 4 year old funding (71 respondents). Previous findings show 53% of parents/carers with a child aged three or four years old are taking up their free nursery place (125 respondents) and this figure is questioned on the basis that monitoring figures show take up of the 3 and 4 year old entitlement to be much higher.

Whilst data should be treated with caution (and findings may reflect some degree of misunderstanding or confusion around child benefits and entitlements) they do indicate that employer support is not widely received:

### Reported help received towards childcare costs

| Type of support                              | Number of respondents citing | Percentage of respondents |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Child Tax Credit                             | 223                          | 53%                       |
| Working Tax Credit childcare element         | 143                          | 34%                       |
| 3 and 4 year old nursery place               | 71                           | 17%                       |
| Childcare vouchers                           | 58                           | 14%                       |
| Salary sacrifice                             | 16                           | 4%                        |
| LSC Free childcare for training and learning | 7                            | 2%                        |
| Care to Learn                                | 3                            | 1%                        |
| Employer contribution                        | 4                            | 1%                        |
| NHS bursary                                  | 3                            | 1%                        |
| 2 year old funding                           | 2                            | 0.5%                      |
| Income support                               | 2                            | 0.5%                      |
| Other  | 15                           | 4%                        |

Base: 420, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Respondents who were working and not claiming the childcare element of Working Tax Credit (WTC) were asked why. The majority stated they did not qualify (60%, 150 respondents). However, within this, some respondents were unsure regarding their eligibility.

14% (33 respondents) were not using formal childcare at the time of the survey and 7% (16 respondents) lacked information about the childcare element of WTC:

“Unsure whether qualify - only just returned to work - not yet researched”.

“Unsure of how to claim & giving personal information - unsure if eligible”.

Other reasons were provided, albeit in small numbers.

## 5.14 Comments

Respondents were invited to make any additional comment at the end of the questionnaire; 19% (148 respondents) chose to do so. Comments covered a wide variety of topics and some provided positive feedback, others suggestions for improvement. Here, comments have been assigned to very broad categories to provide a summary of responses however; the comments add a rich source of information and have therefore been included, verbatim, in the appendices.

- 36% of comments referred to either a lack of provision or the type of provision a respondent felt was required:

“As I am looking for work, I'm looking at what childcare is available but can't seem to find a childminder who does weekdays and weekends and I don't want my child to go to different people”.

“There is no childcare other than what I receive at the moment which is on a first come first served basis. My son receives one after school activity per week that is guaranteed”.

“Would very much like my child's school (name omitted) to provide holiday scheme as quite stressful trying to get time off work in school holidays etc. There seems to be lots of schemes for boys in the area i.e. Football”.

“Sure Start centres have been an invaluable source of education, support and advice. Many more needed as it is a postcode lottery”

- 18% of comments made related to the cost of childcare, or charges made:

“We pay a small amount to our parents to look after our 3 children after nursery and school until we finish work, because we cannot afford childcare”.

“School childcare was not flexible. We had to pay 8 weeks in advance and had to pay for 2 hours regardless of how long we needed. Could schools have similar rules and regulations for childminders?”

“If childcare was less expensive I would have been able to return to work but as it's so expensive I am better off staying off until the baby starts full time school”.

- 11% of comments related to either quality generally or a setting or type of setting specifically:

“I have really enjoyed using the Sure Start playgroups”.

“School nursery not open late enough (need childcare until 6pm). Constant battle to get my private nursery to continue to pick up at my school (10 minutes drive away)”.

- 10% of comments provided general information about the respondents, their child or their circumstances:

“I am a grandparent and bring my grandson to a mother and toddler group - I look after him while his mum is at work”.

“I'm really lucky, I work 3 days a week and both sets of grandparents share the childcare between them...”

- 9% of comments (14) related specifically to the needs of disabled children and children with additional needs. 19% of respondents making a comment were caring for a child with additional needs:

“My child will only stay in places with me or a close family member as he has a fear of people which makes it difficult to go anywhere or do anything away from the house”

“I receive a monthly respite of 1-2 nights for my disabled child. It is fantastic and helps me a great deal”.

“I find it difficult to access care specialist for my son and weekend activities/care just for a couple of hours would be of benefit”.

- 9% of comments were in the area of information, advice and guidance:

“Not enough information is given to help with finding childcare. I knew nothing about 15hours/nursery, if it wasn't for asking around, I still would know nothing”.

“Have found the FIS in Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council very helpful on the occasions that I contacted them”.

- 5% of comments related to the survey and 1% to support for parents and carers

[Base: 148, percentages rounded]

## **6 Qualitative research with parents and carers in Stockton-on-Tees**

A series of focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews were undertaken with parents/carers at various venues across the city. The interviews and discussions aimed to explore issues relating to childcare in more depth, and to consult with parents/carers who may not engage in a questionnaire survey. A total of 40 parents/carers participated in discussions key findings from which have been brought together and summarised below.

The majority of participants (34, 85%) were female, 15% male. Collectively, participants were caring for 60 children with an age range of between one month and 11 years old. 29 participants were White British, 11 participants were from Black and Minority Ethnic communities, including asylum seekers and recent arrivals to the UK. Four participants were one parent families and two participants had a child or children with complex and/or additional needs.

### **6.1 Current level of use of childcare**

25 of the 40 participants were using some form of formal childcare, informal childcare or a combination of both to enable them to train or work. Of the 15 participants not using childcare to work or train, eight were asylum seekers, three were expectant mothers and four were carers who had made the choice to stay at home or were currently not working. Four carers worked full-time, all other working carers worked reduced or part-time hours. Participants' decisions to work reduced hours were based on number of factors including cost reduction, wanting to spend time with children, balancing home and work and a necessity for two incomes.

Many participants were knowledgeable about childcare and had researched the options before they had made decisions about their childcare. Carers reported many different reasons for choosing the childcare option they had in place:

“The continuity of care offered by a childminder is great and this can go on beyond being a baby and nursery into school pick ups”

Carer, Thornaby

“Prepare her for school and to mix with other adults and children”

Carer, one child aged 2½ years old

“It had been essential when we both worked and we felt it was important for his development, social skills and preparation for school”

Carer, two children aged 2 years and 16 weeks old

“What you want is somewhere with a good Ofsted, where staff are fully vetted, somewhere recommended by others where your child is happy and settled”

Carer, two children aged 2½ years and four months old

The childminder option is great for me, she will have both children, does the nursery drop of and eventually, hopefully the school runs which takes care of all my childcare worries on days I am working”

Carer, two children aged ½ years and 9 months old

“It had to be in close proximity to home, on a route to work for one or both parents, it was important that there were several children as I wanted her to mix with others to help develop her social skills and mix with other children”

Carer working in Northallerton

“The homely feel offered by childminders”

Expectant mother who has arranged a childminder for her return to work

Most participants who used formal childcare, used it as part of a package with informal care. Only four carers reported to be using formal childcare in isolation. Two of these carers highlighted that they did not have family locally which meant they did not have the informal networks and as a consequence:

“[I] do not have a choice but to use formal childcare”

Carer working full-time

All newly arrived carers to Stockton-on-Tees reported that they access (or plan to access) the free entitlement offer for three and four year olds for eligible children. These participants preferred to access the offer in the traditional sessional format.

Both carers with children with additional needs used or had used formal childcare through the local authority High Flyer Nursery and combined this with informal childcare. These carers spoke highly of the services and support they have experienced. Neither carer was working at the time of interview.

## **6.2 Current use and rational for using informal childcare**

Participants reported numerous informal care arrangements used for a variety of reasons – friends and neighbours to cater for holidays, grandparents to provide flexible, home-based care with continuity of family relationships, or shared care between husband and wife, particularly to cater for care needs outside school hours

Some parents expressed a preference for informal care by family members, either because it was cheaper or simpler or because they valued family carers and the continuity it offered:

“She is too young to be left with strangers at nursery or with a childminder. I know and trust my parents and that is important to me”

Carer, one child aged 21 months old

“I had not wanted to leave the child with anyone else so formal childcare was not a real consideration for the family”.

Carer child aged 19 months

For participants attending the Port Clarence focus group informal childcare was reported as being the only option:

“Having no childcare limits our choice as parents and therefore relying on family or friends or staying at home is the only option”

Carer Port Clarence



A small number of participants reported that they had chosen not to return to work after the birth of their children, some for financial reasons but others because they wanted to be at home with their children while they were young.

Other carers indicated that they had chosen to reconfigure work patterns to provide informal care to enable both carers to work or train:

“It was a conscious decision by the family to minimise the cost of childcare but still maintain two incomes”.

Carer, one child aged 19 months old

Grandparents were used by many carers with informal arrangements; participants reported that in many cases this was because grandparents wanted to help, but in some cases it was out of necessity to reduce the childcare costs:

“I work part time- because I feel guilty about not helping my daughter”

Grandparent providing care for lone parent who works full-time

“It would not be worth her (carers daughter) while working if she had to pay for five days as it is so expensive for each day, especially as she is a separated parent”

Grandparent providing informal care as part of a package with formal care

### **6.3 Holiday care**

Many of the participants had children who were aged under five years; as a consequence holiday care was not identified as a major concern for these families.

For the few carers who had older children the cost of term time childcare was perceived to be reasonable but holiday care was reported as being too expensive and as a result families relied on informal arrangements using family, friends and annual leave entitlements to cover school holiday periods.

#### **6.4 Future requirements and changing needs of childcare**

Several carers who currently use grand-parents to provide informal care recognise that formal care will need to be a consideration in the future as these carers get older:

“I am not sure my mum will be able to cope with two, they will be very young and needing lots of attention”

Carer, 2 children aged 21 months and eight weeks old

The majority of carers who have currently chosen to stay at home report that they will return to work when child is in full time school.

All carers participating in the Port Clarence group reported that they would be using the pre-school session planned to be run in September by Sure Start to prepare the children for school.

All carers with children under three reported that they would take up the free entitlement place for their child when they were eligible.

#### **6.5 Information, advice and support for parents**

Participants who were asylum seekers, migrants or refugees spoke highly of the support offered by the health visitor team and Sure Start and used these services as the main point of access to information, advice and support. The Families Information Service (FIS) was not recognised as a route for information for these families.

All focus groups were held at children’s centres where publicity and marketing of the FIS was noticeable and prominent, but few carers had heard of the FIS. A large number of participants reported they had spent a significant amount of time on the internet researching childcare options as they were unaware of the service offered by the FIS.

“If I had known about the service it would have been really useful, would have reduced the hours I spent and would have provided me with advice to make the right choices”

Carer, one child, returning to work November

Those who had accessed the FIS spoke highly of the service and one carer with a child with additional needs reported that:

“Accessing the FIZ package is like getting the golden ticket, it contains all the information you need”

This carer spoke highly of the text service also:

“Once you register 88802 UFC you get everything that is happening, its great for reminders, discovering new things and is only 10p”

## **6.6 Support for the cost of childcare**

A few participants accessed salary sacrifice on one or both carer’s salaries, or tax credits with the childcare element. Many reported that they were not eligible for tax credits due to level of income or for other reasons:

“I would not be eligible even if there was childcare as I only work 15 hours a week”  
Carer, one child age 2 ½ year old, Port Clarence

“It was not worth all the paperwork for £80 a month”  
Mother of 3 children

## **6.7 Childcare availability**

Geographical factors affecting availability of activities and childcare for children were highlighted by several participants. Carers in Port Clarence reported that there was no childcare in the locality and to access childcare there was a requirement to travel to Stockton-on-Tees [town] or Billingham. Although the school provides a breakfast club there is no after school provision and childminders are do not pick up from the school which limits the options for families in the locality. Carers recognised that arrangements would need to be made for wraparound care when children started at the school nursery. This is not the case in other areas of the borough where carers report:

“There is a great deal of choice in the Ingleby area, lots of nurseries, childminders and a strong childminder network”

Carer, Ingleby

In contrast, another carers perception of Ingleby was not positive as they indicated that there is a need for:

“Good quality nurseries with good Ofsted reports and vacancies locally”

Carer, one child aged 2 ½ years old, Ingleby

Where concerns were raised they were focussed mainly on school places, in nursery, primary and high school. Some carers in Ingleby reported concerns about quality and number places and frustration at the one point of admission to nursery and mainstream school:

“[There is a need for] more nursery places in Ingleby”

Carer, one child aged 2 ½ years old

“The nursery does mornings and afternoons which means that there are more children in the nursery than can go to the school, also the admissions policy of the local church school can mean that you cannot get into your nearest school”

Carer, one child aged 3 years old

When discussing flexibility of the free entitlement most participants who used informal care and carers who currently did not work were happy with the sessional offer available. But the traditional sessional provision does not meet the needs of all carers

“I needed a nursery close to where I live that would be prepared to drop off and pick up from the school nursery class. There were only three day nurseries in the area. One didn't offer drop off and the other was the nursery my eldest had attended and he had just not settled or been happy there so I decided to choose the only other option for both of them this time”

Carer, two children, in full-time work

“A flexible offer would be good if it was available especially as I hopefully will be working three days”

Carer of two children, currently on maternity leave

Several participants were using childminders who will pick up after morning sessions at school nurseries; others indicated that although the preferred option would be to access the free entitlement at the school nursery, it may not be possible if arrangements could not be made for the afternoons and they may leave the child in the full daycare nursery.

“I will not discount a day nursery place if I can’t get a flexible school place. If I have to look further a field I will do”

Carers with children with additional needs report that geographical factors affected the experiences of carers of children with additional needs:

“Depending on what your child’s needs are influences what you can access or not. Different families have different experiences some good some bad.

“To access some things you must live in a certain postcode or area”

These participants reported that training and confidence of staff in mainstream childcare could improve. They indicated that

“Trained staff, specialist skills like Makaton and specialist equipment in settings would support parents’ confidence to use the private sector”

## **6.8 The cost of childcare**

Participants indicated that the cost of childcare had influenced the choices they had made about the use of childcare especially when the family size increases to two children. Some carers had chosen to take career breaks

“We have done the sums and looked at finances, I was gob smacked when I started to look around at the cost of childcare. We (the carer and her partner) agreed to tighten the spending and our outgoings rather than have me return to work. The cost of childcare was very high and as we have no family close to help us out we couldn’t justify the expense, so I now am a stay at home mum”

Carer, one child aged 18 months and expecting

For some carers who may not have informal networks or who have higher household income, the cost of childcare is not perceived as a barrier:

“The cost was not the major consideration; it was about finding the right person, a good daily routine and a clean safe environment”

Carer, one child aged 8 months old

“£3.00 per hour was the average charge which is not expensive, it was more important that the provider be of good quality and that my child was happy”

Carer in full time work

Recent arrivals perceived childcare beyond the free entitlement as being expensive and have therefore put in place informal arrangements to allow them to study.

Participants participating in focus group discussions paid childcare costs of between £30.00 and £38.00 per day and it was reported that the differential between childminder costs and day care costs had reduced:

“Local childminders used to be cheaper than day nurseries but now childminders are putting their charges up so costs are comparable”

Carer, two children aged three years and eight week old

Carers who had more than one child were more likely to report cost as a barrier:

“The high childcare cost for two”

Mother of three children

“The cost is a problem, especially with more than one child and if you have to have travel on top of that”

Mother, three children, Port Clarence

In one case, a carer had found herself working additional to hours to cover the childcare bills before the family made the decision for her to stay at home:

“I had to work additional hours to cover the cost of childcare”

Mother of three children

Generally, participants accepted the childcare charges they had to pay and had made alternative arrangements through changes to work patterns, reduction in hours worked and the use of informal care to reduce the cost of their childcare.

One carer who used full-daycare to wrap around a school nursery place was not happy with the billing arrangements:

“Although there is no additional charge for the drop off and pick up, there is no discount on my bill for the time my child is not at the nursery. I know it’s a business but it is a little frustrating. If I don’t choose this option I cannot get my child to nursery on the three days that I work. The other nursery I had used had advised me that my child can take his free entitlement there and he has done over the last term as there is only one school intake in September. I have had a slight reduction on my bill but it doesn’t seem like 15 hours free”

Carer, two children aged 3 years and ten months old

## **6.9 Quality of care**

Nearly half of all participants reported a detailed understanding about quality childcare and talked knowledgably about Ofsted reports and inspections. Many carers had visited a selection of settings before choosing their care. No carers reported concerns about the quality of the childcare they used but some referred to children not settling in and not being

happy. Two carers who had visited nurseries voiced concerns about some provision they had visited and consequently not chosen for their children.

### **6.10 Experiences of asylum seekers**

Asylum seekers interviewed in the course of the research reported they were unable to work or access childcare support. Often separated from other family members and social support, they lacked access to informal care but wanted to learn English and not to remain isolated. Participants made use of local play sessions and learning opportunities. They said that both they and their children could make friends and that it helped them learn about their children's development.

These families spoke highly of the services provided through the Health Visitor Team and Surestart.

Carers recognised that their children benefited from accessing the free entitlement but reported that flexibility was not a priority and several indicated they would take a limited offer rather than the full 15 hours, indicating they felt this would be sufficient.

A number of carers will access crèche places to enable them to attend ESOL courses. Sure Start provide a programme of courses supported by crèche places in Children's Centres.

It was highlighted by a person working with asylum seekers that informal care is used significantly by the asylum seeking population in Stockton-on-Tees. Some described arrangements are of concern, with reports of using acquaintances or families of children at school to look after their children when they have court appearances or meetings to attend.



## 7 Youth consultation key findings

### 7.1 Respondent profile

A total of 99 young people completed a survey questionnaire. Respondents ranged from between 11 years and 23 years old. The setting at which the survey was conducted was inclusive holiday provision; where the age of respondents is known it is concluded that older respondents (16 years old and over) were in the main disabled young people and/or young people with additional needs. Nine respondents indicated they had a disability or additional need (a number of respondents declined to answer the question). Of the six respondents aged over 18 years data shows five were disabled or had an additional need.

#### Age of respondents

| Age/age range  | Number of respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 11 years       | 19                    | 19%                       |
| 12 years       | 18                    | 18%                       |
| 13 years       | 25                    | 25%                       |
| 14 years       | 8                     | 8%                        |
| 15-18 years    | 11                    | 11%                       |
| 19 – 23 years  | 5                     | 5%                        |
| Age not stated | 7                     | 7%                        |

Base: 99, percentages rounded

87% of respondents were White British; 3% from a BME background and 10% declined to provide details of their ethnicity.

The focus of the questionnaire survey was on exploring respondent's views about what is needed in the local area for young people and children of all ages and how the young people responding to the survey liked to spend their time in the evenings, at weekends and during holidays.

