

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in Scotland

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Executive Summary

Background and research rationale

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 made up to 600 hours of funded childcare per year available to all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. From August 2021, the funded entitlement to Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in Scotland increased from 600 to 1,140 hours per year for all 3- and 4-year-olds as well as eligible 2-year-olds. In the 2021 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government further committed to expanding funded ELC to all 1- and 2-year-olds, starting in this Parliament with those who will benefit most.

The aim of this research is to enable the Scottish Government to understand what ELC provision presently exists in Scotland for 1- and 2-year-olds, identify good practice and understand challenges that need to be addressed within the design of the new policy.

The first phase of the research focused on mapping ELC provision across Scotland. It included analysing secondary data; conducting a focus group and interviews with key stakeholders; and administering a survey to all local authorities (LAs).¹ The second phase explored childcare provision in four LAs in Scotland: Scottish Borders, Moray, Glasgow City, and Fife. Fourteen interviews were conducted with representatives from the LAs, the Care Inspectorate and with providers operating in those areas. Additionally, a survey was administered to providers in the LAs selected. In what follows, the overarching findings across all research activities are presented.

Current ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

The survey questionnaire administered in all LAs in Scotland indicated that childminding and nurseries are the most common types of provision for 1- and 2-year-olds, with playgroups also being relatively widespread. Fewer LAs responded that they have children and family centres and creches. The LA representatives discussed additional provision models for 1- and 2-year-olds, including parent and toddler groups, family support programmes, and community childminding, which offers short term respite to vulnerable families during times of need.

According to analysis of data provided by the Care Inspectorate and discussions with stakeholders, the number of ELC places in formal group-based settings is much lower for 1- and 2-year-olds than for older children. Nationally, in December 2021, there were only 0.25 ELC places in formal group-based settings per 1-year-old child and 0.47 per 2-year-old child, compared to 0.89 and 0.99 for 3- and 4-year-olds respectively. These figures do not include places in childminder settings. This is an important limitation as childminders provide a significant proportion of ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds. Although the numbers above are underestimates of available ELC places, they still showcase the significant

¹ Stakeholders included relevant policy teams from the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate, Scottish Childminding Association, Early Years Scotland, Care and Learning Alliance, National Day Nurseries Association, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Education Scotland, and the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland.

variation in the availability of ELC places across different age groups of children. Additionally, the data show that ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds relies on the private sector. More specifically, only 5% of LA nurseries provide ELC services to 1-year-olds and only 29% to 2-year-olds, compared to 61% and 67% of private providers (excluding childminders).

According to the LA representatives, there are gaps across all types of provision. Of the 32 Scottish local authorities, 26 responded with only two LAs responding that they do not have provision gaps in their area. The gaps in 19 out of the 26 LAs were described as specific to 1- and 2-year-olds.

Remote rural and island communities have more pronounced gaps in provision for 1- and 2-year-olds than other areas. Additionally, in those areas there are fewer options for families across ELC types, as families are much more reliant on nurseries than in urban and accessible rural areas. These challenges are related to the sparse population and demand in those areas, as well as the long travel distances for both families and staff.

In terms of current challenges in ELC provision for younger children, the recruitment and retention of staff were emphasised as primary challenges, together with capacity issues and demand being higher than supply, as well as the need for facility changes and additions to appropriately address the needs of 1- and 2-year-olds.

Good practice examples

Holistic approaches and family support

The importance of a holistic approach to ELC for younger children and their families was emphasised, including working with both children and parents, providing family support services, and hosting sessions for parents on topics related to parenting skills. For example, the funded ELC places in Fife that are combined with parenting classes and support from voluntary organisations like [Home Start](#), which trains volunteers to work with families and provide parent support, and [Gingerbread](#), which provides advice and support to lone parents in Fife, were discussed. Additionally, the Early Years centres in Scottish Borders were described as a good practice example following such an approach.

Programmes tailored to the needs of children and families

The benefits of tailored programmes to meet the different needs of each family were also emphasised, including programmes and schemes designed for children and families that might need additional support or have additional vulnerabilities, e.g., community childminding to provide short-term respite and the Young Parent Support Base in Glasgow City designed to support young parents to continue their education. Additionally, a few good practice examples of delivery models that work well for children with Additional Support Needs (ASN) were also identified, including developmental nurseries in Moray providing one-to-one support and nurseries having the resources to have a lower number of children per adult to be able to support children with ASN appropriately.

Suggestions for a potential new offer

Across all research activities, while not a formal consultation on the expansion of the funded offer, the stakeholders shared insights on what works better for 1- and 2-year-olds based on their experience of the current provision and provided suggestions for the new offer. According to stakeholders, there is a need to increase the capacity of the ELC sector to deliver the new offer.² This could be achieved by providing additional training to staff and tailoring workforce learning pathways to reflect the skills needed for service provision for 1- and 2-year-olds. Additionally, a few stakeholders emphasised the need to include and promote all different types of provision in a new offer for two reasons. Firstly, this will increase the sector's capacity, and secondly, a wide range of provision types and models will ensure that all the varying needs of families will be met.

Another topic discussed extensively was that the new offer should be designed to fit the needs of 1- and 2-year-olds. Thus, it should allow for flexibility and include and promote (i) programmes tailored to the varying needs of families, (ii) attachment-led models, and (iii) a focus on family learning and parental engagement. Regarding children with ASN, stakeholders suggested additional training to enable providers to recognise early signs of ASN, ELC to be packaged with other services, and additional funding and support to allow providers to offer one-to-one care. Furthermore, stakeholders also highlighted the importance of adequate funding to ensure high-quality ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds.

Finally, a few stakeholders suggested that the new offer should be gradually implemented over time. Some also highlighted the importance of clarity around eligibility criteria and the offer's details to maximise uptake by both providers and families.

² The ELC sector refers to all providers caring for 1- and 2-year-olds in Scotland.

1. Introduction

1.1 Policy background

[The Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) defined Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) as a service consisting of education and care of a kind which is suitable for children who are under school age, taking into consideration the importance of interactions and other experiences which support learning and development in a caring and nurturing setting. The Act set the requirement for education authorities to, among other requirements:

- ensure that the mandatory amount of ELC is available to each eligible preschool child in their area,
- consult representatives of parents and plan availability of ELC accordingly, and
- consider flexibility in how ELC services are made available to offer parents an appropriate degree of choice.

Finally, the Act made available up to 600 hours of funded childcare per year to all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. From August 2021, the funded entitlement to ELC in Scotland increased from 600 to 1140 hours per year for all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. Eligible 2-year-olds include children who are looked after by a local council, have been appointed a guardian, are in kinship care, or whose parents are care experienced or receive income support, tax credits, universal credit, job seekers allowance, state pension credit, severe disablement allowance, employment support allowance or incapacity benefit ([Blueprint for 2020](#)).

In the [2021 Programme for Government](#), the Scottish Government committed to extending funded ELC to all 1- and 2-year-olds, starting in this Parliament with those families who will benefit most. In the [2022 Programme for Government](#), the Scottish Government further committed to conducting research and engagement to inform the development of the new offer for 1- and 2-year-olds. That research and engagement includes this project on mapping current ELC provision for 1- and 2-year olds, as well as a separate literature review on the impact of ELC for younger children which is being conducted by Public Health Scotland.

1.2 Project aims

The aim of this report is to enable the Scottish Government to understand what provision presently exists in Scotland for 1- and 2-year-olds. The report aims to add to the evidence base needed to inform the development of the new offer by drawing on existing evidence and the expertise of key stakeholders.

The research presented in this report explores:

- the available provision for 1- and 2-year-olds across Scotland at both the national and local authority (LA) levels,
- where evidence of good practice exists that could potentially be scaled up, and

- any issues or challenges identified in the sector related to the current provision that could be addressed within the design of the new offer for 1- and 2-year-olds.

1.3 Research approach and methodology

The research was undertaken in two phases. The first phase focused on mapping ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds nationwide and identifying key gaps. The second phase explored in more detail the ELC provision in four LAs in Scotland, with the aim of understanding the demand for ELC services, differences in provision for the age group of interest (i.e., 1- and 2-year-olds), good practice examples, and key challenges in providing ELC services to this age group of children.

1.3.1 Phase 1: Mapping nationwide ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

The first phase of the research included a desk-based review and analysis of a wide range of secondary data on ELC provision in Scotland, a focus group and two interviews with key stakeholders, and a short survey of representatives from the LAs in Scotland. Key information on the methodology used in each research activity and any limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings are discussed below.

Analysis of secondary data

To understand the ELC provision in Scotland, three secondary datasets were reviewed and analysed. One of the key data sources used was the Care Inspectorate Datastore (dated February 28, 2023). In addition to the publicly available data, the research used data that was provided directly from the Care Inspectorate (dated December 2021) that included additional information on types of ELC provision (i.e., whether a provider is a nursery, playgroup, child and family centre, etc.), whether each provider has places for 1- and 2-year-olds, and the number of ELC places in each LA for each age group of children (i.e., under 1, 1-year-old, 2-years-old, etc.).

Using the above data, the research included summary statistics on the number of providers and ELC places by type of ELC provision, age group of children, region in Scotland and LA. However, to produce additional analysis that could provide more insights, the analysis combined the sources described above with the following datasets:

- [Estimates of the Population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland](#) (Office for National Statistics, mid-2021)
- [Urban Rural Classification - Scotland](#) (Scottish Government, 2020)
- [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks](#) (Scottish Government, 2020)
- [International Geographies/International Territorial Levels](#) (Office for National Statistics)
- [Data Zone Look Up](#) (Scottish Government, 2011)

Although the above data sources provided valuable insights, certain limitations must be considered. Firstly, one significant limitation of the additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate is that there is no age-disaggregated data on childminders, so in many places in the report our data analysis is limited to information on formal group-based settings for 1- and 2-year-olds. This is a significant limitation, as a considerable amount of ELC for 1-

and 2-year-olds is provided in childminder settings. Additionally, childminders are, according to stakeholders, a very suitable ELC provision type for younger children.

Additionally, while data on the total number of places for 1- and 2-year-olds in each LA were available, no information was identified on how many places are allocated to 1- and 2-year-olds within each individual provider. Consequently, the research could not determine the number of places for 1- and 2-year-olds within smaller geographic areas or calculate the average number of ELC places providers set aside for younger children. Finally, the data on ELC places per age group was only available for December 2021, creating a time lag of 1.5 years. Thus, the data do not provide information on changes in ELC places for 1- and 2-year-olds since December 2021.

Focus group and interviews

In parallel with the data analysis, key stakeholders from across the ELC sector and the Scottish Government were contacted and invited to a focus group or an interview. Representatives from the following organisations participated in the research:

- Relevant policy teams from the Scottish Government
- Care Inspectorate (CI)
- Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA)
- Early Years Scotland (EYS)
- Care and Learning Alliance (CALA)
- National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)
- The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
- Education Scotland
- Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)

A focus group and two interviews were conducted in March 2023 that discussed current provision for 1- and 2-year-olds and the new ELC offer for that age group. Within these discussions, key gaps in provision, good practice examples, challenges specific to providing ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds, and challenges faced by providers, local government, and families in rural and remote areas in Scotland were discussed. The discussion guide followed is provided in Appendix 1. Once the focus group and the interviews were completed, a thematic analysis of what was discussed was undertaken to identify key themes that emerged, as well as the similarities and differences in views and perceptions across stakeholders within the same and different sectors.

LA survey

The final research activity of the project's first phase was a local authority survey. The survey was distributed to all LAs in Scotland on the 22nd of March 2023, remained open until the 12th of April 2023, and was completed by 26 LAs (out of the 32 in Scotland), a response rate of 81%. The survey captured topics similar to the focus group and interviews but aimed to capture the LAs' perspective, knowledge and expertise. More specifically, the survey covered topics related to the current ELC provision, provision for

children with Additional Support Needs (ASN), demand for ELC services, and concerns and views related to the new offer, always focusing on the provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in each LA. The survey questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

The survey included 15 closed-ended questions (excluding questions related to consent and participation in the next phase of the research) and five open-ended questions. The responses to the closed-ended questions were analysed using Excel to produce summary statistics. The responses to the open-ended questions were read in full and analysed using thematic analysis, identifying the common themes across LAs as well as themes that were raised only by LAs with specific characteristics (e.g., rural areas).

Although the survey achieved a high response rate, it should be taken into consideration that around 20% of LAs did not respond, and thus, their experiences are not captured. Additionally, the survey captures only the views of one representative from each LA. Consequently, additional information known to the council might exist and not be included in the responses. Finally, ELC provision not known to the council (e.g., community ELC provision) is also not included in the responses to this survey.

1.3.2 Phase 2: Case studies

The LA survey asked respondents whether they would be interested in further contributing to our research by participating in a more in-depth interview. Based on the responses to this question, the rest of the questionnaire, and the characteristics of each LA, four LAs were chosen to be studied further in the project's second phase. Those were the Scottish Borders, Moray, Fife and Glasgow. The LAs included as case studies were selected from the sample of those that responded to the survey. While LAs were chosen to balance size, rurality, and region of Scotland, it is not a representative sample and the experience of stakeholders in other LAs may be different. If LAs had examples of unique types of provision, or good practice, an effort was made to include them. While no island communities are included in the case studies, there is significant engagement ongoing with these LAs through other workstreams, including via the Scottish Government Rural and Islands policy team.

The research includes conducted 14 interviews in total, with 3-4 interviews conducted for each LA. Interviews were conducted with: a representative from the LA, a representative from the Care Inspectorate and 1-2 providers for each case study. The aim of the interviews was to understand in more depth the topics explored in Phase 1, identify any good practice examples that can be scaled up, and understand challenges and concerns specific to each area and areas with similar characteristics. The discussion guides for those interviews are provided in Appendix 2.

Additionally, a survey was administered to all providers whose contact information was identified through data provided within the Care Inspectorate Datastore and by the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) in the four LAs listed above. The survey included 8 questions in total (excluding questions asking for consent and participation in further research activities), consisting of mostly closed-ended questions. The survey sought to identify providers who were interested in being interviewed, identify additional types of provision specific to 1- and 2-year-olds, and capture the views of providers in terms of the challenges they anticipate from the new offer and what they think the new

offer should incorporate to meet the needs of younger children. The survey was distributed on the 18th of May 2023, remained open until the 2nd of June 2023, and received 76 responses. Of these, 40 were from childminders, 29 were from nurseries, 9 from out of school care providers, and 7 from other types of ELC providers (some respondents reported that they provide more than one type of ELC). While the survey was open to providers serving both 1-and 2-year-olds and older children, the survey asked providers for their thoughts on caring for 1-and 2-year-olds specifically.

The case studies were primarily qualitative and involved a small sample of stakeholders, leading to a few methodological limitations. Firstly, the interviews did not capture all the different types of ELC provision in each LA. Consequently, there might be different experiences within the LAs studied that are not presented in our report. Additionally, the provider survey is not representative of the whole country since only providers within the selected LAs were contacted. Further, the survey does not represent all providers in each LA, as some types of provision were over-represented while others were under-represented, based on data on providers in the Care Inspectorate Datastore.

It should also be noted that while identifying good practice examples was one of the targets of this phase, only a few specific examples were identified by the stakeholders. This might be because of the small sample size of the research, because ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds is still limited and thus good practice examples are also limited, or because innovative provision models that can be characterised as good practice examples are not well known in their areas. On the other hand, the stakeholders who participated in the research discussed approaches and techniques that benefit younger children and their families based on their expertise. Those approaches are not necessarily only relevant to their LA but may be applicable nationwide.

Overall, the case studies provide interesting and applicable insights and suggestions provided by experts and key stakeholders. However, when interpreting the results, it should be taken into account that there might be additional experiences, good practice examples, challenges and views on the topics explored that are not captured in our report.

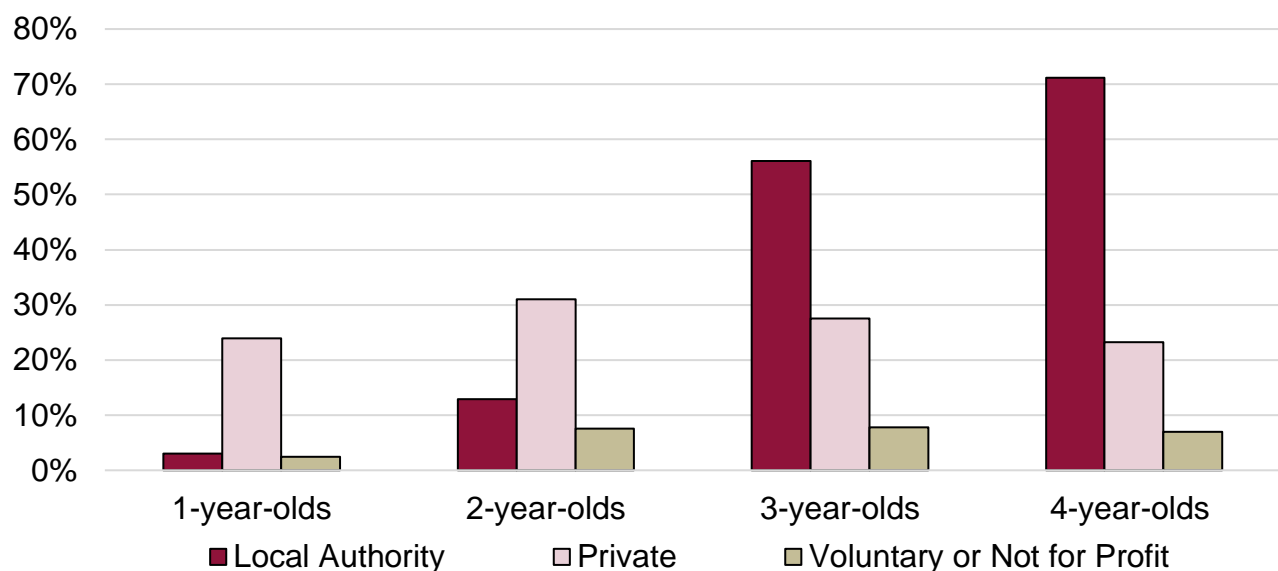
2. Mapping nationwide ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in Scotland

2.1 Analysis of secondary data

2.1.1 Number of places per child in formal group-based settings

In Scotland, as of December of 2021, there were a total of 13,710 Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) places for 1-year-olds, 25,260 ELC places for 2-year-olds, 47,020 ELC places for 3-year-olds, and 54,100 ELC places for 4-year-olds across formal group-based settings. These numbers include both funded and non-funded places in nurseries, playgroups, children and family centres, out of school clubs, holiday playschemes and creches. Because the Care Inspectorate does not collect data disaggregated by age for childminders, the numbers listed above do not include places within childminder settings. Thus, the number of places above is an underestimation of the total number of places available in Scotland. However, these numbers are still significant indicators of the availability of ELC places and how they vary across age groups. While some of the variation between age groups is based on differences in the population, there is also a significant difference in the ELC places per child across age groups³, with significantly fewer ELC places per child in formal group-based settings for younger children. Figure 1 shows the national average of ELC places in formal group-based settings per child by age group.

Figure 1: ELC places per child by age group (excluding childminders) as of 2021



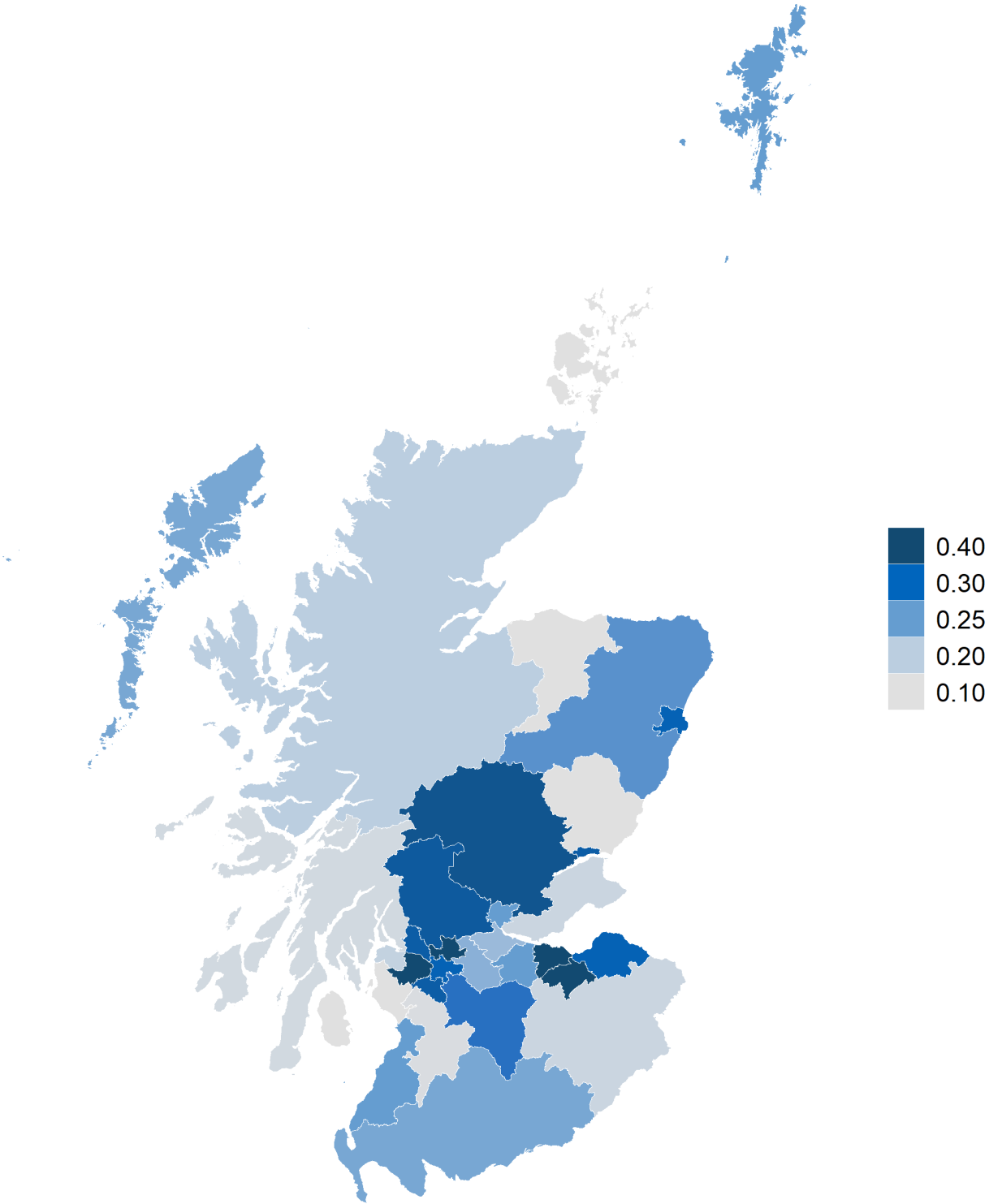
Source: Care Inspectorate Service List (December 2021), Office of National Statistics Population Estimates for Scotland

³ The number of places per child in each age group was calculated by taking the total number of ELC places in formal group-based settings for that age group (as provided by the Care Inspectorate) and dividing it by the total number of children of that age in Scotland (as provided by the ONS Population Estimates for Scotland).

According to the Care Inspectorate Service List in December 2021, there were only 0.26 group-based ELC places per 1-year-old child and 0.47 group-based places per 2-year-old child compared to 0.89 group-based places per 3-year-old child, and 0.99 group-based places per 4-year-old child. While the Care Inspectorate data used above on the number of places does not include places within childminder settings, the data demonstrates that there are considerably fewer places for 1- and 2-year-olds than there are for older children. There are also significant differences in the number of places per child at the LA level, especially for 1-year olds.

