

Pathway to a quality support and assurance system for childminding

Volume 2:
Supporting documents
referenced by

The **Working Group** on reforms and
supports for the childminding sector

March 2018

© 2018. The Working Group on Reforms and Supports for the Childminding Sector

c/o Childminding Ireland
First Floor
39 Wexford Road
Arklow
Co Wicklow

This document is a companion volume to *Pathway to a Quality Support and Assurance System for Childminding: Summary report of the Working Group on reforms and supports for the childminding sector*.

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Document 1 Consultation | 4 |
| 1 Introduction to consultation with children, parents and childminders..... | 5 |
| 2 Consultation with children..... | 6 |
| 3 Consultation with parents..... | 8 |
| 4 Consultation with childminders | 17 |
| Document 2 Childminding in Western Europe: an inventory of best practice..... | 25 |
| Document 3 Regulation of childminding in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales | 40 |
| 1 Experience of regulation in Scotland (Simpson) | 41 |
| 2 The Scottish Experience of Regulation (Murray) | 45 |
| 3 Registration, supports and inspection for childminders in Northern Ireland and Wales..... | 49 |
| Document 4 Results of a survey on parents and guardians experience of, and opinions on, childminding in Ireland 2017 by Fionnuala Ní Mhórdha | 52 |

Document 1
Consultation

1 Introduction to consultation with children, parents and childminders

The members of the Childminding Working Group represented certain stakeholders, other than children and parents. In order to be as widely advised as possible the Childminding Working Group used primary and secondary research. In order to listen to the child's voice, the Childminding Working Group accessed children's views through the consultation with children for Action Plan on School Age Childcare (DCYA, 2017). To capture the parental perspective, a Parents' Survey was conducted in May 2017. In addition, the views of working childminders were ascertained through representation on the Childminding Working Group, a survey of Childminding Ireland members, and a discussion day.

Through this process, the following key findings were made:

1. Children have stated a preference for homebased care, Childminding is uniquely placed in terms of a home setting, as the next best alternative to children being in their own homes. It must be properly resourced and supported in order to meet the expressed preference of children.
2. The long-term goals of the childminders include maintaining the unique home from home form of childcare, on-going development of a qualified childminding sector and public recognition of childminders as professionals, with parity of esteem.
3. The childminder's personal qualities – kind, caring – was the statement with the highest 'very important' ranking by respondents in the Parents' Survey. However, their childminder's highest impact for parents was allowing them to return to work.
4. Nearly half of all parent respondents were in income brackets that would make them eligible for means tested support for childcare costs under the Affordable Childcare Scheme (ACS). This suggests that childminders and families choosing childminding for their childcare needs must have access to State supports as a matter of urgency.
5. The Parents Survey results and childminder feedback indicate an inherent suspicion of regulations and legislation, with fears that this will reduce both the number and quality of childminders that are currently available and increase costs.
6. In some rural areas, there is no access to Tusla Registered providers either in centre based care or in childminding settings, this could lead to the unintended consequence that families have no access to the State supports that they are entitled to.

International best practice was also considered including, international childminding research, Western European models, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish and English experiences of childminding.

NOTE:

Source references in these documents are to the Select Bibliography in the accompanying *Quality Childminding* report (Appendix C).

2 Consultation with children

The detailed consultations with 177 children aged between 5 and 12 years old, which were undertaken by the DCYA as part of the *Action Plan on School Age Childcare* (DCYA, 2017), were used to inform the work of the Childminding Working Group. The consultations were exclusively with school age children and further research would be necessary to establish if the results were consistent with the views of pre-school children. Given the time constraints and in the absence of other information, it was taken that the views of school age children would be in line with the views of pre-school children.

The DCYA survey (DCYA, 2017) was the source of consultation with children in Ireland available to the Childminding Working Group. The consultations were exclusively with school age children, aged 5-7 years and 8-12 years, and further research would be necessary to establish if the results were consistent with the views of pre-school children.

Of the 177 children consulted, the 8 to 12-year-old children voted overwhelmingly for after school care at home or in home environment: at home (59%), friends' houses (17%), relatives (13%), and childminder (4%). Only 7% stated a preference for centre-based care (ibid. p.33).

Home was also a significant category for 5-7 years old children, as a place where they could eat, cook food and relax (p.30).

A home-like environment was preferred, with outdoor and indoor play identified as important by children of all ages. Relationships with family, extended family, friends, childminders and other carers were noted as being very important to children. Eating and cooking were also identified as important activities for children after-school at home with their parents or childminders. (ibid. p.62)

Childminders were mentioned in a positive light.

There was a recognition by the children of the trust placed in the childminder by their parents. (ibid. p.33)

The voice of children is critical to informing policy in this area. If children's preference is to go home after school and enjoy certain patterns and activities, and it is not possible to facilitate this, then the system of SAC must seek to reproduce their preferences in a variety of settings, other than their home. (ibid. p.62)

Other findings to do with childminding from the Action Plan include:

Ireland has a strong tradition of childcare being provided by extended family and members of the local community and, whilst in recent years many formal, or centre-based, services have been developed, childminders remain, after relatives, the most popular form of after-school childcare. (ibid. p.10)

Childminders currently provide the highest proportion of paid SAC in Ireland. As previously stated, it is estimated that approximately 37,000 primary school children are cared for by more than 21,000 childminders. (ibid. p.26) Of those availing of formal childcare arrangements either currently or in the past, the majority of these (51%) use or had used childminders (ibid. p.37)

The Action Plan for School Age Childcare Executive Summary concludes:

We must listen to the voices of children and parents in designing and delivering school age childcare. There is agreement on the need to separate school activity from after-school activity

and for a focus on rest, relaxation and play. The importance of a physical environment that meets children's varied needs at various times (for example, activity versus quiet time, privacy versus group activity, structure versus non-structure, and autonomy versus rules), that in many ways simulates a healthy home environment, is highlighted. (DCYA, 2017, p. 4).

3 Consultation with parents

In order to ensure that the views of parents using childminding services were represented, the Childminding Working Group undertook a survey in May 2017, which was commissioned and managed by *Childminding Ireland*. The survey response rate exceeded expectations with 3,630 people completing the questionnaire; the average response rate per question was approximately 1,687. Quantitative analysis was carried out on the survey results using the software packages SPSS and Excel. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise the data. An exploratory approach to the qualitative data analysis was taken and the data from the open / comments questions was analysed for key words, trends and themes to inform the analysis.

Extracts below highlight some of the significant findings from the full analysis of Parents' Survey.¹

Demographic breakdown of respondents (parents)

Age (n=1,685): The majority of those who responded (65.2%) were between 35 and 44 years of age.

Location (n=1,680): The largest cohort (32.9%) living in what they classified as a rural setting, with 17.4% Village, 28.2% Town, 21.3% City and Other 0.3%

Net annual household income (n=1,543): Approximately 48% reported a net annual household income of less than 50,000 euro per annum, with 6% earning less than a net annual household income of 20,000 euro per annum.

Age profile of children being minded (n=2,897): The majority of children being minded are aged between 0 and 6 years (64.6%), with 32.6% aged between 7 and 12 years and only approximately 3% in the '13-16' age group. Within the 0 to 6 age group, there is little difference between the categories 'under 2 years' (24%), '3-4 years' (21%) and '5-6 years' (20%).

Childminding information

Participants' childminding arrangements: The largest cohort of respondents pay for childminding in their childminder's home (38.6% n=3,422), more than half have been using their childminder for between 1-4 years (51.9% n=1,635), and a larger than expected number (13%) have been with their childminder for more than 10 years.

The largest cohort of respondents heard about their childminder by word of mouth (64.9% n=1,624). The importance of personally knowing someone and trusting them emerges as a common theme throughout the responses.

Childminding costs n=2,681: The results also show that the majority of respondents (54.8%) pay less than €99 per child per week, and a large percentage (37.7%) pay between €100 and €199 per week. The estimated mean cost per child per week was €105.40, but this includes preschool and school age children.

Cost was an issue that provoked strong responses from a lot of the participants and emerged as a constant theme throughout the survey. Words and phrases such as '*insanely expensive*', '*impossible*', '*crippling*', '*extremely high*', '*struggle*', '*not affordable*', '*so high*' and '*huge concern*' emerged in the

¹ Results of a survey on parents and guardians experience of, and opinions on, childminding in Ireland 2017 By Fionnuala Ní Mhórdha, DCU, which is appended in full in **Appendix 6**

comments. There was also a strong concern that new regulations and requirements would drive up the rates that are already considered by many to be too high. This echoes the findings of previous survey research² into the views of parents on childminding in Ireland, in which the high cost of childcare for parents also one of the recurring themes.

Hours using childminding service n=2,606: It is important to note that 23.7% of children are with their childminders for 30+ hours per week, even though there is a relatively even spread) across the categories for how many hours they use their childminding service: 1-9 hours, 10-19 hours, 20-29 hours, 30+ hours at 27.7%, 28.5%, 20.1% and 23.7% respectively.

Attitudes to qualifications and training

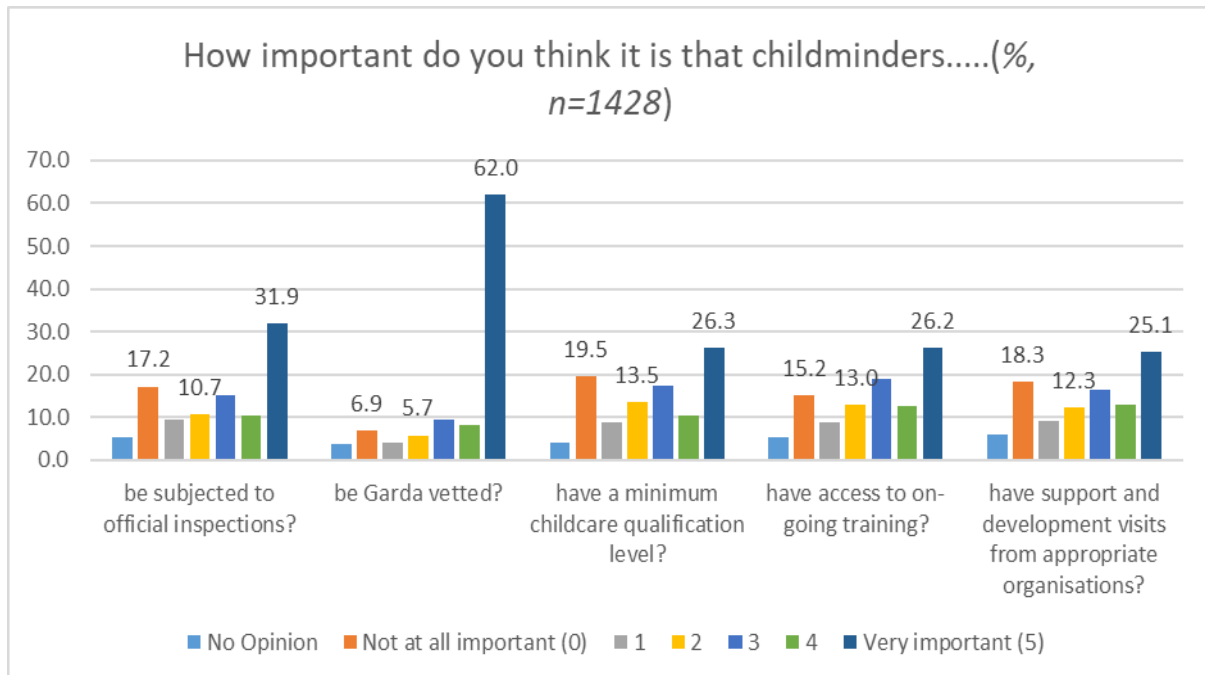


FIGURE 1 PARENTAL ATTITUDES TO VETTING, TRAINING AND SUPPORTS

Apart from Garda vetting, it is interesting to note (Figure 1) the relatively high percentage of respondents stating that they felt it was ‘not at all important’ that their childminder be subjected to official inspection (17.2%), have a minimum childcare qualification level (19.5%), have access to on-going training (15.2%) or have support and development visits from appropriate organisations (18.3%). An insight into why these figures were so high can be found in the comments:

I like that childcare isn't really structured and subject to loads of regulations and paperwork. I want it to be as natural as being in his home for my child.

The responses are strongly linked to the participants’ experiences within the childminding sector, as is evident from the quotation below

I had a childminder who was Garda vetted, registered and had a qualification and she was appalling. Current childminders have none of above but my children are safe and happy.

Perhaps this respondent sums it up when stating:

I would categorise childminders into two categories, one where the parents know the person well and know they are well able to do the job. These childminders can be vetted by and

² Survey conducted in June 2105 as part of doctoral research at Dublin Institute of Technology. .In total, 450 respondents from twenty-three of the twenty-six counties took the online survey: 63% childminders and 37% parents, with a completion rate of 72%.

monitored by parents themselves. If I was looking for someone unknown to me, then Garda vetting, insurance, childcare qualifications, and monitoring by an outside agency would be extremely important to me.

To investigate these results further, they were disaggregated by demographic factors to explore for statistically significant relationships.

Official inspections: Independent of age group, respondents on lower net annual household incomes rated as 'very important' that childminders be subjected to official inspections, while a higher number of rural residents than respondents who lived in villages or cities rated official inspections of low importance or matter of indifference.

Garda vetting: A respondent's net annual household income and location did not significantly affect how they responded to the importance Garda vetting. However, more than expected numbers of younger people rated Garda vetting as being very important than those in the oldest age group. More respondents aged over 45 years rated it as 'not at all important' than would be expected.

Childcare qualifications: How important a respondent considered a minimum childcare qualification was found to be independent of net annual household income, but significantly related to age and location. Those in urban locations were more likely to rank it as being very important, while more than expected numbers of rural dwellers and respondents over 45 years had either 'no opinion' or rated it as 'not at all important'.

Ongoing training: Access to ongoing training was statistically significantly related to both age group and net annual household income group. Fewer people than expected in the 45+ age group rated this as 'very important', while those on higher net annual household incomes were more inclined to rate it as being of lower importance.

Support and Development visits: The rankings of Support and Development visits showed a statistically significant relationship with all three groupings. A greater number of younger people than expected rate this as 'very important' while the reverse is true for the older age groups. Lower earners place a significantly higher rating on this than expected, while fewer than expected high earners rate it as 'very important'. City dwellers consistently had higher than expected numbers rating this as important while rural dwellers had both a higher than expected number of people who had either 'no opinion' or ranked it as 'not important at all' and a higher than expected number of respondents who rated it as 'very important'.