## 7.2. Preferences for after school activities

Respondents clearly indicated valuing time spent with friends without adults present – over two-thirds of respondents (67%) providing information about their preferences for after school activities selected this option. Over a quarter of respondents (27%, 26 respondents) felt old enough to look after themselves and just over one in five (21%, 20 respondents) preferred a youth club:

### Preferences for after school activities

| Activity   | Percentage of respondents selecting |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Spend time with friends without adults present               | 67%                                 |
| Old enough to look after self                                | 27%                                 |
| Go to a youth club some of the time                          | 21%                                 |
| Sport club   | 14%                                 |
| Spend time at home alone                                     | 8%                                  |
| Go to an out of school club some of the time                 | 7%                                  |
| Stay with other members of my family (e.g. grandparent/aunt) | 6%                                  |
| Drama, music or art club                                     | 5%                                  |
| Other activity   | 5%                                  |

Base: 95, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Respondents were asked if overall they thought there were enough things to do after school for young people of their own age. Just under half (47%) felt that there were; 26% felt there were not and 27% were unsure (base: 93, percentages rounded).

### 7.2.1 Barriers to taking part in after school activities

Respondents were asked if they would like to take part in after school activities but had been unable to and if that were the case indicate the reason from a list of possible options. 86% of respondents (85 young people) provided an answer.

The most common barrier identified to taking part in after school activities was a lack of information (selected by 20% of respondents answering the question) followed by access (19%), a lack of activities locally (19%) and not enjoying the activity when tried.

### Barriers to using out of school activities

| Barrier                                   | Percentage of respondents selecting |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Do not know what activities are available | 20%                                 |
| Can't get there                           | 19%                                 |
| Activities not available in area          | 18%                                 |
| Tried an activity but didn't like it      | 18%                                 |
| No one to go with to the activities       | 15%                                 |
| Don't feel welcome                        | 9%                                  |
| Can't afford the activities enjoyed       | 8%                                  |
| No time to take part in activities        | 8%                                  |
| Other reason                              | 4%                                  |

Base: 85, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

### 7.3 Preferences for holiday activities

As with preferences for after school activities, a large percentage of respondents preferred to spend time with friends during the school holidays (52%). However, preferences for holiday activities show some differences to preferences for after school activities.

A higher percentage of respondents preferred staying with other members of their family during the holidays than after school (18% compared to 6%) and a lower percentage of respondents felt old enough to look after themselves during the holidays when compared to after school (18% compared to 27%). This may reflect the longer periods of 'free' time during the school holidays or reflect custom and practice if respondents have become used to spending time with extended family during holidays.

### Preferences for holiday activities

| Activity   | Percentage of respondents selecting |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Spend time with friends without adults present               | 52%                                 |
| Go to a youth club some of the time                          | 19%                                 |
| Stay with other members of my family (e.g. grandparent/aunt) | 18%                                 |
| Old enough to look after self                                | 18%                                 |
| Go to a holiday club some of the time                        | 13%                                 |
| Sport club   | 11%                                 |
| Spend time at home alone                                     | 5%                                  |
| Drama, music or art club                                     | 4%                                  |
| Go out somewhere   | 2%                                  |
| Swimming   | 2%                                  |
| Go on holiday  | 2%                                  |
| Other activity   | 6%                                  |

Base: 93, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Other includes: do things with both my parents and friends; football; go to Centre Parks, swimming, gym and pictures;

Respondents were asked if overall they thought there were enough things to do during the school holidays for young people of their own age. Just under half (49%) felt that there were; 31% felt there were not and 20% were unsure (base: 88, percentages rounded).

#### 7.3.1 Barriers to taking part in holiday activities

Respondents were asked if they would like to take part in holiday activities but had been unable to and if that were the case indicate the reason from a list of possible options. 81% of respondents (80 young people) provided an answer.

A lack of information is more of a barrier to taking part in activities during the holidays compared to after school (25% of respondents cited a lack of information as a barrier in the holidays compared to 20% after school). A lack of time, cost and travel were also identified as barriers during the holidays by higher percentages of respondents compared to after school.

### Barriers to using out of school activities

| Barrier                                   | Percentage of respondents selecting |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Do not know what activities are available | 25%                                 |
| Can't get there                           | 23%                                 |
| Activities not available in area          | 18%                                 |
| No time to take part in activities        | 18%                                 |
| No one to go with to the activities       | 14%                                 |
| Can't afford the activities enjoyed       | 11%                                 |
| Tried an activity but didn't like it      | 8%                                  |
| Don't feel welcome                        | 5%                                  |
| Other reason                              | 5%                                  |

Base: 80, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Other includes: In go out with my mates; there's loads; can't be bothered

#### 7.4 Views on childcare

Respondents were asked if they had used out of school activities in the past, and if so, to rate their enjoyment of activities on a scale of not at all to a lot.

The most commonly cited out of school provision used was a youth club (note: questionnaires were distributed at a youth event and by youth workers). This provision also attracted the highest enjoyment rating with 43% of respondents indicating they enjoyed youth club a lot.

School based activities and holiday provision were both accessed by 40% of respondents and enjoyed 'a lot' by around 1 in 4 of those using.

The percentage of respondents indicating that they had not enjoyed activities accessed was relatively high for each different type of activity and particularly for childminding where 70% of those accessing indicated they had not enjoyed the activity.

## Use and enjoyment of out of school activities

| Type of activity                   | Percentage of respondents using: | Percentage of respondents undertaking an out of school activity that enjoyed it: |           |       |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|-----------|-------|
|                                    |                                  | Not at all   | It was OK | A lot |
| After school club                  | 48%                              | 39%  | 46%       | 15%   |
| Breakfast club                     | 47%                              | 46%  | 41%       | 13%   |
| Holiday club/playscheme            | 40%                              | 44%  | 43%       | 24%   |
| Childminder                        | 36%                              | 70%  | 18%       | 12%   |
| Youth club                         | 56%                              | 17%  | 40%       | 43%   |
| School based activity (e.g. sport) | 40%                              | 44%  | 29%       | 26%   |

Base: all respondents 99, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

### 7.5 Demand for out of school provision

Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of possible options, which one or ones they thought were needed but not available in their local area. 80% of respondents (79 young people) responded.

The most commonly cited activities were youth clubs, holiday provision and after school clubs, all cited by over 25% of respondents. School based activities and breakfast club provision were less popular but were identified as needed by 18% and 14% of respondents respectively. Childminding was less popular, as might be expected given the age group and a possible association between childminding and younger children.

### Demand for out of school provision in the local area

| Type of provision                  | Number of respondents citing | Percentage of respondents |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Holiday club/playscheme            | 22                           | 28%                       |
| After school club                  | 21                           | 27%                       |
| Youth club                         | 21                           | 27%                       |
| School based activity (e.g. sport) | 14                           | 18%                       |
| Breakfast club                     | 11                           | 14%                       |
| Childminder                        | 5                            | 6%                        |
| Other activity                     | 5                            | 6%                        |

Base: 79, percentages rounded. Multiple responses  
 Other includes: dance club; don't know; drama; football; karate

Respondents were asked which activity would be the most important. Where only one activity was selected it has been assumed that activity would take priority.

Applying a ranking changes the order of preference somewhat but youth club, after school club and holiday provision remain in the top three:

### Demand – most important activity needed locally

| Type of provision                  | Percentage of those identifying an activity as needed selecting as the main activity required |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Youth club                         | 27%   |
| Holiday club/playscheme            | 20%   |
| After school club                  | 15%   |
| School based activity (e.g. sport) | 11%   |
| Dance                              | 7%  |
| Childminder                        | 5%  |
| Football                           | 4%  |
| Drama                              | 3%  |
| Sport                              | 3%  |
| Swimming                           | 3%  |
| Breakfast club                     | 1%  |
| Cricket                            | 1%  |

Base: 74, percentage rounded

Respondents were asked why they had selected an activity as being the most important; 19 respondents (19% of total and 26% of those identifying an activity) provided an explanation. The majority of explanations were around enjoyment or enjoying the activity:

“Because it is to enjoy” (female, aged 12 years)

“It’s what I enjoy” (male, aged 19 years)

“Because I like it” (female, aged 12 years)

Explanations like these accounted for 42% of all explanations given. Others included having nothing to do (16% of respondents); the range of activities offered (11% of respondents) and; keeping fit (11%).



## 7.6 Keeping in touch

Respondents were asked how they found out about things to do in the evenings and during the holidays. The most commonly cited source of information was word of mouth, through friends. Perhaps surprisingly the internet was only selected by a quarter (25%) of respondents – given the age range it might seem a reasonable expectation that IT/the internet was used as a source of information but this appears true only of a minority.

### Keeping in touch

| Source of information | Percentage of respondents citing |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Friends               | 72%                              |
| Through the school    | 25%                              |
| Via the internet      | 25%                              |
| Posters and leaflets  | 20%                              |
| Parent/carer          | 17%                              |
| Through the council   | 5%                               |
| Newspapers            | 3%                               |
| Youth Bus             | 1%                               |

Base: 87, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

Given that a lack of information was cited as a barrier to taking part in activities, preferred methods of communication are important.

The highest percentage of respondents cited leaflets and posters as the best method of keeping in contact (this would include letters to the home). Nearly half of those providing information selected these methods (48%, 25 respondents).

### Best method of keeping in touch

| Method                                | Percentage of respondents citing |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Posters/leaflets                      | 48%                              |
| Through the school                    | 15%                              |
| Word of mouth (including 'tell them') | 13%                              |
| Internet/MSN                          | 10%                              |
| Newsletter/newspaper                  | 6%                               |
| Phone/text                            | 4%                               |
| Youth club                            | 2%                               |

Base: 52, percentages rounded

### 7.7 Comments

At the end of the questionnaire respondents were asked if there was anything else they would like to say about out of school and holiday activities in their local area. 17% (17 respondents) chose to do so.

Comments can be loosely assigned to one of a small number of categories:

#### Preferences for out of school activities

|   |
|---|
| I would like more sport and girls         |
| Need loads of trips                       |
| Hang with friends                         |
| Just with mates                           |
| Football tournaments (commented on twice) |
| I don't like them                         |

#### Preferences for how the respondent would like to spend their time

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| Jobs (commented upon twice) |
|-----------------------------|

#### Activities used

|   |
|---|
| We use Daisy Chain, Main Project, Snaps and Eastern Ravens    |
| The way out centre, path finders and Primrose Hill youth club |

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| Ragworth, Primrose Hill |
|-------------------------|

|          |
|----------|
| Ragworth |
|----------|

**Lack of provision or lack of information**

|                        |
|------------------------|
| There is nothing to do |
|------------------------|

|                |
|----------------|
| Don't know any |
|----------------|

**Promotion/awareness**

|   |
|---|
| They are advertised about a month before which is excellent to get prepared |
|---|

**Other**

|                     |
|---------------------|
| No I don't think so |
|---------------------|

## **8 Consultations with children**

The Max the Cat children's consultation project aimed to research the views of children in Stockton-on-Tees, aged between four and 10 years old, who are users or potential users of childcare.

The project was carried out in June and October 2010 by undertaking a number of storytelling, group discussion and questionnaire based consultations in schools. Hemsall's would like to thank the children and staff at St John the Evangelist RC School, Fairfield Primary School and St Marks Elm Tree Church of England School for participating in the project. A total of 207 children were consulted using group discussion, 113 written questionnaires and 94 sticker-based questionnaires.

Children had much to say about the childcare they had attended previously or were currently attending. 87% of all children consulted said they had attended (or were currently attending) pre-school childcare (playgroups, nurseries etc.), with 28% attending breakfast clubs and 24% playschemes/holiday clubs. Attendance at after school clubs and activities was 51% of all children.

Satisfaction levels were varied. The most popular childcare was after school childcare, scoring 83.3% liked 'a lot', compared to the lowest rating of 52.2% for childminding. Overall, children were happier with their pre-school childcare than other types of childcare reporting a low 3.7% 'did not like' rating, compared with 26.8% for breakfast provision and 21.5% for holiday childcare.

Children offered many ideas on how to improve their childcare provision. Such ideas are shown per type of childcare, and included: a focus on play, fun and enjoyment; the quality of toys and equipment; choice of activities and food; a balance between specialist activities and sports and play activities; behaviour of staff and other children; and the physical environment. Younger children showed preferences for all aspects of their childcare experiences with some bias towards computers, snack time, outdoor play and dancing and music.

When considering future use and preferences for childcare, 51% of children reported they would like to attend after school clubs, 40% to attend a childminder, 28% for breakfast clubs, and 24% for holiday childcare. However, many were very aware of the barriers that prevent them from doing so, in particular, their preference not to attend if they did not like the provision on offer. Additionally, children reported their parents were either not working, had chosen to stay at home, or were organising their working week in such a way that childcare was not required. Some children said their families could not afford childcare fees.

The full report of consultations with children is shown in the appendices.



Contributed by a pupil at St Marks Elm Tree Church of England School.

## 9 Consultation with Stockton-on-Tees employers

A survey questionnaire was sent to Stockton-on-Tees employers; the database for contacts was purchased from a commercial organisation. The employer questionnaire survey was designed to complement in-depth interviews with three large employers in the City (the local authority; health and; a call centre).

A total of 425 questionnaires were posted and 62 completed questionnaires returned by the deadline of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

### 9.1 Response profile

Responses were received from a variety of organisations working in a number of different employment sectors. The highest percentage of businesses responding to the survey worked in the field of construction (13, 21% of total).

| <b>Nature of business</b>    | <b>Number of returns</b> | <b>Percentage of returns</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Construction                 | 13                       | 21%                          |
| Health/social care           | 12                       | 19%                          |
| Manufacturing                | 5                        | 8%                           |
| Retail                       | 5                        | 8%                           |
| Automotive                   | 3                        | 5%                           |
| Banking, finance & insurance | 3                        | 5%                           |
| Call centre                  | 2                        | 3%                           |
| Communications/IT            | 2                        | 3%                           |
| Distribution                 | 2                        | 3%                           |
| Professional services        | 2                        | 3%                           |
| Public administration        | 2                        | 3%                           |
| Housing                      | 2                        | 3%                           |
| Transport                    | 1                        | 2%                           |
| Utilities                    | 1                        | 2%                           |
| Voluntary organisation       | 1                        | 2%                           |
| Other business               | 5                        | 8%                           |

Base: 62, percentages rounded

Collectively respondents employed in the region of 2,800 people (in the region: some respondents worked in national or multi-national organisations with a very large number of staff geographically dispersed).

An estimated 27% of staff (740 people) had children below the age of 18 years.

## 9.2 Patterns of work

The percentage of staff working less than 16 hours a week was low – an estimated 4% - but significant in that these staff members would not be eligible for Working Tax Credits (WTC) or the childcare element of WTC.

Nearly a third of respondents operated shift patterns (31%) and a quarter (24%) required staff to work nights (either as part of a rotating shift pattern or employed as night workers).

Over half of responding organisations required staff to work at weekends; types of weekend work are shown verbatim below. Responses indicate that for some workers, weekend work is predictable and scheduled, for others demands appear more ad hoc and less predictable:

|   |
|---|
| Every weekend according to rota, some weekends off.                               |
| Various rotas depending on position   |
| Some weekends   |
| As and when work dictates on a voluntary basis                                    |
| Saturday  |
| Some weekends   |
| Very rare, but may be required to attend annual stock-taking at clients premises. |
| Saturday and Sunday   |
| Some Saturdays  |
| As overtime if the current site is behind schedule.                               |
| Varies from week to week and also takes into account employees requests.          |
| Not often- occasionally, get time off in lieu                                     |
| As required - approx 12 full weekends per year.                                   |

|   |
|---|
| Saturday morning on a rota basis/ during summer sat and sun on a rota basis.  |
| Some Weekends, a Saturday morning only  |
| All year security cover   |
| Shifts  |
| Staff generally work 2 weekends in 4  |
| Not all staff due to the nature of the business. Club open from 12noon till 12midnight Saturday and 11.30am - 11.30pm Sunday. Staff work maximum of 6 hours to cover opening hours. |
| Some Weekends   |
| Some Saturdays  |
| Occasionally  |
| Saturday  |
| Some  |
| Voluntary over time occasionally  |
| Alternative as part of shift pattern  |
| Normally a Saturday   |
| Some work every weekend some work a Saturday or a Sunday.   |
| Saturday mornings, every second week  |
| As per rota, depends on business levels   |
| All weekend- rolling rota   |
| 7 Day rotation System   |
| When needed   |
| 1 weekend in 4 both days  |

### 9.3 Childcare as a barrier or facilitator to recruitment and retention

Respondents were asked if childcare had been identified as a barrier to the recruitment of staff. 13 respondents (21% of total) indicated this had been the case. For those respondents the cost of childcare and the times at which childcare is available had presented the greatest challenge:

#### 9.3.1 Childcare barriers to recruitment

- The cost of childcare was identified as a barrier to recruitment by 92% of those experiencing difficulties;



- The times at which childcare is available was cited by 54%;
- A lack of provision and inflexibility of childcare used were both cited by 31% of those who had experienced childcare as a barrier to recruitment

[Base: 13, percentages rounded]

Respondents were also asked if childcare had a positive or negative effect on staff performance or their work:life balance. 29% of respondents answered the question, of which 71% (12 respondents) identified a negative impact and 29% (5 respondents) a positive impact.

In terms of negative impact the majority of examples given were around the parent/carer having to take time off to care for a child who was sick, or availability of childcare not meeting working hours and/or being inflexible to meet working requirements.

|  |
|--|
| Employees ring in sick when their childcare has let them down.   |
| Negative, Staff with childcare needs often find arranging it a stressful experience, not always allowing them to focus 100% on their work.   |
| Unable to accommodate requested work patterns to suit childcare needs.   |
| Affordability  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Time pressure to leave workplace in sufficient time to pick up children before nursery closes.</li> <li>▪ Difficulty of holiday care for children of school age, staff need to take annual leave in summer holidays period/ Easter/xmas.</li> <li>▪ Cost: at times staff can be demotivated when such a huge percentage of their salary goes on childcare.</li> </ul> |
| As a dental practice, flexibility is a necessity in working hours, and some childcare facilities are not able to offer this to our staff.  |
| Time is needed when a child is sick or the childminder is sick and cover is needed   |
| A member of staff recently took time off due to the lack of childcare at very short notice. This left us a person short on our security shift which due to the short notice was difficult to fill.   |
| One parent families who rely on childminder often phone in to inform the [deleted] either that childminder cannot look after the child/children or the child/children are ill and the  |

|   |
|---|
| parent has to look after them and therefore cannot go to work.  |
| Makes it more difficult to juggle responsibilities.   |
| Many staff have to leave work early due to child's illness, no one to look after child if nursery has to close for any reason.  |
| It can be used as a reason/excuse (justified) for those with children and cause resentment for those with none. To be fair I believe that if those in question did not use this they would use another. |

### 9.3.2 Childcare as a facilitator to recruitment

|  |
|--|
| [Deleted] offer flexible working. Childcare vouchers.  |
| Enable some staff to cover out of school hours, working arrangements.  |
| Kept in employment   |
| Staff who are happy with childcare are less stressed or anxious.   |
| Having a good quality and trustworthy, reliable childcare available close to school gives staff who use it confidence, assurance and comfort. It makes them more at ease and able to continue working post childbirth. The lack of activities or arrangements for older children (teenagers) can lead to staff absence for illness and other problems. |

### 9.3.3 Childcare as a barrier to retention of staff

19% of respondents (12 organisations) identified that childcare had been a barrier to the retention of staff. As with recruitment the biggest problem identified was the cost of childcare with times of availability and inflexibility of provision also identified as key barriers:

- 92% of respondents identifying cost as a barrier to retention of staff (11 respondents) cited the cost of childcare as an issue;
- 50% (6 respondents) cited the times at which childcare is available as a barrier;
- 42% (5 respondents) reported barriers associated with the inflexibility of childcare;
- 25% (3 respondents) cited a lack of childcare provision;
- 17% (2 respondents) reported childcare to be unreliable and 8% (1 respondent) cited quality as a barrier

[Base: 12, percentages rounded]

5% of respondents reported that staff had left their employment as a direct result of insufficient childcare, comments are shown verbatim below:

**Comments regarding staff leaving as a direct result of insufficient childcare**

|  |
|--|
| Carer wanted particular shifts only which could not be accommodated.                                   |
| Although some have discussed that they have considered it.   |
| Proportion of wages used on childcare against benefits received if not working.                        |
| Some staff members have reduced their work hours.  |
| Husband of employee no longer available to childmind therefore the employee terminated her employment. |
| Not yet but one is considering   |

**9.4 Information and childcare support**

Four respondents (6% of total) provide subsidised childcare provision and/or on-site childcare.