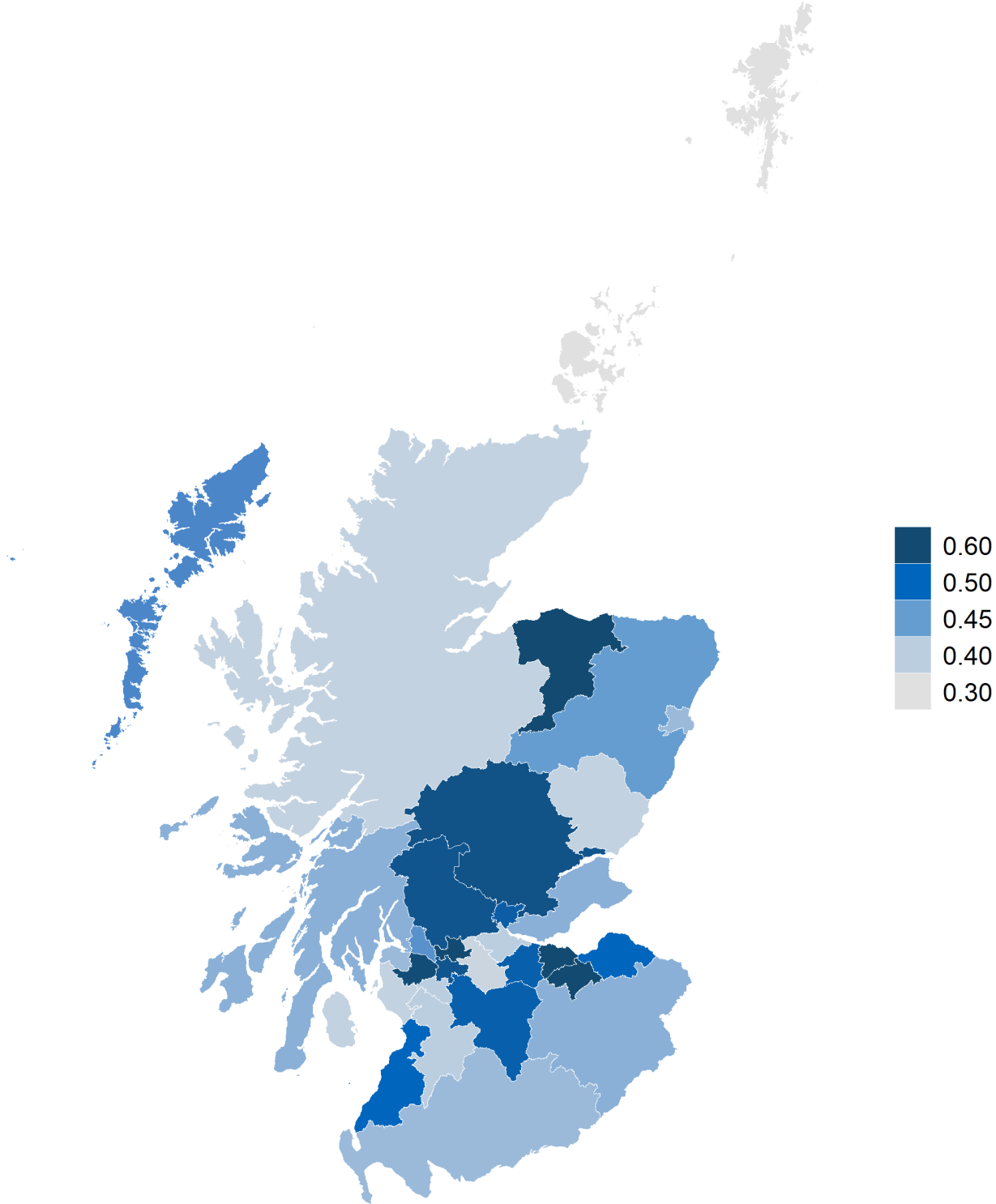
The maps in Figures 2-4 demonstrate the variation in places per child in formal group-based settings across LAs and age groups. While it is difficult to draw a conclusion from the maps, they do indicate that in rural and remote councils, the number of ELC places in formal group-based settings per child is often lower than in urban councils. For example, in the Orkney Islands, the number of places per child for 1-year olds is only 0.11, while in the City of Edinburgh there are 0.45 places per child for the same age group. There is slightly less variation across councils in the number of places for 2-year-old children, however rural councils still have noticeably fewer places per child than urban councils. Once again, the Orkney Islands have the lowest number of places per 2-year-old child (0.15), and the City of Edinburgh has the highest number of places per 2-year-old child (0.64). A full table of places per child for each age group and LA is presented in Appendix 3. It is important to note that because childminders are not included in this map, and places in childminder settings vary by LA, the map may underestimate provision in some LAs more than others.

Figure 2: Number of registered ELC places per child in formal group-based settings as of 2021 (excluding childminders, 1-year-olds)



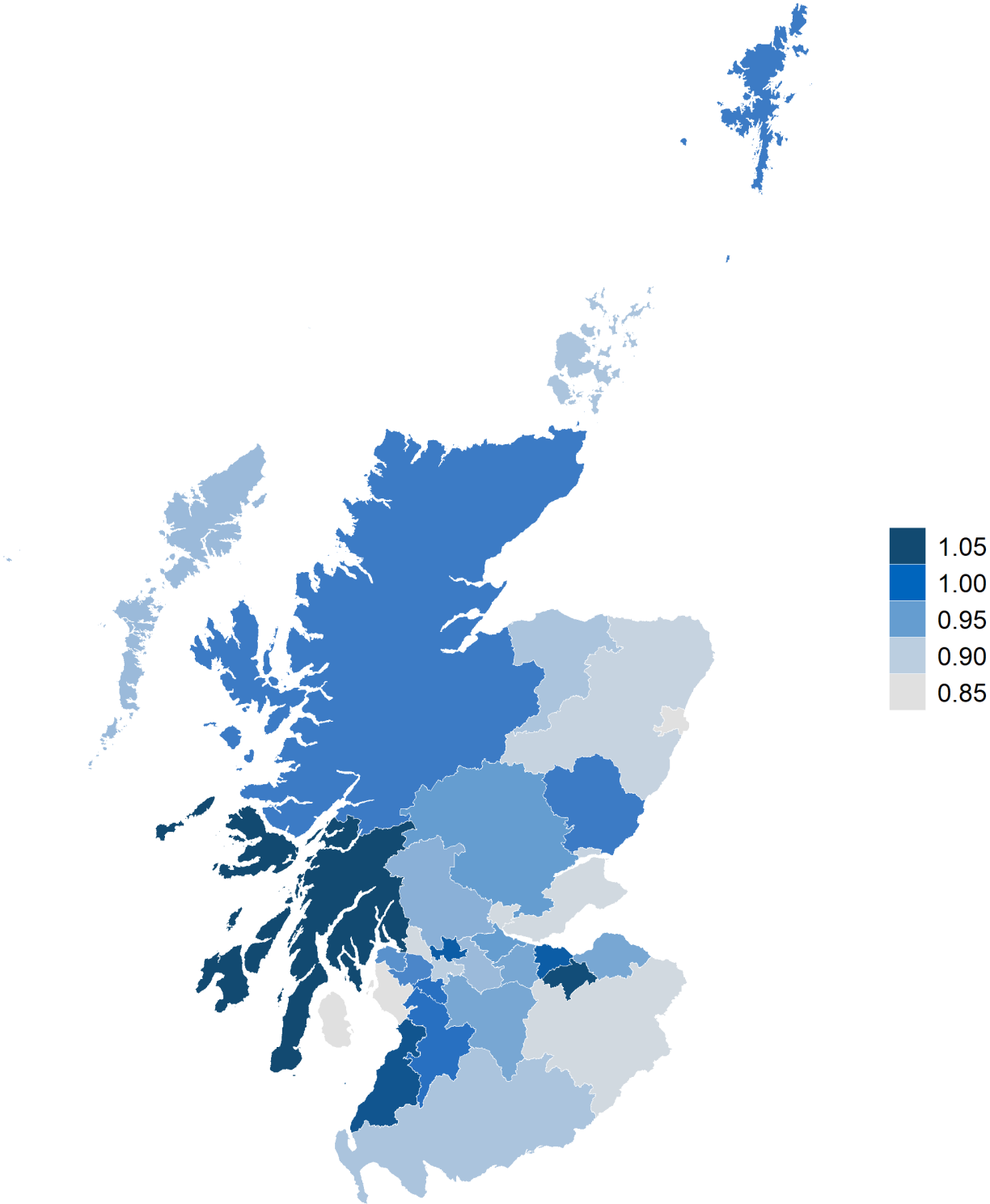
Source: Data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021). Office of National Statistics Population Estimates for Scotland (2021)

Figure 3: Number of registered ELC places per child in formal group-based settings as of 2021 (excluding childminders, 2-year-olds)



Source: Data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021). Office of National Statistics Population Estimates for Scotland (2021)

Figure 4: Number of registered ELC places per child in formal group-based settings as of 2021 (excluding childminders, 3- and 4-year-olds)



Source: Data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021). Office of National Statistics Population Estimates for Scotland (2021)

While the maps above point to a relationship between rurality and remoteness and ELC places per child, a regression analysis can confirm this finding by establishing whether the relationship between rurality and availability of ELC places is persistent across the country, and whether this relationship still exists if we control for deprivation. Table 1 shows the results of such a regression analysis. The dependent variable in our regression is the number of ELC places per child (in formal group-based settings) and our independent variables include whether a region is an accessible rural area, a remote rural area, or an urban area, and the percentage of areas in each council that are deprived.⁴

The analysis showed that accessible rural areas have 0.14 fewer ELC places⁵ per child, as compared to urban areas, while remote areas have 0.23 fewer places⁶ than urban areas, even after controlling for deprivation. The regression also shows that increasing the share of deprived areas within a council by 1%, decreases the number of ELC places per child by 0.03. While this relationship is statistically significant, the magnitude is very small, indicating that rurality likely has a stronger correlation with ELC availability than deprivation.

It should be noted that the coefficients presented in Table 1 and discussed above only represent the correlation between rurality or deprivation of an area and the availability of ELC places, and do not imply a causal relationship. In other words, while it is true to say that rural areas and areas of higher deprivation have slightly lower number of ELC places per child, we cannot say that rurality or deprivation lead to lower ELC places per child. It may be that some other factor is causing these differences.

Table 1: Regression of places per child (excluding childminders) on rurality and deprivation

Independent Variables	Coefficient	Std. Err	t	p>t	95% confidence interval
Accessible rural	-0.14	0.08	-1.83	0.077	-0.306 0.017
Remote rural	-0.23	0.06	-4.05	0.000	-0.342 -0.112
Percent deprived areas	-0.003	0.0012	-2.14	0.042	-0.005 -0.0001
Constant	0.483	0.0410	11.77	0.000	0.399 0.567

⁴ Deprivation was determined using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, associated with each provider in the dataset, as it is recorded by the Care Inspectorate.

⁵ With 90% confidence that this value is statistically different from zero.

⁶ With 99% confidence that this value is statistically different from zero.

2.1.2 Number of service providers

The following table shows the number of ELC providers in Scotland, broken down by childcare type.

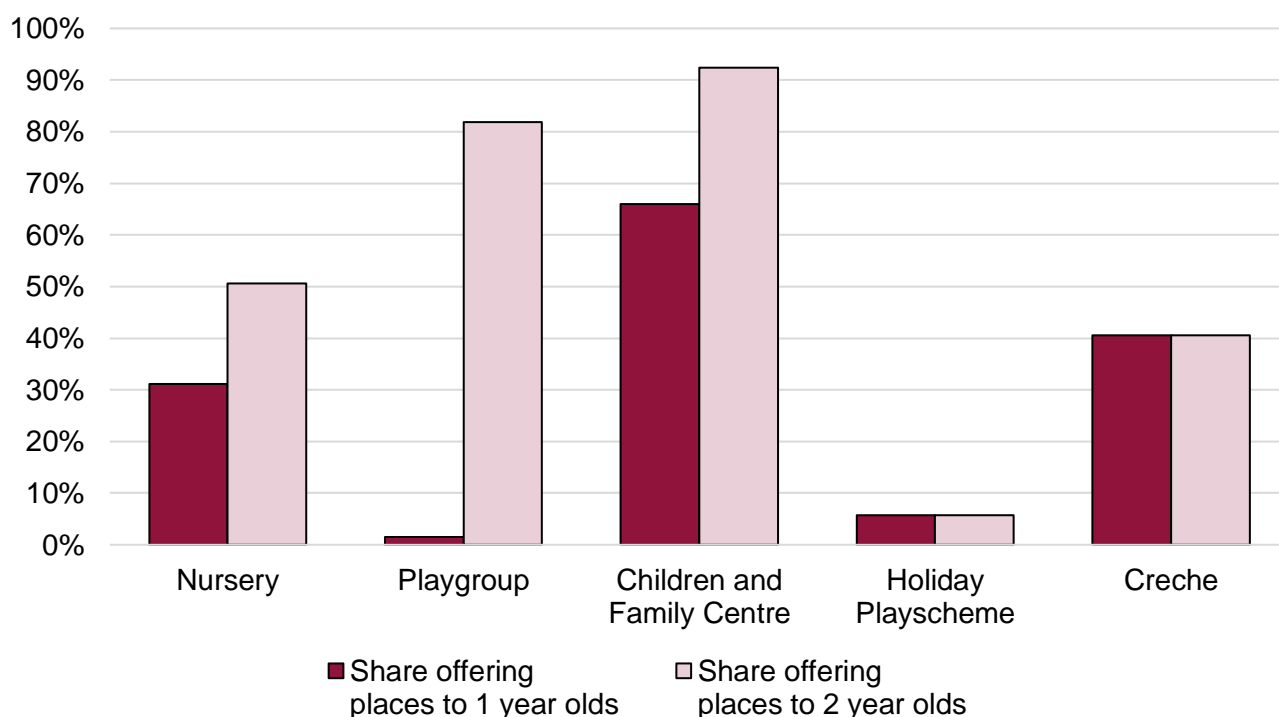
Table 2: Count of ELC providers by type as of February 2023

	Count of all ELC providers	Share offering places to 1-year-olds	Share offering places to 2-year-olds
Childminders	3,484	Unknown	Unknown
Nurseries	2,555	31.1%	50.6%
Out of School Clubs	711	0.3%	0.6%
Playgroups	132	1.5%	81.8%
Children and Family Centres	106	66.0%	92.4%
Holiday Playschemes	35	5.7%	5.7%
Creches	32	40.6%	40.6%

Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023) with matched additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021)

The most common type of providers are childminders, followed by nurseries and out of school clubs. As there is no age disaggregated data on places within childminder settings, Table 2 does not show the share of childminders that offer places to 1- and 2-year-olds. Around half of all nurseries offer places to 2-year-olds, and just under a third have places for 1-year olds. A high number of children and family centres have places for both 1- and 2-year-olds. Interestingly, while just over 80% of playgroups have places for 2-year-olds, fewer than 2% offer places to 1-year olds. These shares are demonstrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Share of ELC providers offering places to 1-year olds and 2-year-olds, as of 2021



Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023) supplemented with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021)

Table 3 shows the count of formal group based ELC settings by provider type. ELC settings are most commonly run by LAs, followed by private sector providers, and then voluntary or not-for-profit run providers. Three ELC providers in the country are also run by Health Boards.

Table 3: Count of ELC providers by provider type (excluding childminders) as of 2023

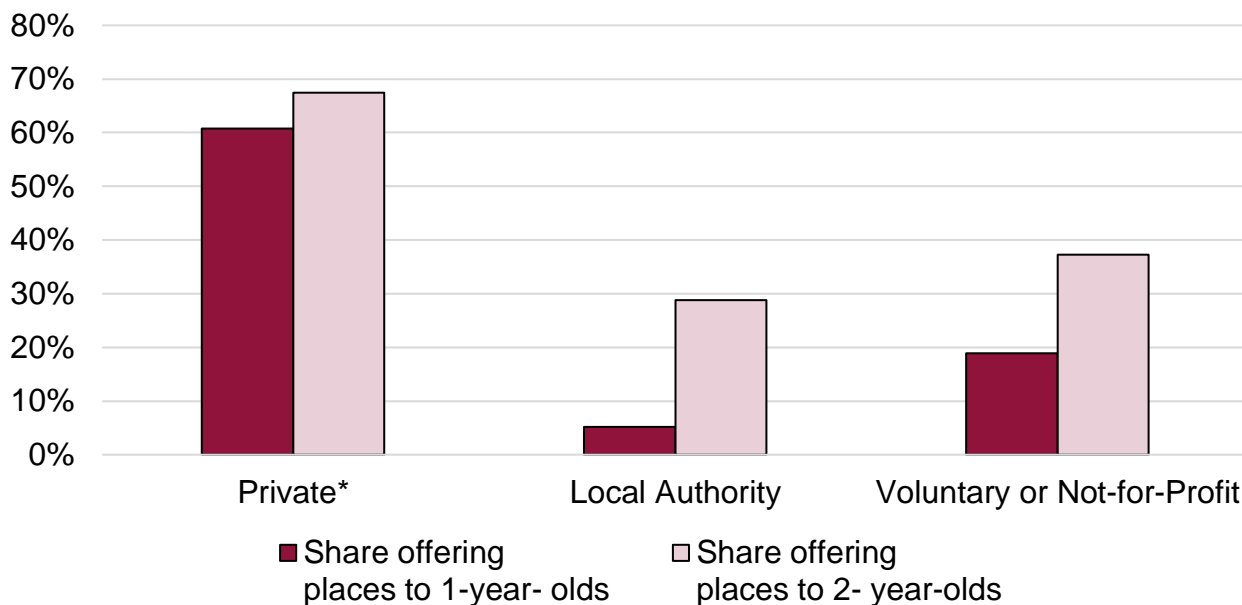
	Count	Share offering places to 1-year olds	Share offering places to 2-year-olds
Local Authority	1785	5.2%	28.9%
Private	1031	60.7%	67.4%
Voluntary or Not-for-Profit	686	19%	37.3%

Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023) supplemented with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021)

Apart from the variation across different ELC services, there is also variation in which types of providers offer places to 1- and 2-year-olds. While 67% of private providers have places for 2-year-olds, and 61% have places for 1-year-olds, only 28% of LA providers have places for 2-year-olds, and only 5% have places for 1-year olds. Thirty seven percent of voluntary or not-for-profit sector providers have places for 2-year-olds, and 19% have

places for 1-year olds. This indicates that parents of younger children (and especially 1-year-olds) are much more reliant on private sector providers. It may be the case that a smaller share of LA providers offer places to 1- and 2-year-olds because they are focused on providing ELC to children included in the current funded offer. Private sector providers shown in Table 3 and in Figure 6 below do not include childminders, as the Care Inspectorate does not have age disaggregated data on places for these settings.

Figure 6: Share of providers offering places to 1-year-olds and 2-year-olds by provider type (excluding childminders) as of 2021



*Private sector providers exclude childminders.

Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023) supplemented with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021).

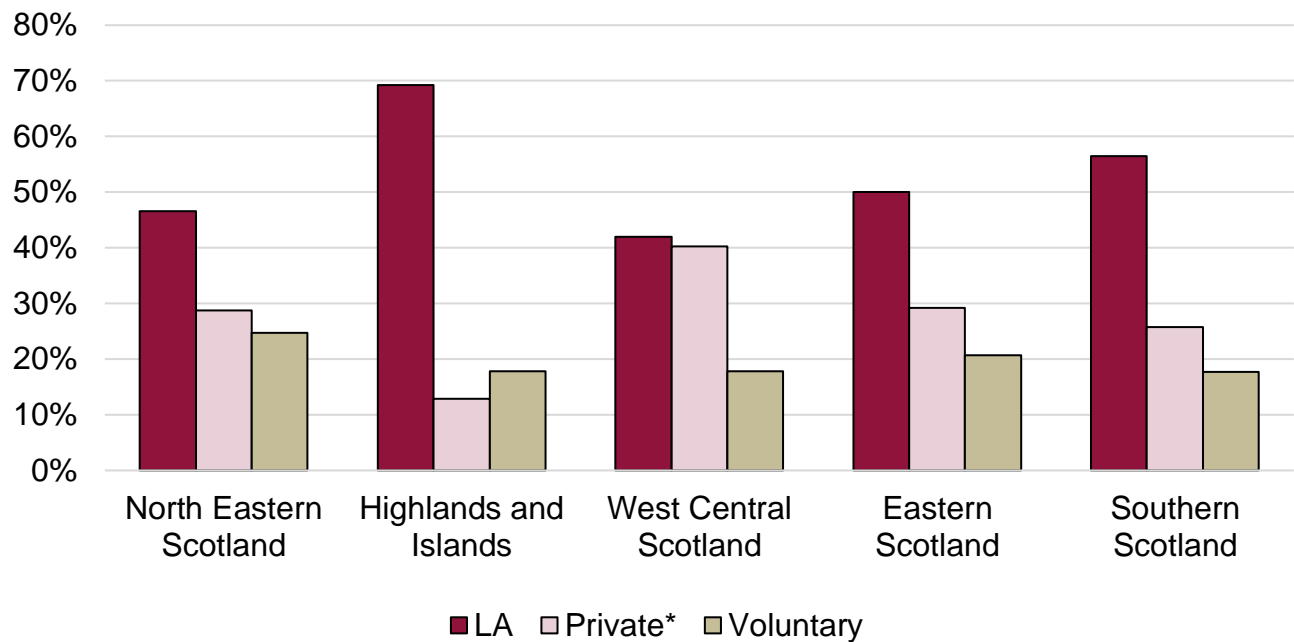
Regional Analysis

Figures 7 and 8 show the variation in formal group-based ELC provision across the five regions⁷ in Scotland. The majority of providers are LA settings, with the Highlands and

⁷ The five regions used in the report correspond to the Office of National Statistics ITL 2 regions. **Eastern Scotland** comprises Angus, Dundee City, East Lothian, Midlothian, City of Edinburgh, Falkirk, Perth and Kinross, Stirling, West Lothian, Clackmannanshire, and Fife. The **Highlands and Islands** region comprises Orkney Islands, Shetland, Na-h Eileanan Siar, Highland Council, Moray, and Argyll & Bute (excluding Helensburgh and Lomond), and Arran and Cumbrae. **Southern Scotland** comprises Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire, South Ayrshire, North Ayrshire (excluding Arran and Cumbrae), and Scottish Borders. **West Central Scotland** comprises East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire, North Lanarkshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, and Helensburgh and Lomond. Finally, **North Eastern Scotland** comprises Aberdeen City, and Aberdeenshire. Where regions did not map exactly onto an LA, the postcode (and datazone) of the provider was used to assign them to a specific region.

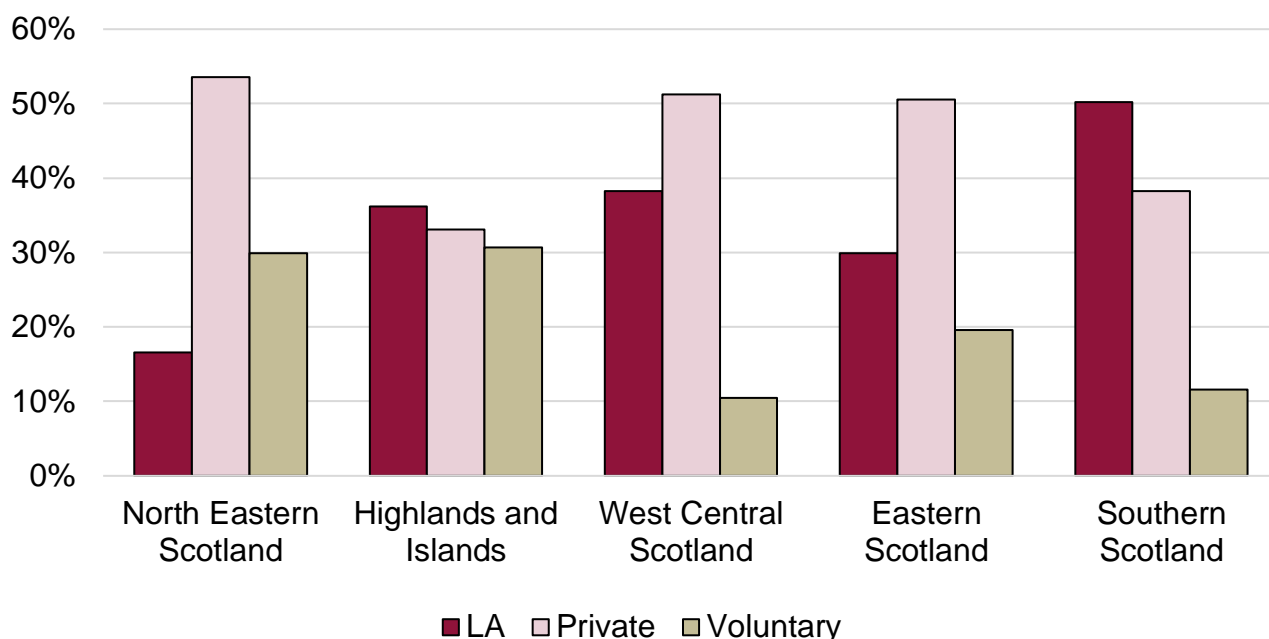
Islands and Southern Scotland having the highest proportion of LA providers, with 69%, and 57% respectively. This suggests that more rural regions may be more reliant on LA provision than urban regions, as it may be more difficult for private providers to be financially sustainable in rural and remote areas. West Central Scotland has the lowest proportion of LA providers with 42% of all providers being run by LAs, and 40% of all providers being run by the private sector.