Age of respondents: These results show a difference in attitude between younger and older parents /guardians. It is significant that high numbers younger respondents attach importance to for example, support and development visits, access to ongoing training, etc. More research is needed to ascertain possible reasons for this. It may be linked to having a growing confidence in your own intuition as you are more experienced and are therefore more likely to rely on this when choosing a childminder.

Urban and rural respondents: The results also indicate that there is a difference in attitude between urban and rural dwellers. More research is needed, but this may be due to rural dwellers having a more detailed knowledge of the community they live in, and are happier to rely on this knowledge when choosing their childminder, rather than feeling the need to rely on state help and guidance.

Further research: It is recommended that these differences be investigated in greater detail in order to understand more deeply the reasons for them. A more in-depth investigation will help determine the implications they will have for future policy makers and for the successful implementation of policies and structures.

Quality indicators – evidence requested summary

However, there was a considerable gap between the rankings given to quality indicator and how often parents/guardians asked prospective childminders for evidence of the same. (See figure 2 below). The findings of this section of the survey raises the question why they are not asking for evidence from their childminder, when so many people consider these issues as important.

A possible explanation may be that the respondents were not comfortable, or feel they do not have a right to, ask for evidence of insurance, qualifications, training, etc. This indicates a need for change in the culture of childminding, where requesting evidence becomes the norm, rather than the exception.

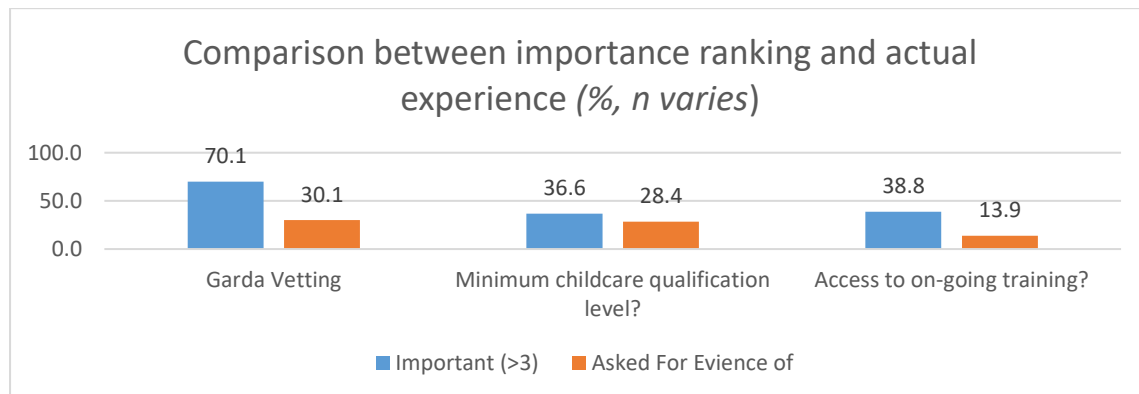


FIGURE 2 COMPARISON BETWEEN IMPORTANCE RANKING AND ASKING FOR EVIDENCE OF SAME

Childminder and childminding environment

Participants were asked to rank the importance of 12 statements on a scale of 0 (not at all important) to 5 (very important). An overwhelming majority of 92.4% ranked the childminder's personal qualities – kind, caring – as 'very important'. More than three quarters of people ranked continuity of care, physical environment and having a home from home setting as 'very important'. In order to illustrate the differences, the percentage of participants who gave a 'very Important' rating to each statement as shown in the figure 3 below.

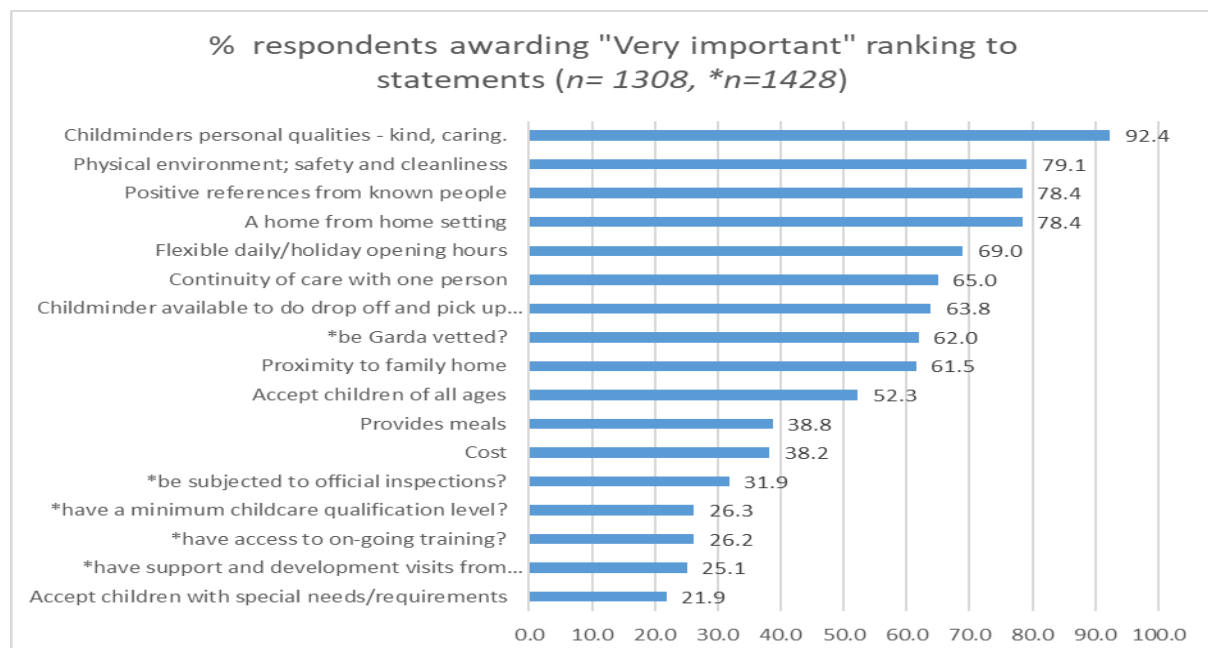


FIGURE 3 RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDMINDER'S PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ATTRIBUTES

It would appear from these results that parents/guardians are more concerned with having continuity of care, a home from home setting, a safe physical environment and positive references from known people than with childcare qualification, training, official inspections, etc.

This confirms previous research, in which been, childminders and parents agreed unanimously in ranking the characteristics that contribute to a high quality childminding service: 1) The relationships and interactions between childminder, children and parents; 2) the one to one care and nurture each child individually received 3) a rich home learning environment. *This reflects research on the benefits of homebased childcare* (Ahnert et al, 2006; Groeneveld et al 2010), and suggests stakeholders' desire for a nurturing pedagogy (Hayes & Kernan, 2008), and an awareness of secondary carer attachment (Bretherton, 1992; Bowlby, 2007). (O'Regan, 2016, p. 6).

This implies that it will be a challenge to successfully implement changes to the childcare system. It will involve taking account of a culturally aligned understanding of quality to assure parents/guardians that the qualities they regard as very important are respected and not undervalued.

While I appreciate the government's preference to register and regulate childminders from a child protection viewpoint, I feel that this approach will mean the loss of childminders such as ours who genuinely loves children and is in effect a second mother to my son and daughter.

The government are not listening to parents or childminders. They seem to want to make childminding similar to a crèche and we as parents DO NOT want this.

The results were investigated further by disaggregating the results by age group, net annual household income group and place of residence group and tested for statistically significant relationships.

Certain important factors showed no statistically significant relationship with the variables: The importance of 'Proximity to family home', 'positive references', 'home from home setting', 'flexible daily / holiday opening hours', 'accepting children of all ages', 'continuity of care' and childminders personal qualities' were all independent of age group, net annual household income group and place residence.

Cost: Cost however, showed a statistically significant relationship with both age group and net annual household income. Respondents under 34 years of age had a higher than expected number of people rating it as 'very important', whereas those aged in the two highest age groups had fewer than expected. All net annual household income groups except for the highest (£60,000 plus) had higher than expected numbers of people rating it as 'very important'.

Drop off and collection: Availability of childminder to do drop off and collection duties was significantly more important to those in the younger age group (<34 years of age).

Caring for children with special needs: Caring for children with special needs / requirements was independent of age group and residence but was related to net annual household income. Those on lower net annual household incomes were more likely to rate this as 'important' than those on higher net annual household incomes.

Provision of meals: The responses to how important it is for a childminder to provide meals varied significantly depending on location. Parents/guardians who lived in rural areas or villages had higher than expected numbers rating this as 'very important', with the reverse being true for those living in cities and towns.

Physical environment: The importance of the physical environment their child was minded in was independent of a person's net annual household income or where they live but did show variation

depending on their age. Younger people (<34 years of age) were more likely to rate it as 'very important' than those in the older age groups.

These results again illustrate that needs and concerns vary depending on age and place of residence.

Affordable childcare scheme

Awareness/childminder eligibility: Participants were asked if they were aware of this scheme and if they knew whether their childminder was eligible for it. The results show that only 36% of respondents knew about the scheme and 74.5% of respondents did not know if their childminder is eligible to avail of it. It should be noted, however, that this survey preceded the Department of Children and Youth Affairs' communication campaign about the scheme.

Consider moving to an eligible provider: When asked if they would consider choosing childcare that is eligible, again there was a high percentage of 'don't knows' with approximately 31% stating that would consider it (See figure below). It should be noted, that this is only the percentage of people who would consider it, it cannot be extrapolated from this that they would definitely choose it. It is also possible that the large number of 'don't knows' results from a lack of awareness about the scheme and that some of these respondents, when informed of it, might move to yes or no category.

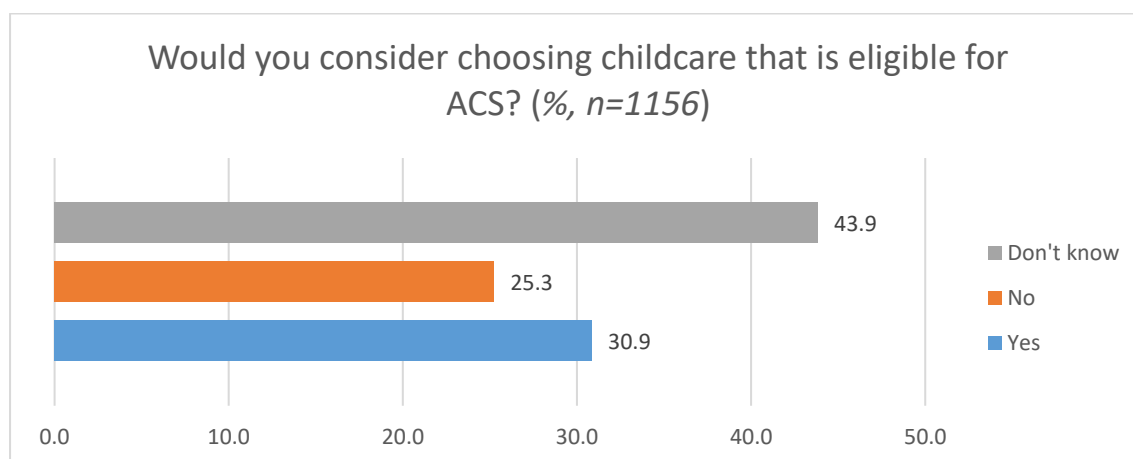


FIGURE 4 POSSIBILITY OF SWITCHING CHILDCARE PROVIDER WITH ACS

Taking the point that 'considering/don't know' is not an absolute, once the actual subsidies come on line in September 2017, some movement may occur. This may raise a potential capacity issue if there is significant movement within the childcare sector. As the majority of childminders are currently not eligible to provide ACS, the above results are very concerning, especially as they predate the DCYA communications campaign.

As stated in the demographic breakdown of respondents - approximately 48% of respondents reported a net annual household income of less than 50,000 euro per annum, with 6% earning less than a net annual household income of 20,000 euro per annum. As a result, the situation may arise for families who are eligible to benefit from the ACS (and the temporary access through CCSP/U) may not be able to due to the vast majority of childminders currently unable to provide access to schemes.

Impact and satisfaction with childminders

Impact: Participants were asked to rank, from 0 to 5, the impact that their childminder has had on various areas of their lives. A ranking of 0 indicates that they thought their childminder has had no

impact, with 5 indicating they considered that they had a high impact. The results are displayed in the figure below. The area where respondents felt that their childminder had the highest impact was allowing them to return to work. A very high percentage (64.1%) also felt that their childminder had a high impact on the education and care of their children.

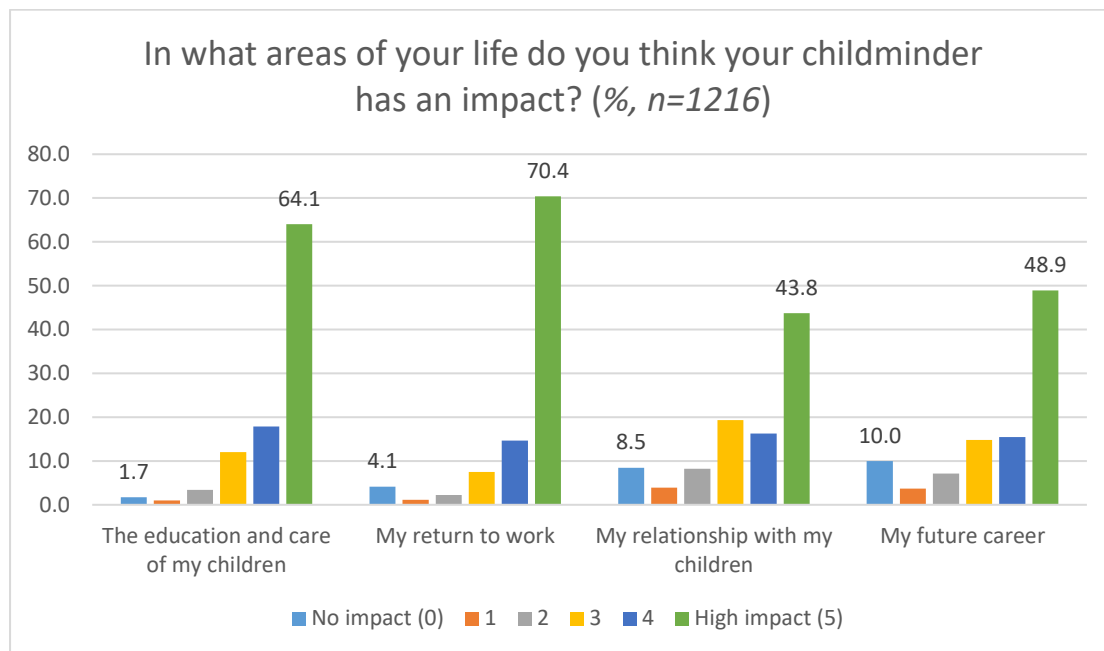


FIGURE 5 IMPACT OF CHILDMINDER ON THE PARENT'S LIFE

As with previous questions, the figures for this question were again disaggregated by age group, net annual household income group and place of residence to test for statistically significant relationships.