Respondents were asked to review a number of childcare support information options and asked to indicate the extent to which each type of information was available through their organisation. Options ranged from having the website address for the Families Information Service (FIS) to providing information on the childcare element of Working Tax Credit (WTC).

Findings suggest relatively low levels of awareness amongst employers of information that might support employees in meeting their childcare needs. A minority of responding employers provide information to staff and slightly higher percentages hold information but do not necessarily provide staff with the information held.

## Information held or provided on childcare support

| Type of information                                | Percentage of respondents who: |   |                  |                              |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------|------------------------------|
|  | Have not heard of              | Have heard of but do not hold information | Hold information | Provide information to staff |
| FIS website address                                | 52%                            | 44%                                       | 2%               | 3%                           |
| FIS telephone number                               | 50%                            | 44%                                       | 3%               | 4%                           |
| FIS brokerage service                              | 61%                            | 32%                                       | 3%               | 3%                           |
| Contact lists/details of local childcare providers | 35%                            | 56%                                       | 8%               | 0%                           |
| Childcare vouchers                                 | 28%                            | 38%                                       | 15%              | 20%                          |
| Salary sacrifice schemes                           | 48%                            | 29%                                       | 11%              | 11%                          |
| Childcare element of WTC                           | 13%                            | 69%                                       | 11%              | 7%                           |

Base: range 61 – 62, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

### 9.5 Flexible working patterns

A relatively high percentage of responding organisations did not feel flexible working arrangements relevant to their organisation. In particular term-time working and working from home, working practices that can support parents/carers to meet their childcare needs, appear to receive little support from employers. There is however evidence of part-time working around school hours, flexi-time and job share opportunities and a small number of responding organisations indicated they would be interested in receiving information about one or more working options:

## Working patterns

| Working pattern                           | Percentage of respondents who: |   |   |
|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
|   | Already have option in place   | Would be interested in receiving more information | Report not relevant to the organisation |
| Flexi-time                                | 49%                            | 3%  | 47%                                     |
| Part-time working to support school hours | 63%                            | 2%  | 35%                                     |
| Job sharing                               | 33%                            | 9%  | 59%                                     |
| School term-time working                  | 9%                             | 3%  | 88%                                     |
| Annualised hours                          | 5%                             | 5%  | 89%                                     |
| Compressed working week                   | 15%                            | 7%  | 78%                                     |
| Working from home                         | 32%                            | 2%  | 66%                                     |
| Sabbaticals or career breaks              | 15%                            | 3%  | 82%                                     |

Base: 57 - 60, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

### 9.6 Interest in receiving impartial childcare information and advice

Respondents were asked if they would be interested in receiving childcare information and advice in a variety of topics. Findings suggest there are opportunities to engage with employers to provide information and advice, particularly around the FIS and the childcare element of WTC:

## Childcare information and advice

| Information and advice   | Percentage of respondents who: |                   |                     |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|  | Would like more information    | Requested contact | Were not interested |
| Hold information about the FIS and circulate to staff                              | 48%                            | 2%                | 50%                 |
| Display FIS information  | 38%                            | 0%                | 62%                 |
| Receive information on the childcare element of WTC                                | 40%                            | 3%                | 57%                 |
| Meet with the local authority to raise awareness of childcare issues with HR staff | 11%                            | 2%                | 87%                 |
| Circulate council parental consultations to employees                              | 39%                            | 0%                | 61%                 |
| Receive contact from the FIS about any of the above                                | 15%                            | 3%                | 83%                 |

Base: 58 - 61, percentages rounded. Multiple responses

### 9.7 Comments

Respondents were invited to provide any additional comments; 2 respondents chose to do so. Comments are shown verbatim below:

Biggest issue facing parents is safe, affordable childcare particularly in holidays and the time from schools closing (3pm) until the end of the working day (5.00/5.30pm)

Occasionally when employing staff the person applying for the work does not advise if they have children or problems with childminders until they are in employment, then it can cause problems.

## **10 Interviews with key employers**

Interviews with three targeted organisations were conducted by telephone during August 2010 (the local authority; North Tyneside and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and Churchill).

Interviews were semi-structured, based around the broad question areas listed below:

- Background Information (staff numbers, employment patterns, shifts and understanding of childcare available to support employees).
- What support is offered to employees (subsidised care, vouchers, family friendly policies, flexible working, term time only contracts, maternity arrangements).
- What information advice and signposting is provided to staff about childcare, tax credits etc.
- How does the support, advice and information provided impact on recruitment and retention.
  - What changes in the future may impact on the childcare needs of your employees?

### **10.1 Background Information**

All three organisations represented large employment sectors within the region. There are 9 call centres in the same area. That means (on the basis of existing research findings and call centre developments) that there is likely to be competition for staff based on terms and conditions of employment (people switch rapidly when rates go up at a neighbouring centre unless working hours suit them, and there is generally a very high turnover of staff in the sector, with high sickness absence levels and heavy reliance on young workers and students who are more likely to be single rather than working parents). But this does vary a lot. Use of zero-hours (casual/ temporary) contracts is widely reported in call centres, meaning that flexible working hours and family-friendly policies may be beyond the reach of those without permanent contracts and without the employment rights and protections that come with this. The nature of the work of the three organisations results in a variety of shifts to meet business requirements. All employers interviewed offered full-time and part-time hours; all three employers have a high percentage of female workers.

## **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

The local authority is the area's largest employer, with over 8,000 employees. It provides a wide range of public services to over 186,000 people who live and/or work in the borough. The Council's gender profile document states that:

"At any one time the Council employs approximately 8,500 employees, accounting for more than 9,400 contracts of employment. 76% of the council's workforce are women, 24% of the workforce are men (71% and 29% respectively using FTE)".

It also notes that more women than men are concentrated in jobs with the lower salary levels. However the Single Equality Scheme notes that there are also significant numbers of women in senior management positions<sup>10</sup>. Work locations and working conditions vary considerably depending on the nature of the work or service involved. Employees may be based in the community as well as in the main council offices. Some local authority jobs and services require staff to provide emergency cover, including night duties, as well as shift work patterns involving early starts or late finishes.

## **Churchill Insurance**

Churchill Insurance is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Royal Bank of Scotland Group. In 2008 its call centre on the Teeside Business Park was one of nine major call centres in the Stockton-on-Tees area<sup>11</sup>.

Unlike the NHS, this call centre does not offer a 24-hour service, but does operate seven days a week from 7.45am – 9.00pm. Early starts, late finishes and weekend working are therefore a feature of the shifts that need to be covered by staff.

## **North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust**

The Trust serves a population of around 350,000 people (400,000 including outlying areas). It provides hospital and community-based health care services and employs over 5,700 staff (4,685 actual whole time equivalents) with a projected annual income of £244 million (2010/11). Its hospitals are the University Hospital of North Tees and the University

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<sup>10</sup> Source: Gender profile document and Single Equality Scheme 2010-2014, published on the SBC website, accessed 4.11.10

<sup>11</sup> Source: Contact Centres in Tees Valley, Tees Valley Regeneration Report No. 02, 2008



Hospital of Hartlepool<sup>12</sup>. Employees may have a fixed workplace (e.g. a hospital) or may be community-based with requirements for travel within their area. Depending on the nature of the job or service area, shift patterns may include night work as well as emergency cover (including 'on call' arrangements, early starts and late finishes. Staffing levels and skill mix requirements may also be subject to seasonal fluctuation as well as extra demands during emergency situations.

## **10.2 Support offered to employees**

### **Family friendly policies and flexible working arrangements**

Family friendly policies appear to be more consistently available within the local authority and NHS Trust than at the call centre. In all three organisations staff have the right to request flexible working when they return from maternity leave. The NHS Trust and the local authority actively promote flexible working (not just for maternity leave returners) but the call/contact centre reports dealing with issues more reactively, trying to meet requests depending business needs at that moment in time. Workforce gender statistics on the NHS website for the end of 2008 indicate that 83% of employees and nearly 82% of new recruits were women. Of those who resigned voluntarily during this period, 5.7% of female leavers said they did so to care for child dependents, but no male leavers gave this as a reason for leaving<sup>13</sup>. Note: The public sector equality duties apply to both the local authority and the NHS - as public bodies, they are duty holders and must comply with legal requirements to actively promote equality as well as avoiding discrimination. They have detailed equality schemes in place which are actively monitored and reviewed.

### **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

The local authority has reviewed all flexible working policies and the new practices have create much more opportunity for managers and teams to support the work life balance of employees as well as ensuring that departmental tasks required are completed. The flexible working strategy also provides an opportunity for term time only working, condensed hours, part-time hours and home working. The local authority has also created a drop-in office base, 'Touchdown,' in central Stockton-on-Tees to enable staff members to provide

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<sup>12</sup> Source: North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2009-10

<sup>13</sup> Sources: workforce statistics on the NH&T NHS equality and diversity website, also North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust / Single Equality Scheme Annual Report 2008-9, accessed 3.11.10

access to email and other computer files, reducing the need for staff to return to their base office and increasing productivity by reducing travel time.

### **Churchill Insurance**

It was reported that staff return quickly from maternity leave within the call/contact centre environment compared to the public sector where benefits are higher and new parents can make choices to stay at home longer based on better financial circumstances.

Compared to the local authority and NHS Trust the flexibility offered to employees at the call centre is much more limited. The company will try to meet changing requirements and support staff who need to change hours, but shifts are more rigid. The decision as to whether a request is granted is very dependent on the business need at that moment in time.

### **North Tees and Hartlepool NHS**

The NHS Trust reports that its Human Resources department has been doing work around flexibility, reviewing arrangements and involving staff representatives in these developments. There will be implications for the directly delivered provision to ensure it is able to meet these changing work patterns.

### **Childcare subsidies/vouchers/salary sacrifice schemes/support**

All three employers interviewed provide access to a voucher/salary sacrifice scheme and information about the scheme is circulated widely to staff using a variety of media.

### **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

The local authority offers discounted childcare through several providers in the borough.

### **North Tees and Hartlepool NHS**

The NHS Trust offers childcare support, managing its own provision and dedicated staff and childcare co-ordinator post. It has nurseries on two sites (one in Stockton-on-Tees) catering for children aged 0-5 (0-8 in the school holidays, mainly those who have already used the nursery) with 120 places on one site and 58 on the other. This is direct provision by the NHS. The NHS Trust maintains its own nursery nurse bank to deal with any

fluctuations in demand or staffing levels (e.g. due to cover requirements and/or ages of children attending the nurseries at particular times). Direct on-site provision was viewed as a real benefit in terms of continuity and quality, and this participant said that it also helped to build the nursery team. But there had been problems over costs and sustainability. The nursery has several strategies to address the financial sustainability of the provision. It was noted that part-time places are charged at a slightly higher rate than full-time places. The emphasis was on providing reliable, quality care with reliable, trained staff offering flexible provision to meet the needs of staff and their children.

### **10.3 Information, advice and signposting provided to staff**

#### **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

Staff induction is the first opportunity the local authority has to brief staff on all aspects of policy, procedure and associated benefits or eligibility to tax credits. Regular communication to employees is achieved through an email newsletter every Friday. Information is posted on intranet for local authority staff and through the schools extranet for all education and school based staff teams. Pay slip advertising is another mechanism used to raise specific issues or promote things such as the change in voucher provider. Work place advisors and health advocates within departments provide a signposting link to HR and other services such as the Families Information Service. There is a good relationship between human resources and the Families Information Service. Employees are regularly signposted to the department for advice on all aspects of childcare, benefits and parenting concerns. The Families Information Service, Occupational Health and the Human Resources department work together to deliver quarterly maternity workshops for all staff prior to the start of their maternity leave.

#### **Churchill Insurance**

As in the public sector, employees' induction is the opportunity for the call centre to provide advice for staff members, but this focuses on operational matters and information on tax credits, support for childcare etc are not part of the formal programme. There are 'RBS Champions' who support staff in the workplace.

## **North Tees and Hartlepool NHS**

The Trust has a staff member who provides an initial 'one-stop shop', signposting and brokerage service for NHS staff (including new recruits) on childcare and related issues. The Trust's Childcare Co-ordinator offers practical information and support to staff on childcare issues as well as liaising with the nursery managers and others inside and outside the NHS on childcare matters. She will signpost parents to the FIS where necessary. She is closely involved in liaising between shift workers and the nursery to ensure that nursery provision is sufficiently flexible to meet changing needs and flexible duty rosters. For this reason the nurseries never run at full capacity, since flexibility in provision is needed to accommodate changes in rostered duties. Although new staff at the NHS Trust are told about the childcare provision and support services at entry, it was reported that there was a need to further develop marketing at recruitment and induction.

### **10.4 The impact of support, advice and information provided on recruitment and retention.**

#### **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

It was reported that the introduction of the revised maternity, paternity, adoption and supported leave policies at the local authority had provided clarity for all staff members and management. Staff teams and managers are able to look at how day to day jobs can be done within flexible working patterns to support home life balance and the need for dependant/child care. The new flexible working structure has also provided service managers with greater opportunities to have an:

"open dialogue with staff at absence monitoring meetings and identify where childcare is a cause of short term absences".

The local authority reported that there has been a notable reduction in the formal requests to take short term/emergency leave as staff can manage dependant/childcare needs in a more flexible manner. A review undertaken after the first twelve months of the new structure seemed to identify that there was a noticeable reduction in the short term absence figures. The new system ran alongside a robust absence management system which provided managers with the opportunity to identify occurrences caused by

dependant/childcare problems and work with the individual staff member to identify more flexible solutions to replace 'sickness absence'.

### **North Tees and Hartlepool NHS**

The NHS report that they have seen improvements in recruitment and retention plus large reductions in sickness absence.

## **10.5 Future changes that may impact on the childcare needs of employees**

### **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

The local authority indicated that they were waiting for the outcome of Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2010 before they would be clear as to the implications of funding reductions, changes in policy or future requirements and what this would mean for staffing and the local economy. It was noted that the local authority has been undertaking a process of best value review over recent years and has always adopted best practice so service departments are recognised as being fit for purpose.

### **Churchill Insurance**

The call/contact centre reported that there were no impending changes or concerns and it was 'business as usual'.

### **North Tees and Hartlepool NHS**

The Trust currently delivers services from two major hospital sites: the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool, however, the future plans were to develop a new single-site hospital build. This is dependent on the Comprehensive Spending Review and budget announcements.

## **11 Consultations with key stakeholders**

Consultations with key stakeholders (contributing organisations are listed in the methodology section in the appendices) identify a number of key themes about childcare sufficiency in Stockton-on-Tees. These are summarised below, following some general observations about relevant background and contextual issues.

### **11.1 Labour market factors**

Labour market factors affected demand for childcare in the area. Uncertainty over future labour market conditions meant that there were concerns about changes affecting childcare supply and demand - examples included possible large-scale redundancies by local employers (which could result in reduced demand) or changes in benefit rules (which could result in increased demand). Changes in recruitment practices had also affected the situation - for example, the NHS had recently recruited a substantial number of nurses from South East Asia.

### **11.2 Use of informal childcare**

Use of informal childcare was reported, particularly by those young mothers who were still attending school or who preferred to leave their young children with a family member - others relied on childminders or local nurseries or (preferably) were able to use an on-site college crèche or nursery when attending courses.

### **11.3 Cultural and faith issues**

Cultural norms and expectations could be barriers to take up of childcare opportunities, particularly for BME families, with physical arrangements (e.g. women-only activities), venue location and cultural links to venues identified as important considerations in overcoming barriers to inclusion and promoting access to childcare and use of other services. It was reported that efforts to address these issues were well supported by other local agencies.

The following issues also emerged from the evidence gathered from contributors:

#### **11.4 Availability of formal childcare**

Whilst contributors reported that there was generally sufficient childcare, some gaps were noted. Childminders were widely used. Provision for holiday care was not reported as insufficient, with heavy demand for the summer holidays meaning that schemes were fully booked and some parents could not find places for their children. Difficulties were also reported for shift workers (including NHS staff) as very few settings catered for flexible working patterns that included working late shifts or into the night. Crèche provision for short courses was also reported to be difficult to find or arrange.

The lack of an on-site college nursery in Central Stockton-on-Tees has created additional barriers for young parents (it was reported that the on-site nursery was removed from Stockton-on-Tees and Riverside College during refurbishment). This has meant that the specific needs and preferences of young parents are not sufficiently addressed either by the college or by transport providers.

Multi-agency co-operation and support was helping to overcome barriers to inclusion in community-based activities for members of the BME community but funding for crèche provision on short courses was a major problem. Children's centres are an important access point but provision is dependent on the necessary funding being made available.

For job seekers, although there was reported to be scope for improving access to childcare information and support, and for increased take-up of childcare places and employment, gaps in supply were also evident, particularly during summer holidays.

#### **11.5 Affordability and cost**

Affordability and cost were seen as important issues both for service users and for service providers. Use of "Better off in work" calculations, promoting the benefits of childcare services and facilities, and advertising the support available, were seen as important ways of addressing parental concerns and perceptions about affordability and cost. The NHS offers its own staff childcare vouchers, with related tax benefits.

#### **11.6 Provision for disabled children and children with additional need**

Provision for disabled children was regarded as good.

### **11.7 Location of childcare**

Location was identified as an important issue for young mothers who were studying or training who wanted to have their young children looked after on the same site as their course, enabling them to visit them easily if they wanted to. Public transport problems were identified for these young parents attending college with young children - lack of space to accommodate buggies and pushchairs on buses meant that they had difficulty getting onto the bus if others were ahead of them in the queue or had boarded at a previous stop, so they risked arriving late or missing their class if they had to wait for the next bus.

### **11.8 Quality of care**

Quality was highlighted as an issue by the NHS, which runs 2 nurseries for its staff. Specific arrangements had been made to ensure continuity of care through direct provision and flexible nursery staffing arrangements, including an established NHS nursery nurse 'bank' for temporary cover to meet fluctuating demands for childcare.