Figure 7: Share of providers by type and region (excluding childminders) as of 2023



Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023). Scottish regions correspond to Office of National Statistics, ITL 2 regions (2021)

Figure 8: Share of providers by type and region serving 1- and 2-year-olds (excluding childminders) as of 2021



Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023), supplemented with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021)

In terms of providers who offer services to 1- and 2-year-olds, most regions have a higher share of private group-based providers and a lower share of group-based providers run by LAs. Only the Highlands and Islands and Southern Scotland regions have a higher share of LA group-based providers offering these services, with 36% of providers in the Highlands and Islands region offering services to 1- and 2-year-old children being run by LAs, and 33% being run by the private sector. In Southern Scotland, 50% of providers offering services to 1- and 2-year-olds are run by LAs, and 38% of providers are run by the private sector. In North-Eastern Scotland, West Central Scotland, and Eastern Scotland, over half of providers that offer services to 1- and 2-year-olds are run by the private sector.

2.1.3 Staffing

Number of registered children per registered staff member

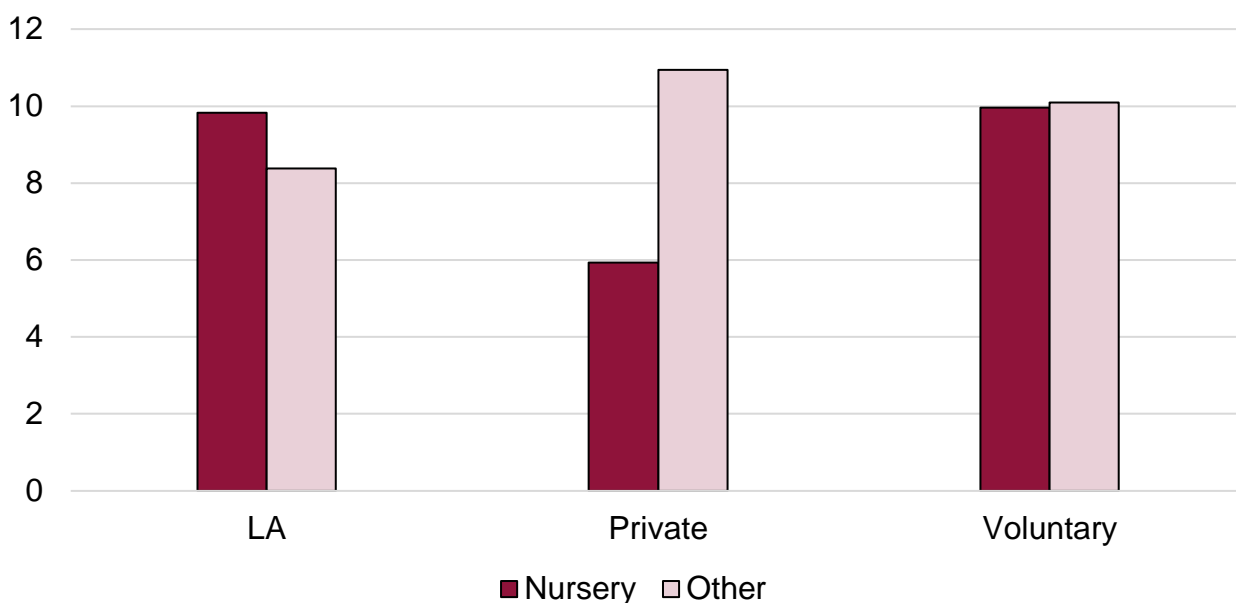
The following tables compare the number of registered places in a setting to the number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff members. The number of registered places per FTE staff member varies by provider type, ELC type, and age group of the children being offered places. It is important to note that this is not a measure of child-to-staff ratio, and it is not an indication that any individual provider, or type of provider more broadly is not meeting Care Inspectorate requirements around child-to-staff ratios. Many children may only attend ELC for certain days of the week, use half-day provision, or only attend certain weeks of the year. Thus, not all children registered in a setting are present in the class simultaneously at any given time in the year. Instead, what this measure indicates is that settings with a higher number of registered places per FTE staff may rely on fewer staff to offer necessary provision and related tasks (e.g., administrative tasks).

This number also indicates which areas may have higher group sizes on average (although they do not show the actual class sizes for the reasons explained above).

Additional research is required to understand the exact child-to-staff ratios and how staffing specifically will affect and be affected by the new offer for 1- and 2-year-olds.

Nationally, private nurseries that provide places for 1- and 2-year-olds have a lower number of registered places per FTE than nurseries run by LAs or the voluntary sector. Private nurseries have 5.9 registered places per FTE staff member per setting on average, while LA nurseries and voluntary sector nurseries have 9.8 and 9.9 registered places per FTE staff member respectively. Within the private and voluntary sectors, other types of providers (creches, children and family centres, and playgroups) have higher numbers of registered places per FTE than nurseries. This may be driven by these types of providers offering more ad-hoc care, which children may only attend for limited hours of the day, or limited weeks of the year. However, of providers run by the LAs, nurseries have a higher number of registered places per FTE staff member than other types of providers. In general, there is a lower number of registered places per FTE staff member in providers with places for 1- and 2-year-olds compared to all providers, due to regulatory differences set by the Care Inspectorate⁸.

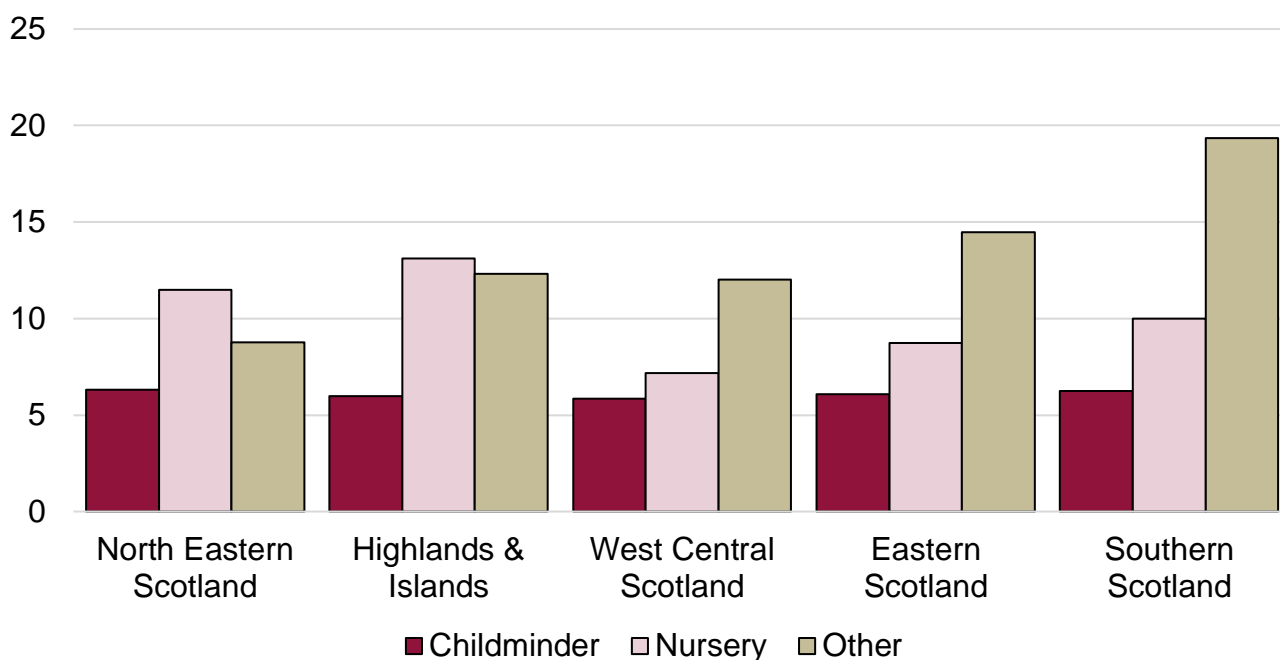
Figure 9: Number of places per FTE staff member in providers offering services for 1- and 2-year-olds (excluding childminders) as of 2021



Source: Care Inspectorate Dastore (as of February 28, 2023) supplemented with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021)

⁸ The Care Inspectorate’s regulation for child staff ratios in group based ELC settings are that there is to be one adult for every 3 children aged 0 to under 2-years-old, one adult for every five children aged 2 to under 3-years-old, and 1 adult for every eight children aged 3 to under 8-year-old. Per Care Inspectorate regulations, childminders can care for a maximum of 8 children under the age of 16, of whom no more than 6 can be under 12, and no more than three are under primary school age, including the childminder’s own children.

Figure 10: Number of places per FTE staff member by region (all providers) as of 2023

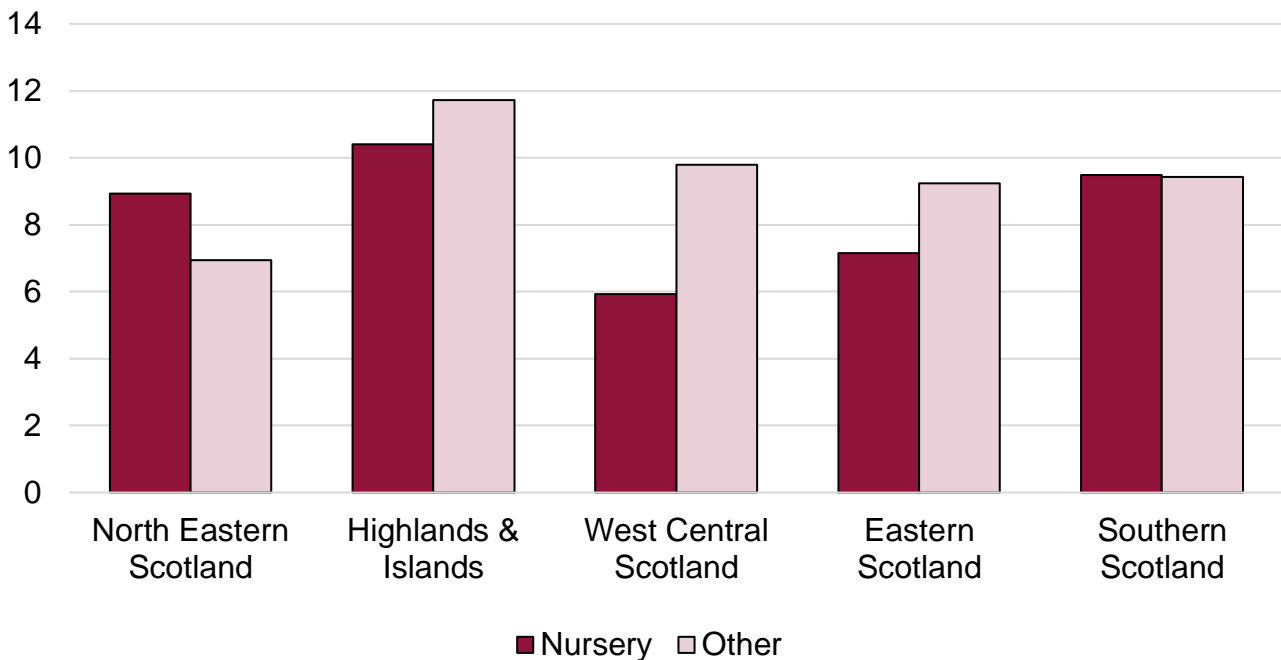


Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023). Regions correspond to Office of National Statistics ITL 2 Territories.

Figure 10 shows the variation in number of registered places per FTE staff member by region and type of provision across all providers. Across all regions, registered places per FTE staff member within childminder settings is relatively stable, at between 5.8-6.3 children per staff member. However, there is much more variation across regions for nurseries, ranging from 7.19 in West Central Scotland to 13.1 in the Highlands and Islands. Other providers (children and family centres, creches, playgroups, and out of school clubs) seem to have a higher number of registered places per FTE staff member than both childminders or nurseries.

As shown in Figure 11, across providers who offer services for 1- and 2-year-olds, the number of registered places per FTE staff member in nurseries ranges from 5.93 places per staff member in West Central Scotland to 10.4 places per staff member in the Highlands and Islands. For all types of providers with places for 1- and 2-year-olds, the Highlands and Islands and Southern Scotland have the highest number of registered places per FTE staff member. On the other hand, West Central Scotland and Eastern Scotland (where Glasgow City and the City of Edinburgh respectively are located) have the lowest number of registered places per FTE staff. This indicates that staffing shortages may be more severe in rural and remote areas.

Figure 11: Number of places per FTE staff member by region in providers offering services for 1- and 2-year-olds (excluding childminders) as of 2021



Source: Care Inspectorate Dastore (as of February 28, 2023). Regions correspond to Office of National Statistics ITL 2 Territories.

2.1.4 Analysis by urban rural disaggregation

This section discusses the variation in ELC provision across areas with different degrees of rurality. As the data presented in Figures 12 and 13 are not disaggregated by age group, childminders are included in the analysis.

To categorise areas by rurality, the Scottish Government’s urban rural disaggregation, which divides all areas in Scotland into urban, accessible rural, or remote rural areas was used⁹.

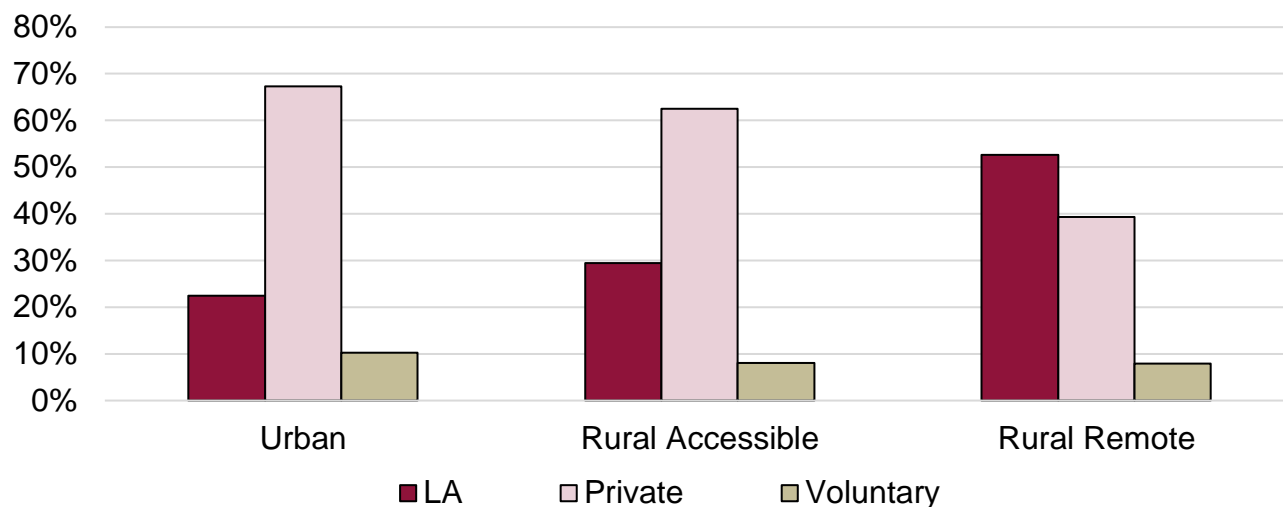
In general, consistent with our regional analysis, remote rural areas are more reliant on LA run providers than urban areas and accessible rural areas, with 52.7% of all providers in remote areas being run by LAs compared to 29.4% of providers in accessible rural areas and 22.5% in urban areas. This is consistent with information in the policy literature¹⁰ and testimony provided by stakeholders supporting the view that it is more challenging for private providers to operate in remote rural areas. In urban areas and accessible rural areas, the majority of ELC providers are run by the private sector, with 67.3% of all providers in urban areas and 62.6% of all providers in accessible rural areas being run privately. Voluntary sector provision is slightly more common in urban areas compared to

⁹ Urban areas refer to settlements of 10,000 people or more, accessible rural areas refer to settlements of up to 9,999 people that are within a 30-minute drive from a settlement of 10,000 or more, and remote areas are areas with a population of up to 9,999 that are more than a 30-minute drive from a settlement of 10,000 or more.

¹⁰ Scottish Government (2021) [The challenges of rural childcare provision, innovative models and the needs of agricultural families](#).

rural areas, with 10% of providers in urban areas run by the voluntary sector, compared to 8.1% in accessible rural areas, and 8% in remote rural areas.

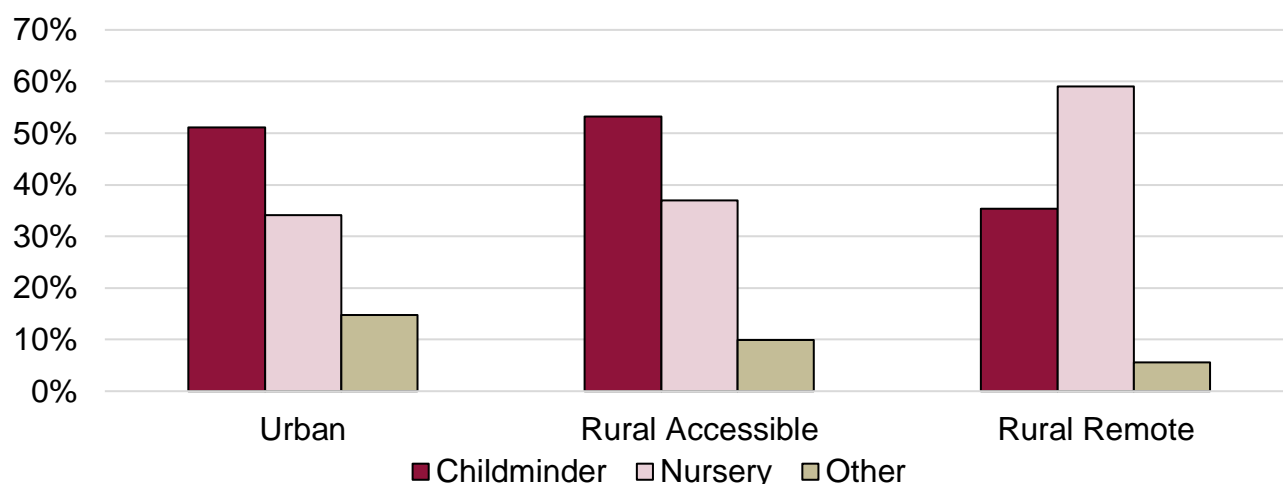
Figure 12: Share of providers by provider type across urban and rural areas as of 2023



Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023). Scottish Government Urban Rural Classifications (2020).

Regarding ELC types, remote rural regions are much more reliant on nurseries, which make up 59% of all provision in those areas, compared to 37% in accessible rural areas, and 34% in urban areas. In accessible rural areas and urban areas, childminders make up just over half of all provision, accounting for 51% in urban areas and 53% in accessible rural areas, compared to only 35% in remote rural areas. It could be that it is more challenging for childminders to operate sustainably in remote areas than other types of providers. Other types of ELC (children and family centres, playgroups, creches, and out of school clubs) are also more widely available in urban areas. This indicates that parents and carers in urban areas may have more choices across ELC types than in rural areas, with the lack of choice being much more pronounced in remote rural areas.

Figure 13: Share of providers by ELC service type as of 2023



Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023). Scottish Government Urban Rural Classifications (2020).

2.2 Stakeholder engagement

2.2.1 Focus group and interviews

As described in Section 1.3, the engagement with key stakeholders was aimed at gaining a broad overview and understanding of ELC provision across Scotland. This section outlines the key considerations raised by stakeholders.

Current ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

The primary challenge discussed by stakeholders related to the accessibility and availability of ELC provision for this younger age group. Stakeholders noted that there are fewer providers that offer services for 1- and 2-year-olds. One reason for this is that different spaces and facilities are suitable for children of different age groups, e.g., younger children require different toilet facilities. Having fewer providers offering services can also lead to long waiting lists to access services and families being limited in their choice of ELC provision for their children. This barrier may be further pronounced in rural and island communities where families may be required to travel long distances to access services. An additional challenge in rural and island communities is that it can be difficult to find Gaelic-speaking staff for families that seek Gaelic-run provision.

An additional point raised is that younger children benefit from attachment-led models and that a focus on family learning and engaging with parents is highly important. This can include models such as 'Stay-and-Play', where parents can stay with their children in the ELC settings and engage in activities together. Furthermore, childminders were considered to be key to providing ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds because their settings mimic the nurturing home environment that children of this age are used to.

Stakeholders were also asked for their views on ELC provision for children with additional support needs (ASN). In terms of challenges, it was mentioned that it can be difficult for some families and providers to access the related services (e.g., health and social care) that they need to be able to support children with ASN effectively. A further challenge relates to children of this age group being less likely to have received a clear diagnosis. It could therefore be that staff will need additional training to recognise early signs and symptoms of ASN among 1- and 2-year-olds.

Keeping these challenges in mind, stakeholders emphasised that it would be beneficial if a new offer is not considered in isolation but packaged with other services that children with ASN access. It was also mentioned that providers need to be funded appropriately to enable them to deliver high-quality ELC for these children, particularly if staff require additional training or need to be able to provide one-to-one support for children that need it.

A new funded ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds

While this report does not constitute a formal consultation on the new offer of ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds, as part of the discussion on the current provision the stakeholders also discussed challenges and opportunities of the new offer, which are presented below.

Firstly, according to stakeholders, ELC provision should be designed to meet the needs of 1- and 2-year-olds, who often require more hands-on support than older children. To ensure that younger children are not overwhelmed, this means it is important that: (i) each staff member does not support too many children at once, (ii) the number of children in each group is not too high, and (iii) the physical space that children are in is not too large.

Secondly, there must be sufficient capacity in the workforce to meet the demand for ELC, which will increase when the new offer is introduced, and staff need to be supported. This can be achieved by training staff and tailoring workforce learning and development pathways to reflect the skills required to meet the needs of 1- and 2-year-olds and their families, such as through professional placements working with children of different ages. This was described as particularly important because there is currently a smaller pool of staff that have experience working with this younger age group. Importantly, it was highlighted that the necessary training should take place before the offer is introduced.

A further way of achieving sufficient capacity within the workforce is by utilising all types of providers that are willing to be included within the offer. For instance, the childminding workforce as well as providers that are currently unregulated may be key to ensuring that all eligible children can access a service. This may further mean a move away from what stakeholders described as the norm for families, i.e., that a child should go to an LA nursery. Furthermore, actions can be taken to improve the social standing of the profession to ensure that people want to join and stay in the sector.

Thirdly, according to stakeholders, to ensure that families are supported, and to reflect that their needs will vary, the new offer should allow them to choose from different provision types. Parents may further benefit from parental engagement and family learning activities, which can help them feel more confident and comfortable in their parenting abilities as well as in introducing their children to ELC at such a young age. As such, it is important that facilities have the space to accommodate families as well.

Lastly, it was mentioned that increased funding, as well as higher salary rates, will be needed for all providers to be able to provide 1- and 2-year-olds with high quality ELC provision.

Takeaways from the current funded ELC offer

While discussing provision for 1- and 2-year-olds, stakeholders also brought up challenges and opportunities associated with the current funded ELC offer. Many stakeholders' views on the new offer of ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds are shaped by their experiences of the current funded offer of 1140 hours for 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. Some of the lessons learned from the current ELC offer may help to inform certain elements of the new offer for 1- and 2-year-olds.

There was a consensus among stakeholders that a primary challenge for all providers is the recruitment and retention of staff. Stakeholders explained that this could be, in part, because staff feel that they are not being compensated fairly for their work. While a concern about pay was described in relation to both sectors, it was mentioned that private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers are losing staff to LA settings, which may pay higher wages and offer better benefits for staff. Recruiting and retaining staff may be particularly difficult in rural and island communities, where it is common that a small population is spread across a large geographic area. Moreover, it was described that the need for training and attaining a qualification may pose a barrier for people to enter the profession as there are often other sectors (e.g., hospitality) in rural and island communities that do not have such a requirement.

A further challenge raised by stakeholders concerned the eligibility criteria for the 2-year-olds that can access ELC within the current offer. Stakeholders felt that more clarity around eligibility criteria is needed, which may have contributed to the policy being inconsistently implemented across Scotland. It was also mentioned that unclear criteria may also have led to some parents not being aware of their children's entitlement to access services. In addition, stakeholders described how families may not be able to make an informed choice regarding the type of ELC provision for their child, because it is the norm to attend LA nurseries. As such, some families may not be aware that there are other options available.