No statistically significant relationship: 'Returning to work' and 'relationship with children' showed no statistically significant relationship with any of the three variables – age, net annual household income or location.

Education and care: Younger people (<34 years of age) rated the impact on the education and care of their children as significantly higher than those in the older age groups. Respondents aged 45+ years had more than expected number of people responding that their childminder had 'no impact' in this area.

Future career: There was a statistically significant relationship between a person's net annual household income and the impact they feel their childminder has on their future career. As net annual household income increased, fewer than expected people rated the impact as 'very important'. Those on net annual household incomes between €20,000 and €40,000 were more likely to rate the impact as 'very important'. Earners on the highest net annual household income group (€60,000+) had more than expected respondents rating it as 'not at all important' and lower than expected rating it as 'very important'.

Satisfaction with childminder: An overwhelming majority of respondents, approximately 72%, are 'Very satisfied' with their childminder (See figure below). Recurring positive words and phrases used to describe childminders include 'home from home', 'kind', 'caring', 'flexible', 'reliable', and 'loved'. This reinforces the high percentage who ranked these qualities as 'very important' in previous questions.

Negative themes that emerged from the analysis were concerns with their childminder regarding the lack of flexibility, the physical environment and the cost involved. Some respondents also stated that, due to the lack of childminders in their area, they had no choice but to stay with a particular childminder, regardless of satisfaction.

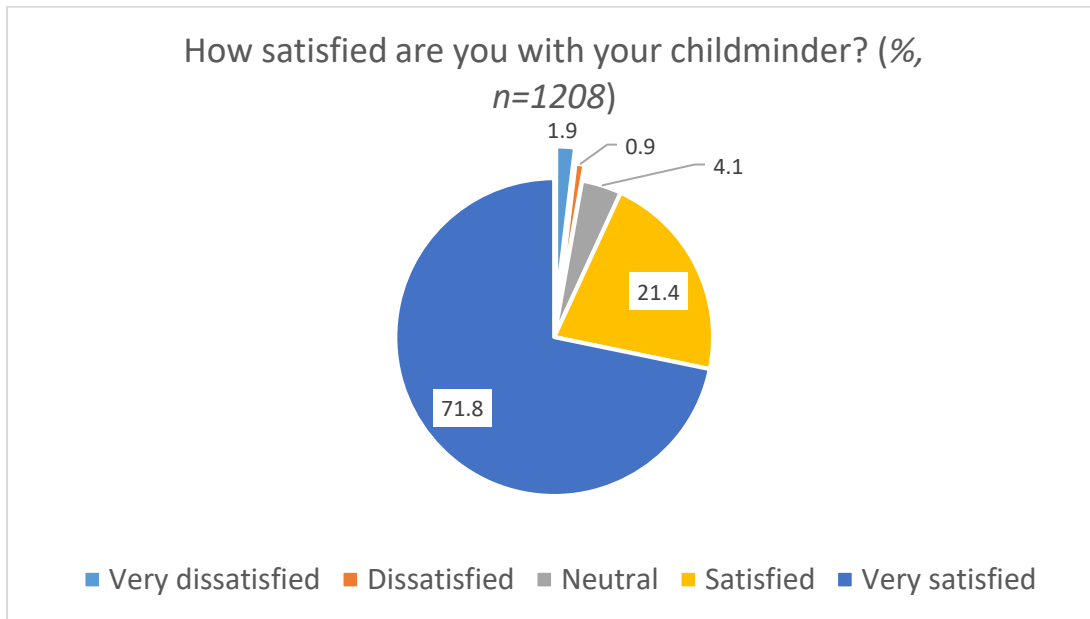


FIGURE 6 PARENTAL SATISFACTION WITH CHILDMINDERS

Email from a parent

The following is an email from a parent employing a childminder in parental home (Nanny). The email is characteristic of comments received from other parents in a similar position.

Sent: 18 May 2017 12:43
To: Support
Cc: Subject: Fwd: FW: Parents Childminding Survey - Working Group on Reforms and Supports for the Childminding Sector

Dear Bernadette,

I received your email survey and was keen to contribute. I currently have a childminder looking after my children in my home. I was most disappointed to note that when I ticked this option on the survey I was advised that I was not availing of a childminding service therefore was not eligible to be included in the survey.

I was quite surprised at this as I would certainly include the employment of a full-time childminder in my home as availing of a childminding service. As I am keen to contribute my thoughts to this debate I thought that I would contact you directly, including the Minister in the hope that she might expand the scope of this discussion.

I employ a childminder in my home as I have three children, one child of school going age, a child attending Montessori and a young baby. With this combination it would be extremely difficult to source any other form of childcare to cater for my three children. Childminders offering a service of minding multiple children in their own homes are extremely rare and I do not know of anyone who has been lucky enough to source such a service for their children.

The majority of working mothers that I know, employ a childminder in their home, however this is extremely expensive, in the region of €1,600 - €2,000 per month and that would generally include a least one a day a week being provided by grandparent / mother working a 4-day week.

I have always employed childminders as a registered employer and paid them through the PAYE system however it is my understanding that such arrangements may not even be eligible for the new proposed grant as that are not specifically "registered childminders".

There are thousands of well educated, experienced professional women in this country who are being massively discouraged from returning / remaining in the workforce due to prohibitively high childcare costs and family unfriendly workplace practices.

I have included a number of my contemporaries on this email who are all struggling to juggle the day to day balance of progressing their careers and being able to source and afford suitable childcare for their children.

I believe that this is the most pressing issue for families and that the Government will lose an entire generation of capable women from the workplace if there is not serious and meaningful intervention in the very near future.

I would urge the Minister to expand the childminding service and consider the opinion of all those employing childminders and au pairs in any capacity as well as those availing of after school care arrangements, in the hope that a suitable assistance programme could be devised.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the issues that I have raised.

regards

4 Consultation with childminders

Overview

The estimated number of working childminders is 35,000³ and as there is no system for the majority of childminders, it is a challenging group to reach in its entirety. Childminder consultation was critical to understanding the current issues facing the sector and to the appropriateness of recommendations.

Consultation included:

- Childminding Ireland members survey, Oct 2016
- Childminding Discussion Day, Jan 2017
- Membership of the Childminding Working Group. A working childminder, the Chair of Childminding Ireland was a member of the Childminding Working Group. Draft recommendations were shared with represented bodies including the Board of Childminding Ireland that includes 7 working childminders.

Survey of childminders

Childminding Ireland undertook a survey of members in Oct 2016, total responses n=357.

Respondents Demographic Breakdown:

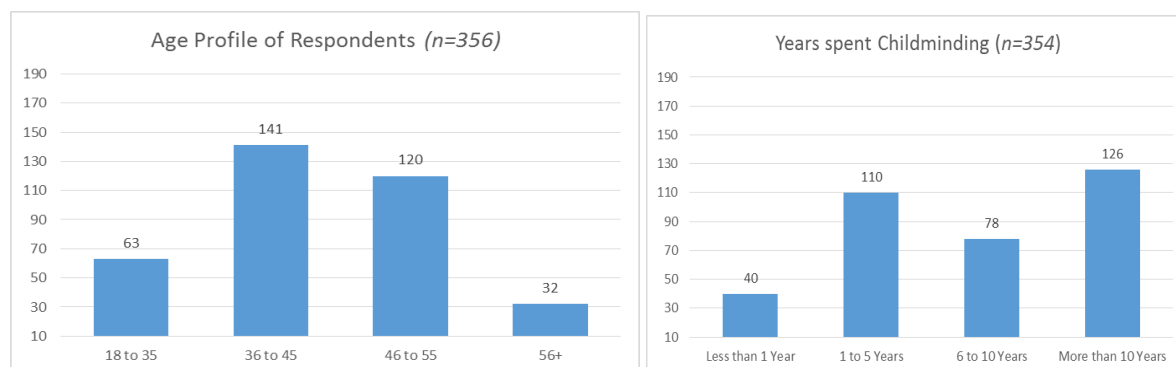


FIGURE 7 CHILDMINDERS' AGE AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

The vast majority (82%) of respondents are over the age of 36 years, and approximately 58% have been childminding for 6 or more years. 36% of respondents have been childminding for 10 or more years. The split between urban and rural based childminders is fairly even at approximately 52% and 48% respectively.

Respondents' childcare qualifications

Childminders were asked if they had a completed childcare qualification and 63% (n=350) of the respondents responded positively. The chart below shows the level of childcare qualification held by

³ This estimate is based on updating the figures in *Children 2020*, with the population results from the latest Census (2016) and the percentages from the most recent Quarterly National Household Survey Module on Childcare (2017), using the assumption of Goodbody Economic Consultants in 2011 that childminders care for 2.5 children on average.

those childminders who answered positively. This confirms previous research of unaffiliated childminders, in which over 55% held QQI level 5, over 34% held QQI level 6, with over 10% held degrees in childcare. This demonstrates that childminders’ educational level has been rising in line with other practitioners in the sector, despite the lack of official incentive or recognition since 2010 (O’Regan, 2016, p. 5)

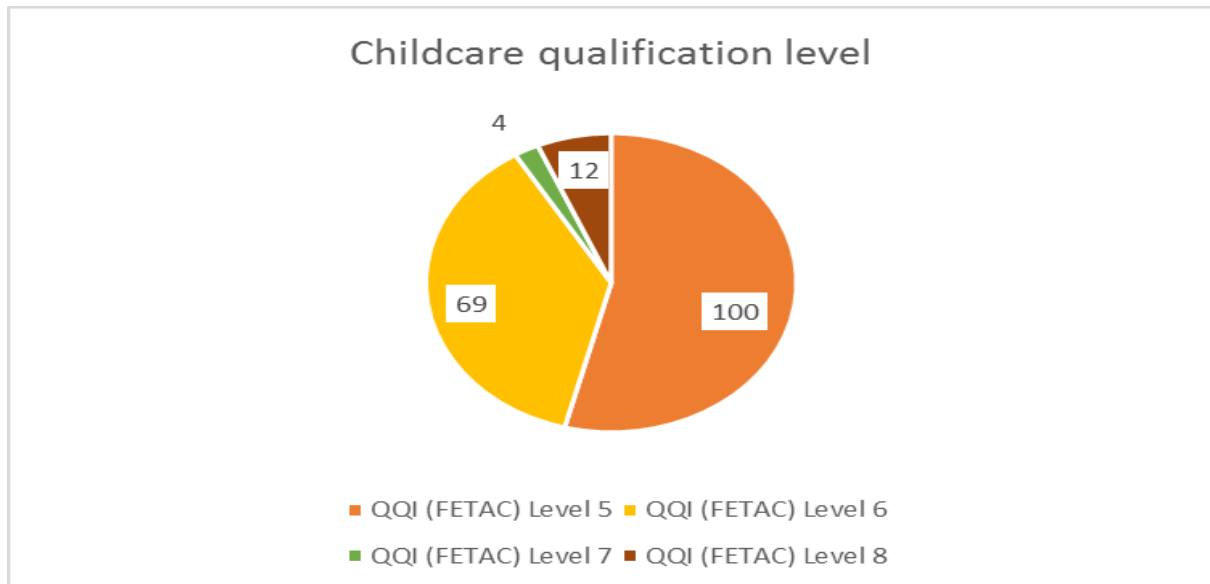


FIGURE 8 CHILDMINDERS LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION IN CHILDCARE

When considering childcare qualifications obtained by childminders in relation to the number of years the childminder had been childminding (see figure 12 below), it was interesting to note that those respondents that had been working for more than 10 years were the most highly qualified group. Further research is required to investigate fully the finding, but it may be due to financial assistance having been available historically to support training and professional development for childminders.

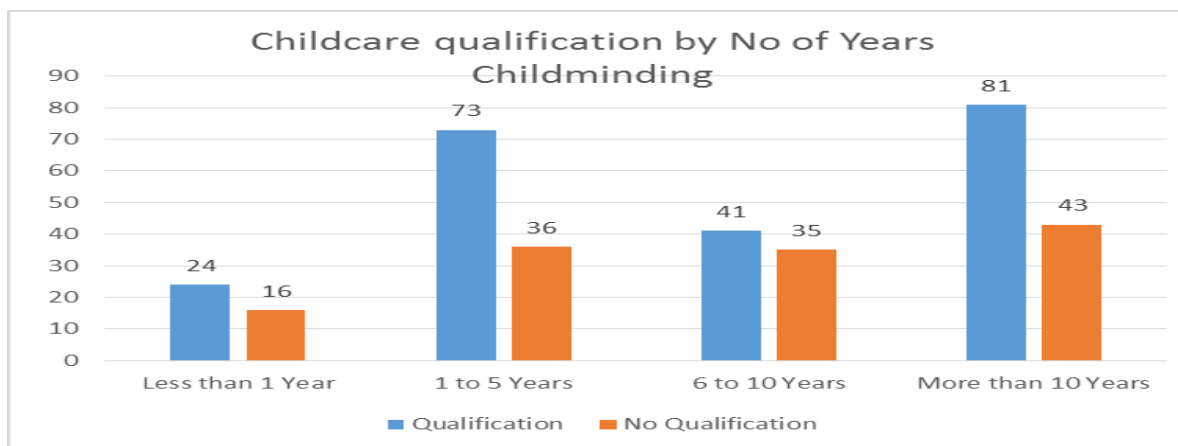


FIGURE 9 QUALIFICATION LEVEL IN RELATION TO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE CHILDMINDING

Challenges/future benefits for childminding services

The most significant challenges currently facing childminders business was ‘lack of Government awareness’ of the sector and the least significant challenge was lack of clients.

Childminders were asked which potential future changes would be of most benefit to their services. The results show that more of the respondents considered subsidies for the provider to be the most beneficial, followed by an increase in tax relief and a separate National Register for childminders. The future changes considered by the largest number of respondents to be the least beneficial to their services was a tailored childminding qualification.

Additional research would be necessary to establish the reasons behind these answers, but the fact that childminders are not currently required to obtain a childcare qualification may be relevant.

Satisfaction levels of childminders using the supports that are currently available

Respondents reported high levels (Figure 10) of satisfaction with current support organisations.