### **11.9 Information and support**

Information and support was reported to be widely available, with key roles being played by FIS, Jobcentre Plus, children's centres and (for NHS staff) the NHS. It was suggested that there was scope for further developments in links with children's centres and Connexions to promote uptake of childcare and employment opportunities.

### **11.10 Sustainability and funding**

Financial support for crèche provision was said to be insufficient and "extremely difficult" to fund. Funding for childcare for qualifying young parents and lone parents was available, but there was uncertainty over future government plans such as those affecting local government funding and the tax credits system. NHS nursery provision had been placed on a more sustainable financial footing through phased increases in pricing over several years, taking into account like-for-like comparisons with comparable services whilst operating below full capacity as a matter of policy to allow for the necessary flexibility to meet fluctuating demands. Based on this evidence, it is recommended that further attention be given to addressing the needs for childcare in school holidays, and to funding crèches for



more short courses including courses that help promote access to pre-employment training and those that promote inclusion for parents and children from the BME communities.

## **12 The supply of childcare**

### **12.1 Registered childcare**

Data has been supplied by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Families Information Service to inform the CSA. Data was extrapolated as at October 2010.

As from September 2008 childcare for children aged under 8 years old is registered on one of two Ofsted childcare registers:

- The Early Years Register (EYR) – all childcare providers caring for children aged up to five are required to join the Early Years register (unless exempt).
- The Ofsted Childcare Register (OCR) – this has two parts:
  - the compulsory part – providers of childcare to children aged 5 to 7 years must register on the compulsory part of the OCR (unless exempt)
  - the voluntary part – providers of childcare to children aged 8 and over, and care for children of any age that is activity based or provided in the child's own home, can choose to be registered on the voluntary part of the OCR if they meet the requirements.

There are advantages to providers to register (for example, inclusion on Families Information Services website available to the public and if registered, parents/carers can claim the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit, if eligible, to help towards costs of childcare).

Provision in schools does not have to be registered unless they provide for children that do not go to that school.

The following section provides an overview of registered provision.

There are a total of 4,415 childcare places in Stockton-on-Tees (this includes registered places 0-7 years and places for older children), 28% of which are in childminding provision, 72% in group provision (including nursery classes in independent schools, crèche, daycare and out of school care).

Of the 4,415 places, the majority (69%, 3,043 places) are for children aged 0 to 5 years. Given that registration on the Ofsted childcare register for places for children aged over 8 is voluntary, the following table will underestimate the actual supply of places for older children as some provision (including extended services in schools) will not be registered on the childcare register. An assessment of extended services in schools is presented at the end of this report.

### Provision of registered childcare places – local authority level

| Type of provision               | Number of registered childcare places |                                   |           |           |          | Total places | % all places | Number of providers |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
|                                 | 0-1 years                             | 2 years                           | 3-4 years | 5-7 years | 8+ years |              |              |                     |
| Childminding                    | 219                                   | 202                               | 149       | 555       | 163      | 1,288        | 29%          | 210                 |
| Crèche                          | 76                                    | 78                                | 53        | 0         | 0        | 207          | 5%           | 12                  |
| Day nursery                     | 599                                   | 443                               | 449       | 78        | 0        | 1,569        | 35%          | 30                  |
| Holiday provision               | 0                                     | 0                                 | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0            | 0%           | 1                   |
| Nursery unit independent school | 0                                     | 0                                 | 117       | 0         | 0        | 117          | 3%           | 3                   |
| Out of school care              | 0                                     | 0                                 | 207       | 439       | 137      | 783          | 18%          | 29                  |
| Pre-school/playgroup            | 12                                    | 213                               | 226       | 0         | 0        | 451          | 10%          | 15                  |
| Totals by age range             | 906                                   | 936                               | 1,201     | 1,072     | 300      | 4,415        |              |                     |
| % of all registered places      | 21%                                   | 21%                               | 27%       | 24%       | 7%       | 100%         |              |                     |
|                                 |                                       | Total registered places 0-5 years |           |           |          |              |              |                     |
|                                 |                                       | 3,043 (69% of total)              |           |           |          |              |              |                     |

The 2008 CSA reported a total of 3,445 registered childcare places for children aged under 8 years old. Comparing registered provision for children aged 0-7 years 2010 over 2008 shows that the number of childcare places in Stockton-on-Tees has decreased by 630 places, or 13% of stock.

### Registered childcare places (0 to 7 years) 2010 compared to 2008

| Type of provision                  | 2008 number<br>(reported in the<br>CSA) | 2010 number<br>(provided by FIS<br>October 2010) | Percentage<br>difference 2010 –<br>2008 |
|------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Childminding                       | 1,300                                   | 1,125  | -13%                                    |
| Crèche                             | 300                                     | 207  | -31%                                    |
| Day nursery                        | 1,784                                   | 1,569  | -12%                                    |
| Out of school care                 | 821                                     | 646  | -21%                                    |
| Pre-school/playgroup               | 540                                     | 451  | -16%                                    |
| Nursery unit<br>independent school | (included in day<br>nursery data above) | 117  | n/a                                     |
| Overall                            | 4,745                                   | 4,115  | -13%                                    |

Source: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2008; FIS 2010

#### 12.1.1 Geographical distribution of childcare places

Eastern ISA has the highest number of childcare places overall and for childminding, day nursery and out of school care. Billingham ISA has the lowest number of overall childcare places with particularly low levels of out of school care; pre-school and day nursery provision is also relatively low.

Geographical distribution of places is shown in the following table:

## Geographical distribution of places at Integrated Service Area level

| Type of provision                  | ISA – number of places (% of total for each type of provision) |                 |                 |             |           |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|
|                                    | Billingham   | Central (North) | Central (South) | Eastern     | Western   |
| Childminding                       | 289 (22%)  | 188 (15%)       | 211 (16%)       | 375 (29%)   | 225 (17%) |
| Crèche                             | 20 (10%)   | 95 (46%)        | 0 (0%)          | 92 (44%)    | 0 (0%)    |
| Day nursery                        | 273 (16%)  | 249 (17%)       | 374 (22%)       | 455 (31%)   | 218 (13%) |
| Nursery unit of independent school | 0 (0%)   | 52 (44%)        | 0 (0%)          | 0 (0%)      | 65 (56%)  |
| Out of school                      | 90 (11%)   | 132 (19%)       | 115 (14%)       | 248 (31%)   | 198 (25%) |
| Pre-school                         | 56 (12%)   | 60 (13%)        | 137 (30%)       | 90 (20%)    | 108 (24%) |
| Overall places                     | 728 (16%)  | 776 (18%)       | 837 (19%)       | 1,260 (29%) | 814 (18%) |

Source: FIS. Percentages rounded

### 12.2 Vacancies

Vacancies are calculated against registered places. A large number of settings are likely to operate fewer places than they are registered for. For example, a childminder may be registered for 6 children but choose to care for no more than 4. It is recommended that an assessment of operating capacity vs. registered capacity is undertaken. Vacancies analysed against registered capacity is likely to over-estimate supply, however, the FIS have reviewed vacancies against operating capacity and estimates the difference at 80 places.

The FIS had records of 1,071 vacancies in registered provision as at 7<sup>th</sup> October 2010. This represents 26% of total places. The highest level of vacancies was in Central (South) with 251 vacancies or 30% of registered places. The lowest level of vacancies was in Billingham with 120 vacancies or 17% of registered places.

### Vacancy levels compared to registered places

| Integrated Service Area | Number of vacancies recorded | % of registered places |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Billingham              | 120                          | 17%                    |
| Central (North)         | 172                          | 21%                    |
| Central (South)         | 251                          | 30%                    |
| Eastern                 | 302                          | 24%                    |
| Western                 | 226                          | 28%                    |
| Overall                 | 1,071                        | 26%                    |

Source: Families Information Service, October 2010. Percentages rounded

The majority of recorded vacancies were in childminding and day nursery provision (accounting for 30% and 41% respectively of all vacancies). The highest number of vacancies was for children aged 5 to 7 years old (259 vacancies, 24% of total).

### Vacancies by age range and type of provision

| Age range                | Number of vacancies by type of provision (% of vacancies for each age group) |             |                    |            |                                 |               |
|--------------------------|--|-------------|--------------------|------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
|                          | Childminding   | Day Nursery | Out of school care | Pre-school | Nursery Unit Independent School | All provision |
| 0-1 years                | 69 (33%)   | 138 (67%)   | 0 (0%)             | 0 (0%)     | 0 (0%)                          | 207 (19%)     |
| 2 years                  | 29 (14%)   | 122 (58%)   | 0 (0%)             | 58 (28%)   | 0 (0%)                          | 209 (20%)     |
| 3 – 4 years              | 22 (10%)   | 108 (48%)   | 42 (19%)           | 34 (15%)   | 21 (9%)                         | 227 (21%)     |
| 5 – 7 years              | 113 (44%)  | 24 (9%)     | 122 (47%)          | 0 (0%)     | 0 (0%)                          | 259 (24%)     |
| 8 – 10 years             | 66 (44%)   | 50 (33%)    | 35 (23%)           | 0 (0%)     | 0 (0%)                          | 151 (14%)     |
| 11 – 14 years            | 18 (100%)  | 0 (0%)      | 0 (0%)             | 0 (0%)     | 0 (0%)                          | 18 (2%)       |
| Overall (all age groups) | 317 (30%)  | 442 (41%)   | 199 (19%)          | 92 (9%)    | 21 (2%)                         | 1,071 (100%)  |

Source: Families Information Service, October 2010. Percentages rounded

### 12.3 Charges

Comparing charges across different providers and ISAs is made more difficult by different charging patterns; some childminders, for example, charge by the hour, some by the day and some weekly. Childminders (and other settings) may charge differential costs according to the time of day (pre 8am, post 6pm), age of child or service (pick ups, drop offs, breakfast or before and after school).

The FIS hold detailed information on charges levied by individual settings, across a number of different charging patterns. Here the focus is on developing a better understanding of charges as they might impact on affordability. If charges for one specific type of provision, for example, are much higher than for others, or if charges in one ISA are higher or lower than others, does this reflect in take-up or impact on demand? This analysis will inform the assessment of gaps, particularly affordability gaps. Data has been simplified in an attempt to identify some areas of comparison (for example just looking at core charging patterns). Average costs by provider in each Integrated Service Area are shown in the appendices.

#### Billingham – average costs by type of provision

|                              | Type of provision/charges levied |           |             |                                 |                    |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Charging period              | Childminding                     | Crèche    | Day nursery | Nursery unit independent school | Out of school care | Pre-school playgroup |
| Per hour                     | £3.29                            | Not given | n/a         | n/a                             | n/a                | n/a                  |
| Per session/half day         | £15.25                           | n/a       | *£17.04     | n/a                             | £9.00              | £8.00                |
| Per day                      | £25.69                           | n/a       | *£32.88     | n/a                             | n/a                | n/a                  |
| Per week                     | £116.40                          | n/a       | £134.04     | n/a                             | n/a                | £25.00               |
| After school                 | £9.83                            | n/a       | n/a         | n/a                             | £7.50              | n/a                  |
| Before school/breakfast club | £5.00                            | n/a       | n/a         | n/a                             | £4.70              | n/a                  |
| Holiday care per day         |                                  |           |             |                                 | £16.00             | n/a                  |

\*average of under two year old and over two year old charges – full day

### Central (North) – average costs by type of provision

|                              | Type of provision/charges levied |           |             |                                 |                    |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Charging period              | Childminding                     | Crèche    | Day nursery | Nursery unit independent school | Out of school care | Pre-school playgroup |
| Per hour                     | £3.23                            | Not given | n/a         | n/a                             | £7.70              | n/a                  |
| Per session/half day         | n/a                              | n/a       | *£21.00     | n/a                             | £11.00             | £5.50                |
| Per day                      | £26.00                           | n/a       | *£29.20     | n/a                             | n/a                | £14.50               |
| Per week                     | £104.00                          | n/a       | *£130.62    | £159.70                         | n/a                | n/a                  |
| After school                 | n/a                              | n/a       | n/a         | n/a                             | £8.50              | n/a                  |
| Before school/breakfast club | n/a                              | n/a       | n/a         | n/a                             | £6.50              | n/a                  |
| Holiday care per day         | n/a                              | n/a       | n/a         | n/a                             | £18.50             | n/a                  |

\*average of under 2 year old and over 2 year old charges – full day

### Central (South) – average costs by type of provision

|                              | Type of provision/charges levied |        |             |                                 |                    |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Charging period              | Childminding                     | Crèche | Day nursery | Nursery unit independent school | Out of school care | Pre-school playgroup |
| Per hour                     | £3.55                            | n/a    | n/a         | n/a                             | n/a                | n/a                  |
| Per session/half day         | £18.00                           | n/a    | *£25.50     | n/a                             | n/a                | £5.97                |
| Per day                      | £27.83                           | n/a    | *£33.63     | n/a                             | n/a                | £15.50               |
| Per week                     | £135.56                          | n/a    | £130.00     | n/a                             | n/a                | n/a                  |
| After school                 | £8.17                            | n/a    | n/a         | n/a                             | £10.25             | n/a                  |
| Before school/breakfast club | £5.00 - £5.50                    | n/a    | £6.50       | n/a                             | £5.43 - £7.33      | n/a                  |
| Holiday care per day         | n/a                              | n/a    | n/a         | n/a                             | £23.63             | n/a                  |

\*average of under 2 year old and over 2 year old charges – full day



### Eastern – average costs by type of provision

|                              | Type of provision/charges levied |        |             |                                 |                    |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Charging period              | Childminding                     | Crèche | Day nursery | Nursery unit independent school | Out of school care | Pre-school playgroup |
| Per hour                     | £3.41                            | £3.50  | *£5.00      | n/a                             | n/a                | n/a                  |
| Per session/half day         | £18.70                           | n/a    | *£22.33     | n/a                             | n/a                | £10.00               |
| Per day                      | £26.62                           | n/a    | *£32.00     | n/a                             | n/a                | £23.00               |
| Per week                     | £121.42                          | n/a    | *£138.25    | n/a                             | n/a                | n/a                  |
| After school                 | £7.00                            | n/a    | n/a         | n/a                             | £9.00              | n/a                  |
| Before school/breakfast club | £4.63                            | n/a    | n/a         | n/a                             | £5.00 - £6.25      | £3.00                |
| Holiday care per day         | n/a                              | n/a    | n/a         | n/a                             | £24.98             | n/a                  |

\*average of under 2 year old and over 2 year old charges – full day

### Western – average costs by type of provision

|                              | Type of provision/charges levied |        |             |                                 |                    |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Charging period              | Childminding                     | Crèche | Day nursery | Nursery unit independent school | Out of school care | Pre-school playgroup |
| Per hour                     | £3.22                            | n/a    | £6.50       | Not given                       | £5.00              | n/a                  |
| Per session/half day         | £20.00                           | n/a    | £28.00      | n/a                             | £8.75              | £6.17                |
| Per day                      | £26.67                           | n/a    | *£35.75     | n/a                             | £20.00             | £16.50               |
| Per week                     | £137.00                          | n/a    | £162.50     | n/a                             | £63.75             | £26.00               |
| After school                 | £5.00                            | n/a    | £9.00       | n/a                             | £5.50              | n/a                  |
| Before school/breakfast club | £5.00                            | n/a    | £6.00       | n/a                             | £2.50 - £3.33      | £2.00                |
| Holiday care per day         | n/a                              | n/a    | n/a         | n/a                             | £20.67             | n/a                  |

\*average of under 2 year old and over 2 year old charges – full day

### 12.3.1 Comment

The different charging patterns and ranges of charges levied make it very difficult to compare costs across different providers. Whilst data is presented as average costs by type of provision this is misleading. If, for example, there is only one provider in an area charging per session, those charges have been presented as averages. It would be useful to develop a system of simplifying how information about charges is recorded, to enable a more direct comparison.

The tables above do not contain all charges information provided as there are so many different ways in which these charges are recorded (e.g. before and after school per day and/or per week; per 2, 3 or 5 hour session; wrap-around; differential charges by age of child; lunch and tea; drop-off and pick up etc.). For detail refer to the appendices.

### 12.4 Opening times

As with charges there was considerable variation in opening times, both within and between different types of provision.

Collectively, childminders offer childcare from early in the morning (from 6.30am) until late in the evening (up to 9pm), and at weekends, including Sundays. The most commonly offered opening times are between 7/7.30am and 6/6.30pm ( a quarter of childminders – 25%, 53 childminders, operate these opening times) and 8/8.30am and 6/6.30pm (offered by 21%, 44 childminders).

#### Childminders – opening times (top 5)

| <b>Start time</b> | <b>Finish time</b> | <b>Number<br/>(% of all childminders)</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------|---|
| 07:00/07:30       | 18:00/18:30        | 25%                                       |
| 08:00/08:30       | 18:00/18:30        | 21%                                       |
| 08:00/08:30       | 16:30 – 17:30      | 11%                                       |
| 07:00/07:30       | 17:00/17:30        | 9%  |
| 07:00/07:30       | 19:00/19:30        | 6%  |

Base: 210, percentages rounded

Eight childminders (4%) open on Saturdays and 6 (3%) open on Sundays.

Information regarding opening times is not available for all providers. In the case of group providers, information is not available for 27 (27% of total). This includes 9 home childcarers (no place data is available for this category) and 11 crèches.

### **Out of school care**

The majority of settings registered for out of school care offer after school provision (60%, 15 settings). A quarter of out of school care settings offer before and after school provision (24%, 6 settings) and 12% (3 settings) offer all day provision.

### **Day nursery settings**

The majority of day nurseries (80%, 24 settings) are open from between 7/7.30am and 6/6.30pm.

### **Pre-school/playgroup settings**

The majority of pre-school settings offer sessional care – one or two sessions a day, for example 8.50am – 11.45am and/or 1pm – 3.30pm. 23% (3 settings) are open from between 9am and 3/3.30pm.

## **12.5 Quality of provision**

The quality of provision in Stockton-on-Tees is generally good, however is below the national average. Latest Ofsted inspection data supplied by the FIS shows nearly half of all childminders have an inspection rating of outstanding or good (46%); 67% of pre-schools, 53% of day nurseries and 42% of out of school providers have a rating of good.

## Ofsted Inspection Outcomes

| Type of provision            | Childminding | Pre-school | Day nursery | Out of school |
|------------------------------|--------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| Number included in review    | 210          | 15         | 30          | 26            |
| Of which, rated:             |              |            |             |               |
| Outstanding                  | 11           | 0          | 0           | 0             |
| Good                         | 86           | 10         | 16          | 11            |
| Satisfactory                 | 83           | 4          | 10          | 13            |
| Registration inspection only | 25           | 1          | 4           | 2             |
| Other                        | 5            | 0          | 0           | 0             |

Source: FIS, December 2010

### 12.6 Extended schools activities

Childcare under the Childcare Act (2006) means any form of care for a child except education provided by a school during the standard school day for a registered pupil or any form of health care for a child (e.g. a hospital stay).