The availability of ELC services in different areas in the country was also a challenge mentioned by stakeholders that is particularly pronounced in rural and island communities. Furthermore, the demand for ELC services may vary significantly across the year in rural and island communities dependent on the hospitality and tourism sectors. The variation in demand for services across different time periods in the year makes it not only difficult to track demand but also to provide services in these areas.

When discussing examples of good practice, stakeholders emphasised that the quality of ELC provided for 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds under the current offer was high. Scotland's 'Getting It Right For Every Child' policy was mentioned as something that works well, and it was highlighted that all families' and children's needs are different, which ELC provision needs to reflect. In addition to this, the findings from a recent survey that looked at parents' views and experiences of ELC were discussed. Overall, the survey found that parents have a positive view of the funded offer and appreciate both the quality and flexibility of provision that it offers.¹¹

2.2.2 Survey of Local Authorities

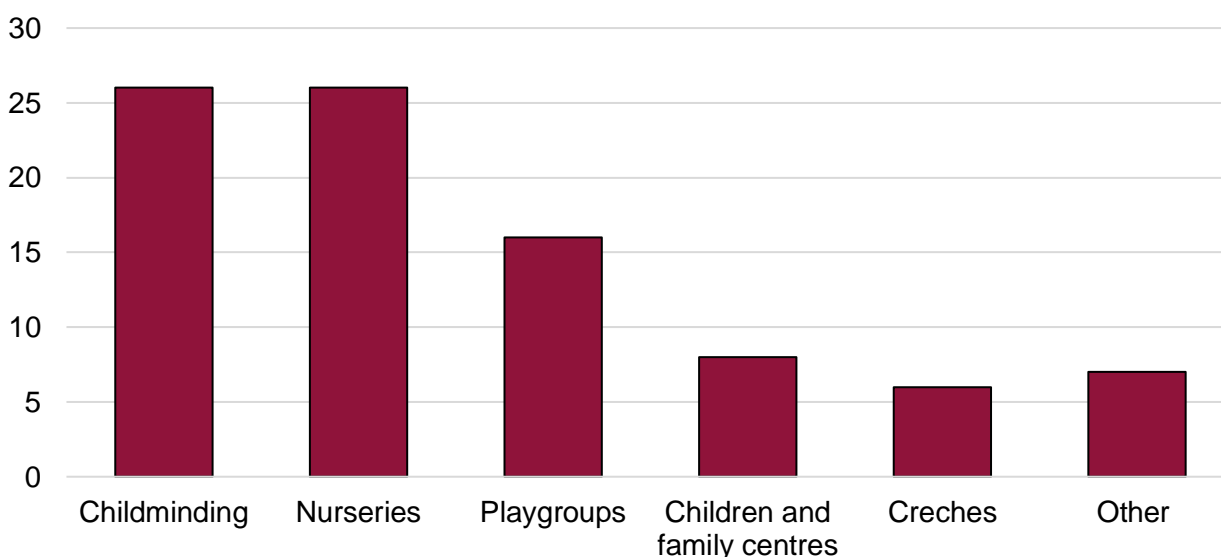
As the final research activity in Phase 1, LAs in Scotland were surveyed on ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in their area, examples of innovative provision in their areas, and considerations related to the new offer for 1- and 2-year-olds. This section summarises the findings from the survey. Additional figures showing the responses from all questions are available in Appendix 1.

¹¹ The Scottish Government (2022) [*Parents views and use of early learning and childcare in Scotland, 2022.*](#)

Current provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

The most common provider type for 1- and 2-year-olds were childminders and nurseries, with all LAs who answered the survey (26) having provision available for 1- and 2-year-olds in these types of settings. The next most common type was playgroups, with 16 LAs responding they have playgroups for 1- and 2-year-olds. Eight LAs responded that they have children and family centres for 1- and 2-year-olds, and six have creches.

Figure 14: Availability of service types for 1- and 2-year-olds



In addition to the types listed above, some respondents outlined further types of ELC available for 1- and 2-year-olds in their LA, including parent and toddler groups (e.g., Stay and Play), family support programmes (e.g., Parents as Early Education Partners and Psychology of Parenting) and community childminding.

In many LAs, ELC provision may be offered through programmes or organisations that are not formally classed as ELC, as they offer a wider range of services to children and families. These programmes could offer examples of innovative service delivery for 1- and 2-year-olds. The majority of LAs (15) responded that they are aware of additional types of ELC, however 7 responded that they do not have additional types, and five did not know about any additional types. The most frequently¹² mentioned alternative programmes include:

- [Parents as Early Education Partners \(PEEP\)](#)
- [Home Start](#)

¹² Other provision types mentioned by respondents include: Ante-natal PEEP, Baby Chat, Bookbug, Community Practitioners, Community Sports and Leisure Activities, Early Years Centre, Stay, Play and Learn (run by Early Years Scotland), Families First, Family Connection Programme, Family Learning Team, Family Nursery Partnership, Family Wellbeing Services, Little Explorers, Mellow Parenting, Multi-agency resource allocation group, Parent and Family Support Team, Parenting programmes, PoPP, Raising Children with Confidence, Roots of Empathy, Soft play, Young Parent Support Base.

- Parent and toddler groups (informal sessions where parents spend time with their children in the company of others, usually engaging in an activity)
- Baby Massage (programmes teaching parents to give their babies massage)
- [Community childminding](#)
- [Incredible Years](#)
- Playgroups (regular short sessions of care and learning through play for children not old enough to go to school).
- Family support services (provide a wide range of services to support families, including signposting and referrals to other services).
- [Stay Play & Learn](#)

Gaps in current provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

LAs were asked about specific gaps in current ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds. While the current funded offer does not include all 1-and 2-year olds, their responses shed light on existing gaps in ELC provision and capacity for 1-and 2-year olds.

Despite being the most common provision types, the majority of LAs responded that there is currently not enough provision for 1- and 2-year-olds within both childminder and nursery settings. Eighteen LAs acknowledged there are not enough places in childminder settings, and 19 responded there were not enough places in nurseries. Despite being available in all responding LAs, the survey results indicate that some families currently may not be able to access provision in nurseries and through childminders, even if there is a setting in their area. Other providers that were commonly listed as currently not having enough places were children and family centres (14 responses), creches (11 responses), and playgroups (10 responses). Only two LAs answered that they have no gaps in provision for 1- and 2-year-olds.

LAs also responded that currently existing gaps are different across age groups, with 19 responding LAs stating that there were gaps in ELC provision for younger children, but not for older children. Five LAs answered that there are gaps for both age groups, but the gaps are different. Only one LA responded that there were no gaps in provision for either age group. No LAs answered that there are no gaps for younger children, but there are gaps for older children; or that the gaps are the same for both age groups. This indicates that in most LAs, provision for 1- and 2-year-olds is currently less readily available, as compared to provision for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Challenges in providing ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds

LAs were asked in a free-text question about the main challenges associated with providing ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds, and if this contributed to gaps.

Lack of capacity to meet demand

Overall, many of the challenges raised by LAs related to the overarching concern that there would not be sufficient capacity to meet the increased demand for ELC provision that a new offer would bring. This includes capacity in relation to having the necessary

providers, places, infrastructure, as well as workforce in place to effectively deliver the offer. The concerns regarding each of these factors are provided in more detail below.

Providers and places

One of the main challenges highlighted by survey respondents was that there will be an insufficient number of ELC providers, and available places for children, to cope with the increased number of 1- and 2-year-olds that will require services when the new funded offer is rolled out. Furthermore, it was described that this availability will vary both between LAs as well as within them. For instance, a gap in services may be more likely in rural regions as provision is often concentrated in areas of higher population.

Some respondents suggested that the lack of ELC providers and places is, in part, due to a large amount of capacity having been used to deliver the current funded offer. Furthermore, the high cost of delivering services for 1- and 2-year-olds, and the limited statutory funding that has been available for this age group, has meant that the existing provision is less extensive across Scotland.

Infrastructure

In addition to the availability of providers and places, respondents also expressed concern about having the infrastructure and facilities necessary to provide services for 1- and 2-year-olds. Some respondents mentioned that existing facilities have been utilised to deliver the current funded offer, limiting the possibility for expansion. A further barrier mentioned is that, with existing facilities, it may be difficult for providers to meet the specific Care Inspectorate requirements for this younger age group (e.g., 1:3 adult to child ratio¹³, there should be a minimum of one nappy changing facility per 10 children using nappies¹⁴). Overall, it was emphasised that many areas will need to acquire or build additional facilities and/or adapt available spaces to be suitable for younger children to deliver the new funded offer.

Workforce

A further capacity-related challenge mentioned by LAs was that the existing workforce will not be sufficient to support the rollout of a new funded offer. Respondents stated that there are currently difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, and this will remain a significant challenge going forward. It was also noted that the higher adult-child ratios required for younger children will mean that more staff will need to be employed by settings than previously.

Moreover, respondents expressed concern that the workforce may not have the skills and training required to provide high quality care for 1- and 2-year-olds. Respondents highlighted that, since these younger children have different needs compared to older

¹³ Care Inspectorate (2018) [Guidance on adult to child ratios in early learning and childcare settings](#).

¹⁴ Care Inspectorate (2018) [Nappy changing facilities for early learning and childcare services: information to support improvement](#).

children, and there is less experience working with this age group within the workforce, existing staff may not be as well-equipped to care for them.

Geographical challenges

Several barriers to providing ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds were mentioned by respondents that related to the geographical characteristics of their LA. Some respondents discussed how many of the challenges in providing services for 1- and 2-year-olds (e.g., recruiting and retaining staff) may be greater in rural communities. Furthermore, it may not be financially sustainable for providers to operate in rural communities, particularly in areas where there are very few children needing to access ELC. Additionally, the need to travel long distances and a lack of transport links can make accessing services challenging for both staff and families in many areas.

Funding and cost of delivering services

Respondents also highlighted several challenges related to the cost of providing ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds. It was mentioned that it is more costly to deliver services for this younger age group, compared to older age groups. One reason for this is that 1- and 2-year-olds require higher adult-child ratios than 3- to 5-year-olds. As such, some respondents suggested that to be able to deliver the new offer effectively, providers need both sufficient funding and support from the Scottish Government.

Additional challenges

While the challenges that were most frequently mentioned by survey respondents have been outlined in detail above, the following are examples of additional points raised by a smaller number of respondents:

- ELC provision may not be appropriate or beneficial for 1- and 2-year-olds.
- The eligibility criteria for children for a new offer is unclear.
- It is too early to learn lessons from the current offer.
- Children with ASN may find extended hours in ELC difficult to manage.

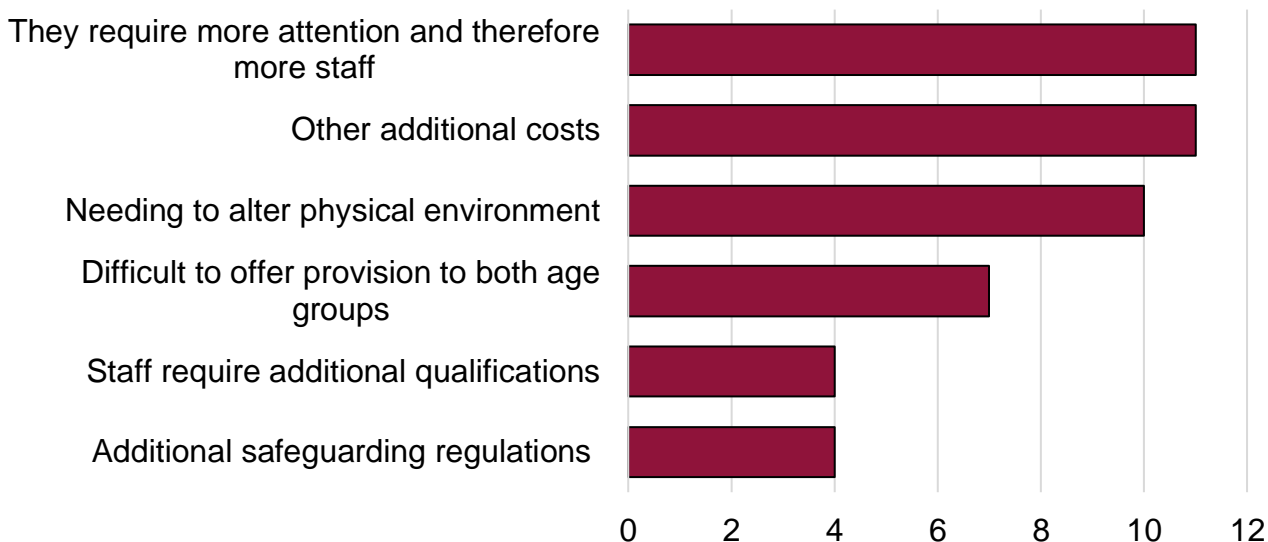
Reluctance to provide ELC services to younger children

When asked if providers are more reluctant to provide ELC services to younger than older children, 12 LAs responded that some providers are more reluctant to provide ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds, as compared to 3- and 4-year-olds, and 10 answered that they did not know if providers are more reluctant to offer ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds. Only four LAs answered that providers in their areas are not more reluctant to offer ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds, indicating that the challenges described above may be significant enough that some providers would prefer to opt out of care for this age group.

The most common responses from LAs around why providers were more reluctant to offer places to 1- and 2-year-olds were that: 1- and 2-year-olds require more attention, and therefore providers must hire additional staff (11 responses), that there were other additional costs associated with offering places to younger children (11 responses), and that providers need to alter their physical environments in order to provide places to younger children (10 responses). Other answers include that it was difficult to offer

provision to both 3- and 4-year-olds and 1- and 2-year-olds based on differing needs (7 responses) and that staff required additional qualifications, or there were additional safeguarding regulations associated with work with this age group (4 responses). Most LAs provided multiple reasons as to why providers were more reluctant to offer ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds.

Figure 15: Why are providers more reluctant to provide ELC to younger children?



Concerns with a new offer

LAs were also asked about their concerns with an expansion of the funded offer to 1- and 2-year-olds. Many of the answers regarding concerns with a new offer overlapped with reasons why providers may be reluctant to offer places to 1- and 2-year-olds. All 26 responding LAs reported being concerned about a lack of capacity within existing providers to accommodate increased demand, and difficulties around recruiting new staff with appropriate qualifications. Many LAs are also concerned that it will be difficult for providers to offer the wider range of services potentially included in the new offer (24 responses). No LA responded that they were unsure of or unaware of any concerns, and all respondents listed more than one concern.

Five respondents outlined additional concerns with the expansion of the funded offer to all 1- and 2-year-olds, including:

- Due to the limited provision of ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds currently, it is difficult for students to gain experience with this younger age group.
- Facilities not being suitable for 1- and 2-year-olds.
- The high cost of providing high quality ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds.
- The need for appropriate funding to deliver the offer.
- The quality of provision will be affected by having a wider age range within settings.
- Younger children will find the hours in ELC settings difficult to manage.

Additional Support Needs

Most (20) LAs are aware of ELC programmes serving children 0-4 with additional support needs (ASN) in their LA. However, 6 LAs are not aware of any such programmes.

The ASN programmes most commonly listed by LAs are:

- speech and language therapy and family play and parenting (15 responses)
- bilingual or sign language translation programmes (8 responses),
- at-home ELC programmes (4 responses)

Five LAs that responded to the survey did not provide a response to this question. In addition to the types listed above, 11 respondents outlined further programmes available to pre-school children with ASN. These included: developmental nurseries, multi-agency drop-in groups, specialist family centres, specialist ELC provision (including nurseries), provision within mainstream services, and Enhanced Learning Outreach services.

Out of the 21 LAs that gave examples of ASN programmes, only 7 answered that the programmes listed are available for 1- and 2-year-olds, while 6 stated they are not available for this age group. 7 LAs responded that some of the programmes offer places to 1- and 2-year-olds while some don't, and 3 did not know if programmes have places for 1- and 2-year-olds or not. ASN programmes available to 1- and 2-year-olds listed by LAs include: developmental and specialist nurseries, family play and parenting programmes, speech and language therapy programmes, sensory play programmes, at-home parent and toddler groups, Early Years Services, nurture groups, PEEP, Incredible Years (IY), and 5 to Thrive.

Most LAs responded that ELC for children with ASN is most commonly provided alongside children without ASN in mainstream settings. Some LAs responded that both specialised providers and provision alongside children without ASN was common. In most LAs (19), provision for children with ASN was provided by the LA. Only one LA answered that most provision for children with ASN was provided by private providers.

Tracking demand

Nineteen LAs said they track demand for ELC by age group, and 14 track demand by type of provision. Only two LAs responded that they do not track demand. Most LAs who track demand found that there are not enough places for certain groups of children in their area (15 responses). This could include children in remote or rural areas, children with ASN, or younger children. Eight LAs that track demand found that there are a good number of places for the demand.

Respondents outlined several groups of children that do not have enough places in ELC settings within their LA, including: 1- and/or 2-year-olds, eligible 2-year-olds, children with ASN, as well as all groups of children. It was also mentioned by some that available provision varies depending on area, some LAs have excess capacity in their rural communities while others have insufficient capacity.

Additional views

At the conclusion of the survey, LAs were invited to share any additional views they had about ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds, or the new offer.

Many LAs shared views related to what they believed would be the most effective approach and timing to deliver the new funded offer. For instance, it was emphasised that the offer should be implemented slowly over time and that expansion in the short-term may be received poorly by the sector. There were also some responses suggesting that focus should be placed on delivering the current offer effectively, prior to implementing a new offer. It was mentioned that delivering the new funded offer prematurely would mean that insufficient time has been given to evaluating and learning from the delivery of the current offer.

An additional point raised by respondents was the importance of using the appropriate language, which includes ensuring that the details of the offer and who it applies to are clear to both families and providers. It was also highlighted that the language used should promote the professionalism of the sector.

Respondents also shared their thoughts about potential barriers to the new offer, including concerns about insufficient capacity in the workforce and the difficulty in recruiting, retaining, and training staff. It was also mentioned that delivering a new offer may negatively affect the wellbeing of existing staff. Furthermore, respondents emphasised that a lack of suitable infrastructure, providers, and funding more broadly could pose barriers to implementing the offer.

3. Case studies

3.1 Introduction

As set out in Section 1.3.2, four case studies of LAs in Scotland were produced. The LAs were chosen to explore similarities and differences between areas that differ in size, rurality, and provision of ELC. The purpose of developing the case studies was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of stakeholders in different areas as well as highlight good practice examples that may be important to consider for the development of the new offer. Although the areas studied have geographical and demographic differences, some challenges and themes were common across all or most areas. We begin the section below by highlighting these recurring themes and subsequently outlining the insights unique to each LA.

3.2 Common themes

3.2.1 Meeting the needs of 1- and 2-year-olds

Several important needs of 1- and 2-year-olds, which must be met within ELC settings, were highlighted by stakeholders across different case studies. This included that 1- and 2-year-olds need: (i) separate and quiet rooms to sleep in, (ii) frequent access to the outdoors, (iii) continuity of care, (iv) a nurturing environment, (v) routines (e.g., sleep) to be followed, and (vi) more supervision compared to older age groups. It was also highlighted that any new offer should be attachment-led and promote the development of a strong bond between the children and their caregivers. It was suggested that this may be easiest to foster with childminders or in nursery settings that have smaller groups of children.

To further meet the needs of 1- and 2-year-olds, stakeholders emphasised the importance of spending time with the children and building relationships with them, rather than feeling pressure to engage with them for specific tasks. This also includes having a child-focused approach, allowing children's interests and needs to guide activities. An example of good practice given by one stakeholder was a nursery that took children for walks in areas where they were likely to see animals and built a "pet shop" in one of the rooms in order to accommodate an interest in animals that both the nursery manager and the children had.

Stakeholders also emphasised that all children's needs are unique regardless of age. Some children may need more time at home with their families, while others will benefit from being in a different setting (e.g., if their home life is challenging). Furthermore, stakeholders stated that the Covid-19 pandemic has shown the importance of socialising with peers for young children's development. Some families may also benefit from settings that are able to accommodate full-time work or different shift patterns. As such, it was mentioned that giving families flexibility and choice can be key to ensuring that they access the type of support that is most suited to them and their child.

3.2.2 Meeting the needs of 1- and 2-year-olds with ASN

Stakeholders also raised several important considerations for supporting children with ASN. Childminders were suggested as being well-placed to care for children with ASN as these children may benefit from having one main carer in a more home-like environment.

One childminder who was interviewed reflected on how she has been able to provide a secure environment for a child with ASN that is in kinship care, who she has cared for for nearly 7 years. She also mentioned that she developed a good relationship with both the child and the family over time and she has received advice and help from the SCMA and CI, highlighting the importance of supplying providers with sufficient support.

It was also mentioned by stakeholders that there needs to be a system in place to diagnose symptoms of ASN early on. Providers also need to be well-equipped to support children with ASN, which may include having fewer children per staff member in some settings and ensuring that staff have the appropriate training.

3.2.3 Lack of capacity to meet demand

Availability of ELC places and providers offering services to 1- and 2-year-olds

One concern frequently raised by stakeholders was that there would not be enough capacity within settings to accommodate all 1- and 2-year-olds who could be entitled to a place when the new offer is implemented. Ensuring that there are enough providers, staff, and places available for the younger age group will therefore be a vital consideration for the development of the offer. One important aspect of this is promoting all types of providers and making sure that each of them is supported by their LA. For instance, it was mentioned by some interviewees that childminders often do not receive the same support as providers in LA settings (e.g., they may not be invited to child protection and multiagency meetings for children with ASN or have training options available at times suitable to their working hours), and it can be particularly difficult to ensure the presence of childminders in all areas within each LA and thus meet demand wherever it occurs.

A further aspect of the limited availability of ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds is related to the rural nature of some areas. There are some areas where the population is not large enough for there to be ELC provision, while long travel distances and a lack of suitable transport links can make it difficult for families to access provision that is further away. A consequence of this is that parents may not be able to access ELC for their 1- and 2-year-olds, and, if they can, they may not have much choice in the type of provision they can access. Finally, because much of the existing capacity has been utilised to deliver services for 3- to 5-year-olds, stakeholders anticipated a lack of capacity to meet demand for 1- and 2-year-olds.

Concerns related to workforce

A related concern described was that there is not sufficient capacity in the workforce to deliver the new offer effectively. It was mentioned that it is difficult for providers to recruit and retain staff. This was described as particularly difficult for providers within the private, voluntary or independent (PVI) sector, where staff often choose to move to LA settings that may pay higher wages and provide better employment benefits (e.g., annual leave). It was also mentioned that current staff may not have the skillset required to care for 1- and 2-year-olds, which is in part because childcare qualifications have primarily focused on the care of 3- to 5-year-olds. As such, in addition to ensuring that all types of providers are

supported, significant funding to grow and upskill the workforce will be required to deliver the new offer effectively.

A concern related to the discussion above, expressed by stakeholders, was that there are many staff members that do not have experience caring for this younger age group and may therefore not be able to implement best practice. Experienced staff members are also valuable because they can mentor and share their knowledge with newly qualified colleagues. As such, the new funded offer should focus on training staff to supply providers with the tools that they need to support 1- and 2-year-olds.

A further important challenge expressed by stakeholders was that insufficient funding and resources, particularly for PVI providers, can negatively impact the quality of ELC they can provide. For instance, the importance of the sustainable rate being in line with the Real Living Wage was discussed. Overall, it was suggested that the new offer needs to be underpinned by adequate funding to ensure that providers can deliver high quality ELC provision. Furthermore, considering that some LAs rely primarily on the PVI sector to deliver ELC services for 1- and 2-year-olds, the importance of ensuring that all providers are supported and sufficiently resourced within the new offer was emphasised.

3.2.4 Further considerations for a new offer

When discussing considerations for the new offer, stakeholders suggested that the messaging and communication about the offer will be highly important. This is particularly significant if the new offer will come with eligibility criteria as families need to understand whether their child is entitled to ELC or not. One provider explained that, under the current offer, they had not had as much uptake for their eligible 2-year-old places as they would have expected. The provider suggested that this might be because the criteria are not described clearly enough and are only provided online.

3.2.5 Additional challenges and suggestions from providers (survey of providers)

In a survey of ELC providers for 1- and 2-year-olds, respondents were asked to identify the main challenges and key suggestions for implementing a new offer, among lists of pre-defined options.