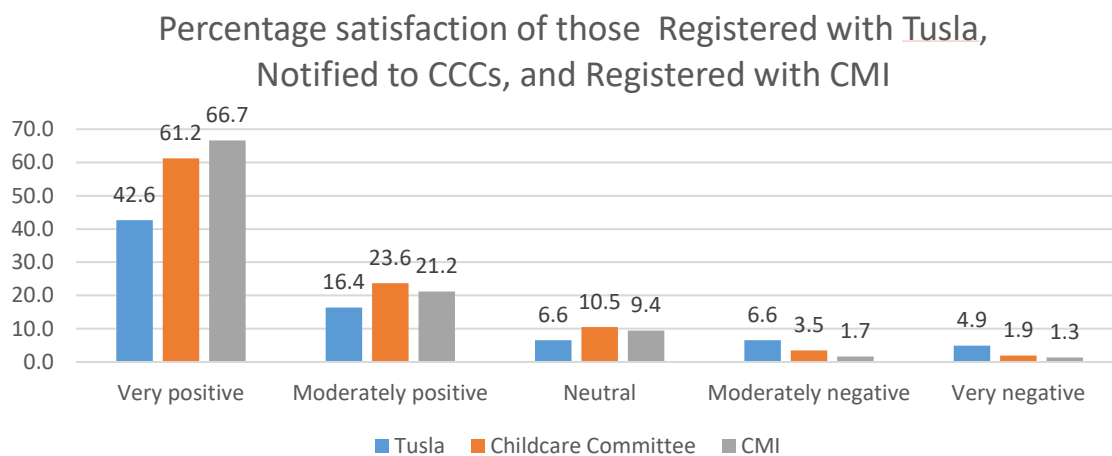


FIGURE 10 CHILDMINDER SATISFACTION WITH SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

Additional Points Raised by Respondents:

Respondents were asked if they had any other comments, questions or concerns. These were thematically analysed as follows:

- Regulations should be childminding appropriate
- Childminders should be viewed as professionals
- Parental choice needs to be respected
- Access to training is needed
- Concerns arising from the impact of ECCE on childminding services,
- An increase to the ratio of minded children per childminders

Childminders Discussion Day

A facilitated childminder discussion day was organised by Childminding Ireland for members to look at the short, medium and long-term vision for childminding within Ireland. The purpose of the day was to gather input from working childminders. The 22 volunteers were from 12 different counties and represented both rural and urban childminding services. The length of time the participants had been working as childminders ranged from 1 to 20 years.

Participants were divided into working groups to discuss and make recommendations on the short, medium and long-term vision for childminding in Ireland. Each working group contained a mix of urban and rural, relatively new childminders and long established services.

The discussion was passionate and wide ranging and the main themes that emerged were:

| Short-Term Goals (Themes raised by all/most groups) | Mid-Term Goals (Themes raised by all/most groups) | Long-Term Goals (Themes raised by all/most groups) |
|--|---|---|
| Childminders to be included in ACS | Access to funding for training that is locally available and flexible | Preservation of unique home from home childcare |
| Support for Childminders including continuing professional development, workshops, guidance on policies and procedures | Consistent countrywide inspection standards | On-going development of qualified childminding sector |
| Proportionate, tailored standards and inspections | Childminding support workers for each county | Public recognition of childminders as professionals, parity of esteem |
| More efficient Garda Vetting | An increase to the tax threshold of €15,000 | |
| Respecting parental choice in childcare | | |
| Tailored criteria to allow Childminders access to schemes, grants and Learners Fund | | |
| Attention to individual children's different rates of development not just aged based | | |
| Child centred standards and inspections, not emphasis on paperwork alone. | | |
| More flexible ratios for Childminders | | |

FIGURE 11 CHILDMINDERS' VISION FOR CHILDMINDING IN IRELAND

(The full Childminder Discussion Day feedback paper is including is appended Appendix 3.1).

The long-term goals of the majority of the childminders at the Discussion Day included the need to preserve the unique home from home form of childcare, on-going development of a qualified childminding sector and public recognition of childminders as professionals, with parity of esteem.

These findings echo previous research undertaken which concluded that childminders now seek a distinctive approach to support home based childcare repeatedly articulating that:

1. Apart from relative childcare, ALL homebased childminders to be regulated under proportionate childminding regulations.
2. National accredited awards at QQI level 5 and 6 required for home based ECEC.
3. Training should be funded, local and flexible, with incentives to progress to higher levels.
4. A local support worker should be dedicated to the development of homebased childcare.
5. Development of local networks to support and empower childminders.
6. A national register for childminders, available to the general public to provide transparency to the childminding system.
7. Trained registered childminders should be allowed provide whatever government funded childcare schemes are in place (O'Regan, 2016, p. 7).

In addition to the future of childminding, principle themes emerged as matters of great concern and potential blockages to the migration of childminding into a quality assured system were as follows:

- Lack of appropriate inspections and regulations
- Lack of respect for the home from home ethos
- Lack of professional support for Childminders
- Lack of access to education and training
- Lack of recognition for professional working standards
- Lack of access to funding, subsidies and financial supports

Any future childminding quality assurance system must address and resolve these issues if it is to encourage retention of existing childminders and attract new childminding entrants into the sector.



Childminders' Discussion Day 14 January 2017 – Feedback

Introduction: The members of Childminding Ireland were invited to attend a facilitated discussion day, the focus of which was: the short, medium and long-term vision for childminding within Ireland. The purpose of the day was to gather input from working Childminders in order to feedback directly to the Working Group formed by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to establish reforms and supports necessary in the childminding Sector. The volunteers were from 12 different counties and represented both rural and urban Childminding services. The participants had been working as Childminders from 1 to 20 years.

Having reviewed the stakeholders impacted by childminding the participants were divided into five working groups to discuss and make recommendations on the short, medium and long-term vision for Childminding in Ireland. Each working group contained a mix of urban and rural, relatively new Childminders and long established services. The groups each nominated a spokesperson to feedback findings to the room for discussion.

Findings: This paper was shared with all attendees who were asked to provide feedback if any comments on the day were missing. No corrections were received.

Themes: The discussion was passionate and wide ranging. The principle themes that emerged as matters of great concern and potential blockages to the migration of childminding into a quality assured system were as follows:

- Lack of appropriate inspections and regulations
- Lack of respect for the home from home ethos
- Lack of professional support for childminders
- Lack of access to education and training
- Lack of recognition for professional working standards
- Lack of access to funding, subsidies and financial supports

Feedback has been summarised into those issues that were common to all spokespersons and categorised as short, medium and long term goals as follows:-

Short-term Goals (Themes raised by all/most groups)

1. Childminders to be included in ACS
2. Support for Childminders including continuing professional development, workshops, guidance on policies and procedures
3. Proportionate, tailored standards and inspections
4. More efficient Garda vetting
5. Respecting parental choice in childcare
6. Tailored criteria to allow Childminders access to schemes, grants and Learners Fund
7. Attention to children's different rates of development – not just aged based e.g. Potty training artificially accelerated to allow parents access to schemes.
8. Child centred standards and inspections, not emphasis on paperwork alone.
9. More flexible ratios for Childminders

Medium-term Goals (Themes raised by all/most groups)

1. Access to funding for training that is locally available and flexible
2. Consistent countrywide inspection standards
3. Childminding support workers for each county
4. An increase the tax threshold of €15,000

Long -term Goals (Themes raised by all/most groups)

1. Preservation of unique home from home childcare
2. On-going development of qualified childminding sector
3. Public recognition of childminders as professionals, parity of esteem

Summary: The themes that emerged from the breakout work, illustrate the concerns of the attendees, feelings ran high and the general sense was that few of the attendees would have an interest in joining a system that did not appropriately address these issues.

The flipcharts were useful for capturing the discussion at individual tables, but did not record the plenary discussions resulting from the flipcharts presentations themselves.

The plenary discussions focused on quality assurance of childminding and necessary supports for childminders. There was a strong emphasis on voluntary codes of conduct, guidelines and standards that are viable starting positions rather than ‘regulations’. Concerns were raised around individual interpretation of regulations.

Questions were asked as to the actual evidence that ‘regulation’ improves quality standards for childminders – where is the science.

Concern that current regulation of centre-based care and the time constraints when single handedly caring for children. Solutions for childminders will not be the same as the solutions needed for centre-based care.

Support and advice is badly needed, including support and development visits rather than inspections.

The ‘home’ ethos has to be protected as does ‘childhood’

Conclusions of consultation process

1. Children have stated a preference for homebased care. In the Parents Survey 78% of respondents ranked the ‘home from home setting’ as ‘very important’. Childminders also strongly emphasised the need to protect the ‘home’ ethos of childminding. Childminding is uniquely placed in terms of a home setting, as the next best alternative to children being in their own homes. It must be properly resourced and supported in order to meet the expressed preference of children and parents.
2. The long-term goals of childminders consulted was the need to preserve the unique home from home form of childcare, on-going development of a qualified childminding sector and public recognition of childminders as professionals, with parity of esteem.
3. The childminder’s personal qualities – kind, caring – was the statement with the highest “very important” ranking by respondents in the Parents’ Survey.
4. According to the survey, their childminder’s highest impact for parents was allowing them to return to work.

5. Nearly half of all parent respondents were in income brackets that would make them eligible for means tested support for childcare costs under the Affordable Childcare Scheme (ACS)
6. The Parents Survey results and childminder feedback indicate an inherent suspicion of regulations and legislation, with fears that this will reduce both the number and quality of childminders that are currently available and increase costs.
7. This findings suggest that childminders and families choosing childminding for their childcare needs must have access to State supports as a matter of urgency. The findings show that in particular in some rural areas, there is no access to Tusla Registered providers either in centre-based care or in childminding settings, this could lead to the unintended consequence that families, have no access to the State supports that they are entitled to.
8. As every family is unique so too is every childminding setting, this allow parents the opportunity to find a childminding setting that as much as possible is in line with their own home. The challenge is to ensure quality, whilst respecting and preserving the very aspect of childcare that children themselves and parents value, the home-from-home ethos.

Document 2

**Childminding in Western Europe:
an inventory of best practice**

About this study

Conducted by a team of researchers at the Kohnstamm Instituut of the University of Amsterdam, this study⁴ looked at childcare policy for childminders in six west European countries with reference to the Netherlands: Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, Belgium, France and England. It analysed the systems in these countries under three headings:

1. **Child Protection, Health and Safety** How is the safety of the children guaranteed? This covered how children are protected from physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as how they are protected from health risks and an unsafe environment.
2. **Financial Management** How is the State involved in funding childminding and how is fraud around State funding combatted?
3. **Childcare Quality** How is the quality of the childcare on offer required to meet the legal standard?

1. Child Protection: Minimum age, vetting and screening

In all the countries involved in this study, 18 years is the minimum age for exercising the profession of childminder. Table 1 shows the requirements for vetting in each country. In addition, the Netherlands conduct continual screening, while other countries ask for renewed police vetting periodically.

TABLE 1 VETTING AND SCREENING

| Land | Mandatory vetting | Further details |
|-------------|-------------------|---|
| Netherlands | Yes | <p>Vetting is mandatory for the childminder and anyone 18 years old or over living in the house.</p> <p>Vetting is also mandatory, for anyone 12 years or older, who is present in the house while the service is open, if the person in charge has reason to suspect them of a serious offense, such as physical or sexual abuse.</p> <p>There is also continual screening of those 'working professionally in childcare and preschools', via a daily check of the national Justice Database linked to the PPS numbers of childcare workers in a central register.</p> <p>Childcare professional are mandatory reporters in cases of physical or sexual abuse, via confidential inspectors within the Dept, of Education.</p> <p>Students on work placement, temporary workers and volunteers are not part of the continual screening system, and so these workers must undergo vetting every 2 years. since July 2013. It is intended to include all the workers in the central register eventually so that this biannual vetting is no longer necessary.</p> |
| Belgium | Yes | <p>The childminders and anyone in regular direct contact with the children must hold a vetting clearance statement.</p> <p>Other requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a certificate of capacity from an childcare support organisation. |

⁴ Boogaard, M., Bollen, I., & Dijkers, L. (2013). Gastouderopvang in West-Europese landen. Retrieved from www.kohnstammstituut.uva.nl. Extracts translated by M. O'Regan

| | | |
|-------------|-------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A certificate of medical fitness (Part A filled in by the applicant; it may be supplemented by Part B, a doctor’s declaration. To be renewed every three years. |
| Denmark | Check | Before the childminder starts work, the police run a check (<i>for the municipality</i>) for any violent crimes on every adult member of the household of the future childminder. |
| Germany | Yes | In some states, all adults of the household must hold a police vetting statement. These must be submitted in order to gain a childcare permit (Pfleegerlaubnis) from the local Youth Office (Jugendamt). This permit must be renewed every 5 years. Other requirements: a health declaration, and in some cases, a tax compliance certificate, showing the person has no debts. |
| England | Check | The childminder and all inhabitants of the house over 16 must hold clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service. (DBS) The childminder receives a one-time screening visit from OFSTED, and possible further checks if OFSTED receive information suggesting the person is no longer suited for working with children. Other requirements: Medical declaration of fitness by your GP, (including medical history) |
| Switzerland | No | In some cantons, it is recommended that childminders and adult members of the household should hold vetting, but this is not mandatory and not true of every canton. |

2. National register

Both the Netherlands and England have a national register for childminders, which all childminders must be on. In the other countries, there is mandatory registration at a local level. Only the Dutch register is open to the public.

TABLE 2 REGISTRATION

| Land | National/ Local | Details |
|-------------|---|---|
| Netherlands | Mandatory national registration | Childminders register through local agencies; once the childminding agency fulfils the condition the childminders is registered in the National Register for Childcare and Playschools. (LRKP) This registration is required for parents to be able to claim a childcare allowance. This digital database is accessible to the public. |
| Belgium | No national register, just local registration | Childminders receive tax free expenses claimed through a childcare organisation. This agency receives subsidies from the Child & Family department, with whom they must be registered. |
| Denmark | No national register, just local registration | All childcare providers must be approved and registered by local authorities in order to qualify for subsidies. Most childminders are employed by the local municipality. It is unclear if the small percentage of private/independent childminders must also register. These databases are not open to the public, although some areas publish local childminders’ profiles to assist parents. |

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| Germany | No national register, just local registration | To become a childminder, a permit is required from the local Youth Office in most cases. There appears to be no national database. |
| France | No national register, just local registration | Registration is linked to approval by the local PMI officer (<i>Mother and Child Protection - La protection maternelle et infantile (PMI)</i>). This approval must be renewed every five years. |
| England | Mandatory national registration (OFSTED) | All childminders and other childcare providers working with children under the age of 8 years must register with OFSTED. (<i>Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills</i>) |
| Switzerland | No national register, just local registration | All childminders must notify their local authority of their service. Childminders who belong to an agency receive support to do this. Some cantons work with a licensing system, which a childminder applies for once, depending how many hours the childminder operates. In Zurich, a licence is required for those who mind children for at least 20 hours per week. |

3. Mandatory Documentation

Table 3 show the differences in documentation required for childminders. In countries where most childminders are employed by the municipality, (Denmark and Switzerland), it seems that there are no mandatory documents required, although checks are done before employing the person.