As well as the more formal Ofsted registered childcare settings in private day nurseries, childminding, playgroups, out of school provision and crèches, this wider definition includes many of the 'varied menu of activities' offered by primary and secondary schools. As long as the activity offered by the school (for example, a homework club or a football session) is supervised by an adult and is run on a 'reliable' basis which enables parents/carers to work or access training with a view to gaining employment, under the Childcare Act (2006) this activity can now be classed as childcare.

Provision in schools does not have to be registered unless they provide care for children that do not go to that school. This can result in difficulties fully assessing the supply of childcare. Parents/carers may however be using extended schools services (including sports and drama/arts clubs and homework clubs) as part of their childcare package allowing them to work or to train for work.

Data has been collated to provide an overview of the nature and range of provision available in schools to inform the 2010 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Data is not complete (no data is held on extended services provision in Central (South), Eastern or Western ISAs. Available data has however been analysed to provide a description of availability in areas where data is held.

There are some common themes:

- The majority of clubs/activities delivered on school site and delivered on a termly basis
- In general, academic subjects are provided by the school, specialist activities are provided by external provider
- There is a small charge or no charge for activities
- Data supplied identifies an extensive range of activities
- Activities are delivered predominantly Monday to Thursday, very few Friday or weekend activities; a large proportion finish before 5pm, so would not support childcare for working parents
- The majority of activities are not open to the wider community or to other schools
- There are very few waiting lists for activities
- Few family learning opportunities have been identified
- Before and after school childcare is classed as a reliable activity by the schools that provide the care.

### **Billingham**

- Data is available from 15 schools
- 12.5% of schools in the Billingham area (2) provide a breakfast club, there is no afterschool or holiday childcare
- 54% data is incomplete. 8 schools are showing extended activities (84 activities) with no additional data available. 46% 8 schools have completed data for extended activities (71 activities)
- All activities are delivered on school sites
- Of the data provided 91.5% of activities are considered to be reliable

- There is a charge for 15% of activities ranging from 50p to £125.00. £125.00 is for an activity centre visit, Monday – Friday
- Only 13% of activities are available on a Friday and these don't constitute childcare
- No waiting lists for any of the activities and no family learning opportunities available
- 32% of activities are delivered all year round, out of the 43 activity dates given
- Only two activities go beyond 5pm
- Data shows that all activities are suitable for children with disabilities.

### **North**

- Data from 16 schools
- Ten schools have a breakfast club, two schools have afterschool clubs, one school has a summer school and one an Easter school, St Gregory's has registered two breakfast clubs it is the only school with before and after school care, term time only
- Five out of 15 schools have fully completed data
- Six activities available for family learning
- 72% of activities have incomplete data or no data available
- Only one activity go beyond 5pm
- 96% of those activities listed are considered reliable (46 activities listed 2 activities considered unreliable)
- Data shows that all activities are suitable for disabled children.

### **Central**

- Data from 12 schools
- Of the data given 42% of activities are regarded as reliable
- Four schools operate a breakfast club
- No after school or holiday care available in the central area
- One activity (breakfast club) is delivered off school site (parish Hall) all other activities are delivered on school sites
- 7% (4) activities are available to the wider community from the completed data (55 activities)
- 3.5% (2) of activities are available to other schools from the completed data (55 activities)
- 7% (4) of the activities are available for family learning opportunities

- 50% of the data is incomplete for out of school activities
- 7 activities exceed a 5.30pm finish
- Data shows that all activities are suitable for disabled children

### **South West**

- Data collected from 9 schools
- All data is complete for all schools
- Conyers School provide a range of activities available to the wider community and to other schools delivered by a range of external providers
- Levendale Primary school has before school and afterschool care, the only school in the south west area with this provision on school site
- Of the data given, 24% (29) of activities are available to the wider community
- Of the data given, 22% (27) of activities are available to other schools
- Of the data given, 15% (19) of activities are available for family learning
- 68% of the activities on the data sheet are considered reliable
- 82.5% of activities are considered suitable for disabled children
- All activities are delivered on school site
- 10% of activities are scheduled for Fridays.

### **South East**

- Data collected from 14 schools, all data completed
- St Patricks school hold all their extended activities during December on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 2.30 until 3.30pm, during the autumn and spring term football and basketball are delivered before school and at lunchtime
- Five breakfast school clubs and one afterschool club in the south East area
- St Patrick's school is the only school in the South East area with before and after school childcare
- 98% of activities are delivered on school site
- 5% (8) of activities are available for family learning
- 9% (15) of activities are available to the wider community
- 5% (9) of activities are available to other schools.

### 13 Childcare sufficiency in the Tees Valley

An information sharing event was arranged for the five Tees Valley local authorities to meet to:

- Share methodology used to prepare childcare sufficiency assessment 2011
- Explore local authority key findings and gap analysis (where developed)
- Identify possible areas of joint working/commissioning for consideration in action planning process
- Share good practice across authority areas
- Provide peer support and challenge to ensure sufficiency of childcare provision and sufficiency of activities for older children

The event was held on 25<sup>th</sup> January, hosted by Stockton-on-Tees Borough council and facilitated by Hemsall's.

#### Key gaps were identified by each local authority:

|   |
|---|
| <b>Geographical Gaps:</b> where a geographical area has a general shortage of supply  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lack of after school and holiday childcare in a specific locality area was identified in Stockton</li><li>▪ Hartlepool have one village that is identified with a gap</li></ul>   |
| <b>Income Gaps:</b> where there is a shortage of affordable childcare for the income groups populating an area  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The cost of childcare for children with disabilities and additional needs – Hartlepool</li><li>▪ Affordable holiday care – Darlington and Redcar</li><li>▪ Affordable places for vulnerable two year olds in specific locality areas – Middlesbrough and Stockton</li></ul> |
| <b>Specific Need Gaps:</b> where there is a shortage of suitable places for disabled children, or children with other specific needs or requirements, including those from particular faiths or   |



|   |
|---|
| community groups  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stockton identify a specific need for childcare that reflects cultural groups</li> <li>▪ Childcare for children with disabilities and additional needs – Hartlepool, Redcar and in one specific area in Stockton</li> <li>▪ Holiday care and afterschool care for children with disabilities and additional needs – Stockton</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Time Gaps:</b> where there is a shortage of childcare at a time that parents would wish to use childcare   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Childcare between 5.30pm and 6pm for school aged children – Stockton</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Age Gaps:</b> where there is a shortage of childcare suitable to the needs and requirements of a certain age group (for example, school-aged children up to 18 years, if they are disabled). This may be difficult to detect if it is masked by overprovision of childcare suitable for other age groups   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Holiday care and specific activities to meet the needs of children 11 plus – Darlington, Redcar and Stockton</li> <li>▪ After school care for 11 plus – Darlington, Stockton and Redcar</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Type Gaps:</b> where there is a shortage in the type of childcare for which parents may be expressing a preference   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sessional playgroup provision – Hartlepool, small specific locality need in Darlington and Stockton</li> <li>▪ Lack of after school and holiday childcare in a specific locality area was identified in Stockton</li> <li>▪ Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Redcar indicate that holiday care could be an issue if/when decision is taken to stop local authority funded playschemes</li> <li>▪ Childminder places in specific areas – Darlington</li> </ul> |

- Holiday care that is flexible – Darlington
- Under two places in specific locality areas –Middlesbrough and Redcar
- Not enough flexible free places for 3 & 4 year olds - Middlesbrough
- Appropriate high quality provision – Stockton
- Provision for 3 & 4 year olds that is flexible over three days – Stockton, Middlesbrough and Darlington
- Sustainable provision bearing in mind the reduction of public sector funding and a reduction in any funding to support sustainability from the Early Intervention Fund – Stockton and Hartlepool

**Information and knowledge gaps**

- Age appropriate information – Stockton and Redcar
- Employers awareness of the Families Information Service – across all areas
- Employers understanding and ability to support parents/carers access
- information and support to reduce the cost of childcare – all areas
- Understanding about direct payments and how this can support access to childcare where local authority funding may not be available to families – all areas

All local authorities agreed that taking a “Tees Valley” approach would be a useful way forward to maximise resources, share learning and support the implementation of local authority sufficiency action plans.

The participants identified several areas where joint working could be applicable and appropriate:

- Creating a Tees Valley approach to how parents use direct payments to support childcare for children with disabilities and additional needs
- FIS and information distribution Identifying where a strategic approach across the valley will be cost effective
- Pilot work by individual local authorities on specific areas of action planning, sharing learning, peer mentoring etc
- A shared understanding of lines of authority and emerging structures in member authorities
- Requirement for regular whole team meetings
- Create a set of terms of reference for the group
- Arrange another meeting at end of April when things should be clearer
- Agree a set of common priorities for the group

## **Appendix one      Methodology**

### **Distribution of the parent/carer questionnaire**

Questionnaires were distributed to parents/carers, either for self-completion or for supported completion (one to one support) using a mixed methodology that aimed to: introduce a degree of random sampling to improve the sample; reach and support parents/carers to complete a questionnaire that might otherwise experience barriers (e.g. language, literacy )and ; target specific groups to ensure representation in the sample (e.g. parents/carers of a child with additional needs; parents/carers of a Black and Minority Ethnic background)

### **Self-complete survey**

Questionnaires were distributed to a total of 38 schools across the borough – 48% of all maintained schools. Distribution was controlled to ensure representation in primary and secondary schools and to include all special schools.

Primary and secondary schools were randomly selected from with cluster areas.

Questionnaires were also sent to contacts on the Aiming High database and to parents/carers who had contacted the FIS in the preceding 12 months.

### **Supported distribution**

The survey was supported by local authority colleagues at a number of events and locations, including:

- Four children’s centre events (Newtown; The Star and; Sunrise and; Redhill)
- A ‘dad’s’ group
- English classes
- Parent and toddler groups
- Children’s Urdu and Arabic class
- Traveller site
- Jobcentre Plus outreach advisors
- Parents/carers of with a disabled child or child with additional needs.

## **On-line**

The parent/carer questionnaire was also available to local authority staff via the intranet.

Questionnaires were distributed/available in the field across June, July and August. A deadline of 9<sup>th</sup> August 2010 was set for the return of completed questionnaires; data was entered into Excel for analysis by Hemsall's. A total of 797 parents/carers completed a questionnaire by the deadline.

A prize draw was offered to encourage participation in the survey – a first prize of £100 Toys R Us vouchers; a second prize of £50 of vouchers and; 5 third prizes of £10 of WH Smith vouchers. Winners were drawn at random in September 2010 by Hemsall's from a list of all parents/carers wanting to be entered into the prize draw. Winners were informed by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council in 2010.

## **Qualitative research with parents and carers in Stockton-on-Tees**

A series of in-depth focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews were undertaken with parents/carers at various venues across the city. The interviews and discussions aimed to explore issues relating to childcare in more depth, and to consult with parents/carers who may not engage in a questionnaire survey. A total of 40 parents/carers participated in discussions.

Participants to the qualitative research were recruited working in partnership with stakeholders who acted as sponsors to the research, obtaining informed consent from participants prior to introduction to the researcher. Qualitative research was targeted at harder to reach and/or parents/carers with specific needs, for example, male carers, members of the Black and Minority Ethnic community, and parents/carers of children with additional needs.

Discussions were semi-structured around pre-determined areas of questioning, but were shaped by the specific interests and needs of each group or participant.

Qualitative research was undertaken in June and July 2010.

### **Consultations with children and young people**

The 'Max the Cat' children's consultation project aimed to reach children in Stockton-on-Tees, aged four to ten years old, who were non-users and users of early years, childcare and childminding provision. The consultation was interested in their views on their current, potential and future use of childcare to inform the local authority's childcare sufficiency assessment. A total of 3 schools participated, involving 207 children.

Consultations with younger children were undertaken in June and September 2010.

A questionnaire was developed for consultations with young people attending a youth event in July 2010 and for distribution at youth clubs. The questionnaire aimed to explore young people's experiences of childcare and their preferences for out of school care. A total of 99 young people participated.

### **Consultations with employers**

A self-complete questionnaire was distributed to 425 employers based in Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council-on-Tees; the database was purchased for the CSA from a commercial organisation. Questionnaires were distributed in June 2010; a total of 62 employers responded.

To complement the employer questionnaire survey, in-depth interviews were undertaken with three major employers; the local authority; health and; a call centre. Interviews were aimed at exploring the relationship between childcare and employment, as a barrier and as a facilitator and to develop a better understanding of the local employment market in the current time.

### **Stakeholder interviews**

A series of in-depth telephone interviews were undertaken with key stakeholders:

- Teenage pregnancy support service
- North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Trust
- Jobcentre Plus

- Stockton-on-Tees PCT
- Aiming High

Interviews were undertaken in May and July 2010.

### **Desk research**

Desk research was undertaken in October 2010 to inform the CSA. Desk research included: populations and demographic data; children provision data; employment and labour market trends; regeneration and housing and contextual analysis of the Stockton-on-Tees local area.

## Appendix two Parent/carer questionnaire survey comments

| Locality                         | Comments  |
|----------------------------------|---|
|                                  | <b>Disabled children and children with additional needs</b>   |
| Billingham Area Partnership      | I would like to see play schemes through the holidays based at children's schools. My son is 7 and I think would benefit from holiday activities at his own school, Billingham South Primary (not disabled). My disabled daughter seems well catered for. |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | There is not enough childcare for any disabled child with complex needs   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | My child will only stay in places with me or a close family member as he has a fear of people which makes it difficult to go anywhere or do anything away from the house  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | There is no childcare in my area for disabled children  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Transport is not supplied i.e. for oasis during 6 weeks holidays. Have to make 8 bus journeys within 1 day to go to Thornaby and back   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | 2 children with special needs: [information deleted]  |
| Central Area (South) Partnership | I would like to have more placements closer to home as I have a child with special needs. I do not drive myself because of health reasons   |
| Central Area (South) Partnership | I receive a monthly respite of 1-2 nights for my disabled child. It is fantastic and helps me a great deal  |
| Central Area (South)             | Care is not generally made available to families. You have to find it yourself and hope you meet the criteria (complex needs care).   |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| Partnership                            |   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | What activities/clubs are available for ADHD children in the area?  |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | Have no support, have to look after our son ourselves, or rely on family to give us a break, unable to have meal out with husband as no-one to babysit after 6pm and no respite yet, has to be 8 years old.   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | I find it difficult to access care specialist for my son and weekend activities/care just for a couple of hours would be of benefit.  |
| Western Area<br>Partnership            | I would like my child to go to play schemes but as we don't have a car - we live in [deleted] - her school is in Billingham and there is nowhere closer to home that would meet her needs.  |
| Western Area<br>Partnership            | Though there is great childcare in this area, there is nothing for disabled children so I waited to send [name deleted] to his school's nursery before he had that bond with other children   |
|  | <b>General comment</b>  |
| Billingham Area<br>Partnership         | Annual leave is not sufficient to cover the amount of school holidays each year resulting in extra childcare and separate leave for parents.  |
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | Most of us [BME group] ask our parents to come here to help out with childcare at our own cost for at least 6 months.   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I don't use paid childcare as my parents look after my daughter but I did in the past and I found there was lots of choice and it was good for the child. If I needed to use it again, I would need to have childcare starting early as I start work at 6am |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I'm really lucky, I work 3 days a week and both sets of grandparents share the childcare between them. [Information deleted].   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I have gone back to work part time (was previously full time). My pay can change, hard to calculate wage.   |
| Central Area                           | My son, aged 10, went to the nursery on site twice a week and it  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| (South)<br>Partnership                 | helped him mix with other children.   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | Our children are older now, aged between 11-17years - all at home.<br>One of our daughters has 2 children and uses services   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | Partner works off shore - energy  |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | My partner and myself work opposites shifts.  |
| Unknown ISA                            | I am a grandparent and bring my grandson to a mother & toddler group - I look after him while his mum is at work  |
| Unknown ISA                            | I asked once for help! I was lied to; I do not trust you now. I did not want [name deleted] involved, I was not asked. You think you can do what you like!                    |
| Western Area<br>Partnership            | Children really enjoy after school activities   |
| Western Area<br>Partnership            | Very disappointed to learn my daughter will not be able to access free nursery place until she is 3.5yrs, due to her birthday being 24 days over deadline                     |
| Western Area<br>Partnership            | One parent should be encouraged to stay at home with their child/children rather than constantly being pushed back to work and children not receiving the best start in life. |
| Western Area<br>Partnership            | Would like to see Families Information Service offer an equipment loan service to help childcare groups, schools, PTA's etc. with organising activities for the children      |
|  | <b>Support for parents/carers</b>   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | Form does not consider disabled parents or the pressures on disabled parent households, financially, emotionally or practically   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Stockton-on-Tees should create facilities for parents to go to classes to improve their skills towards work or other reasons  |
|  | <b>Comments about the survey</b>  |
| Central Area                           | Not sure, due to coming from school, if information in questionnaire  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| (North)<br>Partnership                 | relates to one i.e. school member or all children - some questions could be clearer  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | The school system has changed - my child is entitled to go at aged 4. This form and questions do not reflect this and made it hard to fill in  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Any questions left unanswered are because I feel they are not relevant to me   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | This questionnaire does not seem to account for those on maternity leave still   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | I am fortunate that my husband and I are generally able to look after our children between us, by working around each other and also having grandparents to help. Therefore I am unable to comment on current costs etc. of childcare in Stockton. |
| Unknown ISA                            | This questionnaire is totally not applicable to my family  |
| Unknown ISA                            | Should only be told to fill this in if using formal childcare arrangements - not relevant to me  |
|  | <b>Comments about quality or settings</b>  |
| Billingham Area<br>Partnership         | The sports my son did at Roseberry School was very good but they didn't realise it was the whole of the holidays. Maybe a few days would be better so more kids could be involved  |
| Billingham Area<br>Partnership         | 'Smash' would be ideal for my childcare needs but after visiting 'Smash', I decided against it as I feel it's in need of refurbishment. An after school club may be handy also.  |
| Billingham Area<br>Partnership         | More feedback from nursery childcare maybe parents evening, as when I pick my children up the staff seem very busy and I do not like to disturb them   |
| Billingham Area<br>Partnership         | Tried to find nursery (private) in Billingham but no places available had to go to Middlesbrough - only lasted 1 month - terrible - ended up grandma had to give up work and we pay her  |
| Billingham Area<br>Partnership         | Sure Start is fantastic - I hope it's funding continues  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | Greater checks needed on childminders - we had a bad experience.<br>Also 2 nurseries closed down in area in last 6 months - very hard to keep moving kids  |
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | I have used the Sure Start facilities since my daughter was 6 weeks old and they are excellent. I hope these will continue in the future   |
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | I have really enjoyed using the Sure Start playgroups  |
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | Just that I couldn't have found a better nursery, this nursery came highly recommended and Sonny has settled really well   |
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | I find the stay & play sessions run by Sure Start very good for my daughter and she really enjoys going to them.   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Unfortunately the childcare site at my children's school is a prefab/portacabin. It is small and smells of urine. My own and other parent's have raised concerns re: prices and inadequate food provision e.g. a teacake for tea after a day at school |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | The quality of childcare in Stockton that has school collection is not adequate at all.  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | A couple of years ago, there was a Sure Start nursery 2 days a week on the site where I live which I found brilliant as it was close to home   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | I was considering a childminder but they are more interested with quoting prices they charge rather than how they would teach and occupy your child  |
| Unknown ISA                            | I am happy with the school   |
| Western Area<br>Partnership            | Children used to go to after school club in Roseworth run by social services but hated going and refused to go anymore so unable to access this now  |