The lack of suitable infrastructure or spaces was among the most common challenges selected by providers in all LAs surveyed.¹⁵ Additionally, meeting CI registration criteria, managing family expectations and insufficient funding from the LA to cover the cost of providing services were also frequently selected by providers.

In terms of views on what the new ELC offer should include, tailored support for children with ASN was among the suggestions most commonly selected by providers in all LAs surveyed. Additionally, parenting support programmes, parental engagement and family learning programmes and cognitive and emotional development support programmes were

¹⁵ Please note that the sample of survey respondents, and therefore the survey findings, are not representative of all providers in each local authority.

frequently selected answers in three out of four LAs surveyed.¹⁶ In addition to the pre-defined options respondents could choose from, some stakeholders suggested that 1- and 2-year-olds should have fewer hours and shorter days in ELC settings.

3.3 Scottish Borders

3.3.1 ELC provision in Scottish Borders

According to CI data, in Scottish Borders, there are 0.18 places in formal group-based ELC settings per child for 1-year-olds, 0.43 places per child for 2-year-olds, as compared to 0.76 places per child for 3-year-olds, and 1 place per child for 4-year-olds¹⁷. The majority of provision is within nurseries, with 10 nurseries out of 69 offering places to 1-year olds, and 38 offering places to 2-year-olds. There is one playgroup in the council offering places to 2-year-olds, and there are no children and family centres registered with the CI in Scottish Borders. Information on the number of providers and places for 1- and 2-year-olds in each LA in Scotland is presented in Appendix 3 and similar information specific to case studies is presented in Appendix 4.

3.3.2 Demand and capacity challenges in Scottish Borders

Stakeholders described that the demand for ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds within Scottish Borders is high and while the statutory duty for eligible 2-year-olds can be met, there is not much capacity beyond this. For instance, one provider engaged with stated that their baby room consistently has a year-long waiting list. The Early Years centres run at almost full capacity year-round, while there are several areas with few or no childminders. According to stakeholders, this may partly be due to the rurality of the LA.

3.3.3 Early Years centres – An example of a holistic approach

The ELC provision available in Scottish Borders for 1- and 2-year-olds is only provided by the PVI sector. In addition to this, Scottish Borders has a supported childminding scheme and four Early Years centres located in the areas with the highest deprivation. The Early Years centres are attached to schools and funded by the LA. The centres do not provide childcare but work with children together with their parents, as well as with parents on their own. Families and/or parents can access services like Stay and Play and Bookbug and the centres also deliver programmes like Psychology of Parenting Project (PoPP), Mellow Parenting, and Incredible Years. There are also sessions that encourage important aspects of childcare such as healthy eating and budgeting as well as drop-in sessions held by other professionals.

¹⁶ Survey respondents could choose from the following options: parenting support programmes; parental engagement and family learning programmes (e.g., Stay and Play; Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP)); cognitive and emotional development support programmes; tailored support for children with ASN; smaller classes or groups of children; smaller physical spaces (e.g., smaller rooms); different physical spaces (other than size of space).

¹⁷ Data on ELC places do not include places in childminder settings, as the CI does not publish age disaggregated data for childminders.

Once a year, parents are consulted by the Early Years Centres on the types of services they believe they would benefit from, and the centres try to tailor what is made available to meet these preferences. Overall, the Early Years centres aim to build confidence and capability in parents, which in turn can enhance their parenting skills. The stakeholders engaged with emphasised the importance of providing holistic support to families and that a new ELC offer should promote family life. The Early Years centres available in Scottish Borders illustrate how 1- and 2-year-olds and their families can be holistically supported, and could be a key component of ELC for the younger age group going forward.

3.4 Moray

3.4.1 ELC provision Moray

According to CI data, in Moray, there are 0.15 ELC places in formal group-based ELC settings per 1-year-old and 0.62 ELC places per 2-year-old, compared to 0.83 ELC places per 3-year-old, and 0.97 ELC places per 4-year-old.¹⁸ Overall, 29 nurseries out of 60 in Moray have places for 1- or 2-year-olds. Three playgroups also have places for 2-year-olds. There are no registered creches or children and family centres in Moray that have places for 1- and 2-year-olds. Information on the number of providers and places for 1- and 2-year-olds in each LA in Scotland is presented in Appendix 3 and similar information specific to case studies is presented in Appendix 4.

3.4.2 Gaps in provision and reliance on the PVI sector

ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds in Moray is primarily delivered by PVI providers while funded places for eligible 2-year-olds are provided by partner organisations. Across all age groups, there are significantly more PVI providers than LA services. Before the expansion of the offer to 1140 hours, there were settings providing services exclusively to 2-year-olds (e.g., playgroups), but the number of these has since decreased. It is now more common for ELC provision for 2-year-olds to be integrated within other settings. Generally, there is a higher demand than supply for ELC services for 1- and 2-year-olds. Demand for services in Moray is being tracked through birth rates, but this method does not take into consideration movement across areas. This can be a barrier because Moray has army and RAF bases, and thus many families move to and away from the area frequently.

3.4.3 Good practice examples in supporting children with ASN

A few examples of good practice were shared by stakeholders when discussing supporting 1- and 2-year-olds with ASN. In Moray there are three developmental nurseries, one of which can be accessed by children under 2-years-old. Developmental nurseries are nursery settings that are specially equipped to provide care for children with complex ASN. In the developmental nursery providing services to under 2-year-olds, children receive one-to-one support, which means that they each have one adult that acts as their key worker. This was described as working particularly well. Another example of good practice mentioned by a stakeholder was that a nursery has been able to adjust their adult-to-child ratios and have fewer children per adult to account for having a higher percentage of

¹⁸ Data on ELC places do not include places in childminder settings, as the Care Inspectorate do not publish age disaggregated data for childminders.

children with ASN than previously. This illustrates the importance of having sufficient funding and support for providers, which will enable them to deliver high quality and flexible ELC for children with ASN. A final consideration emphasised by stakeholders was the key role of other teams around the child (e.g., health, speech and language), the need for these to be well-resourced, and the importance of collaboration between these teams and ELC providers.

3.5 Glasgow City

3.5.1 ELC provision in Glasgow

According to CI data, in Glasgow City, there are 0.31 places in formal group-based ELC settings per child for 1-year-olds and 0.56 places per child for 2-year-olds, as compared to 0.88 places per child for 3-year-olds, and 0.92 places per child for 4-year-olds.¹⁹ In terms of provision across different types for 1- and 2-year-olds, the majority of provision is within nurseries, with 161 nurseries registered (out of a total 226) with the CI having places for 1- and 2-year-olds and 17 children and family centres also providing places for 1- or 2-year-olds. There is no playgroup or creche provision for this age group in Glasgow City. Information on the number of providers and places for 1- and 2-year-olds in each LA in Scotland is presented in Appendix 3 and similar information specific to case studies is presented in Appendix 4.

According to stakeholders, the demand for ELC places for 1- and 2-year-olds in Glasgow is high. The PVI sector accounts for the majority of provision for 1- and 2-year-olds while the LA delivers most provision for the older age group. For the age group of interest, the uptake for childminders is low.

3.5.2 Additional delivery models and family support programmes

In addition to traditional ELC provision, stakeholders from Glasgow described additional programmes and interventions designed to support 1- and 2-year-olds and their families. This includes a community childminding scheme, which is designed to provide short-term respite for vulnerable children and families. Families with children under the age of 5 can access this service through referral from family support teams. There is also a targeted project (Young Parent Support Base) for young people that become parents when they are teenagers, which is a nursery for under 3s based in a school, allowing parents to continue their education. The aim of this project is to maintain the connection between the young parent and their education, which is important for ensuring the best outcomes for them and their child. Stakeholders also underlined the value of family support programmes, however many of these have disappeared due to a lack of funding. One example that is still available is a “Toy Library” where parents can borrow a wide range of toys for their children. Overall, these additional services illustrate both the diversity of needs that 1- and 2-year-olds and their families have, as well as the value of delivering provision that is tailored to support those most vulnerable.

¹⁹ Data on ELC places do not include places in childminder settings, as the Care Inspectorate do not publish age disaggregated data for childminders.

Stakeholders also mentioned that Glasgow has “Leaders of Learning” which involves having an additional staff member in nurseries who is dedicated to observing the children’s learning and development. The nursery is then able to provide additional support to the children that need it and ensure that they are ready to start school. While this is currently only available for 3-year-olds or older children, a similar approach may be beneficial for supporting 1- and 2-year-olds.

3.6 Fife

3.6.1 ELC provision in Fife

According to CI data, in Fife, there are 0.18 places in formal group-based settings per 1-year-old, 0.43 places per 2-year-old, 0.79 places per 3-year-old, and 0.96 places per 4-year-old.²⁰ 75 nurseries out of 151 in total have places for 1- and 2-year-olds. All four of the children and family centres in the council have places for 1- and 2-year-olds, while eight of the playgroups have places for 2-year-olds (one of these has places for 1-year-olds). There are no registered creches in Fife. Information on the number of providers and places for 1- and 2-year-olds in each LA in Scotland is presented in Appendix 3 and similar information specific to case studies is presented in Appendix 4.

3.6.2 Limited capacity of places for younger children in certain areas and reliance on the PVI sector

According to stakeholders, while Fife provides LA-run ELC for 2-year-olds, the provision for younger children is solely provided by the PVI sector. This means that they, like Moray, rely on the PVI sector to provide these services. Of the PVI settings that do provide services to the younger age group, there are more ELC places available to 2-year-olds compared to 1-year-olds. The provision for 1-year-olds tends to be in areas with lower deprivation²¹, which means that it can be more difficult to access ELC in less affluent areas. In addition to this, stakeholders mentioned that some PVI providers are reluctant to work in partnership with the LA and offer funded places. Taken together, this means that the new offer should ensure that ELC can be accessed by both 1- and 2-year-olds in all areas independent of socioeconomic characteristics. This may involve ensuring that offering funded places is attractive for PVI providers.

3.6.3 An example of a holistic approach to ELC for young children

LA funded 2-year-old provision was established in Fife prior to the two most recent statutory expansions of ELC and has been available to 2-year-olds and their families that meet certain criteria (e.g., children with ASN may be eligible). The funded place is combined with parental support to help the child’s family address anything that may impact their ability to care for their children. This support could include parenting classes or help from voluntary organisations like Home Start and Gingerbread. This is an example of

²⁰ Data on ELC places do not include places in childminder settings, as the Care Inspectorate do not publish age disaggregated data for childminders.

²¹ According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), which measures deprivation based on the following indicators: geography; population; income; employment; health; education, skills, and training; geographic access to services; crime; housing.

taking a more holistic approach to ELC provision, particularly for those children and families that are more vulnerable. It was mentioned, however, that the more children that become eligible for funded ELC, the more this impacts the LA's ability to provide these discretionary funded places.

4. Conclusion

In the 2021 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government committed to extending funded ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds, starting in this Parliament with the families that will benefit most. This report contains information on current ELC provision for 1-and 2-year-olds in Scotland to inform the design of a new offer.

The research included analysing data from the Care Inspectorate (CI) to understand nationwide provision, a focus group and interviews with sector stakeholders, a survey administered to all local authorities (LAs) in Scotland, and interviews and a survey to understand the views and experiences of local councils, the CI and providers in four selected LAs. In what follows, we summarise the findings from the different phases of the report, highlighting the main themes and implications for the design of the new offer, and recommend avenues for future research.

4.1 National ELC provision for 1-and 2-year-olds

Across Scotland, childminding and nurseries were the most common types of ELC for 1- and 2-year olds, with playgroups also being relatively widespread, as reported by LA representatives. Fewer LAs responded that they have children and family centres and creches. LA representatives also discussed additional provision models for 1- and 2-year-olds, including parent and toddler groups (e.g., Stay and Play), family support programmes (e.g., Parents as Early Education Partners and the Psychology of Parenting Project), community childminding, Home Start, Baby Massage, and Incredible Years. Analysis of secondary data from the Care Inspectorate supported these findings, with nurseries being the most common type of group based ELC provider for 1-and 2-year-olds. While age disaggregated data on childminders were not available, the count of childminder settings was higher than the count of any other provider type.

Care Inspectorate data also showed that ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds relies on the private sector. More specifically, only 5% of LA providers offer ELC services to 1-year-olds and only 29% to 2-year-olds, compared to 61% and 67% of private providers respectively (excluding childminders).

In all areas of Scotland, there are fewer ELC places in formal group based settings for 1- and-2-year-olds, as compared to 3-and-4-year-olds. Nationally, in December 2021, there were only 0.25 ELC places per 1-year-old child and 0.47 per 2-year-old child, compared to 0.89 and 0.99 for 3- and 4-year-olds respectively. These numbers do not include places in childminder settings due to data limitations. This is an important limitation as childminders provide a significant proportion of ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds. Although the numbers above are underestimates of available ELC places, they still showcase the significant variation in the availability of ELC places across different age groups of children. The stakeholders' views and experiences of the current ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds were consistent with our findings from the data analysis, with stakeholders mentioning that there are fewer providers and places compared to provision for older children and long waiting lists for the available places.

According to LA representatives, the gaps in ELC provision are present across all types of provision. Out of the 26 LAs participating in our survey, only two responded that they do not have provision gaps in their area. The gaps in 19 out of the 26 responding LAs were described as being specific to 1- and 2-year-olds.

4.2 Regional and local ELC provision for 1-and 2-year-olds

ELC provision for 1-and 2-year-olds varies significantly by region and local authority. The number of places per child for all age groups in rural and remote areas is usually lower than in urban areas. For example, in the Orkney Islands, the number of places per child for 1-year olds is only 0.11, while in the City of Edinburgh there are 0.45 places per child for the same age group. Because these figures are adjusted for the population of each LA, it suggests that there is significantly less ELC capacity for 1-and 2-year-olds in remote, rural, and island LAs. Stakeholders highlighted that the issue of having not enough places and long waiting lists is even more pronounced in rural and island communities. In these areas families have fewer options due to sparse populations and low demand, and long travel distances for both families and staff.

Rural and remote regions may be more reliant on local authority providers than other regions. Analysis of secondary data also shows that Southern Scotland and the Highlands and Islands regions have a higher share of local authority providers than other regions. This suggests that financial viability may be an issue for private providers in rural and remote regions. Highlands and Islands is also the only regions where the share of LA providers with places for 1-and 2-year-olds is higher than the share of private providers with places for 1-and 2-year-olds.

Rural and remote areas are also much more reliant on nurseries, which indicates that parents and carers in urban areas may have more choices across ELC types than in rural areas, as there may be only a handful of providers within a feasible distance to travel.

4.3 Challenges

Several challenges were highlighted by stakeholders. The LA case studies highlighted that (i) there is a need for additional experience and expertise on the needs of young children in terms of both practice and leadership, (ii) there are gaps in provision and lower capacity than demand, with rural areas being challenged more, (iii) facilities need to be adjusted to ensure that the needs of younger children can be met, and (iv) providers will need to be supported with training and resources to provide appropriate care to children with ASN and identify symptoms early on.

The recruitment and retention of staff were emphasised as primary challenges in the sector, with stakeholders concerned there is not sufficient capacity in the current workforce to deliver a new offer. The PVI sector and providers in rural and island communities have additional challenges. For example, PVI providers often lose staff to LA settings because of higher pay and more employment benefits, while in rural and island communities it is often challenging for people to access the necessary training and thus they turn to sectors (e.g., hospitality) with no such requirements. While recruitment of new staff to increase capacity is necessary, there was also a concern from stakeholders that many staff do not have experience caring for the younger age group.

Furthermore, one of the key challenges anticipated by the stakeholders related to the increased demand for ELC services for younger children was the need for infrastructure and facility changes and additions to meet the needs of this age group. The Care Inspectorate requires that providers serving younger children have additional facilities such as places to change nappies. This could be a barrier in increasing the number of places for 1-and 2-year-olds, where infrastructure changes may constitute a significant investment.

Regarding the current offer of ELC to eligible 2-year-olds, stakeholders also highlighted that additional clarity around eligibility was needed and that all types of provision should be promoted and supported equally.

4.4 Examples of good practice and innovative programmes

Several examples of good practice and innovative programmes emerged through the research, and especially through the LA case studies.

The importance of a holistic approach to ELC for younger children and their families was emphasised, including working with both children and parents, providing family support services, and hosting sessions for parents on topics related to parenting skills. For example, the funded ELC places in Fife combined with parenting classes and support from voluntary organisations like Home Start and Gingerbread were discussed in the context of supporting the whole family. Additionally, the Early Years centres in Scottish Borders were described as a good practice example following such an approach. These programmes demonstrate how 1- and 2-year-olds and their families can be holistically supported, and could be a key component of ELC as part of a new offer.

The benefits of tailored programmes to meet the different needs of each family were also emphasised, including programmes and schemes designed for children and families that might need additional support or have additional vulnerabilities, e.g., community childminding to provide short-term respite and the Young Parent Support Base in Glasgow City designed to support young parents to continue their education. The Early Years centres in Scottish Borders also consult families once a year on what types of services would be beneficial to them, in order to best tailor programmes to families needs. The success of these programmes suggests that multiple models of provision should be on offer for families of 1-and 2-year-olds, and parents should be regularly consulted to ensure programmes are best meeting their needs.

Additionally, a few good practice examples of delivery models that work well for children with ASN were also identified, including developmental nurseries in Moray providing one-to-one support and nurseries having the ability to have a lower number of children per adult to be able to support children with ASN appropriately.

4.5 Suggestions on the way forward

Although this was not a formal consultation on the new offer and the discussions were focused on current provision, stakeholders provided their suggestions and ideas on the way forward. The suggestions were based on their experience of current ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds, as well as the current offer for older children.

According to stakeholders, the new offer should be designed to fit the needs of 1- and 2-year-olds. This includes attachment led models, with stakeholders stressing that caregivers should prioritise building relationships with children and focusing on children's needs and interests. Some stakeholders highlighted that childminders might be well placed to offer a nurturing environment and continuity of care for younger children. Furthermore, stakeholders stressed that the new offer should provide flexibility to ensure that all families' needs are met, support providers to enable them to provide quality care to all children and those with ASN, and that parents and carers should be actively involved in ELC provision. Additionally, the need for smaller groups of children and tailored physical spaces was highlighted.

Regarding children with Additional Support Needs (ASN), stakeholders suggested additional training to recognise early signs and symptoms. Additionally, ELC should be packaged with other services that children with ASN may access, such as health and social care, and providers need to be funded appropriately to enable them to deliver high-quality ELC for children with ASN, particularly if additional training and one-to-one support for children is needed.

There is also a need to increase the capacity of the sector to deliver the new offer. This could be achieved by training staff and tailoring workforce learning and development pathways to reflect the skills needed for this age group, as well as supporting all providers (of different types and sectors). Along with the recruitment of new staff to the sector, experienced staff members should be supported to stay in the sector, as they can share knowledge with newly qualified colleagues. Based on the above, according to stakeholders, it is important to ensure adequate funding will be available to allow the provision of high-quality ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds. The importance of supporting the PVI sector and ensuring their inclusion in the offer was also emphasised due to reliance of ELC provision for younger children on this sector.

Finally, stakeholders proposed that the new offer should be slowly implemented over time and that it should be ensured that the details of the offer and who it applies to are clear to both families and providers.

4.6 Recommendations for future research

Although the research presented in this report provides a comprehensive overview of current ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds as well as key insights from a wide range of stakeholders, there are numerous elements of the research that could be expanded on further. Our recommendations for future research are listed below.

As discussed in the report, age-disaggregated data on places provided within childminder settings were not identified. Further research could explore additional data sources or undertake a national survey of childminders focusing on places they have available and childminder-specific experiences and challenges.

Although our LA survey achieved a very high response rate, 20% of LAs are not represented in our findings. Additionally, we only engaged with one LA representative from each LA through the survey and conducted interviews with only four LAs. Consequently, there might be LA-specific information that is not captured in this report. Further research

could engage with all LAs through in-depth interviews, allowing for more than one representative to engage with the research and share information (e.g., an interview could involve the whole ELC team of an LA or multiple interviews per LA may take place).

The providers' views were mostly captured through the survey and interviews conducted for the case studies, with the engagement being limited and the sample of participants not representative of the whole area. Consequently, a national survey of providers could be implemented to understand the different types of provision and programmes provided to 1- and 2-year-olds, as well as good practice examples across the country. Additionally, for more in-depth analysis a sample representing all different types of provision could be selected (e.g, including interviews with staff from creches and family centres, as our research mostly involved nurseries and childminders). Finally, additional case studies could be explored to ensure that areas with particular characteristics are captured and considered, e.g., remote and island communities, areas with severe gaps in provision, or deprived areas.

Identifying informal ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds is particularly challenging and needs extensive stakeholder engagement. Consequently, a natural next step would be an attempt to zoom in further in some areas by engaging with local ELC organisations, parent groups, and charities to identify these informal types of provision as well as innovative programmes and approaches that are not regulated or categorised as ELC provision.

Appendix 1:

Primary research materials (Phase 1)

Focus group and interview discussion guide

Question 1: Current funded offer

To get started, we are interested in getting your views on the current offer of funded Early Learning and Childcare. Currently, all 3- and 4-year-olds (and 2-year-olds with certain characteristics) are eligible for 1,140 hours of funded childcare from approved providers. What are the challenges of the current offer of funded hours?

Prompt 1.1: In order to offer funded provision, Early Learning and Childcare providers must meet the criteria set out in the National Standard, receive the sustainable rate provided by the local authority, and sign a contract with the local authority. To your knowledge, are providers interested in being included within the funded offer? Why or why not?

Prompt 1.2: Are there gaps in the funded offer, in terms of provision types, hours for certain groups of children, or in certain geographic areas?

Prompt 1.3: Are there any lessons learned from the current offer that you think should be considered when designing future childcare policy?

Prompt 1.4: Can you think of any specific examples of good practice within the current offer?

Question 2: Provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

From your experience, what type of Early Learning and Childcare provision works best for 1- and 2-year-olds and their families? Are there certain types of provision that are more effective or popular for this age group?

Prompt 2.1: Do providers need additional support in offering childcare places to 1- and 2-year-olds?

Prompt 2.2: Do parents and carers of 1- and 2-year-olds have significantly different needs than parents of older children?

Prompt 2.3: What are the gaps in provision for 1- and 2-year-olds, are they different to other age groups?

Prompt 2.4: Can you think of any specific examples of good practice among services for 1- and 2-year-olds?

Prompt 2.5: What are the differences generally in high-quality Early Learning and Childcare for 1- and 2-year-olds, as compared to older children?

Question 3: Expansion of funded offer

The Scottish Government has committed to expanding the funded Early Learning and Childcare offer to all 1- and 2-year-olds. How do you think this expansion will impact providers, parents and children?

Prompt 3.1: Should there be significant differences between the offer for 1- and 2-year-olds, as compared to the offer for 3- and 4-year-olds?

Prompt 3.2: What are the key challenges providers will face in the expansion of the offer?

Prompt 3.3: Will providers need to make significant changes to their services (i.e. hiring more staff, making changes to the physical environment, existing staff undergoing retraining)?

Prompt 3.4: What are the key challenges your organisations may face in expansion of the offer?

Question 4: Additional support needs

Do you have any views on current Early Learning and Childcare provision with regards to children and families with Additional Support Needs (ASN)? What about ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds with ASN specifically?

Prompt 4.1: What specialised or ASN, Early Learning and Childcare or family support programmes are you aware of?

Prompt 4.2: Are there specific needs that are not catered to, or areas that do not have access to ASN provision?

Prompt 4.3: What are the main challenges of providing places to children with ASN? Are these challenges different for 1- and 2-year-olds (as opposed to 3- and 4-year-olds)?

Prompt 4.4: Are you aware of any specific examples of good practice with regards to provision for children with ASN?

Local Authority survey questionnaire

The full text of the survey distributed to local authorities in the first phase of the research is presented below. Graphs depicting the local authorities answers' are included within the relevant questions.

Question 1

I have read and understand the terms of participation as these are outlined above, and agree to proceed with taking the survey

- Yes

Question 2

Which Council are you working in?