In most countries, childminders must provide evidence to show:

1. Suitability to work as a childminder
2. Suitability of the home for the care of children
3. Physical fitness for the work and, in some cases, tax compliance.

TABLE 3 DOCUMENTATION

| <i>Land</i> | <i>Documents required</i> |
|--------------------|---|
| Netherlands | <p>Proof of registration on the national database (LRKP), which requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A certificate of the required standard of qualification • Proof of Vetting • Proof of Identity • Health & Safety assessment for the home • Paediatric First Aid (valid for 2 years) |
| Belgium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of Identity • Police Vetting document • A medical certificate (from a doctor) • Proof of qualifications • A certificate of capacity (from a childcare organisation) • A certificate for the module: Introduction to Family Childcare • A Paediatric First Aid certificate (valid for 3 years) <p>Documents required for others coming in direct contact with the children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Vetting document • A medical certificate (from a doctor) |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Denmark | <p>As for all childcare services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum / educational learning plan. <p>This plan and the documentation on the development and learning of the children are evaluated annually by the committee and the town management. Some areas have a central curriculum which is for all childminders in the area, while others allow childminders develop their own learning plans.</p> |
| Germany | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A childcare permit <p>This is granted by the Youth Office after a personal interview, a house visit and the submission of various documents such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police vetting statement • First Aid certificate • Medical certificate (valid for 5 years) • Tax compliance certificate, in some States. |
| France | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of approval from the PMI inspector • Permission from the local authority to use the house for the purpose of childminding, with details of number of children, type of care etc. • With an additional licence if a group of childminders are working in a MAM – group of 3-4 childminders working together • Proof of animal vaccinations where applicable • Car insurance, and written permission of parents to carry minded children <p>Renewed every 5 years.</p> |
| England | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid First Aid certificate • Approval from the Disclosure and Barring Service via OFSTED • Evidence of completed qualification from an approved authority • Registration with OFSTED in Early Years Provision (0-5) and/or Later Years Provision (6-8). This involves meeting requirements in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safeguarding and Welfare ○ Learning and Development • Public liability insurance • Medical certificate and history from your GP. |
| Switzerland | <p>Childminders must register with the local authority to be allowed to mind children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no required documentation. • An interview and approval procedure considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The family situation ○ Organisational ability ○ Educational and teaching qualifications ○ Knowledge of children, child development, children’s needs, nutrition, illnesses, handling of medicines, the risks of passive smoking ○ Physical, intellectual and emotional suitability for minding children from a medical exam and vaccination records ○ Good mastery of the French language ○ A health and safety assessment on the home, hygiene, furniture, storage of poisons, availability of a telephone, display of emergency numbers. ○ Suitable surrounding environment – outside play areas, dangers such as rivers or wells, etc. ○ No dangerous (Category 2) animals – such as a Pitbull. |

4. First Aid and Safety Checks in the home

Almost all Childminders have to have a First Aid certificate, valid for 2 or 3 years, only in Denmark was it not obligatory in all areas. In all 7 countries, there are safety checks on the places and set up where the children will be minded, usually by a visit in the home from a worker from the agency or office concerned, and the completion of a risk assessment tool.

5. Inspection, supervision and management

TABLE 4 CONTROLLING BODIES AND INSPECTION

| Country | Body | Inspection and Supervision provided |
|-------------|--|--|
| Netherlands | GGD Local Health Service is responsible for supervision, managed by the local authorities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual inspection of the Childminding Agencies • Random inspections of sample Childminding homes, unannounced in theory but often made known in advance in practice. • Focuses on meeting legal requirements. |
| Belgium | Zorginspectie The care inspectorate is a national authority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection of Childminding Agencies • Makes recommendations • Under the new law, individual Childminders can also be inspected • Assessed for quality of learning with the KWAPOI instrument. • A new tool is in development, which will be used by the inspectorate and for self-evaluation. • Everything else is assessed under the regulatory framework. |
| Denmark | Gemeente The town's local inspectors, who hold an early years' qualification, carry out all supervision. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a month on average • In the Childminder's home or the playcentre where the children are being minded • Can be announced or unannounced • Monitoring and assessment of quality based on an agreed framework focussed on the care of children, the required documentation, the educational plan <p>As well as being the employer, the inspector is also the supervisor and advisor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They advise childminders on their daily practice, to ensure children are having positive experiences, and that parents and childminder have a good relationship. • 72% of local authorities have a systematic, prescribed method of supervision. • Inspection is supplemented by group meetings for childminders, and other information events for parents and childminders. |
| Germany | Jugendamt Local Youth Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection once every 5 years when the childcare permit is being renewed. |
| France | PMI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childminders are supervised by professional PMI workers, who may be a children's nurse, a social worker, a psychologist or a doctor. • Visits take place in the Childminder's home, as often as needed depending on the need and observations of the PMI worker, the goals agreed with the Childminders, the questions of parents etc. • The licence to operate as a Childminder must be renewed every 5 years at the municipality. |

| | | |
|-------------|--|---|
| England | Ofsted In conjunction with local authorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 7 months of registration • Every 3-4 years after that • An inspection report is published after each inspection for those on the EYP, which describes the services regarding child well-being, quality, how well the children's needs are met, supervision and management. • Childminders on the LYP get a letter stating that they meet the requirements, under the same headings. |
| Switzerland | Childminder agencies & town officials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childminders have at least one supervisory meeting annually • At least one home visit by the agency or officials. |

6. The role of Childminding Agencies

The Dutch model, where all Childminders must join a Childminding agency, is unique. In the other countries, other bodies carried out some aspects of the agency role, but Childminders could also work independently.

TABLE 5 ROLE OF CHILDMINDING AGENCIES

| Country | Childminding agencies | Tasks |
|----------------|--|---|
| Netherlands | Yes, all childminders must join at least one. | <p>Childminder Agencies are responsible for the quality of childcare provided by their childminders. They must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange interviews for parents and prospective childminders • Support and supervise Childminders • Manage and account for payments • Create an educational plan, and a child protection protocol • Do an annual health and safety assessment with the childminder • Put plans in place to prevent or reduce risks • Have a parents' committee and complaint handling system • Handle fee payments to childminders: all parents' payments (& payments from government or employer) go through the agencies. |
| Belgium | Yes, but childminders are not obliged to join one. | <p>The organising agency provides Childminder supports regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of childcare places - health and safety - working with children and families - administration, and - co-operation with other bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments • Educational supports, from within its own organisation or via an educational service, recognised by the Department of Child and Family. <p>It is also possible to work as an 'independent childminder' without joining a childminding agency.</p> |
| Denmark | No | <p>The local Social Services are responsible for the all childcare centres in their area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure sufficient childcare places • To recruit and terminate childminders • To supervise, inspect and support of childminders via home visits on average once a month |

| | | |
|---------|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To visit the childminder with the parents before a child is placed in the service, so that the parents are well informed and give the child a good start in the service • To check the physical and social development of the children • To provide childminders with any equipment needed to provide a successful service: Toys, prams, and nappies. • To organise excursions, outings and activities. <p>It is also to work as a private childminder, but there is still contact with the local authority regarding payments for the child.</p> |
| Germany | No | <p>The Youth office (<i>Jugendamt</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspects the childminder and the home for suitability, which includes granting a childcare permit • Facilitates negotiations between parents and childminder regarding the cost of care and the parents' contribution • Concludes contracts with childminders • Handles the payment to the Childminder • Guarantees educational needs are met • Provides training and Continuous Professional Development • Supports childminders with expert advice and support • Offers the first point of contact for parents. <p>In some regions, these tasks are carried out by so called Childminding Unions.</p> |
| France | No | <p>Childminders can join a Childminding network: <i>relais assistants maternel</i> (RAM). Childminders can go there for legal, administrative and childcare advice, to meet other childminders and to exchange experiences with them. Workshops and training are organised and sometimes there are activities for children where they can meet other children being minded locally.</p> <p>Parents can go the local RAM to get advice and information about the types of childcare available. A RAM is organised by a professional with expertise in the field of young children, for example a social worker.</p> |
| England | No, but there has been a pilot project running since 2013. | <p>A childminder agency can register childminders and provide a range of services to its members and parents. Introduced by the Department for Education in 2013, childminder agencies are obliged by law to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure a childminder's suitability, including their capacity to deliver the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) if needed. • support the training and development of childminders • help parents find and work with a suitable childminder • improve the quality of provision • monitor the standard of care provided by the childminders they register <p>Childminder agencies may provide childminders with support services such as marketing, administration, training and development. They also carry out assessments of the childminders registered with them. Agencies may provide parents with matching services to help them find a childminder, as well as access to holiday and sickness cover.</p> <p><i>There are 8 agencies in England in 2016; they are self-funded and so charge parents/childminders fees to avail of their services. Once a childminder is</i></p> |

| | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| | | <i>with an agency, they are no longer inspected OFSTED as an individual; instead the agency is inspected.</i> |
| Switzerland | Yes, but childminders do not have to join. | The Childminding Organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employ childminders • facilitate negotiations between parents and childminders. Childminders can also work independently; they are not obliged to join a childminding organisation. |

7 How the State funds childcare

TABLE 7 STATE CONTRIBUTION TO THE COST OF CHILDCARE

| Country | State Contribution to the cost of childcare |
|-------------|---|
| Netherlands | <p><i>Via settings:</i></p> <p>Childcare organisations receive subsidies for providing recognised preschool education programmes.</p> <p>Also, subsidies can be claimed from the Office of Quality in Childcare (BKK) in order to improve the quality of childcare and playgroups.</p> <p><i>Via parents:</i></p> <p>Parents can claim a childcare tax break with Revenue, for the cost of childcare with a registered childcare organisation.</p> <p>The amount is dependent on the actual costs (up to a certain maximum), the income and the number of hours the parents have worked.</p> <p>Measures have been taken to successfully combat fraud.</p> |
| Belgium | <p><i>Via settings:</i></p> <p>All recognised childcare has the right to a basic subsidy. Extra subsidies are possible if the setting decides to work with lower income brackets and a certain number of conditions. In addition, extra subsidies are possible if the setting works with socially vulnerable families, or is inclusive or flexible.</p> <p><i>Via parents:</i></p> <p>Parents can deduct childcare costs from their taxes (max €11.20 per day, per child). They receive a certificate of costs paid from the setting in April/May for that purpose. Financial support is also available for independent childcare. The government pays the difference between the family income and the price per day on the certificate of childcare costs.</p> <p>Childcare subsidies work entirely on the supply side, so that makes fraud practically impossible.</p> |
| Denmark | <p><i>Via settings</i></p> <p>If a child has a place in a publicly funded childcare setting, then the local authority pays at least 75% of the actual or average cost. Parents pay the rest – a maximum of 25%, or 33% for out of school care. This can differ, depending on the area.</p> <p><i>Via parents:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low income parents are eligible for an extra contribution to the cost of childcare. • Brothers and sisters can get a discount, as can children with special needs. • Parents with a preference for a particular type of care can get financial support if the child is eligible for the type of provision. <p>There is no problem with fraud or abuse of subsidies.</p> |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Germany | <p><i>Via settings:</i></p> <p>The Department of Family, Elderly, Women and Youth invested 5.4 billion euros in 2014 in the development of childcare provision for children under the age of 3. Since then, 845 million euro is being invested annually to ensure good quality day care for young children. Childminding forms part of this provision.</p> <p><i>Via parents:</i></p> <p>Arrangements differ depending on the State. The cost of childcare is shared between the government, the local authority and the parents. The level of parent contribution depends on their income. If the parents have little or no income, the costs can be entirely covered by the local Youth Office.</p> <p>In Berlin, parents pay the same price regardless of whether the child is with a childminder or a crèche. The level of payment is based on the income, the number of children, and the number of hours of childcare. Since 2013, a new law means that in addition to child benefit, parents can claim childcare benefit, if they do not make use of childcare but care for the child at home. Since 2014, that is work 150euro per month until that child is 22 months old.</p> <p>There seems to no abuse of the system.</p> |
| France | <p><i>Via settings:</i></p> <p>The government pays for preschool. A place at preschool (école maternelle) is free for children from the age of 2.</p> <p><i>Via parents:</i></p> <p>Parents pay an income related contribution for childcare. The price depends on the type of care. If a family income is double the minimum wage, then a childminder is the cheaper childcare solution. If the family income is lower than that, then centre based care is the cheapest.</p> <p>There is no known abuse of the system.</p> |
| England | <p><i>Via settings:</i></p> <p>All 3 and 4 years olds are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare per week over 38 weeks of the year. Some 2 year olds are also eligible.</p> <p><i>Via parents:</i></p> <p>The government has been spending £7 billion pounds annually on subsidies for childcare via different systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via the Universal Tax credit system, in which there is a childcare element, parents can claim a tax credit. The parent must work at least 16 hours per week to qualify. In 2016, a parent may be able to claim back up to 85% of childcare costs if eligible for or Universal Credit. • If parents cannot avail of tax credits, then they can avail of childcare vouchers via their employer up to a maximum of £55 per week for registered childcare. • For student parents, there are other subsidies available. <p>There are known cases where this system has been abused. However, for the preschool contributions, there are now legal means to pursue someone who is found to be illegally using the system.</p> |
| Switzerland | <p><i>Via settings:</i></p> <p>Childminding Agencies can claim subsidies from the government. Over three years, a third of training costs will be reimbursed to any organisation training childminders and agency workers. Also, a third of the costs will be reimbursed for improving the co-ordination and quality of care. These claims are made to ministry of Social Security, who makes a</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>decision on the claim in consultation with the local authority. Independent childminders are not eligible for this type of subsidy.</p> <p><i>Via parents:</i></p> <p>There is no nationally agreed tariff for childcare. Usually, the income and means of the parents are examined and the parents' contribution is based on that. There are differences in the cost of childcare depending on the area and the type of provision. Parents on low incomes qualify for an extra contribution from the State towards childcare costs. Parents who prefer a certain childcare provider can receive financial support once the child is eligible for that type of care. There are no known cases of fraud.</p> |
|--|--|

8 Employment Status of Childminders

Childminders have different employment status in different countries. There are childminders who work as self-employed, small business owners as well as childminders employed by the government in every country. However, the proportions vary: in Denmark, nearly all childminders are employed by the local authorities, while in France almost all are self-employed.