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Western Area Partnership         | School nursery not open late enough (need childcare until 6pm).<br>Constant battle to get my private nursery to continue to pick up at my school (10 minutes drive away)  |
|                                  | <b>Costs/charges</b>  |
| Billingham Area Partnership      | We pay a small amount to our parents to look after our 3 children after nursery and school until we finish work, because we cannot afford childcare   |
| Billingham Area Partnership      | It is unfortunate but inevitable that one has to pay a premium for under 3's child care that I would be happy to leave my child in. The cost of this care acts as a barrier to parents wanting to return to work. |
| Billingham Area Partnership      | Without child care vouchers it would not make sending child to nursery financially viable   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | I would like to see free places over school holidays. Cost for childcare if family e.g. Grandparents are ill would out cost price for working when having four children to consider in school holidays            |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Childcare is expensive when you have more than 1 child and weekend and evening availability is non-existent   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Every parent should be entitled to some free childcare regardless of how much they earn, as it is people who work should be looked after, not those who don't   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | If childcare was less expensive I would have been able to return to work but as it's so expensive I am better off staying off until the baby starts full time school  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | My contribution to household income is approx £12,000pa. Child care is so expensive. If my parents were not able to take care of my children, I would not be able to go to work.                                  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Childcare would be available to me if you could pay per hour, instead of per day  |
| Central Area                     | The cost of childcare is a potential barrier to returning to work!  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| (North)<br>Partnership                 |  |
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | I would personally like to see nursery prices reduced for childcare during the day   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Grandparents should receive some financial gain for the support they provide for working families  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Look into if your child attends nursery for half a day, it often falls into a full day's fees - kind regards   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Although I have not had a problem recently with affordable childcare (as I now have relatives who can help), I have had difficulty in the past. There is little choice in the immediate area and what there is seems to be expensive |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Childminders are very expensive but playschool is good value   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I feel discriminated against because I work full time, so I have to pay full time childcare with no extra help. I may as well not work with the cost of childcare  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Childcare costs should be lower  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Use my mother and school breakfast club as other forms of childcare prohibitively expensive. Used private childcare previously for many years; VERY expensive  |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | There should be no child care provision free of charge to the unemployed and other benefit claiming tax payer liabilities that this country cannot afford  |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | There needs to be more affordable childcare. I am lucky I can arrange my working hours around my family  |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Eastern Area Partnership    | Difference in price to other breakfast clubs (schools). I pay £3 for two children in some schools it's 50p per child/per day  |
| Eastern Area Partnership    | I don't use childcare because I don't want to leave my child. I also think it's not fair that working people have to pay £30 a day.   |
| Unknown ISA                 | Childcare at a lower cost and closer to home would be appreciated   |
| Unknown ISA                 | Not really, as fortunately the child care provider is based in our child's school and is at a reasonable cost. If this was not available, then I would find it difficult to find suitable childcare as have no family in area to help out.      |
| Western Area Partnership    | Holiday clubs are extremely expensive and only operate part of the day (10am-3pm) which is very problematic   |
| Western Area Partnership    | School childcare was not flexible. We had to pay 8 weeks in advance and had to pay for 2 hours regardless of how long we needed. Could schools have similar rules and regulations for childminders?   |
| Western Area Partnership    | I have been shocked at the cost of childcare. My husband and I both work and our child is only at private nursery 3 days a week, but it can be a struggle at times.   |
|                             | <b>Comments relating to a lack of provision and/or types of provision required</b>  |
| Billingham Area Partnership | I have had trouble finding childcare for my five year old for two nights after school and have been let down by two childminders. I am also concerned about getting wraparound care for my 2 year old when she goes to school nursery next year |
| Billingham Area Partnership | As I am looking for work, I'm looking at what childcare is available but can't seem to find a childminder who does weekdays and weekends and I don't want my child to go to different people  |
| Billingham Area Partnership | We need childcare in our area - our single parent families can't work because of lack of nurseries for under 3years   |
| Billingham Area Partnership | We need a nursery in Port Clarence  |
| Billingham Area Partnership | Would like to see more playgroups in the area - thank you   |

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Billingham Area Partnership      | I think schools should run pre and after school schemes for working parents  |
| Billingham Area Partnership      | No childcare available for children 14+. I don't want sports or drama club   |
| Billingham Area Partnership      | We would prefer term time only childcare   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Childcare for older son who finishes school at 2.55pm is impossible to find as childminders are on school runs. Also affects their ratios and is not financially viable for them.  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | There is no childcare other than what I receive at the moment which is on a first come first served basis. My son receives one after school activity per week that is guaranteed   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | When my child gets older I would be interested in after school clubs but as it stands, this service is not available at his current school, even though they do have a breakfast club.   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Nursery facilities do not cater for shift/weekend workers. I would like to see nurseries open at weekends to help with my childcare needs. Also it is expensive and I feel should be subsidised to allow more parents to be able to afford to go to work |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | I did find it difficult to find the same childminder to have a place for both my children especially having 1 child under 12 months  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | When looking for private childminders in my area, there was very few last year. Please can I also have summer holiday and after school information sent  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | There are no childcare places around Roseworth. I had to look really hard to find the one I have   |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Your service has been very helpful while I've been here. Thanks a lot. I think there are not enough childminders in the area   |
| Central Area                     | Childminders to do 15 hours free childcare for 3 year olds. Parents  |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| (North)<br>Partnership                 | are struggling to get school nursery places   |
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | I'm happy with my child's nursery but i need to have longer hours and flexible because I want to go back to work and with sales you have to be flexible   |
| Central Area<br>(North)<br>Partnership | We need affordable holiday clubs that do a range of activities  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | My child attends Oak Tree Primary School and goes to breakfast club there but there is no after school club. As I work full time, I would find one of these very useful as would many other working parents   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I think there should be more fun, fitness clubs etc for children, so that they do not get bored and are kept active while still learning, having fun and playing with other children. The cost should be reasonable or free.                                    |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I wish my children's primary school offered before and after school clubs so I did not have to pay during school holidays - I work term time only but still pay £520 for places   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Would be interested in school my child attends doing a before and after school and a holiday club - Fairfield School  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I struggled to find appropriate childcare after contacting Sure Start. The leads and information provided to me was irrelevant as I followed up contacts , nothing was available  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I cannot find anyone to look after them. My working hours are 8.30am-5pm x 2 days, 1 weekend day 12noon-8.15pm 2 days   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | It's really hard to get childcare 'ad hoc' on a casual basis i.e. maybe a 2 hr session or 1 hour. I have meetings that I have to attend and errands & would be very helpful if I could drop my daughter off in a relaxed, informal environment for limited time |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | When I return to work, it would be useful if the school were to provide an after school childcare provision. Currently there is a breakfast club but nothing after school  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Would very much like my child's school (Hartburn PS) to provide holiday scheme as quite stressful trying to get time off work in school holidays etc. There seems to be lots of schemes for boys in the area i.e. Football       |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Would like to see after school club located at Hartburn PS as they have breakfast club only currently  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I think all school children should be entitled to an after school club/activities, either in their own school or working together with other schools in the area.  |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | Childcare is really good for parents especially those who are working and no friends and family around. There should be more crèches available   |
| Central Area<br>(South)<br>Partnership | I would find it handy to have a playgroup on site  |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | I would like my child's school to have an after school club. This would solve problems getting my son picked up  |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | I would like my child's school (Bader Primary) to provide an after school club   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | There is no childcare for my 12 year old daughter around. She is too old, I got told off at Sure Start   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | When I was trying to sort out a childminder to walk my son to Myton Park, there were very few to choose from   |
| Eastern Area<br>Partnership            | After school and holiday clubs in the Thornaby area are nonexistent or very poor (not every child wants to play football). Holidays are long when there are no facilities for 10 year old children i.e. Park with play equipment |
| Eastern Area                           | Sure Start centres have been an invaluable source of education,  |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Partnership              | support and advice. Many more needed as it is a postcode lottery  |
| Eastern Area Partnership | Distinct lack of playgroups - the ones available have waiting lists or are full   |
| Eastern Area Partnership | There is no adequate childcare in holidays for teenagers in this area.  |
| Eastern Area Partnership | It's more childcare before and after school that I need. It would be better if all schools had 7.30am start or drop of stage available. There are not enough breakfast clubs/after school places available at the school my daughter goes to. |
| Unknown ISA              | It would be very helpful if primary schools had breakfast clubs for parents who start work after 8am but before 9am   |
| Unknown ISA              | Apart from having to employ a nanny, which is extremely expensive, there aren't any childminders that help and support us parents in caring and loving our children when we need to be at work  |
| Unknown ISA              | There seems to be little provision for school holidays. I have enquired before but have been unable to get my daughter a place - at Christmas time there are none available at all  |
| Unknown ISA              | More after school provision based at child's school would be good   |
| Unknown ISA              | Would love to have before and after school care at all schools at a reasonable price  |
| Unknown ISA              | Smash should re-open at the Sure Start Redhill, instead of having to go all the way to Billingham   |
| Western Area Partnership | As I have older children, they really enjoy sporting activities. We need summer holiday club for 11+ aged children i.e. tennis, rounder's, hockey, dance & football   |
| Western Area Partnership | School breakfast clubs need to be open before 8am and need to include sibling discounts   |
| Western Area Partnership | I am very happy with my current childcare but am concerned by the lack of childminders in my area - it is very hard to get a place with so many childminders leaving  |
| Western Area Partnership | Would be great to have more holiday club choices for Foundation Stage children  |

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Western Area Partnership         | My 5 yr old child's school does not have a holiday club. In fact there is not one in the village. This makes it difficult - especially in the summer as I still have to work but have to scramble for childcare                 |
| Western Area Partnership         | I was surprised to find that when my child moved from primary to secondary, no after school care was offered in his school. My child is too old to go to a childminder, a little too young to be 'home alone' for several hours |
|                                  | <b>Information, advice and guidance</b>   |
| Billingham Area Partnership      | Information easier to find  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | I have had to organise a childminder alongside Summer Camp as the Summer Camp did not cover all of my child's holiday. The FIS was excellent in supporting me to find appropriate childcare                                     |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Not enough information is given to help with finding childcare. I knew nothing about 15hours/nursery, if it wasn't for asking around, I still would know nothing  |
| Central Area (North) Partnership | Some information about free 15hrs a week cc is not advertised enough!   |
| Central Area (South) Partnership | The free 15hrs a week - can you use this for childminders?  |
| Central Area (South) Partnership | I think the taster sessions are an excellent idea as you can see if it will suit your child's needs   |
| Central Area (South) Partnership | Have concern re availability for childcare once my child reaches secondary school. Not sure what is out there post 11+  |
| Eastern Area Partnership         | Publication of childcare available, would be nice, if it was posted locally   |
| Eastern Area Partnership         | Would be helpful to receive more information from services through post etc as do not know where to go and do not see health visitor  |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Eastern Area Partnership | I would like to know why I cannot use the free nursery grant towards my childminder as I am unable to get a place for my daughter in a school nursery.  |
| Unknown ISA              | I am not sure of what childcare options are available to me once my child joins secondary school. I am concerned there might not be any provision once my child reaches 11 and moves on to Secondary School |
| Western Area Partnership | If new services are introduced, they then need to be highly publicised rather than finding out by word of mouth   |
| Western Area Partnership | Have found the FIS in Stockton very helpful on the occasions that I contacted them  |



# **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council**

## **Max the Cat**

### **A consultation of children's views of childcare in Stockton-on-Tees**

November 2010

## **Contents**

- 1 Executive summary and key findings
- 2 Consultation aims
- 3 Consultation methodology
- 4 Consultation findings

## **Appendices**

- A Max the Cat News – the children’s report

## I Executive summary and key findings

The Max the Cat children's consultation project aimed to research the views of children in Stockton-on-Tees, aged between four and 10 years old, who are users or potential users of childcare. The project was part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment undertaken by Stockton-on-Tees to meet the local authority's duty under section 11 of the Childcare Act (2006) to assess the sufficiency of childcare, in preparation for providing a sufficiency of childcare, and increasing childcare take-up to support parents in employment and/or training.

The project was carried out in June and October 2010 by undertaking a number of storytelling, group discussion and questionnaire based consultations in schools. Hemsall's would like to thank the children and staff at St John the Evangelist RC School, Fairfield Primary School and St Marks Elm Tree CofE School for participating in the project. A total of 207 children were consulted using group discussion, 113 written questionnaires and 94 sticker-based questionnaires.

Children had much to say about the childcare they had attended previously or were currently attending. 87% of all children consulted said they had attended (or were currently attending) pre-school childcare (playgroups, nurseries etc.), with 28% attending breakfast clubs and 24% playschemes/holiday clubs. Attendance at after school clubs and activities was 51% of all children.

Satisfaction levels were varied. The most popular childcare was after school childcare, scoring 83.3% liked 'a lot', compared to the lowest rating of 52.2% for childminding. Overall, children were happier with their pre-school childcare than other types of childcare reporting a low 3.7% 'did not like' rating, compared with 26.8% for breakfast provision and 21.5% for holiday childcare.

Children offered many ideas on how to improve their childcare provision. Such ideas are shown per type of childcare, and included: a focus on play, fun and enjoyment; the quality of toys and equipment; choice of activities and food; a balance between specialist activities and sports and play activities; behaviour of staff and other children; and the physical environment. Younger children showed preferences for all aspects of their childcare experiences with some bias towards computers, snack time, outdoor play and dancing and music.

When considering future use and preferences for childcare, 51% of children reported they would like to attend after school clubs, 40% to attend a childminder, 28% for breakfast clubs, and 24% for holiday childcare. However, many were very aware of the barriers that prevent them from doing so, in particular, their preference not to attend if they did not like the provision on offer. Additionally,



children reported their parents were either not working, had chosen to stay at home, or were organising their working week in such a way that childcare was not required. Some children said their families could not afford childcare fees.



The drawings shown in this report are by children attending St Marks Elm Tree CofE School.

## 2 Consultation aims

The project aimed to collect the views of children and young people and reward and value their contribution. With anti-discriminatory practice at its core, the consultation aimed to deliver age appropriate, imaginative, engaging and effective consultation through a storytelling approach, and to reach a representative sample of children and young people.

The project evaluated past and current experiences of childcare, and aimed to identify the preferred type and quality of services wanted by children and young people across the age range.

Childcare in this project refers to registered childcare (childminding, full day care, playgroups, and all types of out of school) and extended services activities. There were also opportunities for children to reflect back on their experiences pre-school groups.



The Max the Cat puppet

### **3 Methodology**

The consultation was designed as a project called 'Max the Cat', which was an exciting approach to consultation presented and delivered as a story and newspaper.

#### **3.1 Working in partnership**

Three schools in Stockton-on-Tees were identified as target locations for the consultations with the aim of ensuring that the sample for the consultation was representative of the population of borough. The following sessions were delivered:

##### **Fairfield Primary School**

- Reception (46 children)

##### **St John the Evangelist RC School**

- Reception (27 children)
- Year 1 (23 children)

##### **St Marks Elm Tree CofE School**

- Year 2 (27 children)
- Year 3 (29 children)
- Year 4 (26 children)
- Year 5 (29 children)

#### **3.2 Storytelling**

The research team visited the schools to provide storytelling events for children under the age of nine years. The specially written story about Max the Cat provided children with the contextual information they needed to enable them to understand the scope of the consultation. The story gave information about the different types of childcare that the consultation was focused upon. The story was told in group settings and was used as a platform for the collection of ideas from children using the following strategies.

#### **3.3 Discussion**

Discussion groups facilitated by the storyteller and Hemsall's researchers focused on the key areas: views on current experiences of childcare; and the preferred type and quality of childcare services. Broad themes of the discussions were observed and noted by the researchers.

### 3.4 Questionnaires

Following the discussions, each individual child was supported to complete their written or sticker-based questionnaire, which was designed to appeal to different participation styles, ages and stages of development.

### 3.5 Summary newspaper style report

The findings of the consultation are provided in the form of the 'Max the Cat' newspaper. This is to be distributed to every child that participated in the project to feedback the findings of the project, thank everyone for their participation and time, and to stimulate further discussion and dialogue.





## 4 Consultation findings

Max the Cat engaged children who were openly excited and occupied with the consultation. The story was successful in providing children with the information they needed to effectively answer the consultation's questions.

### 4.1 Reaching children

A total of 207 children were reached with 113 written questionnaires and 94 sticker questionnaires being completed by children aged between four and 10 years old.

The three schools selected to participate in the project were considered by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to have cohorts of children that were reflective of the demographics of the children in the borough as a whole. There were children with additional needs, and children with special educational needs within the classroom settings, and support was provided to enable full engagement in the process.

### 4.2 Responses

A total of 113 written questionnaires and 94 sticker questionnaires were completed by children aged between four and 10 years of age.