- Aberdeen City Council
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Angus Council
- Argyll and Bute Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Clackmannanshire Council
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- Dumfries and Galloway Council
- Dundee City Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- East Dunbartonshire Council
- East Lothian Council
- East Renfrewshire Council
- Falkirk Council
- Fife Council
- Glasgow City Council
- Inverclyde Council
- Midlothian Council
- Moray Council
- North Ayrshire Council
- North Lanarkshire Council
- Orkney Islands Council
- Perth and Kinross Council

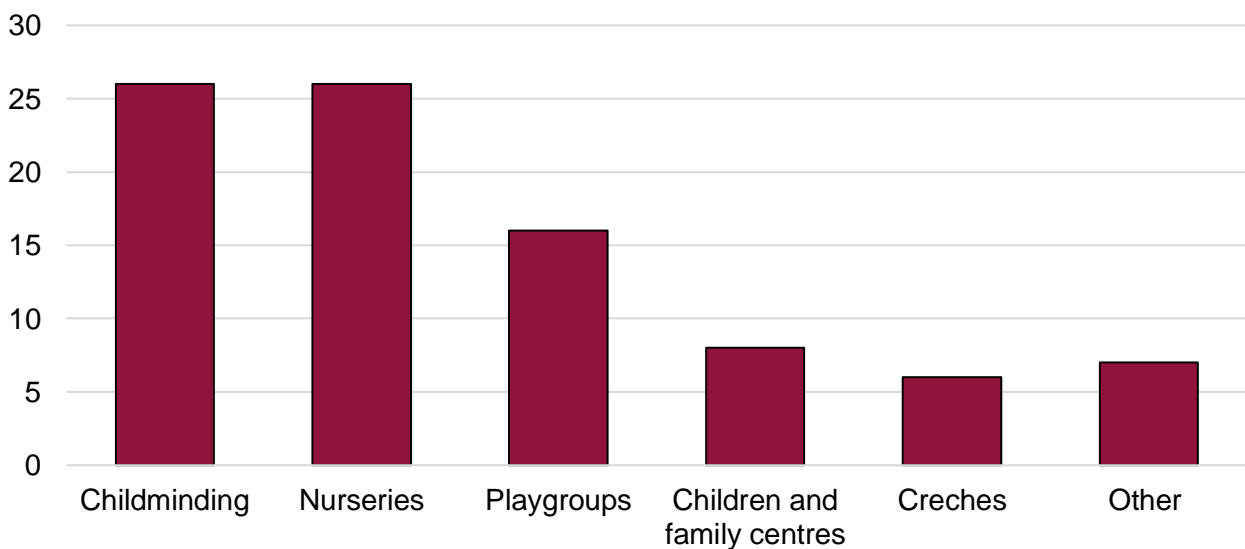
- Renfrewshire Council
- Scottish Borders Council
- Shetland Islands Council
- South Ayrshire Council
- South Lanarkshire Council
- Stirling Council
- The Highland Council
- West Dunbartonshire Council
- West Lothian Council

Question 3

Which types of ELC or other family support programmes are available in your local authority for 1- and 2-year-olds? Please select all that apply. If there are additional regulated types of ELC or family support provision that offer places to 1- and 2-year-olds in your local authority that we have not specified, please list them in the 'Other' option.

- Children and family centres
- Childminding
- Creches
- Nurseries
- Playgroups
- Other

Figure 1: Availability of ELC provision in Scotland

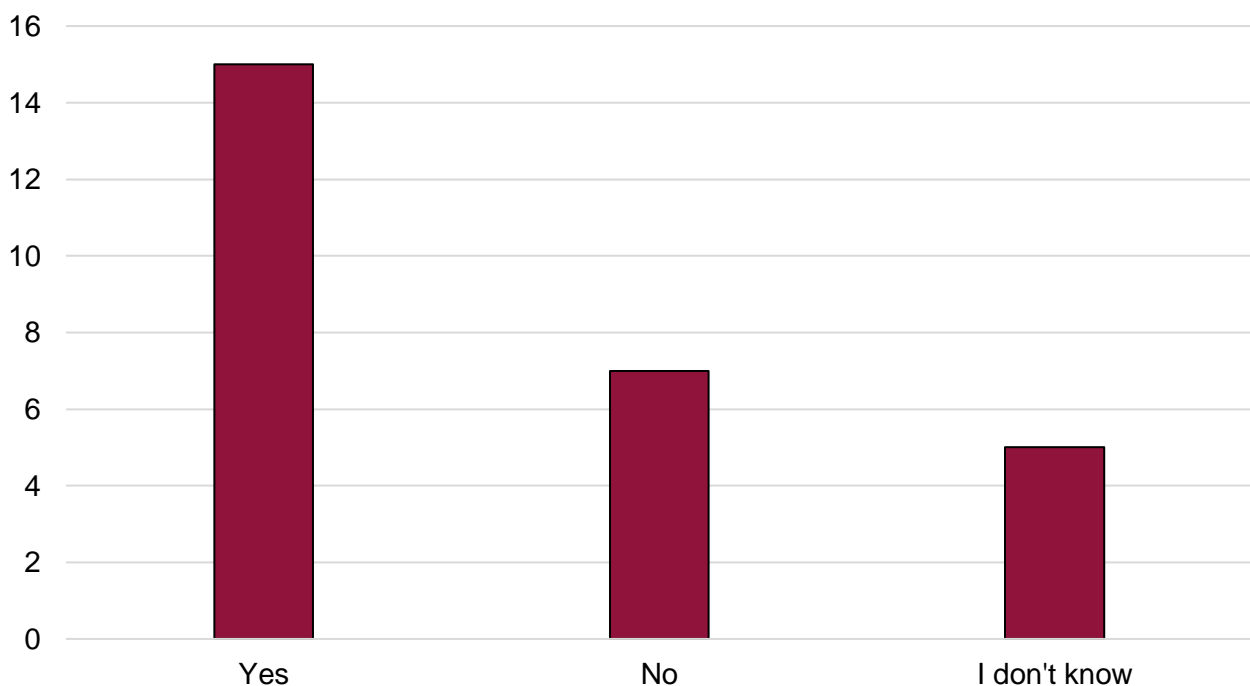


Question 4

Are there any other types of ELC or family support programmes for 1- and 2-year-olds in your local authority that are not registered as ELC provision and/or are not regulated by the Care Inspectorate? For example, these programmes/provision types could include family support programmes, community childminding services, and services arranged through referrals from social work or health visiting teams.

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. I don't know

Figure 2: Are there other programmes that are not registered as ELC or are unregulated?



Question 5

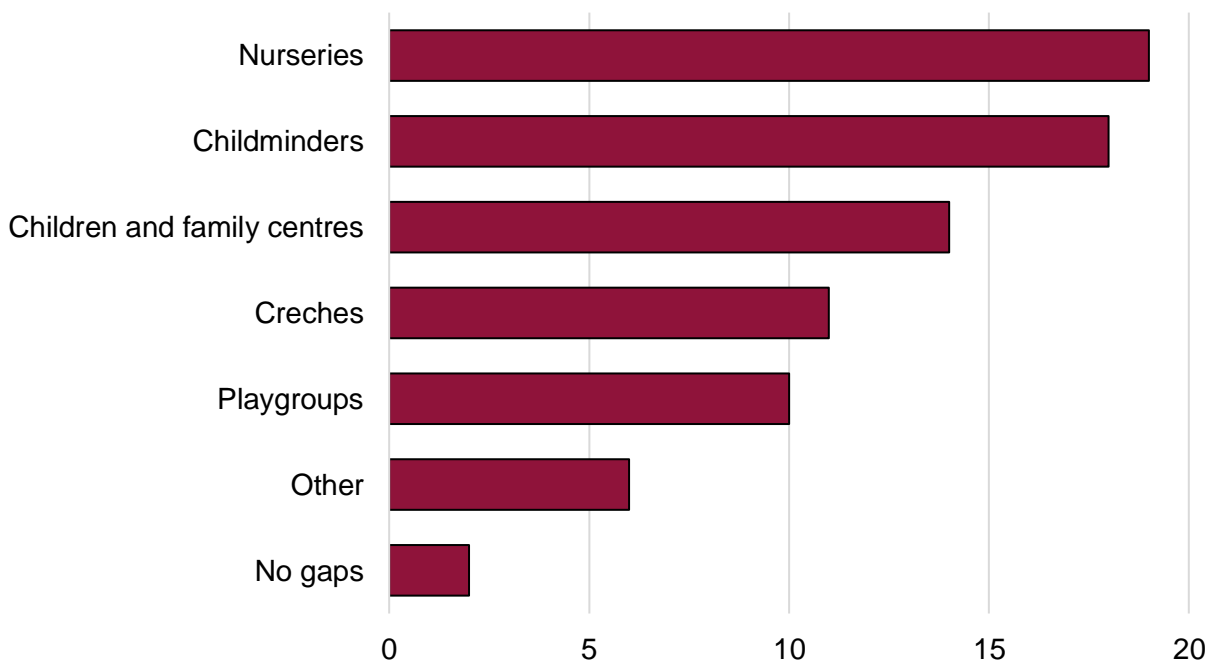
If you replied 'A' above, please list those types of ELC or family support programmes for 1- and 2-year-olds in your local authority that are not registered as ELC provision and/or not regulated by the Care Inspectorate.

Question 6

Are there specific gaps in ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in your local authority?
Please select any providers where the number of places is very limited, or provision is not available in your local authority for 1- and 2-year-olds.

- Childminders
- Children and family centres
- Creches
- Nurseries
- Playgroups
- There are no gaps in provision in my local authority
- Other

Figure 3: Gaps in provision

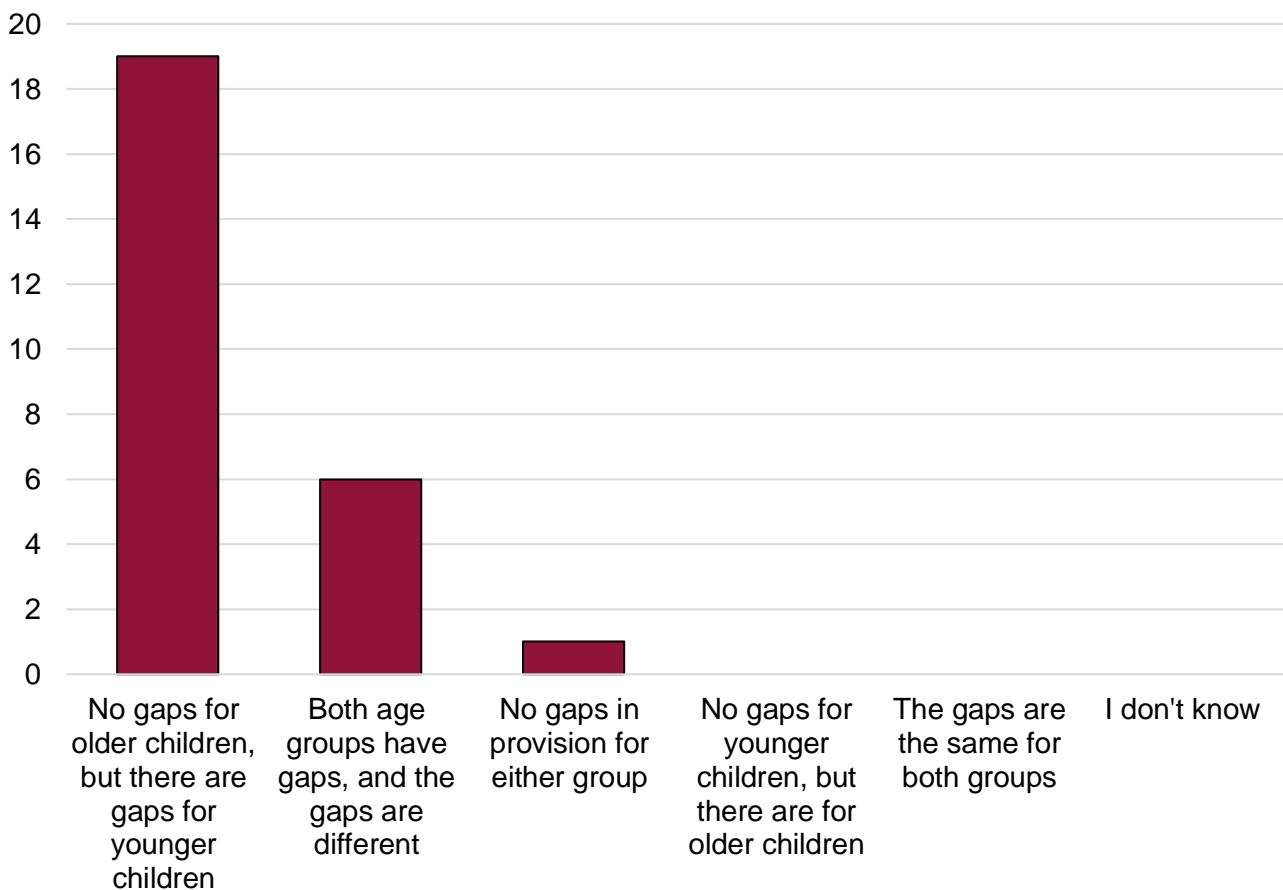


Question 7

Are the gaps in ELC provision for younger children (1- and 2-year-olds) different than gaps in provision for older children (3- and 4-year-olds)? Please select only one.

- Both age groups have gaps, and the gaps are different.
- There are no gaps in ELC provision for older children, but there are gaps in provision for younger children.
- There are no gaps in ELC provision for younger children, but there are gaps in provision for older children.
- The gaps are the same for older and younger children.
- There are no gaps in provision for either group.
- I don't know.

Figure 4: Gaps in provision by age group



Question 8.

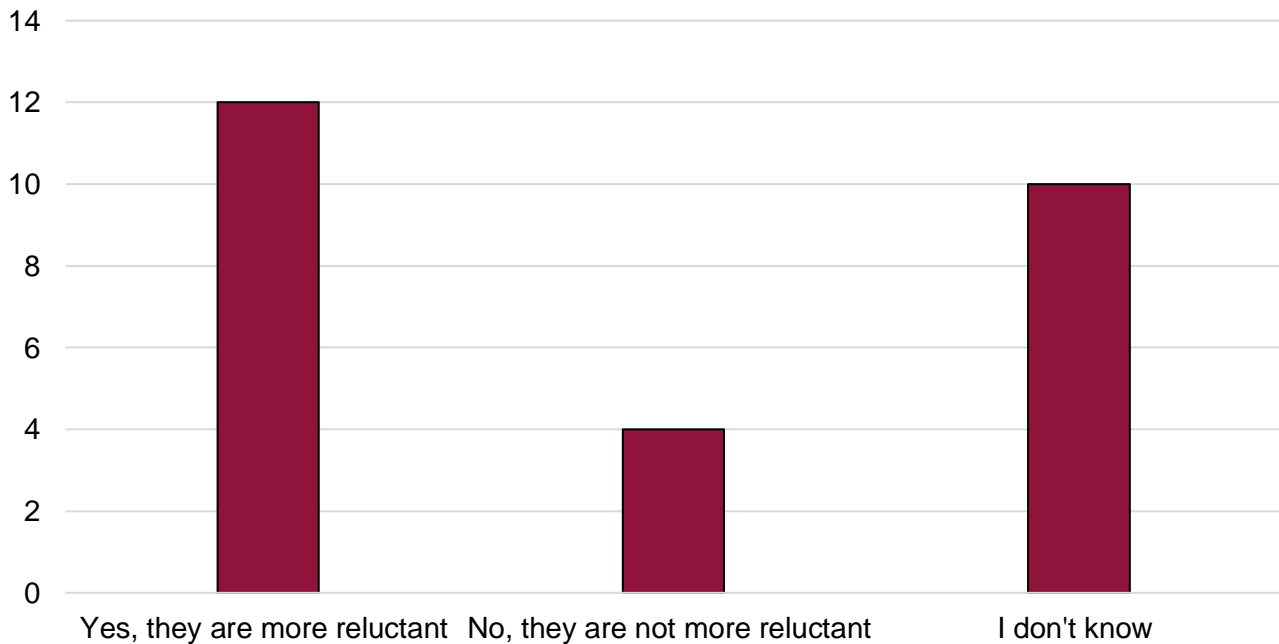
What are the main challenges to ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in your local authority? Do these challenges contribute to gaps in provision?

Question 9

Are providers more reluctant to offer ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds?

- Yes, they are more reluctant to provide to 1- and 2-year-olds
- No, they are not more reluctant to provide to 1- and 2-year-olds
- I don't know

Figure 5: Reluctancy of providers to offer ELC services to 1- and 2-year-olds

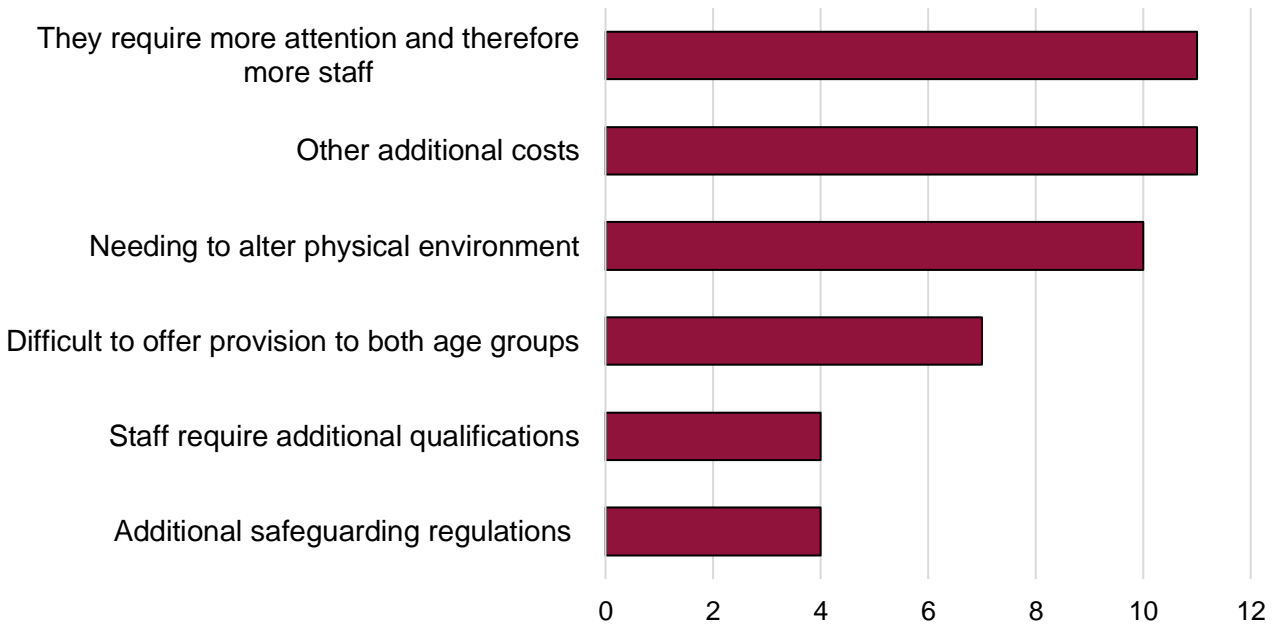


Question 10

If you selected 'A' above, why do you think this is the case? Please select all that apply.

- 1- and 2-year-olds require more attention than older children, so providers must hire more staff to facilitate smaller group sizes
- 1- and 2-year-olds have different developmental needs than older children, so it is difficult to offer ELC to both age groups in one setting.
- Providing ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds requires staff to undertake additional qualifications.
- There are additional safeguarding regulations associated with provided ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds.
- Providing ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds requires settings to alter or update their physical environments (outdoor or indoor), which can be costly and inconvenient.
- There are other additional costs associated with providing ELC to 1- and 2-year-olds.

Figure 6: Reasons for providers' reluctance to offer ELC services to younger children.

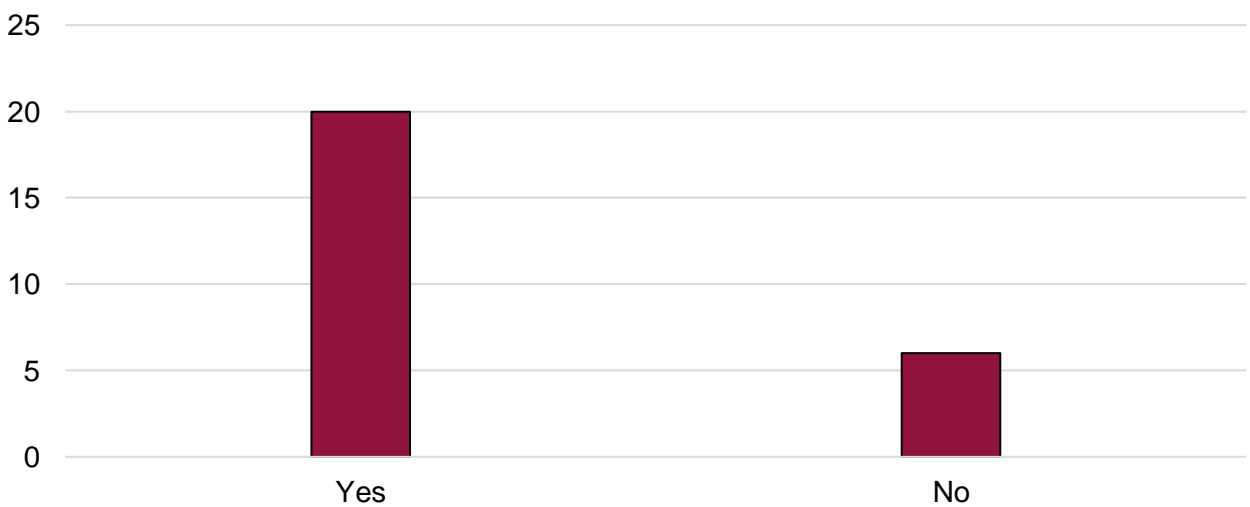


Question 11

Are you aware of any ELC or family support providers specifically serving pre-school children (all ages) with additional support needs (ASN) in your local authority?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Figure 7: ELC or family support providers offering ELC services to pre-school children with ASN

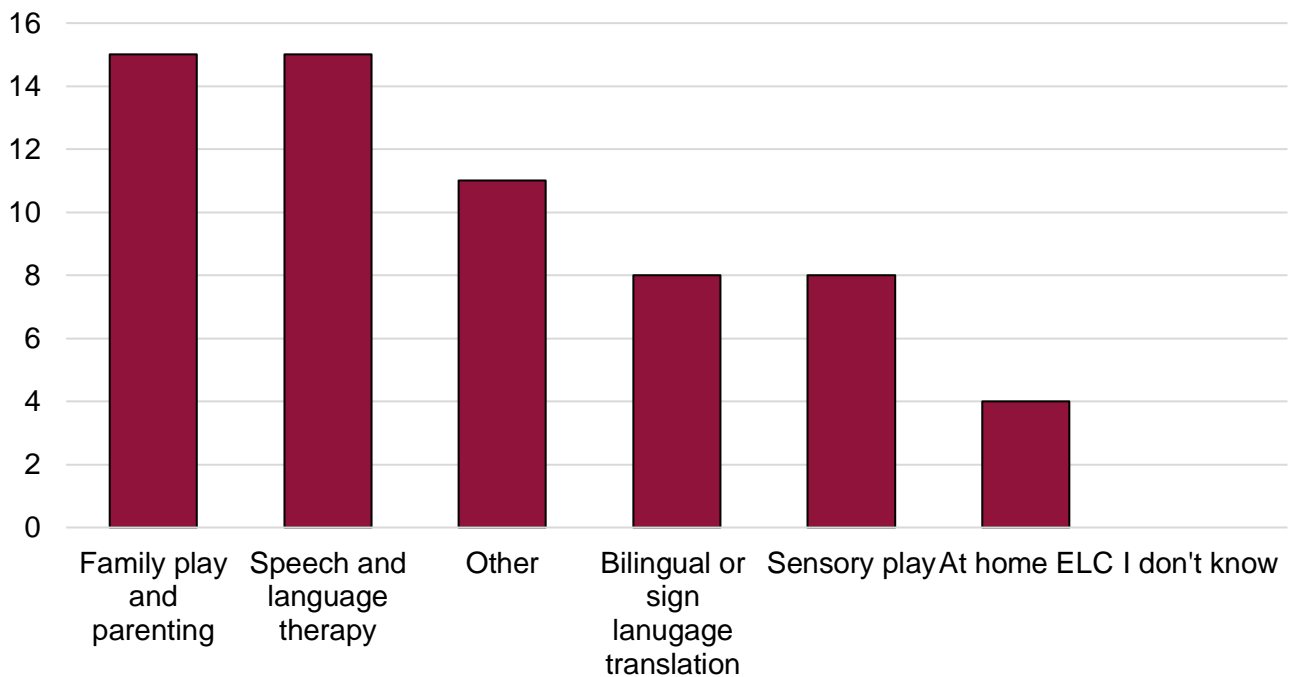


Question 12

If you selected 'A' above, please select any of the following programmes that are available in your local authority. Please select all that apply.