Apart from that, there are also differences in terms and conditions of work, regarding maternity and sick benefit, holiday pay, and subsidies towards the cost of courses and insurance premiums.

TABLE 8 STATE CONTRIBUTION TO THE COST OF CHILDCARE

| Country | Legal employment status of childminders | Payment |
|----------------|---|--|
| Netherlands | <p>As far their employment status is concerned, there are two types of childminders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Childminders who work in their own home on the basis of a contract between the childminder and the parent, where the childminder is a contractor, and the parents are clients; b) Childminders who work in the parents' home usually do so on the basis of a contract where the childminder is the employee and the parents are the employer. The regulations for domestic workers apply, under certain conditions which lighten the burden of employers' responsibilities on parents. c) Occasionally, childminders work on the basis of a contract with a childminding agency. <p>A childminder may or may not have the right to paid sick leave or holidays depending on the type of contract.</p> | <p>Payment is made by the parents, in line with the contract and the declaration of hours provided, via the childminding agency (cashier role) except in (very rare) cases, where the childminder is employed by the parents or the childminding agency.</p> |
| Belgium | <p>Childminders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • under contract with a childminding agency, • or independent. | <p>Payment is made via the organizing agency, (which could be the childminder) in the form of 'tax free payment of expenses'. This consists of parent's contributions and subsidies.</p> |

| | | |
|---------|---|---|
| | | <p>There is are several parallel complicated systems of financing:</p> <p>(a) For contracted childminders: parents pay between €1-24 (max) per day depending on their income; the rest is paid by subsidy, which the agency receives and passes on to the childminder.</p> <p>(b)Independent childminder make their own arrangements with parents for payment, and they can also calculate and claim any income related subsidy.</p> <p>Until now, childminders have been considered ‘volunteers’, but are demanding employment status. A two-year pilot project is due to report soon.</p> |
| Denmark | <p>Most childminders are employed by the local authority, only 2% are independent, private business owners.</p> <p>Childminders get 6 weeks paid holiday annually, along with paid sickness and maternity leave. They also get 2 days paid care leave, and full pay if they must care for their own sick child. 12.6% of their salary is paid into a pension. A full working week for a childminder is 48 hours, (vs. 37 hours for most other jobs) or no more than 11 hours per day.</p> | Childminders are paid by the social care department of local authorities. |
| Germany | <p>Childminders are:</p> <p>a) Employed by the Youth Office or Childminders’ Union depending on the region</p> <p>b) or work privately as an independent childminder</p> <p>Employed childminders receive a financial contribution for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - child costs, such as care necessities, toys, rent, water, electricity, travel - compensation for any training costs - contribution for insurance, health insurance and pension. | <p>Childminders receive:</p> <p>Either</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) a salary from the Youth Office, at a rate determined by the office,</p> <p>Or</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b) payment directly from parents on the basis of a privately agreed contract between childminder and parents</p> |
| France | <p>Childminders are:</p> <p>a) Mostly independent contractors (90%) who are directly hired by the parents. They have a contract with the parents.</p> <p>b) Can be employed by the local municipality if they work in a ‘family crèche’</p> <p>c) Can be employed by a Childminding Network. (MAM)</p> | <p>Payment is</p> <p>a) by the parents</p> <p>b) by the municipality</p> <p>c) by the network</p> <p>Since 2004, childminders are considered employees and can have a contract of unlimited hours, and certain hourly gross salary. They come under social security</p> |

| | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| | | regulations, and benefit from welfare payments for sick leave, pregnancy and maternity leave and old age pension. They also have the right to paid holidays. |
| England | <p>Childminders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Mostly independent and self-employed b) Employed by local authorities as preschool providers, partly because this guarantees a steady income – this is becoming increasingly popular. c) a small percentage is now employed by childminding agencies <p>Childminders are not obliged to have contracts with parents, but this is recommended. Also separate contracts can be agreed with parents or local authorities for specific purposes (e.g. overnight stays for night shift workers)</p> | <p>Payment is made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) by the parents, or b) by the local authority |
| Switzerland | <p>Childminders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Employed by a childminding agency. They have fixed earnings and an employment contract, covering everything agreed. The childcare for each child is agreed in separate contracts, which deal with hours of care, holidays and sick leave (childminder or child) b) Independent and not linked to a childminding agency. These childminders agree their own contracts with parents, with their own terms and conditions, (rate of pay, arrangements for holiday, sick leave etc.) | <p>Payment is made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) By childminding agencies b) By parents |

9 Research on quality in childminding

There is relatively little research done on the quality of childminding and its impact on children apart from studies in the Netherlands and the UK. In Belgium and the Netherlands, rating scales for the educational quality of childminding are in development, and in the UK the quality of training is under research. In Switzerland, a manual has been developed to improve childminding quality.

TABLE 9 RESEARCH ON THE QUALITY AND EFFECTS OF CHILDMINDING

| Country | Research on childminding quality and outcomes for children |
|-------------|--|
| Netherlands | <p>No quality ratings are available for childminding, although national ratings are done for full day care, afterschool care and playschools. A <i>Dutch rating scale based on the Family Child Care Environment Rating scale has now been completed</i> and national quality survey will soon be conducted.</p> <p><i>Groeneveld et.al., 2009, 2010 have compared stress levels in among children and workers in childcare settings, including childminders. Based on measurement of cortisol levels, the research found that in home-based childcare, children experienced higher caregiver sensitivity, lower noise levels, and showed higher wellbeing compared to children in childcare centres.</i></p> |
| Belgium | No research found. A new quality rating scale for childminding is in development. |
| Denmark | No research found. |
| Germany | No research found. |
| France | No research found. |
| England | <p>In 2011, Fauth et al. carried out research into the quality of childminding in England. (Childminding Practice in England.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A close, trusting relationship between childminders and children was the foundation upon which good childminding was built.</i> • <i>Childminders' ethos of learning revolved around tailored provision, the use of child directed free play and some planned activities.</i> • <i>There was a large variation in specific learning opportunities provided by childminders. Some childminders consistently provided activities for learning and structured children's play to support and extend their learning, whereas others were less likely to do so. By and large, childminders were aware of the kind of learning opportunities that should be provided to children to promote their development and learning; however, some childminders were more successful in putting these ideas into practice than others.</i> • <i>Regular reflection and a willingness to improve their practice were important among childminders who offered consistent high-quality care. Advance planning appeared to be important to ensuring children were offered adequate opportunities for learning, particularly when childminders had large groups of children.</i> • <i>While some childminders could offer both high quality care and learning opportunities, others found it difficult to strike the right balance between the two. Also, it seemed that childminders</i> |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| | with children of very different ages found it more difficult to maintain high quality in all areas. |
| Switzerland | No research was found on childminding. In 2013, a quality mark was brought in, a manual developed by members of KiTas (the Swiss day care organisation) and the Jacob's Foundations, to improve the quality of Swiss day care, targeting the quality of the childcare worker. |

Document 3

**Regulation of childminding in
Scotland, Northern Ireland
and Wales**

1 Experience of regulation in Scotland (Simpson)

Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) – Maggie Simpson Chief Executive

24th April 2017 Video Conference Notes

In attendance: Yvonne Kelly, Michael Keenan, Bernie McNally, Miriam O'Regan, Bernadette Orbinski Burke and Mairead Hurley. **Apologies:** Liz Kerrins, Liz Kennedy, Breda Cloney, Treasa Quigley

SCMA

The organisation covers the whole of Scotland and is a membership organisation (not for profit).

Estimated that 83% of Childminders in Scotland are SCMA members. SCMA views itself as the Professional Body for Childminders.

Core funding:

Government funding (approx. 20%) for core programmes such as early intervention work

Self-generated income:

Membership Fees

Services including insurance and training

Also some funding from local authorities

Board:

Board is primarily made up of Childminders – there are 20 members on the board in total.

Strategic plan is set out by the board so very much Childminding led.

States in the memo and arts that majority must be Childminders, to keep it relevant

However, SCMA must work within Government policy, where policy isn't working they will lobby for change - a two-way process.

<https://www.childminding.org/>

Scottish Childminding Definition:

If you are minding children other than your own between the ages of 0-16 for more than 2 hours a day and get paid or a reward, then you must register with the Care Inspectorate.

Statistically it is mostly children under 11 that attend Childminding services.

There are exemptions Grandparents, Aunts etc. are not required to register unless minding non-relative children.

Quality Assurance:

Registration and inspection of Childminders is the responsibility of the Care inspectorate. Pre 2002 changes in legislation, the 32 local authorities registered and inspected Childminders. 2002 change in legislation – brought improved consistency across Scotland.

Childminders are not inspected every year. Unless there are concerns, inspections are every 4 years and there is a grading system (levels 1-6).

Childminders provide annual self-assessments on-line. Childminders report on training completed during the year. The emphasis is on self-evaluation, self-improvement and linked to well-being indicators for each child.

94% of Childminders achieve higher grades – 4 -6

Those graded 1-3 would be inspected on yearly basis, these are the services that are struggling
Focus is on the improvement of service

Regulation of Childminding began in 1948, how do we get from here to there?

No-one thing, gradual process.

Standards for Group Based childcare and Childminders are different, there has to be a different standard when working in a home for example environments.

Outcome Basis is the same for all children.

In the past 2 years Care Inspectorate has changed, much better outcomes.

More about talking to the Childminder and the children.... tell me how you do.... not paper copy of policy being produced as evidence.

Better inspection process, improves the Childminders thought process. This approach of self-reflection and discussion with Childminders and discussions with children has been adapted for use in group based services also.

Inspires people

Longitude studies show that key quality indicators for positive outcomes in relation to social and emotional development- quality of care and support provided to children and leadership.

Childminders consistently outperform other forms of childcare in longitudinal studies.

<http://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/register-a-care-service/register-a-childminding-service>

Education Scotland inspections under the Department of Education-in relation to quality, not a legal requirement.

Subsidy:

Is there any financial incentive to register?

Large financial incentives for families, especially on low incomes, have to be using a registered provider to avail of subsidies.

Required to register in order to run business. Very few don't register, it happens, but not common. Registration provides access to supports, and subsidy for parental clients. If using an unregistered Childminder, parent/s are in breach of legislation.

Currently subsidy is paid to parent – better that it be paid to provider

Payments are made in arrears

Qualifications:

No current requirement for Childcare qualification – this may change.

Childminders tend to be 35+years old when starting, held other jobs, possibly have their own families, mature person.

Need for system to accredit prior learning – life skills

In sole charge of their own service.

Create tailored learning pathways –CPD, don't treat them like they are 16yrs old.

Childminding could be a Vocational qualification, with evening or weekend study.

Knowledge may be missing rather than skills

Make use of e-learning SVQ-SMART Assessment

Must be capable of running a business

40% childminders currently have other qualifications

Regulations accept 'have qualification or working towards it' can just have enrolled on a course.

Given 3yrs to complete a course.

Financial incentives needed for colleges to provide appropriate training.

Funded hours for pre-school – local Authorities hold budget

Childminders can provide funded hours. Early learning and childcare funded hours are expected to be substantially increased by 2020.

Care plans, support tool used.

Care Inspectorate

Good working relationship between SCMA and Care Inspectorate

Role of Care Insp – registration and inspection

Role of SCMA – support Childminders to meet the standards required. Identify areas of training needed.

Work with Care Inspectorate on two platforms:

1. Operational group – 2-way feedback where emerging trends and potential responses e.g. training, can be highlighted
2. Strategic group – high-level issues.

Standards are guidelines not detailed inspection tool.

Detail not in legislation. Childminders required in legislation to comply with standards.

Nanny – unregulated service – parents have to quality assure. Childcare qualifications quality mark for parents. There are a number of Nanny Agencies, these are registered with Care Inspectorate

<http://www.careinspectorate.com/>

Fees:

Keep registration fee achievable, £25 fee – heavily subsidised for Childminders.

Charge for Police check for all those in household over 16

Childminding costs per child per hour, generally £4 or £5 per hour

Part-time workers especially find Childcare; Scottish Government are investing in Childcare costs – 6hours free Childcare per week

Recommendations:

There must be a lead in time

Work towards quality

Ongoing CPD

Consider e-learning

Improve system, two-tier system not recommended.

Focus on quality assurance and outcomes for children. For example, if a child has poor communication skills, what are you (the Childminder) going to do to help the child's development?

Do not lose sight of the soft indicators, e.g. on-going CPD.

Lots of training workshops and reading.

2 The Scottish Experience of Regulation (Murray)

Lynne Murray - Quality Improvement Officer: Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA)

Background

Legislation

- ▶ The Children Act 1989
- ▶ The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010
- ▶ Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

National Care Standards. Scottish Ministers developed the **National Care Standards** to ensure everyone in Scotland receives the same high quality of **care** no matter where they live. The **Standards** explain what you can expect from any **care** service you use, written from the point of view of the person using the service.

National Care Standards - The Scottish Government

www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Regulate/Standards

- ▶ Providers will use the standards to find out what is expected of them in offering early learning and childcare services.
- ▶ The Care Inspectorate will use the standards to assess applications from people who want to provide an early learning and childcare service.

Care Inspectorate

- ▶ Set up by the Scottish Government, the Care Inspectorate inspects over 9,000 care services for children and young people.
- ▶ The Care Inspectorate is an improvement service which regulates services by inspecting them against the relevant legislation and National Care Standards. These services include childminders, nurseries, playgroups, out of school clubs and other forms of day-care for children.
- ▶ They check that proper provision is made for the health, welfare and safety of service users and that suitably qualified and competent persons are working in the care service and receive training appropriate to their role.
- ▶ As well as registering, inspecting and grading these services, the Care Inspectorate has a duty to investigate complaints and also take enforcement action when there is a serious risk to children's health and wellbeing.

Inspections: the main purposes

- ▶ To enable the Care Inspectorate to be satisfied that services are provided to an acceptable standard.
- ▶ To ensure that the terms and conditions of childminding registration are being met and maintained.
- ▶ To encourage the raising of standards.
- ▶ To ensure SSSC Codes of Practice are taken into account.
- ▶ To reassure parents that childminding services are being monitored and standards are being maintained.
- ▶ To grade the service against national themes.

Grades

Care services are graded when inspected.