#### Response level by location

| Location                         | Number of written questionnaires | Number of sticker questionnaires | % of total |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| Fairfield Primary School         | 0                                | 46                               | 22%        |
| St John The Evangelist RC School | 0                                | 50                               | 24%        |
| St Marks Elm Tree CofE School    | 113                              | 0                                | 54%        |

Base: 207, percentages rounded

#### Response level by age

|       | Number | % of total |
|-------|--------|------------|
| Boys  | 104    | 50.2%      |
| Girls | 103    | 49.8%      |

Base: 207, percentages rounded

### Participation by ethnicity

| White          | Asian       | African<br>Caribbean | Dual<br>heritage | East<br>European | Other     | Total      |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------|------------|
| 196<br>(94.7%) | 9<br>(4.3%) | 0<br>(0%)            | 2<br>(1%)        | 0<br>(0%)        | 0<br>(0%) | 207 (100%) |

Base: 207, percentages rounded. Based on observation and consultation with schools

### 4.3 Use of childcare

The questionnaire survey focussed on five specific forms of childcare:

- pre-school groups
- breakfast clubs
- after school clubs/activities
- holiday playschemes
- childminding

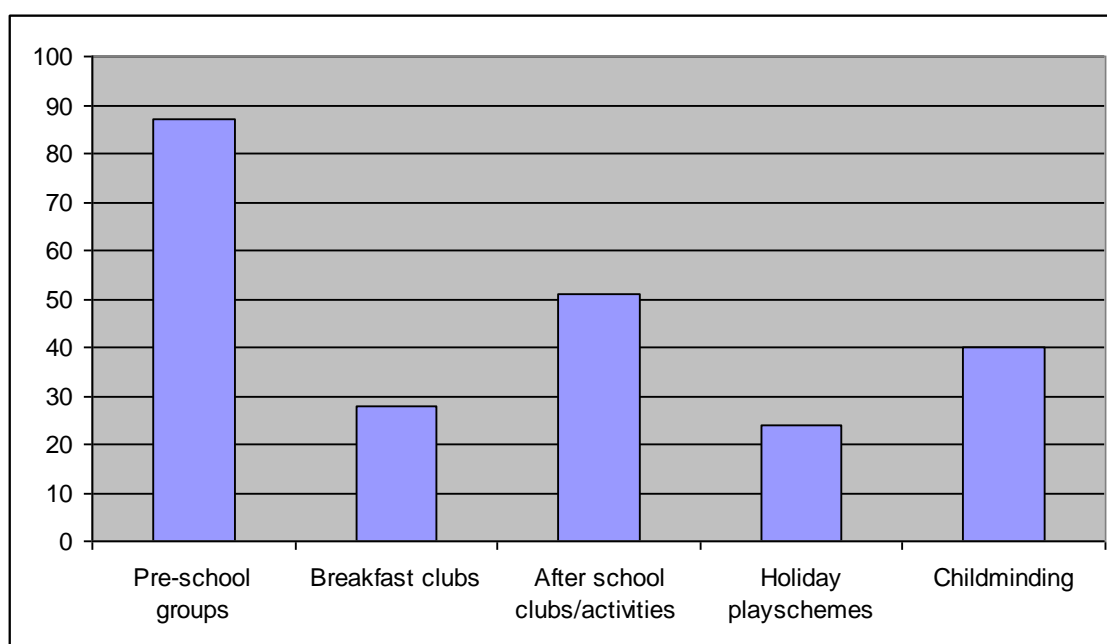
Questionnaire data and groups discussions showed that 87% of all children consulted had attended (or were currently attending) pre-school childcare (playgroups, nurseries etc.), with 28% attending breakfast clubs and 24% playschemes/holiday clubs. Attendance at after school clubs and activities was 51% of all children. Results are shown below per school and overall.

#### Use of childcare: previous and current

| Type of<br>childcare             | Fairfield<br>Primary<br>School | St John The<br>Evangelist RC<br>School | St Marks Elm<br>Tree CofE<br>School | Total     |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Pre-school groups                | 39                             | 39                                     | 103                                 | 181 (87%) |
| Breakfast clubs                  | 12                             | 14                                     | 32                                  | 58 (28%)  |
| After school<br>clubs/activities | 12                             | 19                                     | 74                                  | 105 (51%) |
| Holiday<br>playschemes           | 7                              | 13                                     | 29                                  | 49 (24%)  |
| Childminding                     | 22                             | 18                                     | 42                                  | 82 (40%)  |

Base 207, multiple responses, percentages rounded

## Use of childcare: previous and current by percentage, overall



### 4.4 Satisfaction with childcare

In written questionnaires, children were asked about their levels of satisfaction with the childcare they had previously attended or were currently attending. In group discussions, children were asked about their comments on the provision and in written questionnaires, they were asked to rate their experiences on a three point scale:

- Liked a lot
- Liked a bit
- Did not like

Results from both methodologies are shown below. All comments are shown verbatim in appendices one to five.

#### 4.4.1 Pre-school group

| Rating        | Total | Percentage |
|---------------|-------|------------|
| Liked 'a lot' | 79    | 73.8%      |
| Liked 'a bit' | 24    | 22.4%      |
| Did not like  | 4     | 3.7%       |

Base 107, percentages rounded



Of those children offering a rating, the majority liked pre-school childcare ‘a lot’ (73.8%). Comments were wide ranging, the majority were about play, toys and equipment (34). The next most common theme was fun and enjoyment (19), with nine comments being about friends:

“It had a separate room for sleeping and loads of nice toys”

“I loved nursery because you got to play a lot”

“We did loads of fund things and my friends were there”

22.4% said they liked it ‘a bit’. Many comments were about the range of toys, equipment and activities on offer, with some preference for play over ‘work’. One comment focused on the social aspects of attending. Other comments seem to be about how service provision had not met expectations.

“I didn’t like the climbing frame”

“We got to play and we had no work”

“I liked it a bit because it got me used to being in a group without my mum”

“Because they did not have me doing anything”

“Because we got a biscuit and sometimes we did not”

4 children (3.7%) reported they did not like their pre-school childcare. Two comments stated it was ‘boring’, one indicated that although they wanted to like it, they did not, and one commented “it was a little place”.

#### 4.4.2 Breakfast club

| Rating        | Total | Percentage |
|---------------|-------|------------|
| Liked ‘a lot’ | 24    | 58.5%      |
| Liked ‘a bit’ | 6     | 14.6%      |
| Did not like  | 11    | 26.8%      |

Base 41, percentages rounded

58 children had previously stated they had attended a breakfast club, 41 children offered a rating, 58.5% of which said they liked it 'a lot'. Many comments were about the breakfast meal itself, all but one of the other comments was all about play and fun:

“Because I could have breakfast and also you got to play with your friend”

“Because it’s nice, they have a nice area”

14.6% said they liked breakfast clubs 'a bit'. Comments suggest that a lack of a social experience affects children’s enjoyment along with the choice of cereal:

“Because of the choice of cereal”

“Because it didn’t have many of my friends”

Over a quarter of respondents (26.8%) said they did not like their breakfast childcare provision. Comments followed the themes from the 'a bit' rating:

“Because it doesn’t have coco pops”

“It was really boring”

#### 4.4.3 After school club

| Rating        | Total | Percentage |
|---------------|-------|------------|
| Liked 'a lot' | 60    | 83.3%      |
| Liked 'a bit' | 7     | 9.7%       |
| Did not like  | 5     | 6.9%       |

Base 72, percentages rounded

The overwhelming majority of children (83.3%) providing a rating and comments about their after school provision rated it as liked 'a lot'. This was the highest rating across all types of childcare. This appears to be related to children’s experience on the various specialist activities available in such provision. 30 comments were about activities, sports, arts or drama etc. A further 16 comments were on having fun and playing.

“I liked it because I like playing football”

“I like it a lot because it gives me a chance to do what I like doing”

“Because it is pure fun for two hours”

Almost 10 per cent rated said they liked after school ‘a bit’. Comments seem to concentrate mainly on the activities provided:

“It was a bit fun and a bit not”

“Because I can already make things”

“Because we did drama”

Five children (6.9%) said they did not like their after school provision. Half of comments were that provision was boring, others concerned on behaviour management or activities.

#### 4.4.4 Holiday playscheme

| Rating        | Total | Percentage |
|---------------|-------|------------|
| Liked ‘a lot’ | 19    | 57.5%      |
| Liked ‘a bit’ | 7     | 21.5%      |
| Did not like  | 7     | 21.5%      |

Base 33, percentages rounded

There were fewer comments about holiday provision. Of the 49 children stating they had attended holiday childcare, 33 provided a rating and/or comments. Ratings were spread over the range, with 57.5% stating they liked it ‘a lot’. Comments were mostly about the activities on offer:

“It was a sports club and I really like sports”

“Because it was a mini golf holiday club and it is challenging”

“There was good games”

A fifth of respondents (21.5%) rated they liked holiday provision 'a bit'. Comments were driven by the feeling of boredom or activities offered:

“Because I do not want to be bored”

“Because it had not much to play with”

The final fifth (21.5%) said they did not like their holiday provision. Comments suggest the reasons for this are varied: missing parent, parental choice, and the activities provided:

“Because I miss my mum too much”

“Because my mum chose where I went”

“I did not like it because there was no games”

#### 4.4.5 Childminding

| Rating        | Total | Percentage |
|---------------|-------|------------|
| Liked 'a lot' | 23    | 52.2%      |
| Liked 'a bit' | 14    | 31.8%      |
| Did not like  | 7     | 15.9%      |

Base 44, percentages rounded

Childminding received the lowest rating of children liking it 'a lot' (52.2%), the highest was after school activities (83.3%). Some comments suggest that friends and family may be providing either unregistered or registered childminding; others focus on friends and the play activities on offer. One comment demonstrates a child is highly aware of the EYFS play v. learning debate:

“Because the childminder I had was my dad’s sister”

“Because I got to play on the trampoline”

“Because Ofsted say she needs to give us targets but my childminder lets us play”

However, a third of ratings were that children liked childminding ‘a bit’. Comments were about the social aspect, outings, and play and a lack of play. One comment suggests inappropriate behaviour:

“Because it’s good and I meet new people and we go to parks”

“We don’t play that much”

“I got shouted at a lot”

15.9% of children providing a rating said they did not like childminding. Only three relevant comments were made and these were:

“I hated it because the childminder had a snake, I hated snakes”

“Because it’s boring”

“She was bossy”

#### **4.5 What could be done to improve childcare?**

Children were frequently asked for their ideas on how to improve their childcare provision. Answers relate both to previous and current childcare attended. Verbatim responses are shown in appendices six to 10 under each type of childcare.

##### **4.5.1 Pre-school childcare**

Of the many comments given on improving pre-school childcare, children mostly suggested there should be more activities and toys. Others were on the games and activities offered, with a small number on daily routines/time, staffing and one on toileting. 17 children could not think of anything to make provision better or replied ‘nothing’.

“Get more toys because if you play with the same toy everyday you will be bored”

“It would be better to have a full day to get us used to school”

“It would be better if you could eat anything”

“More toys and the toilet doors closed”

#### **4.5.2 Breakfast club**

Ideas on improving breakfast provision were wide ranging, and both general (more games, toys, time available), and more specific (reinstating the TV, choice of cereal or food, staff training).

“More board games and more shreddies”

“To have different things to eat instead of cereal all the time”

“Bring the TV back”

“If you could do some press ups”

“It was fantastic how it was”

#### **4.5.3 After school club**

15 children responding could not think of anything to suggest for improving after school activities, or thought nothing could improve such provision. Most given comments were about either the choice or variety of activities on offer, and a theme on wanting to play more games in addition to the specialist activities that were provided. Some children thought there should be more clubs available and/or more people attending them. There were some requests for more staffing, and some suggestions of behaviour issues.

“If we played more games”

“Where you could play before you had to do what you had to do”

“A different sport every week instead of the same sport”

“If they kept a closer eye on the children”

#### **4.5.4 Holiday playscheme**

A smaller number of ideas were shared for improving holiday provision compared to all other types of childcare. Other than comments on particular games and sports, some shared issues of choice or social aspects:

“To be able to do anything”

“If you could bring your mum”

“A friend”

#### **4.5.5 Childminding**

11 children responding could not think of how to improve childminding, or thought nothing could improve it. There were requests for more play, books and toys (including rabbits). Other ideas included:

“If I am allowed to go on the computer”

“I would get rid of the snake”

“More children my age and cheaper prices”

“If the childminder was more active”

#### **4.6 Expressed preferences for childcare use**

Throughout the story and consultation children were encouraged to discuss their preferences for future childcare use. 28% of all children stated they would like to attend breakfast clubs, just over half (51%) after school which was the most popular, and a quarter (24%) holiday childcare. 40% expressed a preference for attending childminding.

### Use of childcare: future

| Type of childcare             | Fairfield Primary School | St John The Evangelist RC School | St Marks Elm Tree CofE School | Total     |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Breakfast clubs               | 12                       | 14                               | 32                            | 58 (28%)  |
| After school clubs/activities | 12                       | 19                               | 74                            | 105 (51%) |
| Holiday playschemes           | 7                        | 13                               | 29                            | 49 (24%)  |
| Childminding                  | 22                       | 18                               | 42                            | 82 (40%)  |

Base 207, multiple responses, percentages rounded

#### 4.7 Barriers to using childcare

Children shared their thoughts on barriers that may prevent them from attending childcare. The concept of barriers is variously understood by children, with older children being more likely to answer the question. 15 comments were that there were no barriers. Others (18) either did not want to go or said they did not like childcare provision. A similar number reflected that parents were at home (either unemployed or choosing to stay at home), that families organise their week around school, or children thought they were not allowed to go. Others reflected a perceived lack of money or 'high prices'.

"I go to my childminder once a week because my mum is off the rest of the week so she can pick me up"

"Sometimes its too much money"

"I go out to orchestra, ballet, brownies and homework and my mum picks me up every night after school"

"Because my mum goes to work and my nan looks after me when I go home"

"My mum doesn't have a job"

"I would miss my mam"

"I can't go because its too much money and they can't come and pick me up"



“Having to give money because my mum says no to the high prices”

“Well I can’t go to breakfast club because my mum needs to get in the shower and doesn’t get up early enough”

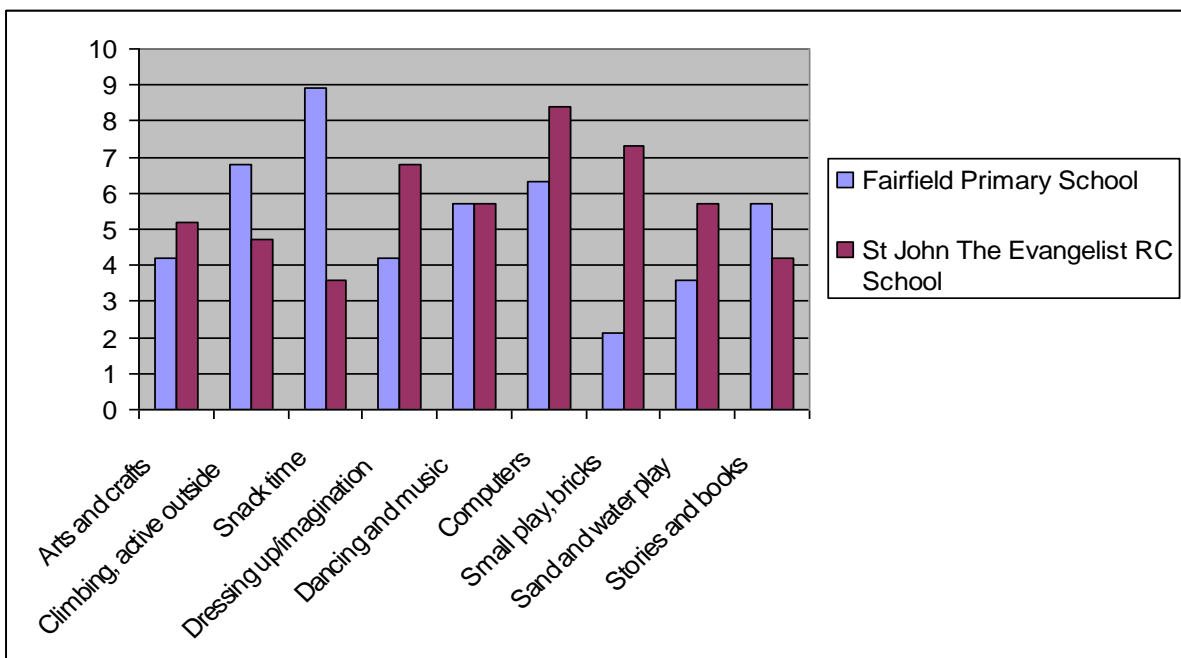
#### 4.8 Sticker questionnaire results

To offer younger children an opportunity to indicate their childcare preferences, a sticker questionnaire featured photographs of various childcare based activities. Children were asked to indicate their favourite activities in childcare.

Across the nine options, children’s preferences were generally well spread, with few areas attracting more than an average score of 11%. The scores ranged from 9.3% to 14.7%. Those areas receiving a higher than average score were: computers (14.7%), snack time (12.5%), outdoor play (11.5%) and dancing and music (11.4%).

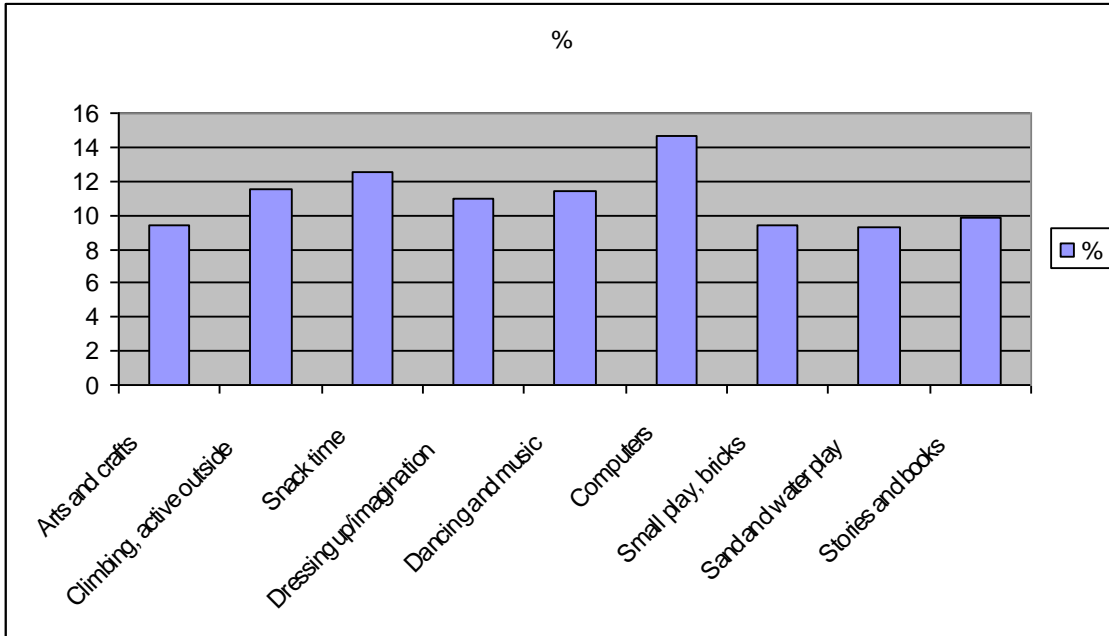
In terms of differences between the two schools where sticker questionnaires were used, results were broadly similar, with the following exceptions: snack time, outdoor play and stories/books being more popular at Fairfield; and computers, small toys, and imaginative play being more popular at St John.

#### Sticker preferences by school



The following table shows cumulative results for activity preferences as a percentage. Computers being the most popular activity followed by snack-time and outside play.