- Bilingual or sign language translation services
- Speech and language therapy
- At home ELC
- Family play and parenting programmes
- Sensory play programmes
- I don't know in detail about programmes for children with ASN in my local authority
- Other

Figure 8: ELC programmes available for children with ASN

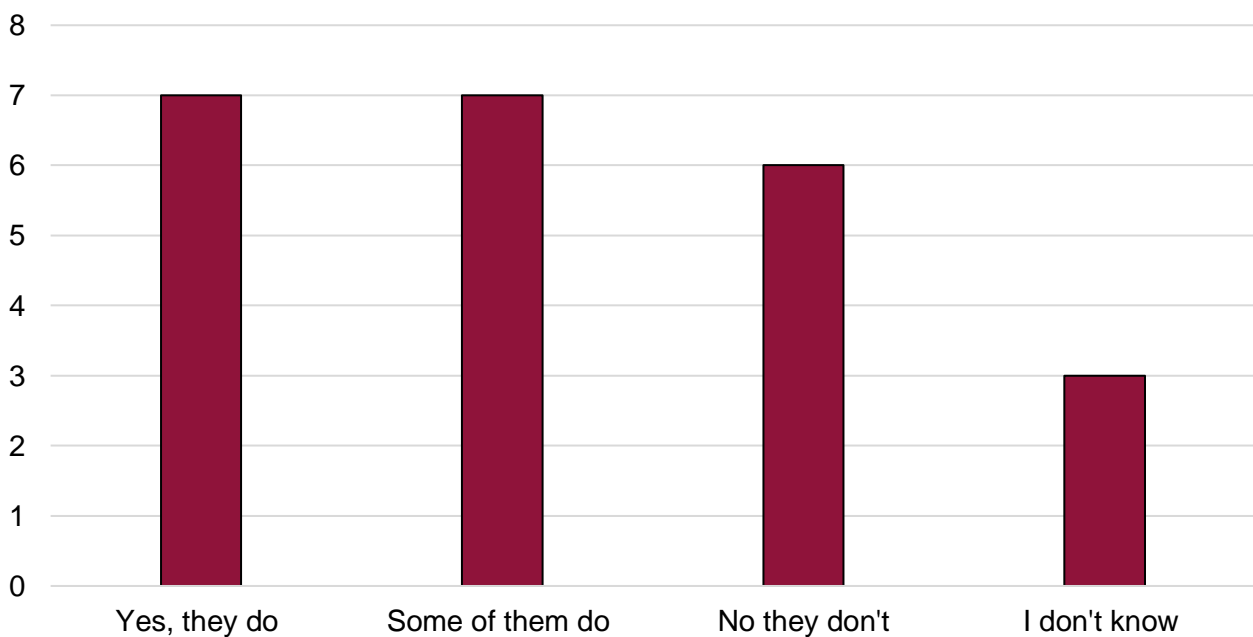


Question 13

Do the above programmes offer services to 1- and 2-year-olds with additional support needs in your local authority?

- A. Yes, the above programmes do offer services to 1- and 2-year-olds.
- B. No, the above programmes do not offer services to 1- and 2-year-olds.
- C. Some of the above programmes offer services to 1- and 2-year-olds.
- D. I don't know

Figure 9: Do the ASN programmes provide places for 1- and 2-year-olds?



Question 14

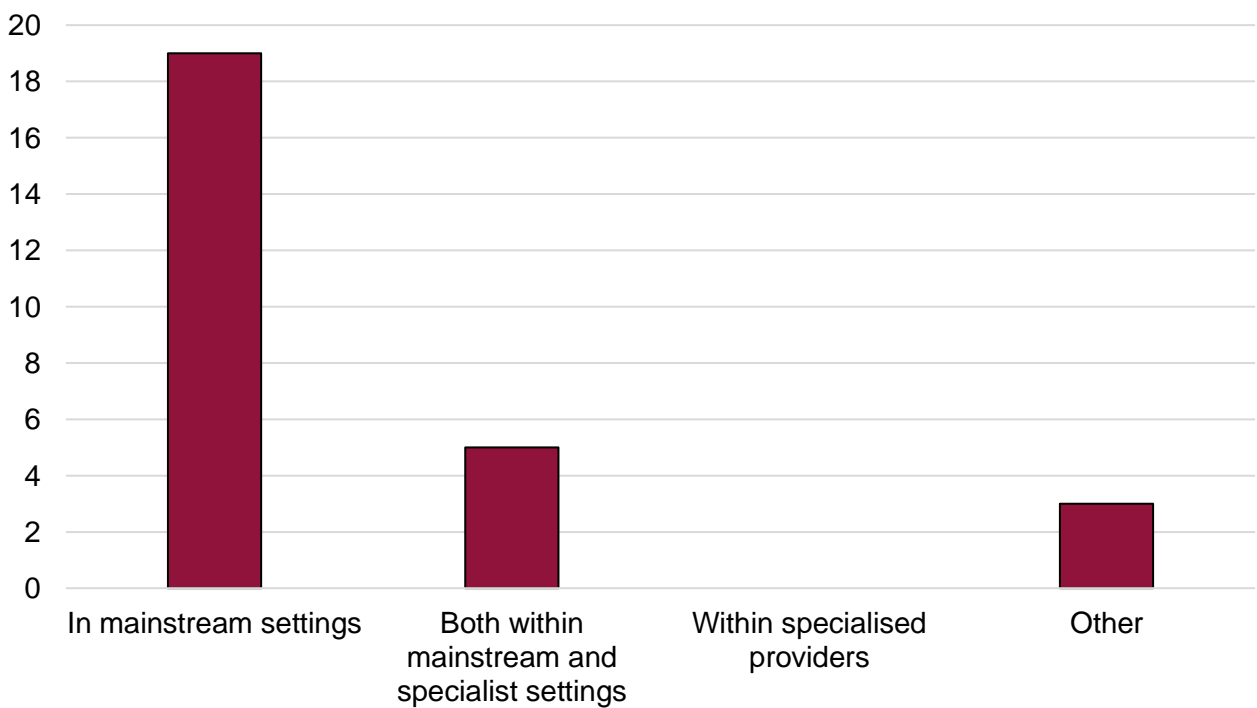
If you selected 'C' above, please specify which programmes mentioned above offer services to 1- and 2-year-olds?

Question 15

In your local authority, is ELC for children with ASN usually provided in the same setting as for children without ASN, or within separate settings?

- In settings alongside children without ASN
- Within separate providers, specialising in ASN support
- Both types of settings are common in my local authority
- Other

Figure 10: Settings providing ELC to children with ASN

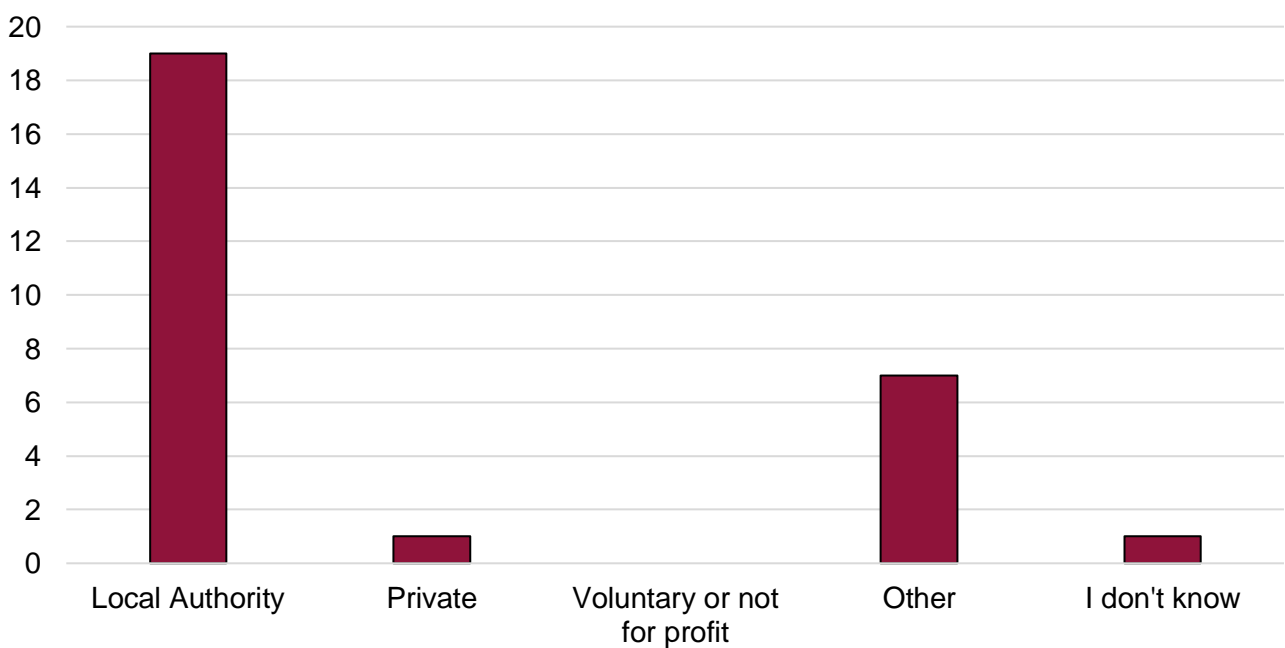


Question 16

What is the most common provider type of ELC for children with ASN in your local authority? Please select only one.

- Voluntary organisations or not-for-profit
- Private providers
- Local authority providers
- I don't know
- Other

Figure 11: Types of settings most commonly providing ELC to children with ASN

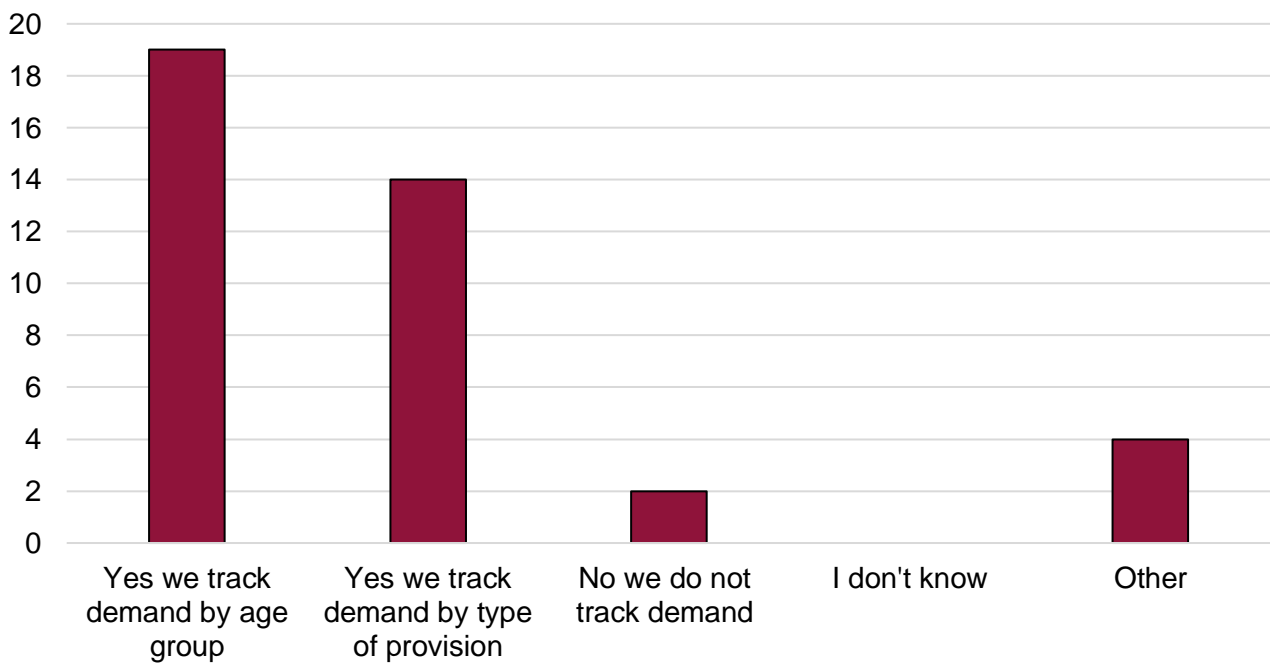


Question 17

Do you track demand for ELC places in your local authority? Please select all that apply.

- Yes, we track ELC demand by age group
- Yes, we track ELC demand by type of provider (i.e., demand for childminders, nurseries, etc.)
- No, we do not track demand
- I don't know
- Other

Figure 12: LAs tracking demand for ELC

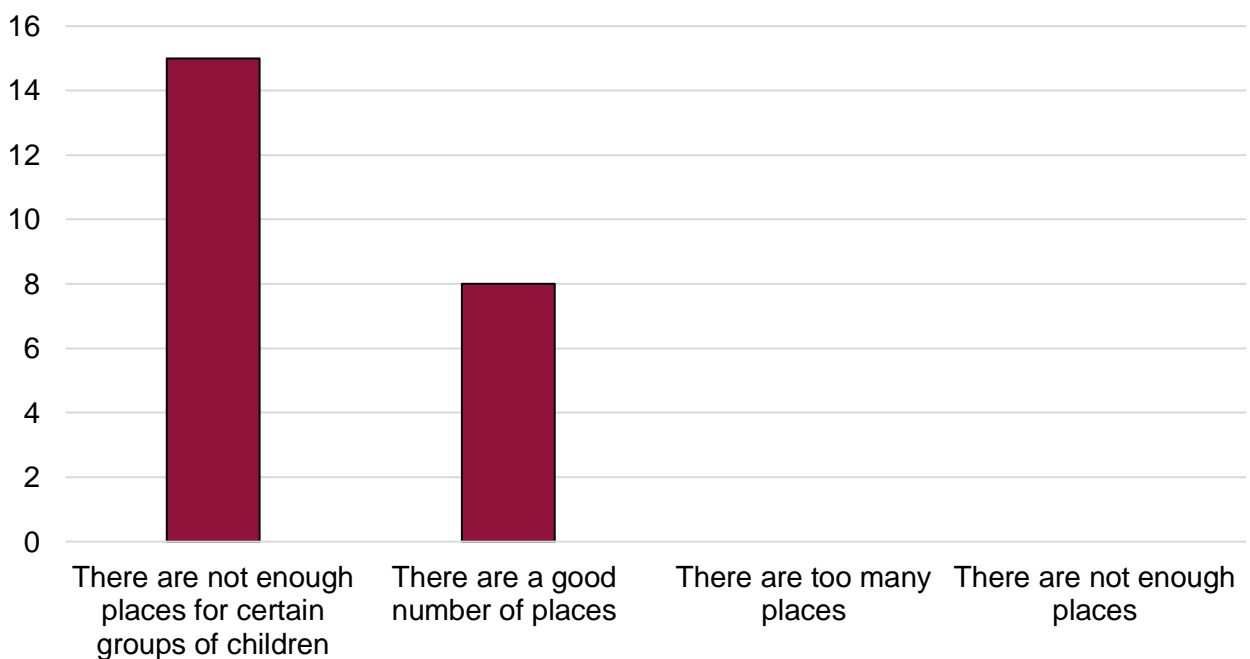


Question 18

If you track demand, does it match the number of places available? Please select all that apply.

- A. There are too many places..
- B. There are not enough places compared to the number of children.
- C. There are not enough places for certain groups of children, or in certain areas in my local authority (e.g. children in remote or rural areas, children with ASN, younger children etc.)
- D. There are a good number of places

Figure 13: Does demand match available places?



Question 19

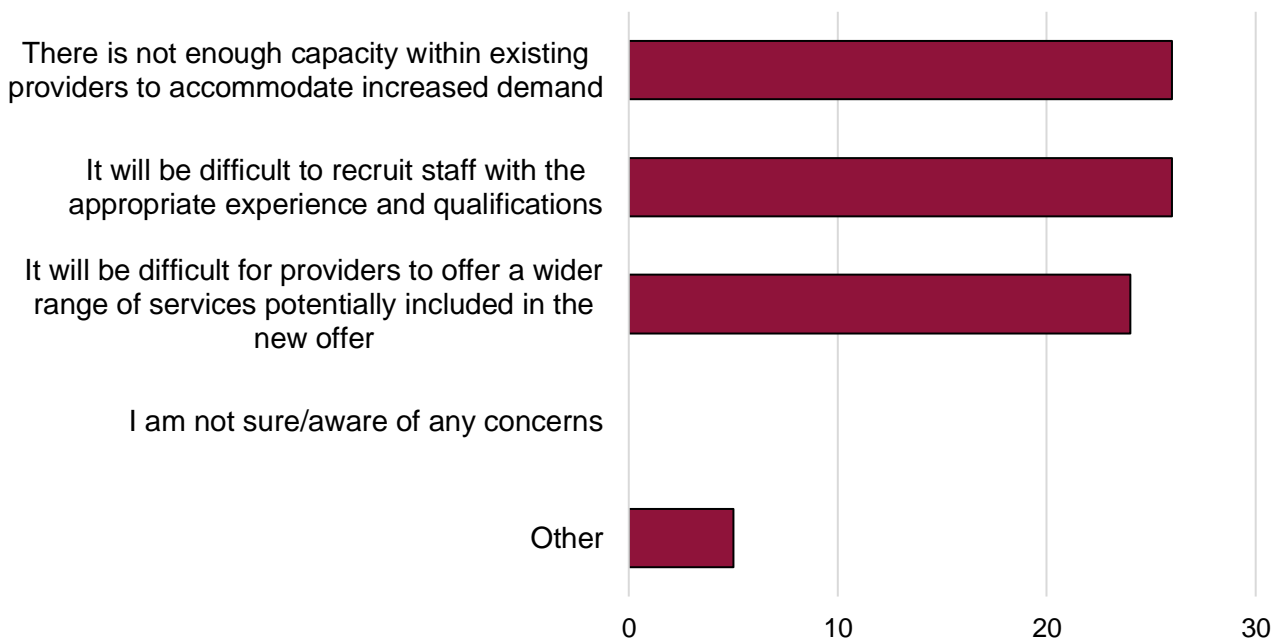
If you selected 'C' above, please specify which groups of children do not have enough places in your local authority.

Question 20

What are your primary concerns with the expansion of the funded offer to all 1- and 2-year-olds? Select all that apply.

- There is not enough capacity within existing providers to accommodate increased demand.
- It will be difficult to recruit staff with the appropriate experience and qualifications.
- It will be difficult for providers to offer a wider range of services potentially included in the new offer.
- I am not sure or aware of any concerns.
- Other

Figure 14: Primary concerns related to the new offer



Question 21

Do you have any additional views about ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds or the new offer that you would like to share?

Question 22

If you would like to be considered for an interview, please provide the following details in the field below:

- Your name
- Your role in the Council
- Your email address

Appendix 2:

Primary research materials (Phase 2)

Care Inspectorate discussion guide

1. Can you tell me a bit about the Care Inspectorate and the role that you have, specifically in relation to Early Learning and Childcare provision?

Current provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

Good practice

2. In terms of the existing provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in your local authority, can you think of any specific provision models that work particularly well for this age group and their families?
3. Prompt: Are there specific types of provision that seem more popular among 1- and 2-year-olds and their families?
4. Prompt: Are you aware of any provision that works particularly well for children that have ASN?
5. From your experience, is there anything that works particularly well for providers and/or members of staff when providing ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds?
6. Overall, are there any changes or additions to the provision models that exist in your local authority that you would recommend to better support this age group?

Demand

7. Do you feel that there is a good understanding within the Care Inspectorate about the current supply and demand of ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds locally?
8. Now thinking more specifically about the current demand for ELC within your local authority, have you found that there is a mismatch between the available provision and the number of children seeking ELC?
9. Prompt: If there is such a mismatch, is this consistent across areas within your local authority? E.g., urban vs. rural areas; more or less affluent areas.

Gaps and challenges

10. Thinking about the current provision of ELC (incl. funded and not funded) in your local authority, what are the gaps in provision for 1- and 2-year-olds?
11. What are the main challenges with ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in your local authority? Do these challenges contribute to the gaps in provision?
12. What are the main issues identified during inspections for providers that support this younger age group?

13. Prompt: What can be done to support providers to be better able to support 1- and 2-year-olds?

A new ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds

14. Are there any lessons learnt from the current 1,140 hours funded offer mainly delivered to 3- and 4-year-olds that you think should be taken into consideration when designing the new ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds?

15. What do you think is important to consider in the new offer based on existing successful provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in your Local Authority?

16. Are there any specific things to keep in mind when developing the new offer, to ensure that children with ASN are supported?

17. The Scottish Government has committed to expanding funded Early Learning and Childcare to all 1- and 2-year-olds, what are the key challenges that will be faced in the expansion of this offer?

18. Prompt: What are the key challenges providers will face in a further expansion of funded ELC?

19. Prompt: Are there any challenges that families will face in a further expansion of funded ELC?

20. Prompt: To your knowledge, are providers and families aware of the anticipated expansion to 1- and 2-year-olds?

Final thoughts

21. Do you have any other views or comments (that we haven't discussed already) about the proposed ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds?

Local Authority discussion guide

Current provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

Good practice

1. In terms of the existing provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in your local authority (LA), can you think of any specific provision models that work particularly well for this age group and their families?
2. Prompt: Are there specific types of provision that seem more popular among 1- and 2-year-olds and their families?
3. Prompt: Are you aware of any provision that works particularly well for children that have ASN?
4. From your experience, is there anything that works particularly well for providers and/or members of staff when providing ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds?

Demand

5. Do you feel that there is a good understanding within your LA about the current supply and demand of ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds?
6. Thinking about the general process of tracking demand, can you tell me about the steps that your LA takes to track demand for ELC? Is this different for funded, not funded and PVI provision?
7. Are there any challenges to tracking demand?
8. Can you think of anything that has worked well for your LA in terms of tracking demand? (E.g., something that you would recommend that other LAs implement.)
9. Now thinking more specifically about the current demand for ELC within your LA, have you found that there is a mismatch between the available provision and the number of children seeking ELC?
10. Prompt: If there is such a mismatch, is this consistent across areas within your LA? E.g., urban vs. rural areas; more or less affluent areas.
11. Prompt: Does the demand for ELC remain consistent throughout the year?

Gaps and challenges

12. Thinking about the current provision of ELC (incl. funded and not funded) in your LA, what are the gaps in provision for 1- and 2-year-olds? E.g.: different types or models of ELC; differences between rural and urban areas; differences between funded and not funded provision; differences between more and less affluent areas.
13. What are the main challenges with ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in your LA? Do these challenges contribute to the gaps in provision?

A new ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds

14. Are there any lessons learnt from the current 1140 hours funded offer mainly delivered to 3- and 4-year-olds that you think should be taken into consideration when designing the new ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds?
15. Along with lessons learnt from the current funded offer, what do you think is important to consider in the new offer based on existing successful provision for 1- and 2-year-olds age in your LA?
16. Are there any specific things to keep in mind when developing the new offer, to ensure that children with ASN are supported?
17. The Scottish Government has committed to expanding funded Early Learning and Childcare to all 1- and 2-year-olds, what are the key challenges that your LA will face in the expansion of this offer?

18. Prompt: What are the key challenges providers will face in a further expansion of funded ELC?
19. Prompt: Are there any challenges that families will face in a further expansion of funded ELC?
20. Prompt: To your knowledge, are providers and families aware of the anticipated expansion to 1- and 2-year-olds? Has your LA had the opportunity to collect their views on this?

Final thoughts

21. To get a comprehensive view of the provision of ELC within your LA, we're also interested in speaking with a representative from either a third sector or partnership organisation (we're particularly interested in organisations that have a role in implementing good practice) as well as a CI Inspector that can speak on behalf of ELC provision within your LA. We are therefore wondering if you have any contacts you can share with us?
22. Do you have any other views or comments (that we haven't discussed already) about the proposed ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds?

Provider discussion guide

Current provision for 1- and 2-year-olds

Good practice

1. What type of provider is the organisation you are working for (third sector/local authority provider/private provider/other)? [Ask only if they haven't completed survey].
2. Can you tell me about the services that you provide for 1- and 2-year-olds and their families?
3. Prompt: Do you provide services for older children as well?
4. Prompt: How do families access these services?
5. Prompt: Do you provide services in a more rural or urban area?
6. Prompt: Do you support children that have additional support needs?
7. From your experience, are there any types of services (e.g., provision models) that work particularly well for children of this age group?
8. Do 1- and 2-year-old children have different needs when it comes to providing support compared to older children?
9. From your experience, is there anything that works particularly well for providers and/or members of staff when providing ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds?