Looking at the quality of:

- ▶ Care and Support
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Staffing
- ▶ Management and Leadership

What happens when things are not good enough?

Early Learning & Childcare

More information can be found at www.childminding.org/elc

Building the Ambition:

National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare

- ▶ The Scottish Government is committed to developing a high quality, flexible system of early learning and childcare that is accessible and affordable for all children and families.
- ▶ The purpose is to improve outcomes for children; and, to support parents and carers with work, training or study.
- ▶ The guidance is designed to support all early years' practitioners in their important role to deliver high quality early learning and childcare which is accessible and affordable for all children and families.

Getting it right for every child - (GIRFEC)

GIRFEC is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them.

These are the basic requirements for all children and young people to grow and develop and reach their full potential.

The Journey of a Childminder in Scotland

1. Registration with Care Inspectorate
2. Strong Foundations Pack
3. Providing a quality service
4. Benefits of childminding

1. Registration with the Care Inspectorate

All childminders in Scotland are registered by the Care inspectorate (Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland).

SCMA Induction Training covers:

- ▶ The laws relating to childminding
- ▶ The Care inspectorate application process
- ▶ How best to meet the needs of children in your care
- ▶ The business side of childminding – everything from contracts to cashbooks

SCMA Induction training is designed to support a potential childminder through every stage of the application process and beyond to ensure their childminding career gets off to the best start.

2. SCMA Strong Foundations Pack

- ▶ Road to Registration
- ▶ Laying Strong Foundations
- ▶ Providing a Safe and Healthy Environment
- ▶ Professional Approach

3. Providing a quality service

- ▶ Keep up to date with early years information via:
 - SCMA website, monthly eNewsletter, magazine.
 - Care inspectorate website and 'The Hub'.
- ▶ Take responsibility for developing own skills and knowledge.
- ▶ Apply for an ILA (Individual Learning Account) from Skills Development Scotland.
- ▶ Access workshop or e-Learning training options from SCMA

4. Benefits of childminding in Scotland

- ▶ Making a difference.
- ▶ Providing families with a service that covers a range in the children's ages (from babies to secondary school age if required).
- ▶ Offering parents with a choice of extended hours if required.
- ▶ With membership of SCMA:
- ▶ Resources to help market services,
 - Peer support,
 - CPD opportunities,
 - Local Childminding Development Officers,
 - Fundamentals: A – Z of Childminding.

Scotland's Childminding Workforce

- ▶ Part of the Early Learning and Childcare workforce in Scotland
- ▶ Are inspected by the Care Inspectorate
- ▶ Comply with Scottish legislation
- ▶ Are providing an ELC service funded by some local authorities

*...help make Scotland
“the best place in the world to grow up”.*

Helpful website links

Scottish Childminding Association www.childminding.org
Care Inspectorate www.careinspectorate.com
Building the Ambition <http://goo.gl/WQHj97>
GIRFEC www.wellbeingforyoungscots.org
SSSC Codes of Practice www.sssc.uk.com

3 Registration, supports and inspection for childminders in Northern Ireland and Wales

Both Northern Ireland and Wales operate a registration system for childminders and day-care providers working with children aged 0-12, a change from 0-8 year olds since 2012 in NI and since 2016 in Wales. This includes Home Childcarers, or nannies, and childminders may also have assistants and more children in the home. For childminders working alone in NI, the ratio is 1:6 i.e. 6 children under 12 of whom no more than 3 are under compulsory school age. With an assistant present, the childminder may have two babies. In Wales, some childminders also provide the Foundation Stage preschool programme and must meet required educational standards.

Childminders are not required to have a minimum qualification. However, they must meet the core training requirements. In Northern Ireland, pre-registration training in safeguarding, first aid and health and safety is required in these core areas as part of the Registration process and full training is required in the first year of Registration, and needs to be renewed every three years.

In both jurisdictions, childminders must register by law with the local Health & Social Care Trust in NI and with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW), not OFSTED as in England. In both places, there is a clear process.

In Wales, PACEY provides all the preparation and support childminders need prior to registration, for certain fees, (totalling £250 approx.) which some local authorities fund. Childminders must:

1. Attend a Briefing Information Session
2. Complete the pre-registration training 'Understand how to set up a Home-Based Childcare Service' (CYPOP5 Unit)
3. Make use of the pre-registration support and workshops available
4. Complete and submit an application to CSSIW, including the health reference from a doctor; details of paediatric first aid training and pre-registration training (CYPOP 5) certificates
5. Undertake Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS) for you and anyone else over 16 in your home.

At this point, the CSSIW will visit and interview the childminder in the home, when the childminder has completed the 47page application, enclosed the insurance certificate, the first safety checklist and the extensive list of policies, showing how the childminder intends to meet the Minimum Standards. Clearly, training is needed to prepare for this process. The Scottish requirements are similar, and the SCMA provide the necessary supports.

In Northern Ireland, the local Early Years team provides all the preparatory training. The following table outlines the process in full.

1. Initial enquiry to Early Years Social Work Team (EY Team)
2. Enquiry form returned to EY Team
3. Pre-Registration Briefing Session attended
4. Application pack from EY Team received

5. Application pack completed and returned to EY Team- this includes an 8 page application form, a 4 page health declaration, a verification of ID form and consent for checks on all household members over 10 years, and regular visitors.
6. ID checks verified
7. Core Training attended: Health & Safety, Safeguarding Children, Paediatric First Aid - initial 3 hour session
8. Social Worker allocated
9. 1st Assessment visit
10. 2nd Assessment visit
11. Registration process completed
12. NICMA Membership package (to include insurance) purchased
13. Registered with Environmental Health
14. Registered with HMRC
15. Paediatric First Aid – full 12 hours to be completed within first year of registration.

All childminders in Northern Ireland and Wales work in line with Minimum Standards, which constitute guidance, rather than legislation. The emphasis in the documents is on the childminder showing how they work to meet the Standards, rather than on checking off prescribed paperwork.

The standards are intended to allow a flexible approach, allowing providers to develop quality provision tailored to the needs of children, parents and local communities. They are intended to reflect the needs of children from birth to 12 years, and to be proportional in the way in which they are applied. (Wales, p.5)

Children and parents are consulted as part of the inspection process. These documents are about 50-60 pages long, and there are specific sections for childminders. In NI, there is also a specific User Guide for Childminders. Below is the list for Wales; that for Northern Ireland is similar but consists of 16 Standards grouped under 4 headings:

- ▶ Quality of Care
- ▶ Quality of Staffing Management and Leadership
- ▶ Quality of Physical Environment
- ▶ Quality of Staffing Monitoring and Evaluation

| | |
|--|---|
| Information on service | Standard 1: Information |
| | Standard 2: The Contract |
| Planning for individual needs & preferences | Standard 3: Assessment |
| | Standard 4: Meeting individual needs |
| | Standard 5: Records |
| Empowering service users, encouraging lifestyle choices | Standard 6: Working in partnership with parents |
| | Standard 7: Opportunities for play and learning |
| Quality of care | Standard 8: Nurture and well-being |
| | Standard 9: Behaviour |
| | Standard 10: Healthcare |
| | Standard 11: Medication |

| | |
|---|--|
| | Standard 12: Food and drink |
| Staffing | Standard 13(CM): Suitable person |
| Conduct and management of the services | Standard 14: Organisation |
| | Standard 15: Staffing ratios |
| | Standard 16: Equal opportunities |
| | Standard 17: Financial procedures |
| | Standard 18: Quality assurance |
| Complaints, protection and notifications of significant events | Standard 19: Complaints |
| | Standard 20: Child protection |
| | Standard 21: Notifications of significant events |
| The physical environment | Standard 22: Environment |
| | Standard 23: Equipment |
| | Standard 24: Safety |

Document 4

Results of a survey on parents and guardians experience of, and opinions on, childminding in Ireland 2017 by **Fionnuala Ní Mhórdha**

Funded by



An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of
Children and Youth Affairs

**Project Commissioned
and Managed by**



CHILDMINDING IRELAND
Supporting Ireland's Childminders; Minding Ireland's Children

Results of a survey on parents and guardians experience of, and opinions on, childminding in Ireland 2017

By

Fionnuala Ní Mhórdha

Report prepared in 2017 for the Working Group on Reforms and Supports for the Childminding Sector, project commissioned and managed by Childminding Ireland.

I would like to thank the following people who contributed to this research:

Bernadette Orbinski Burke, Childminding Ireland

Mary Tynan, Childminding Ireland

Bernie Byrne, Childminding Ireland

Maireád Hurley, Childminding Ireland

Lara Hughes, Childminding Ireland

Liz Kerrins, Children's Rights Alliance

Dr. Marianne Boogaard, Kohnstamm Institute, University of Amsterdam

Miriam O' Regan, Dublin Institute of Technology

Dr Ana Cruz Garcia, Cork Institute of Technology

Working Group on Reforms and Supports for the Childminding Sector

I would like to thank the Department of Children and Youth Affairs for funding this research

Address: Childminding Ireland, First Floor, 39 Wexford Road, Arklow Co. Wicklow

Phone: (01) 2878466

Email: support@childminding.ie

Introduction

Classification for registration of childminders currently depends upon the numbers of children minded at any one time by a childminder. The vast majority of childminders are precluded from any system. There are an estimated 35,000⁵ childminders working in Ireland of which only 120 are registered with Tusla. In order to ensure best outcomes for children and families using childminding services and to best support childminders in their work, Dr Katherine Zappone Minister for Children and Youth Affairs established the Childminding Working Group for Reforms and Supports (Childminding Working Group) for the Childminding sector.

The Childminding Working Group met for the first time in October 2016. The terms of reference for the Childminding Working Group are:

- Using research and consultation as required, drawing on international best practice, and acting at all times in the best interests of children
- Examine the feasibility and implications of the migration from voluntary to mandatory regulation for the childminding sector
- In the short term, identify the reforms and supports that are required to have a robust system of quality assurance for childminders
- Make proposals for, and cost where appropriate, a model of reforms and supports for the childminding sector in the short (1-3 years) term, medium (3-5 years) and long (5-10 years) term
- Provide a description of the childminding sector in Ireland, including all the different categories of childminders and, where possible, the estimated number in each category. Make recommendations in respect of which categories should be included in plans for reform and support of the sector, and – if necessary - provide a rationale for excluding others

The Childminding Working Group represents the following:

- Academic – Research Focus Childminding
- Better Start National Early Years Quality Development Service
- Childcare Committees Ireland
- Childminding Ireland
- Children’s Rights Alliance
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- National Voluntary Childcare Collaborative
- Pobal
- Tusla Child and Family Agency
- Working Childminders

In order to ensure that the views of parents using childminding services were represented, the Childminding Working Group undertook a parental survey on childminding. This survey was devised and carried out by Childminding Ireland on behalf of the Childminding Working Group and it surveyed

⁵ This estimate is based on updating the figures in *Children 2020*, with the population results from the latest Census (2016) and the percentages from the most recent Quarterly National Household Survey Module on Childcare (2017), using the assumption of Goodbody Economic Consultants in 2011 that childminders care for 2.5 children on average.

parents and guardians currently using childminding for their childcare needs. Full details of this process and analysis of the results are outlined below.

Methodology

It was decided that a questionnaire survey would be the most effective way to achieve the aim of capturing all relevant information. In consultation with Childminding Ireland, a detailed questionnaire was designed which consisted of closed and open-ended questions. A pilot study was distributed to experts in the field (Appendix 1) before the final survey commenced. Changes were made to the original survey based on recommendations received during the pilot process. The questionnaire was then distributed online, via the software package Survey Monkey. It should be noted that this method did exclude groups of people from selection, for example, those who do not have access to a computer or the internet. The survey was uploaded in both English (online from 9th May to 27th May) and Irish (online 17th May to 27th May) and contained 19 questions (Appendix 2). As there is not a complete sampling frame of childminders in Ireland available, it was not possible to use a random sampling technique. It was decided therefore, to use a snowball sampling process. This process involves identifying someone who meets the criteria for inclusion in your study. You then ask them to recommend others who they may know who also meet the criteria. Snowball sampling is especially useful when you are trying to reach populations that are inaccessible or hard to find. The survey was therefore distributed to all schools (both primary and post primary) listed on the Department of Education website and all T.D.'s and senators listed on the Dáil Eireann website as well as being embedded in the Department of Children and Youth Affairs website. It was attempted to contact all companies in Ireland, but while the Enterprise Boards supplied a list of all the companies, they were unable to supply email addresses for them which, given the time constraints involved, meant it was not possible to contact all of them. The link to the survey was also distributed to all County Childcare Committees, advertised on activelink.ie and national radio stations, tweeted by IBEC and embedded in the facebook page of Childminding Ireland. The survey was emailed to a wide variety of organisations, institutions, and individuals. Everyone who was emailed was asked to use their mailing lists to distribute it to parents, employees, etc. Anonymity was guaranteed for all respondents by using the anonymous option in Survey Monkey.

The response rate exceeded expectations with 3,630 people completing the questionnaire. Although some of those who did the questionnaire were filtered out after the first two questions, as they did not meet the formal definition of a childminder (using a childminder in the childminder's own home) there was still a very large number who continued through and the average response rate per question was approximately 1,687.

Quantitative analysis was carried out on the survey results using the software packages SPSS and Excel. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise and display the data. Tests of Independence (Chi-Square) were carried out, where appropriate, to explore for relationships between variables. Significance levels are reported as either being 95% ($p < 0.05$) or 99% ($p < 0.01$). One of the preconditions for the robustness of this type of test is that only a limited number cells can have expected values of less than 5. If this assumption was found to be breached, then categories were combined to increase the numbers and validate the test.

An exploratory approach to the qualitative data analysis was taken. This means that the data from the open / comments questions was carefully read and reread, looking for key words, trends, themes, or ideas in the data to help inform the analysis.

Demographic Breakdown

Of the 3,630 respondents, the vast majority (95.8%) stated that they were either a parent or a guardian of a child or children aged under 16 years, 2.6% stated that they were not and 1.6% did not give any response. (Table 1)

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 3478 | 95.8 |
| No | 96 | 2.6 |
| Missing | 56 | 1.6 |

Table 1: Parent / Guardian of child/children under age 16

Age Profile: The majority of those who responded were between 35 and 44 years of age. Figure 2 supplies a more detailed breakdown of the age profile.