**Sticker preferences total percentage**



## Appendix I Pre-school satisfaction comments (verbatim)

|  |
|--|
| <b>Pre-school satisfaction</b>                             |
| <b>Liked 'a lot'</b>                                       |
| All my friends were there and you got to play games        |
| Because we could play with any toys and any hobby          |
| I played games and met friends                             |
| Because it had fun games and activities                    |
| I liked it a lot because it was fun                        |
| I like it because my cousin went there                     |
| Because it was fun   |
| It was good and fun  |
| It was good and fun  |
| I got to play all the time                                 |
| We did loads of fun things and my friends were there       |
| Lots of my friends were there and there's lots of toys     |
| It had a separate room for sleeping and loads of nice toys |
| Activities and friends and a range of things to do         |
| Because I got to play                                      |
| Because you could play with the toys                       |
| Because I can play with play dough                         |
| Played games   |
| Because I got to play                                      |
| Because I like sting sticking                              |
| Because you can play                                       |
| Games and play   |
| It was fun   |
| Because it was good  |
| It was good  |
| It was fun   |
| It had big blocks  |
| (Name of child omitted) was there                          |

|  |
|--|
| It was big   |
| It has cool cars   |
| Because they have computers  |
| I could play   |
| Because the things are good  |
| Because you don't need to work   |
| Because I love building  |
| It was good  |
| Because it was fun   |
| You did not need to do work  |
| I liked nursery because you got to play a lot                                  |
| Because I got to play  |
| Because my brother and sister went to school and I did not want to be left out |
| I liked it because it had a climbing frame                                     |
| It was cool  |
| Because you can do anything  |
| Because I had fun  |
| You could wear any clothes   |
| Because you got to play with toys  |
| It was fun   |
| Play with dolls  |
| I did all sorts of fun things  |
| Because I got to play  |
| Because you got to get splat bags  |
| Because you could play   |
| It was fun and free play   |
| A played a lot   |
| It was fun   |
| Lots of fun  |
| Because I love playing with play dough   |
| Lots of fun  |
| Lots of boys who want to play with me  |

|  |
|--|
| Because they have play dough             |
| Because it has lots of toys              |
| Lots of fun                              |
| Because I got a chocolate bar            |
| It had good toys                         |
| Because it was good                      |
| Because my mum wanted me to do something |
| Because I had lots of fun                |
| Fun toys                                 |
| Because it was fun                       |
| There was things to do                   |
| Because it had lots to play              |
| I did painting                           |
| We had fun                               |
| Because I play with play dough           |
| Because I can play with play dough       |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Pre-school satisfaction</b>   |
| <b>Liked 'a bit'</b>   |
| It was noisy   |
| Because it never had much toys   |
| Good computers but not much toys   |
| I liked it a bit because it had toys and footballs                         |
| Because we did some work   |
| Because you got to play games  |
| I didn't like the climbing frame   |
| I like it a bit because I got to play with toys                            |
| I liked it a bit because it got me used to being in a group without my mum |
| Because you could meet friends   |
| Because I used to feel that one of the ladies was always staring at me     |
| Because we got to go on computer   |
| Because you learnt French  |

|   |
|---|
| Because its fun                                   |
| More soft toys                                    |
| Because I couldn't read                           |
| Because we got a biscuit and sometimes we did not |
| We got to play and we had no work                 |
| Because mum had to go to work                     |
| Because it was fun                                |
| Because they didn't have me doing anything        |

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| <b>Pre-school satisfaction</b>  |
| <b>Did not like</b>             |
| It's boring                     |
| Boring, I didn't like it in Jan |
| Because it was a little place   |
| I wanted to at first            |

## Appendix 2 Breakfast club satisfaction comments (verbatim)

|  |
|--|
| <b>Breakfast club satisfaction</b>                                       |
| <b>Liked 'a lot'</b>   |
| You get to play with toys  |
| Because I knew everyone there  |
| Because you can play after breakfast                                     |
| Because we got to play games   |
| I like to play games   |
| Play games   |
| After breakfast you can play with toys                                   |
| Because its nice, they have nice area                                    |
| Nice food  |
| I like to school breakfast   |
| Because you got to have your breakfast there                             |
| Because I could have breakfast and also you got to play with your friend |
| Because you can play games   |
| You have breakfast there   |
| Played with my top trumps cards  |
| Because its fun  |
| Because you got to stay there  |
| Because it was fun   |
| We had lots of fun   |
| Because it was fun   |
| We played  |
| You could play games and have breakfast                                  |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Breakfast club satisfaction</b>         |
| <b>Liked 'a bit'</b>                       |
| Because it didn't have many of my friends  |
| I like it a bit because I met other people |
| Because of the choices of cereal           |
| Watched TV                                 |

|               |
|---------------|
| It wasn't fun |
|---------------|

|                           |
|---------------------------|
| Because my dad works late |
|---------------------------|

|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| <b>Breakfast club satisfaction</b> |
|------------------------------------|

|                     |
|---------------------|
| <b>Did not like</b> |
|---------------------|

|            |
|------------|
| It not fun |
|------------|

|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| Because I like having my breakfast |
|------------------------------------|

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| Because it doesn't have coco pops |
|-----------------------------------|

|   |
|---|
| Because I was never ready for breakfast |
|---|

|             |
|-------------|
| I got bored |
|-------------|

|                      |
|----------------------|
| It was really boring |
|----------------------|

|              |
|--------------|
| I don't know |
|--------------|



### Appendix 3 After school club satisfaction comments (verbatim)

|  |
|--|
| <b>After school club satisfaction</b>                              |
| <b>Liked 'a lot'</b>   |
| Because I meet new friends and it is fun                           |
| Because we were doing play scripts                                 |
| Because I haven't ever been to one before and I liked it           |
| I like the activities there  |
| Because it has a different subject every time/year                 |
| I liked it because you could play                                  |
| Because it was lots sports   |
| They make it fun   |
| Because its fun and get to play with mates                         |
| I like it because I like football                                  |
| It's brilliant   |
| Because it is pure fun for 2 hours                                 |
| Because it was fun   |
| I like it a lot because it gives me chance to do what I like doing |
| Because it is fun  |
| My friends are there and I really like them                        |
| It was fun painting the potatoes                                   |
| It is fun  |
| Because I like football  |
| Because there was lots to do                                       |
| There' sweets  |
| Because you win prizes   |
| Because you win prizes   |
| I like it because it has loads of activities                       |
| It is fun  |
| I like cooking   |
| I liked it because I like playing football                         |
| Because you can get  |

|  |
|--|
| You could play on anything                             |
| Because you can play football                          |
| Because we played cricket                              |
| You get sweets   |
| Because you can dig                                    |
| Because we act   |
| Because we got sweets                                  |
| Because I plant lots of plants                         |
| Because it is fun                                      |
| Because its football                                   |
| It was football  |
| We played sports                                       |
| Because we get to play                                 |
| There was lots of games                                |
| Because we could dance                                 |
| Have fun   |
| Because I went to treasure kids and I won a prize draw |
| I go to one  |
| Because there's activities                             |
| You get sweets   |
| Because it was brilliant                               |
| Because we get to plant                                |
| It was a lot of fun                                    |
| Because I love drama                                   |
| Exciting   |
| Can't think of anything                                |
| Fun  |
| Because there was lots to do                           |

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| <b>After school club satisfaction</b> |
| <b>Liked 'a bit'</b>                  |
| Because we did drama                  |

|   |
|---|
| Because some people broke the toys on purpose |
| There was not a lot to do                     |
| I got hungry                                  |
| It was a bit fun and bit not                  |
| Because I can already make things             |
| We had to sit down all the time               |

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| <b>After school club satisfaction</b> |
| <b>Did not like</b>                   |
| It got boring                         |
| Because it was boring                 |
| I think its boring                    |
| Because I like dancing                |
| Because I don't know what it is       |
| Don't like it                         |
| Because it was boring                 |
| Because we were told off              |

#### Appendix 4 Childminder satisfaction comments (verbatim)

|   |
|---|
| <b>Childminder satisfaction</b>   |
| <b>Liked 'a lot'</b>  |
| Because we went on the field and play sports                                    |
| Because all my friends were there   |
| Because Ofsted say she needs to give us targets but my childminder lets us play |
| Because she is kind   |
| I play and eat  |
| Because I liked to ride and play  |
| See my friends  |
| Because it is my Grandma  |
| Because I am allowed to dress up  |
| Because my nana take me to the shops  |
| Don't know  |
| Fun   |
| Because it was my sister  |
| Because I liked stories   |
| Fab   |
| Because I got to play on the trampoline   |
| Play out  |
| My mum is a childminder   |
| My dad goes to college  |
| Because the childminder I had was my dad's sister                               |
| Because it has more to play with  |
| Because my mum is at work   |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Childminder satisfaction</b>                            |
| <b>Liked 'a bit'</b>                                       |
| Because it's good and I meet new people and we go to parks |
| It was fun but I was a shy                                 |
| Because you get to play                                    |

|  |
|--|
| We went on days out                      |
| Don't get to play                        |
| We don't play that much                  |
| Because (child's name omitted) was there |
| I got shouted at a lot                   |
| Because you don't do any work            |
| Because I feel a little bored            |
| Parents go out                           |
| It was fun                               |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Childminder satisfaction</b>                                |
| <b>Did not like</b>  |
| I did not go   |
| I hated it because the childminder has a snake, I hated snakes |
| Because it's boring  |
| She was bossy  |

## Appendix 5 Holiday childcare satisfaction comments (verbatim)

|   |
|---|
| <b>Holiday childcare satisfaction</b>                         |
| <b>Liked 'a lot'</b>  |
| Something to do in the summer holidays                        |
| Because it was a mini golf holiday club and it is challenging |
| Because it is easy to win                                     |
| It was a sports club and I really enjoy sports                |
| Because I get to see (name omitted) and (name omitted)        |
| We painted mugs   |
| Because we played football all day for a week                 |
| Because I like to go in the pool                              |
| Because I liked to play                                       |
| Because I got to ride a pony                                  |
| Dr Who  |
| Because we play football                                      |
| There was good games  |
| Lots of toys  |
| Because we went to the seaside                                |
| We had a disco  |
| Played football   |
| Because I liked to play                                       |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Holiday childcare satisfaction</b>       |
| <b>Liked 'a bit'</b>                        |
| Doing different activities                  |
| Because it was a bit boring                 |
| Because I do not want to be bored           |
| Because they was a mountain of things to do |
| Because you get to stay off                 |
| Because it had not much to play with        |

|  |
|--|
| <b>Holiday childcare satisfaction</b>        |
| <b>Did not like</b>                          |
| Because I didn't                             |
| I did not like it because there was no games |
| Because I miss my mum too much               |
| Because I have a childminder                 |
| Don't like it                                |
| It wasn't as sporty as I thought             |
| Because my mum chose where I went            |

**Appendix 6 Ideas on making pre-school childcare better (verbatim)**

|  |
|--|
| Trained teacher  |
| More toys  |
| If it had lots of toys like teddies towers of blocks                           |
| Nothing would make it better   |
| More toys and the toilet doors closed  |
| More toys and a bit more time there  |
| There isn't anything to make it better   |
| Get more toys because if you play with the same toy everyday you will be bored |
| Own responsibility have more computers   |
| Better toys  |
| More toys and painting and making  |
| No   |
| An out more toys   |
| I think they could have some more toys to share                                |
| More toys and rooms  |
| I don't think anything can   |
| A bigger playground  |
| To play more   |
| By adding more toys in   |
| Played more games  |
| We had more games  |
| More painting  |
| To be able to play all day   |
| Playing all day  |
| Swing  |
| Play all the time  |
| More glittering water  |
| More costumes  |
| More food on the allotment   |
| Bigger   |
| Costumes   |



|  |
|--|
| Don't know   |
| To play on x box   |
| Don't know   |
| Dr Who   |
| More bikes   |
| Don't know   |
| Don't know   |
| Having more to stack   |
| More silver play dough                                       |
| Football goal  |
| More games   |
| Nothing  |
| More art   |
| More play  |
| If there was all day nursery                                 |
| Nothing  |
| Play dough   |
| It would be better if you could eat anything you want        |
| Building blocks  |
| Nothing  |
| Do anything you want   |
| If it was all day nursery                                    |
| Nothing will make it better                                  |
| Nothing  |
| Nothing  |
| Nothing  |
| Bit more people  |
| More sound toys  |
| More fun   |
| If you could read early books and of you got to do more work |
| More babies to play  |
| I would like more toys                                       |

|  |
|--|
| More toys  |
| If we had a garden   |
| More toys  |
| More activities  |
| If we did art  |
| It would be better to have a full day to get us used to school |
| More people to take care of the children                       |
| With some more toys  |
| Bicycles   |
| More fun   |
| Two more computers   |
| Nothing  |
| Nothing  |
| Different toys and breakfast club                              |
| More toys  |
| Having a sandpit outside                                       |
| More stuff to do   |
| By adding more toys in   |

## Appendix 7 Ideas on making breakfast childcare better (verbatim)

|  |
|--|
| A trained teacher  |
| More time  |
| More fun   |
| It was fun   |
| Play longer games  |
| I would like to have more breakfast                            |
| If you could do some press ups                                 |
| Putting more breakfast in                                      |
| More games   |
| To be able to play longer                                      |
| If it had coco pops  |
| Don't know   |
| Different toys   |
| Don't like it  |
| Computers  |
| Bring the TV back  |
| More breakfast   |
| Nothing  |
| If you could play for longer                                   |
| Bring stuff in   |
| It was fantastic how it was                                    |
| More toys  |
| More board games and more shreddies                            |
| Have fun   |
| If you had more biscuits and drinks and played games           |
| More food  |
| Didn't do it   |
| If we had different things to eat                              |
| If we can play outside and sit and watch TV                    |
| If they had different food                                     |
| To have different things to eat instead of cereal all the time |

Putting more breakfast in

## Appendix 8 Ideas on making after school childcare better (verbatim)

|  |
|--|
| Have more people                                       |
| Nothing  |
| Nothing  |
| More of them   |
| Nothing  |
| A different sport every week instead of the same sport |
| A lot would make it better                             |
| Nothing  |
| Absolutely nothing                                     |
| Nothing  |
| Do better drama  |
| Nothing  |
| It they kept a closer eye on the children              |
| Play more games  |
| I'm not sure   |
| More games   |
| Better cars  |
| Add some more staffing                                 |
| More games   |
| Have more cupcakes                                     |
| More sweets  |
| More drinks and different types                        |
| Dr Who   |
| Don't know   |
| More cakes   |
| Make more things                                       |
| Nothing  |
| A longer session                                       |
| More exciting things                                   |
| Don't get told off                                     |
| Nothing  |

|  |
|--|
| If you could play anything                                   |
| To have more fun   |
| It was fantastic how it was                                  |
| If you all had a flower bed to yourself                      |
| Nothing  |
| If we played more games                                      |
| Nothing  |
| If there more of them  |
| More people  |
| Where you could play before you had to do what you had to do |
| If I sung louder and got picked                              |
| More than just toys  |
| Nothing  |
| If we could dance and sing                                   |
| If we could have a chocolate tree                            |
| More games   |
| More acting  |
| More games   |
| Nothing  |
| More fun   |

## Appendix 9 Ideas on making holiday childcare better (verbatim)

|                                |
|--------------------------------|
| A bit more holiday clubs       |
| To get more games              |
| We play football               |
| Nothing would make it better   |
| Nothing                        |
| Not really anything            |
| If you could bring your mum    |
| A friend                       |
| Have lots more stuff in it     |
| To be able to do anything      |
| Make it fun                    |
| Nothing                        |
| Nothing                        |
| More stuff                     |
| More consoles                  |
| By playing tennis              |
| If you could read books        |
| Not boys there                 |
| If it warm and not hot         |
| If we could sing               |
| Play a match                   |
| To have more toys to play with |
| Have lots more stuff in it     |

## Appendix 10 Ideas on making childminding better (verbatim)

|   |
|---|
| Nothing it is already fun                   |
| Nothing                                     |
| Nothing would make it better                |
| More books and toys                         |
| I can't think of anything                   |
| Bigger garden                               |
| Eat more                                    |
| A bit more children in                      |
| If you could play                           |
| Play more                                   |
| More toys                                   |
| More food                                   |
| Don't know                                  |
| If I am allowed to go on computer           |
| Nothing                                     |
| More toys                                   |
| I did not go                                |
| I would get rid of the snake                |
| Because I liked playing with (name omitted) |
| Nothing                                     |
| Nothing                                     |
| More children my age and cheaper prices     |
| More toys                                   |
| More toys                                   |
| If they had rabbits to stroke them          |
| More toys and play and kiss                 |
| I don't know                                |
| Nothing                                     |
| If less people came                         |
| Play more games                             |
| A bit bigger house                          |



|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| If she was not bossy               |
| Nothing                            |
| If the childminder was more active |
| If there was more toys             |
| Nothing                            |
| More computers                     |
| Having a sandpit                   |
| A bit more children in             |

## Appendix II Perceived barriers to childcare (verbatim)

|  |
|--|
| I could play at home with family and friends   |
| Because I like to stay home in future to look after my rabbit  |
| Because my mum does not work and I normally have to mind my baby brother   |
| My mum would let me go but I don't want to   |
| Sometimes its too much money   |
| I don't want to go   |
| Sometimes I didn't want to go  |
| I just don't want to go  |
| I can go but I don't want to go  |
| Because of my family can drive   |
| I just don't want to go  |
| No because I like it at home with my family  |
| I have to always go out  |
| Don't want to and didn't need to   |
| In summer I do things with my family   |
| I go to my childminder once a week because my mum is off the rest of the week so she can pick me up                              |
| Because no one can pick me up  |
| I go out to orchestra, ballet, brownies and homework and my mum picks me up every night after school                             |
| No nothing stops me but I normally go out with my mum and dad and I am happy going to the football thing where all my friends go |
| Nothing  |
| Because my mum wouldn't let me go to some of them  |
| Football and robots  |
| I don't want to go   |
| To play games  |
| Because my mum goes to work and my nan looks after me when I go home   |
| Mam looks after me   |
| No   |
| I don't want to  |

|   |
|---|
| I think me mam is getting a job soon but not yet and I've got a baby sister       |
| I will play with my baby brother  |
| I don't like it   |
| I don't go to clubs because I don't want to                                       |
| Nothing   |
| No  |
| Sometimes my mum is off   |
| No  |
| Don't want to go  |
| Always forget   |
| My mum doesn't have a job   |
| It stops me from going to these because my mum chose not to go to work            |
| I don't like going to clubs with children I don't know                            |
| Its stops me from going to after school because I might be doing something better |
| I would miss my mam   |
| I go dancing and choir  |
| Nothing   |
| I like to go straight home  |
| Nothing   |
| Go to lots of clubs   |
| Nothing   |
| Nothing   |
| Nothing stops me because my finishes the same time                                |
| Nothing   |
| My mum is never at work early enough  |
| Missing my mum and dad  |
| My homework and my dancing  |
| Going places on weekend   |
| We have to be at school early   |
| When mum says no  |
| Because I need to help with the baby  |
| Have to go home   |

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|---|
| I can't go because its too much money and they can't come and pick me up                                    |
| Nothing stops me  |
| No things stop me   |
| My mum can't pay for it sometimes and I don't fancy going to any  |
| Nothing   |
| Afraid I gave up on it  |
| Nothing   |
| To be good  |
| My dad not got enough money because he spent it all on me   |
| Too much  |
| I don't think my parents can afford it  |
| Mum and dad don't let us go   |
| Having to give money because my mum says no to the high prices  |
| Because I don't like it   |
| Because I don't like it   |
| Mum   |
| Don't like  |
| I will miss my mum  |
| Because sometimes I don't go because my mum and dad at work   |
| Dad likes to look after me  |
| Normally stays with mum   |
| Well I can't go to breakfast club because my mum needs to get in the shower and doesn't get up early enough |
| Because my mum wouldn't let me go to some of them   |