Demand

10. How do the number of places that you have available for 1- and 2-year-olds compare to the number of children seeking a place?

11. Prompt: Does the demand remain consistent throughout the year?

Gaps and challenges

12. From your experience, what are the main challenges with providing ELC for 1- and 2-year-olds? Do these challenges contribute to the gaps in provision?

13. Are these challenges the same for older age groups?

A new ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds

14. Background information for interviewee: The Scottish Government has committed to expanding funded Early Learning and Childcare to all 1- and 2-year-olds. The following questions aim at gathering important considerations regarding the design of this expansion.

15. Are there any lessons learnt from the current 1140 hours funded offer mainly delivered to 3- and 4-year-olds that you think should be taken into consideration when designing the new ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds?

16. Based on any successful provision for 1- and 2-year-olds that you are aware of, what do you think is important to incorporate into the new offer?

17. Are there any specific considerations to keep in mind when developing the new offer, to ensure that children with ASN are also supported?

18. What are the key challenges that your organisation will face in the expansion of this offer?

19. Prompt: Are there any challenges that families will face in a further expansion of funded ELC?

20. Prompt: To your knowledge, are families aware of the anticipated expansion to 1- and 2-year-olds?

Final thoughts

21. Do you have any other views or comments (that we haven't discussed already) about the proposed ELC offer for 1- and 2-year-olds?

Provider survey

Current service provision

1. The following questions concern your organisation and the services you currently provide.
2. What type of provider are you?

- a. Voluntary or not for profit
 - b. Local authority provider
 - c. Private provider
 - d. Other (please, specify)
3. Please let us know which local authority you provide services in. If your organisation provides services in multiple areas, please type the local authority you are personally working in.
4. Which of the following does your organisation provide? Please select all that apply.
- a. Children and family centre
 - b. Childminding
 - c. Creche
 - d. Nursery
 - e. Playgroup
 - f. Out of school care
5. From the list below, please select all the groups that are able to access the services you selected above.
- a. Children under the age of 1
 - b. 1-year-olds
 - c. 2-year-olds
 - d. Children aged 3 and over
6. Please describe any additional services to the ones listed in Question 4 that you provide to 1- and 2-year-olds and/or their families? (E.g., parent support programmes, community childminding services, parent and toddler groups etc.). Please tell us the name of the services and their main purpose.

Service provision for a new funded offer

7. The following questions relate to important considerations for the development of a new funded Early Learning and Childcare offer for 1- and 2-year-olds.
8. While the details of the new funded offer have not yet been specified, what do you anticipate would be the main challenges for your organisation to deliver funded Early Learning and Childcare for 1- and 2-year-olds? Please select all that apply. If

there are additional challenges not listed, please describe these using the 'Other' option below.

- a. Recruiting and retaining staff
- b. Training and retraining staff
- c. Lack of suitable infrastructure / spaces
- d. Meeting Care Inspectorate registration criteria
- e. Geographic barriers (e.g., poor transport links)
- f. Cost of providing services is high
- g. Insufficient funding from the local authority to cover the cost of providing services
- h. Business sustainability if there is a reduced number of private places
- i. Managing family expectations (e.g., if their child does not meet eligibility criteria)
- j. Demand for services is lower than available places
- k. Demand for services is higher than available places
- l. Other [please specify].

9. Please consider again the challenges you selected in Question 7. Which of those are specific to the age group of interest (1- and 2-year-olds)? [Select all that apply, but please make sure you don't select any options that were left unselected in Question 7.]

- a. Recruiting and retaining staff
- b. Training and retraining staff
- c. Lack of suitable infrastructure
- d. Meeting Care Inspectorate criteria
- e. Geographic limitations (e.g., poor transport links)
- f. Cost of providing services is high
- g. Insufficient funding from LA to cover the cost to provide services
- h. Business sustainability if there is a reduced number of private places

- i. Managing family expectations (e.g., if their child does not meet eligibility criteria)
- j. Demand for services is lower than available places
- k. Demand for services is higher than available places
- l. Other [please specify].

10. Which of the following do you think the new funded offer for 1- and 2-year-olds should incorporate to meet the needs of this younger age group? Please select all that apply. If you have additional suggestions to the ones listed below, please specify which ones using the 'Other' option below.

- a. Parenting support programmes
- b. Parental engagement and family learning programmes (e.g., Stay and Play; Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP))
- c. Cognitive and emotional development support programmes
- d. Tailored support for children with ASN
- e. Smaller classes or groups of children
- f. Smaller physical spaces (e.g., smaller rooms)
- g. Different physical spaces (other than size of space)
- h. Other [please specify].

11. As part of our research, we will also be conducting interviews with a number of providers to understand in more detail challenges and best practice of ELC provision in Scotland. This is an opportunity for providers to share their views, which, together with other findings, will feed into policy development. Interviews are expected to take place between mid-May and mid-June 2023, remotely on the MS Teams platform, and we anticipate each interview lasting up to 1 hour.

If you would be willing to take part in an interview, please provide your contact details below. Please note that your information will only be used to contact you in case you are selected for an interview. Your name, your job title, the name of your organisation (if applicable), and email address will not be associated with your answers.

Appendix 3: Data tables by local authority (all local authorities in Scotland)

Table 1 shows the number of places per child across each age group and local authority (LA) in Scotland, excluding places in childminder settings.

Table 1: ELC places per child by local authority (excluding childminders)

Local authority	1-year-olds	2-year-olds	3-year-olds	4-year-olds
Aberdeen City	0.31	0.42	0.77	0.92
Aberdeenshire	0.26	0.45	0.8	0.98
Angus	0.14	0.38	0.81	1.15
Argyll & Bute	0.17	0.43	1.03	1.07
City of Edinburgh	0.45	0.64	0.96	1.06
Clackmannanshire	0.25	0.53	0.81	0.95
Dumfries & Galloway	0.24	0.42	0.78	1.03
Dundee City	0.33	0.56	0.83	0.95
East Ayrshire	0.16	0.4	0.93	1.04
East Dunbartonshire	0.4	0.63	1.01	1.01
East Lothian	0.31	0.5	0.92	0.95
East Renfrewshire	0.33	0.4	0.98	1.01
Falkirk	0.22	0.4	0.89	1.01
Fife	0.18	0.43	0.79	0.96
Glasgow City	0.31	0.56	0.88	0.92
Highland	0.2	0.38	0.86	1.09
Inverclyde	0.19	0.42	0.98	0.94
Midlothian	0.43	0.63	1	1.07
Moray	0.15	0.62	0.83	0.97

Na h-Eileanan Siar	0.24	0.47	0.9	0.94
North Ayrshire	0.12	0.38	0.76	0.94
North Lanarkshire	0.23	0.36	0.91	0.93
Orkney Islands	0.11	0.15	0.87	0.95
Perth & Kinross	0.36	0.57	0.88	1.02
Renfrewshire	0.42	0.59	0.92	1.01
Scottish Borders	0.18	0.43	0.76	1
Shetland Islands	0.25	0.28	1.01	0.94
South Ayrshire	0.25	0.5	1.01	1.02
South Lanarkshire	0.29	0.52	0.92	0.97
Stirling	0.34	0.56	0.87	0.98
West Dunbartonshire	0.33	0.46	0.82	0.94
West Lothain	0.25	0.52	0.92	0.96
Average	0.26	0.47	0.89	0.99

Source: Data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021). Office of National Statistics Estimates of the Population, Scotland (2021)

Table 2: ELC places per child by age group and local authority (excl. childminders)

Local authority	1-year-olds	2-year-olds	3-year-olds	4-year-olds
Aberdeen City	0.31	0.42	0.77	0.92
Aberdeenshire	0.26	0.45	0.8	0.98
Angus	0.14	0.38	0.81	1.15
Argyll & Bute	0.17	0.43	1.03	1.07
City of Edinburgh	0.45	0.64	0.96	1.06
Clackmannanshire	0.25	0.53	0.81	0.95
Dumfries & Galloway	0.24	0.42	0.78	1.03
Dundee City	0.33	0.56	0.83	0.95

East Ayrshire	0.16	0.4	0.93	1.04
East Dunbartonshire	0.4	0.63	1.01	1.01
East Lothian	0.31	0.5	0.92	0.95
East Renfrewshire	0.33	0.4	0.98	1.01
Falkirk	0.22	0.4	0.89	1.01
Fife	0.18	0.43	0.79	0.96
Glasgow City	0.31	0.56	0.88	0.92
Highland	0.2	0.38	0.86	1.09
Inverclyde	0.19	0.42	0.98	0.94
Midlothian	0.43	0.63	1	1.07
Moray	0.15	0.62	0.83	0.97
Na h-Eileanan Siar	0.24	0.47	0.9	0.94
North Ayrshire	0.12	0.38	0.76	0.94
North Lanarkshire	0.23	0.36	0.91	0.93
Orkney Islands	0.11	0.15	0.87	0.95
Perth & Kinross	0.36	0.57	0.88	1.02
Renfrewshire	0.42	0.59	0.92	1.01
Scottish Borders	0.18	0.43	0.76	1
Shetland Islands	0.25	0.28	1.01	0.94
South Ayrshire	0.25	0.5	1.01	1.02
South Lanarkshire	0.29	0.52	0.92	0.97
Stirling	0.34	0.56	0.87	0.98
West Dunbartonshire	0.33	0.46	0.82	0.94
West Lothian	0.25	0.52	0.92	0.96
Average	0.26	0.47	0.89	0.99

Table 3: Total number of providers by local authority and type

Local authority	Childminders	Nurseries	Out of School Clubs	Playgroups	Creches	Holiday Playschemes	Children and Family Centres
Aberdeen City	125	96	40	6	1	1	1
Aberdeenshire	247	141	47	29	1	3	0
Angus	92	67	18	14	0	3	0
Argyll & Bute	56	76	7	1	0	0	2
City of Edinburgh	247	214	86	18	4	6	12
Clackmannanshire	35	19	4	0	0	0	1
Dumfries & Galloway	82	76	2	5	0	0	1
Dundee City	88	62	20	0	1	3	0
East Ayrshire	120	40	9	0	2	0	5
East Dunbartonshire	88	47	32	0	1	1	1
East Lothian	81	52	20	7	0	1	2
East Renfrewshire	86	32	26	0	1	3	6
Falkirk	147	70	21	0	0	0	2
Fife	290	151	57	9	6	2	4
Glasgow City	125	226	92	1	6	2	18
Highland	184	197	10	5	1	2	3
Inverclyde	38	26	3	0	1	0	7
Midlothian	56	57	16	5	0	0	7
Moray	96	60	1	4	0	0	0
Na h-Eileanan Siar	14	22	0	1	1	0	0
North Ayrshire	134	56	11	0	0	0	2
North Lanarkshire	231	131	31	2	0	0	16

Orkney Islands	26	21	0	0	0	0	0
Perth & Kinross	115	83	18	4	2	2	2
Renfrewshire	62	71	34	0	0	2	6
Scottish Borders	73	69	12	3	0	0	0
Shetland Islands	7	26	2	0	0	1	0
South Ayrshire	62	51	16	1	1	0	1
South Lanarkshire	198	140	35	0	1	1	6
Stirling	78	44	13	3	1	0	1
West Dunbartonshire	38	39	12	0	0	0	1
West Lothian	171	93	16	14	0	2	0

Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023) with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021)

Source:

Table 4: Share of nurseries offering places to 1- and 2-year-olds by local authority

Local authority	Share offering places to 1-year-olds	Share offering places to 2-year-olds
Aberdeen City	34.4%	53.1%
Aberdeenshire	26.9%	61%
Angus	17.9%	49.3%
Argyll & Bute	13.2%	39.5%
City of Edinburgh	55.1%	73.8%
Clackmannanshire	26.3%	89.5%
Dumfries & Galloway	27.6%	68.4%
Dundee City	48.4%	79%
East Ayrshire	30%	65%
East Dunbartonshire	42.5%	76.7%

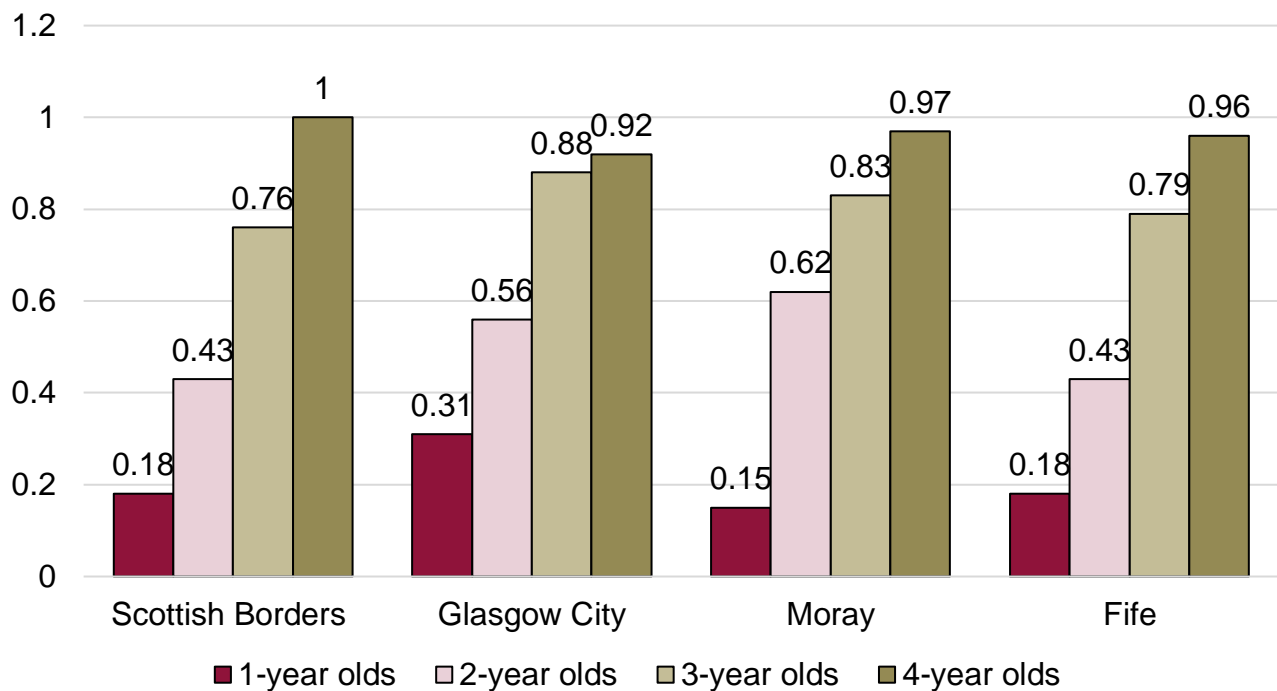
East Lothian	32.6%	51.9%
East Renfrewshire	46.8%	56.2%
Falkirk	34.3%	44.3%
Fife	23.2%	57.6%
Glasgow City	61.9%	79.6%
Highland	13.7%	24.9%
Inverclyde	30.7%	69.2%
Midlothian	52.6%	68.4%
Moray	16.7%	53.3%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	27.3%	77.3%
North Ayrshire	21.4%	51.8%
North Lanarkshire	35.9%	50.4%
Orkney Islands	4.8%	28.6%
Perth & Kinross	31.3%	72.3%
Renfrewshire	60.6%	78.9%
Scottish Borders	14.4%	56.5%
Shetland Islands	7.7%	19.2%
South Ayrshire	27.4%	72.6%
South Lanarkshire	39.3%	60%
Stirling	45.5%	72.7%
West Dunbartonshire	43.5%	48.7%
West Lothian	26.9%	53.8%

Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023) with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (as of December 2021)

Appendix 4: Data on ELC providers and places (Case studies)

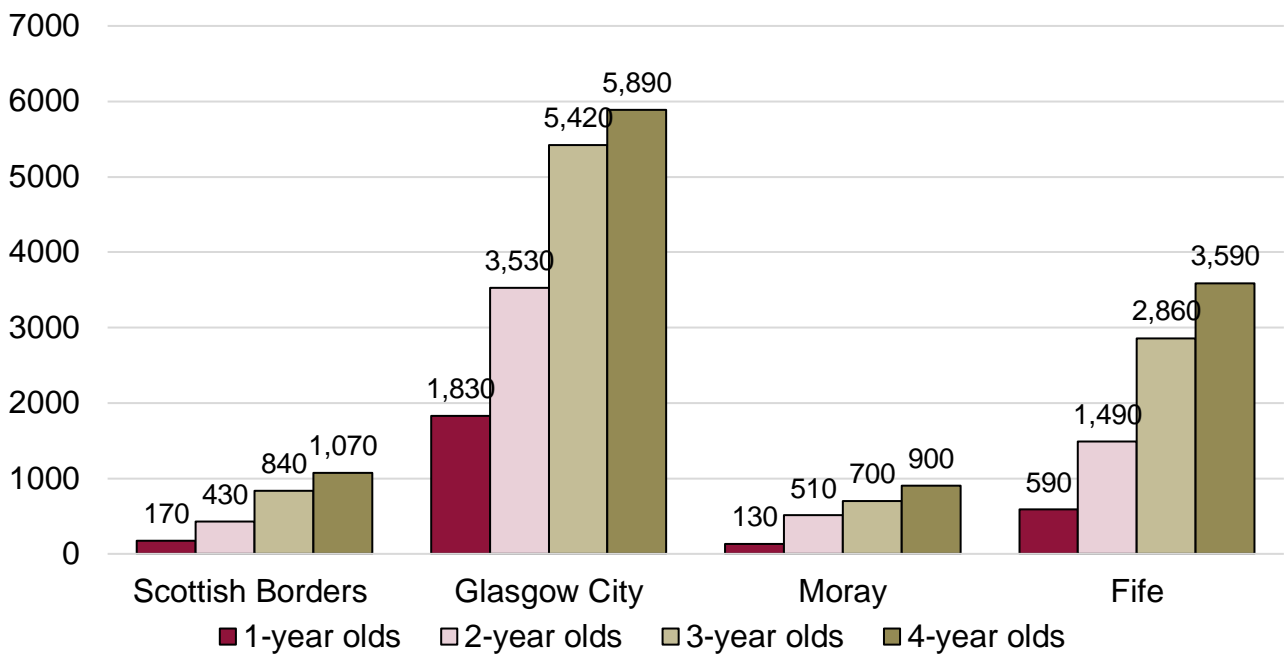
The figures in this section show ELC provision for 1- and 2-year-olds in the local authorities (LAs) selected as case studies. The figures below do not include childminder settings as the Care Inspectorate does not publish age disaggregated data on childminders.

Figure 1: ELC places per child by age group and LA (case studies)



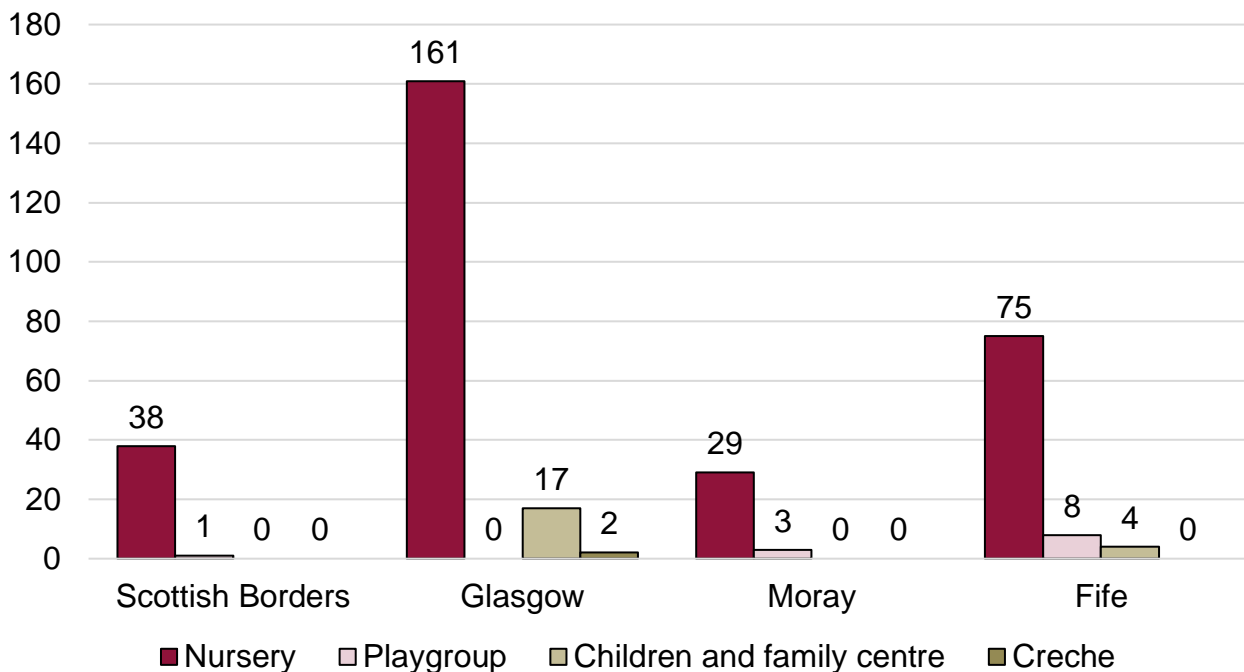
Source: Care Inspectorate Service List (December 2021), Office of National Statistics Estimates of the Population of Scotland (2021)

Figure 2: Number of places by age group and LA (case studies)



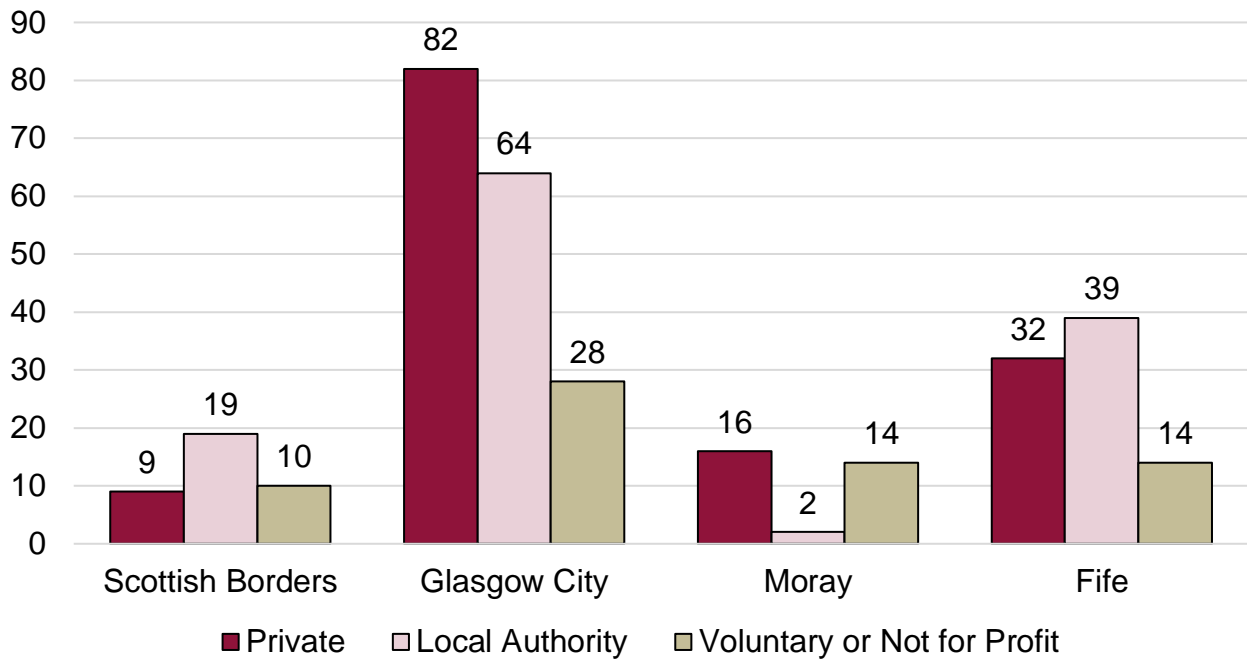
Source: Care Inspectorate Service List (December 2021)

Figure 3: Number of settings by type and LA (case studies)



Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023) supplemented with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (December 2021)

Figure 4: Number of settings by provider type and LA (case studies)



Source: Care Inspectorate Datastore (as of February 28, 2023) supplemented with additional data provided by the Care Inspectorate (December 2021)



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