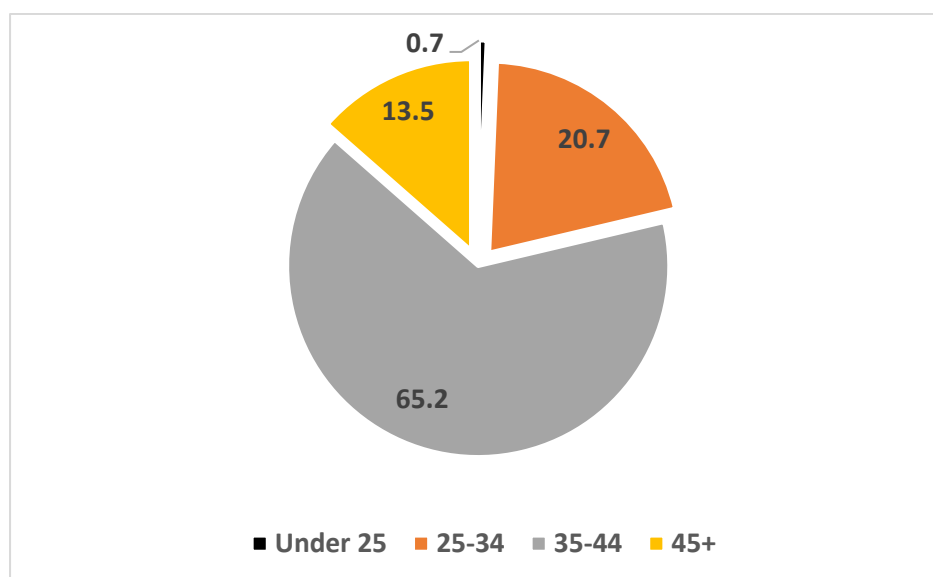


Figure 2: Age Profile of Respondents (% , n=1685)

Place of residence: The initial analysis of this question revealed that a number of respondents who had chosen “other” as their answer, then stated that they lived in Dublin. These responses were re-allocated to the “City” option, substantially reducing the “other” option to 0.3%. The final breakdown can be seen in Figure 3 below which shows that the largest cohort lived in what they classified as a rural area or village (50.3%) and 49.5% classified themselves as living in an urban area (Town or City).

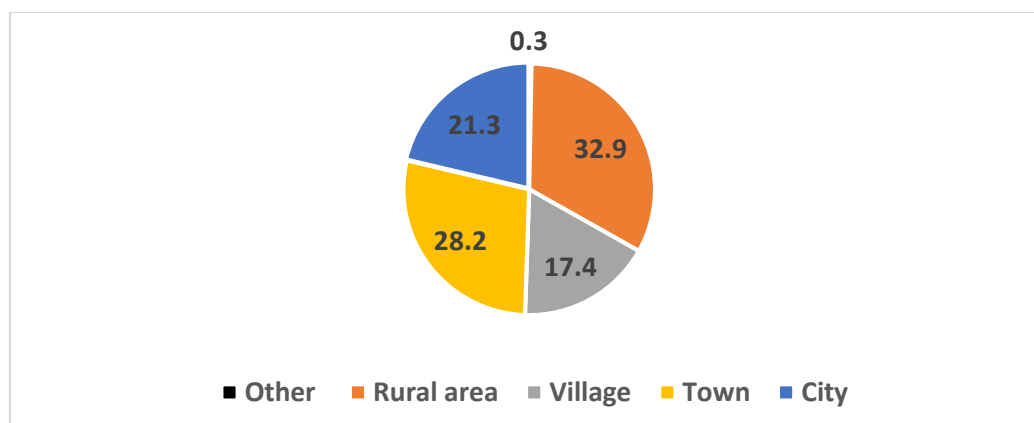


Figure 3: Place of Residence (% , n=1680)

Net Annual Household Income: Details of the net annual household income categories of those surveyed are displayed in **Table 2**. Approximately 52% reported a net annual household income of more than 50,000 euro per annum, with 6% earning less than a net annual household income of 20,000 euro per annum.

| Annual Household Income Group (after tax) | % of Respondents | Cumulative % of Respondents |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------|
| €1-€9,999 | 1.3 | 1.30 |
| €10,000-€19,999 | 4.7 | 5.96 |
| €20,000-€29,999 | 8.8 | 14.78 |
| €30,000-€39,999 | 16.1 | 30.91 |
| €40,000-€49,999 | 16.7 | 47.63 |
| €50,000+ | 52.4 | 100.00 |

Table 2: Participants categorised by net annual household income (n=1543)

Age Profile of Children being minded: When analysing the results in relation to the age profile of children being minded, it was decided to combine the first two categories in order to have just one category “under 2 years” This was done as there were very few children in the under 1 year category. The age profile is illustrated in **Figure 4** below. This shows that the majority of children being minded are aged between 0 and 6 years (64.6%), with 32.6% aged between 7 and 12 years and only approximately 3% in the “13-16” age group. Within the 0 to 6 age group, there is little difference between the categories “under 2 years” (24%), “3-4 years” (21%) and “5-6 years” (20%).

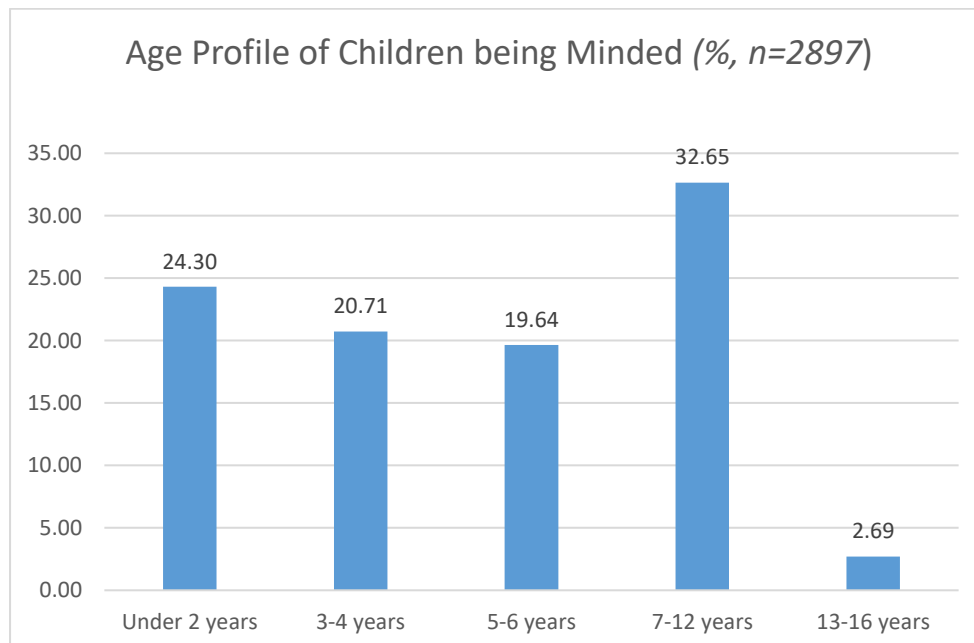


Figure 4: Age Profile of Children being minded

CHILDMINDING ARRANGEMENTS

This section looks at information about the participants' childminding arrangements. The largest cohort of those who responded are paying for childminding in their childminder's home (38.6%); have been using their childminder for between 1-4 years (51.9%) and heard about their childminder by word of mouth (64.9%). 14% of respondents state that they are not paying for childcare. (Figures 5, 6 and 7 respectively)

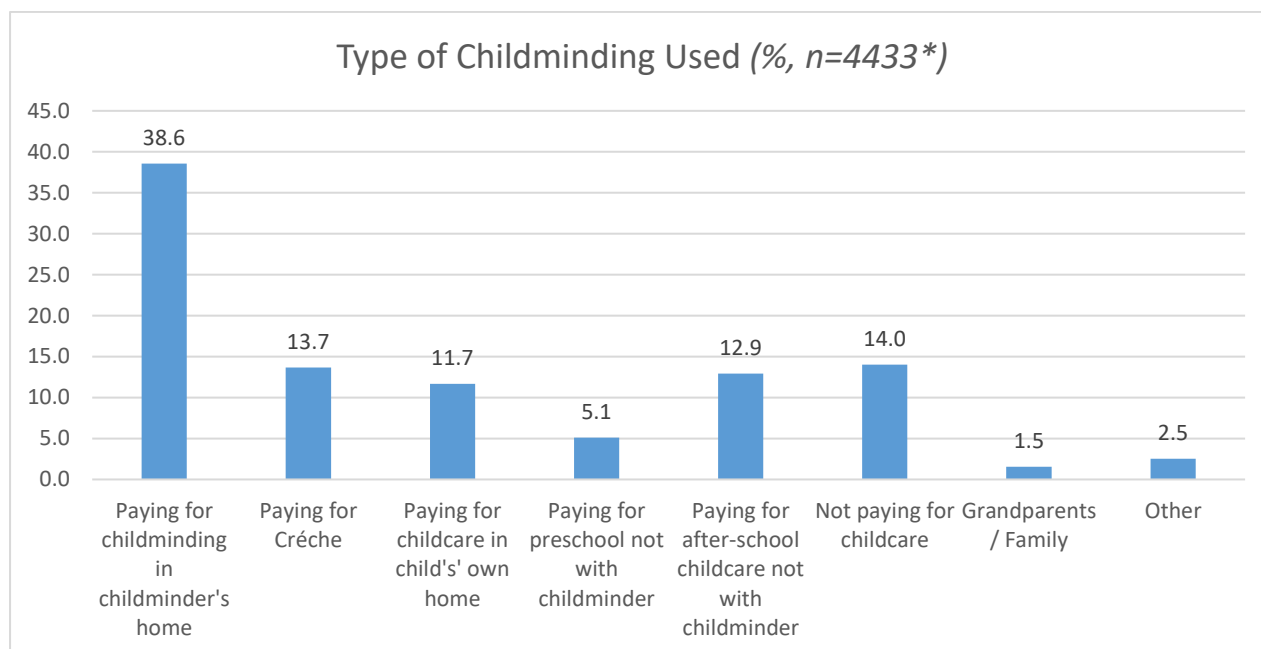


Figure 5: Type of Childminding Used (*more than one option could be chosen): Choosing "Grandparents / Family" was not presented as an option in the survey. However, 2% of respondents wrote it down in the "Other" option. While this percentage is relatively low, it is obvious from the comments that using family is an essential part of some people's childminding system. It is also very probable that the high percentage (14%) saying that they are not paying for childcare includes those who use family members.

"I have an extended family member minding my two children – as do many people around Ireland"

"I mostly use grandparents to mind my children as I can't afford it otherwise"

"It's very difficult to find someone just to mind children for 30 mins before school and then drop them to school. Most parents rely on family members (usually retired grandparents) to do this for them"

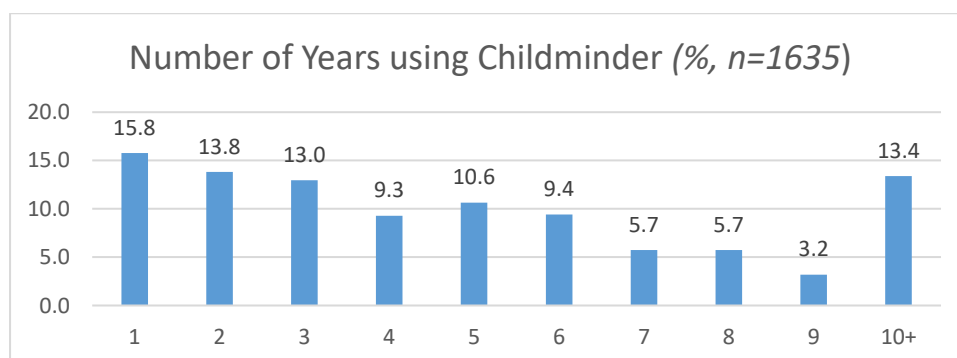


Figure 6: Number of Years using Childminder

It is interesting to note from **Figure 6** that 48% of respondents have been using their childminder for five years or more. This might imply a high level of satisfaction with their childminder, a finding that is corroborated by the results from question 18, and the high level of importance given to continuity of care, both of which are discussed later on. However, there is also the possibility that it is due to lack of choice, an issue that is also highlighted later on in the report.

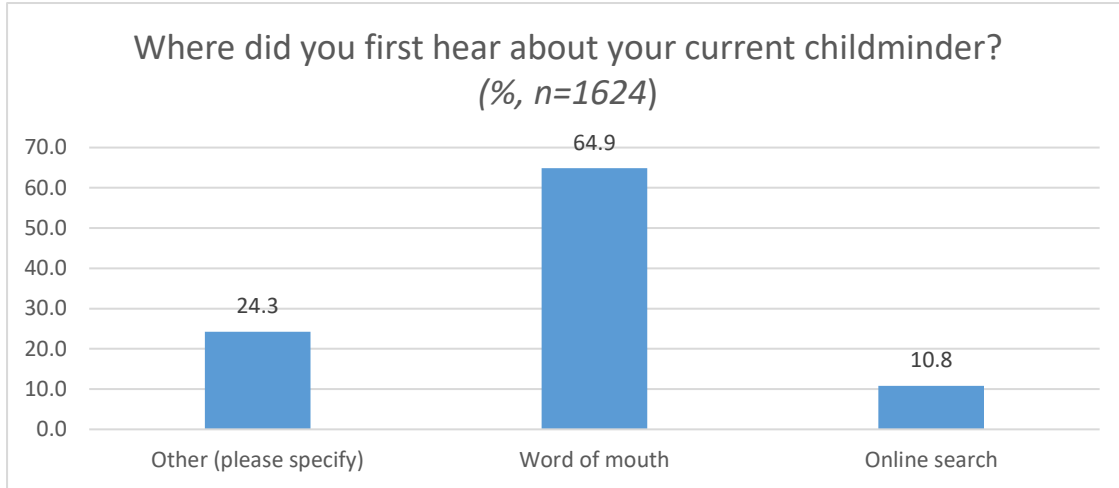


Figure 7: Where did you first hear about your current childminder?

Word of mouth emerged as the most common way of hearing about your childminder. The “Other” option is a combination of categories including newspapers, advertising, local noticeboard, etc. The importance of personally knowing someone and trusting them emerges as a common theme throughout the responses.

“We have been very fortunate that our childminder is a trusted friend of the family”

“My childminder is my neighbour she babysat me as a child”

The results also show that the majority of respondents pay between €1 and €99 per child per week but a large percentage (37.7) pay between €100 and €199 per child per week. Given that the data is in the form of a grouped frequency table, we can calculate, using the midpoints of each group, an estimated mean cost per child per week, of €105.40. **(Figure 8)** It was found **(Figure 9)** that the estimated mean number of hours a child is minded per week is 19.4 hours. This implies an approximate cost of €5.40 per hour per child.

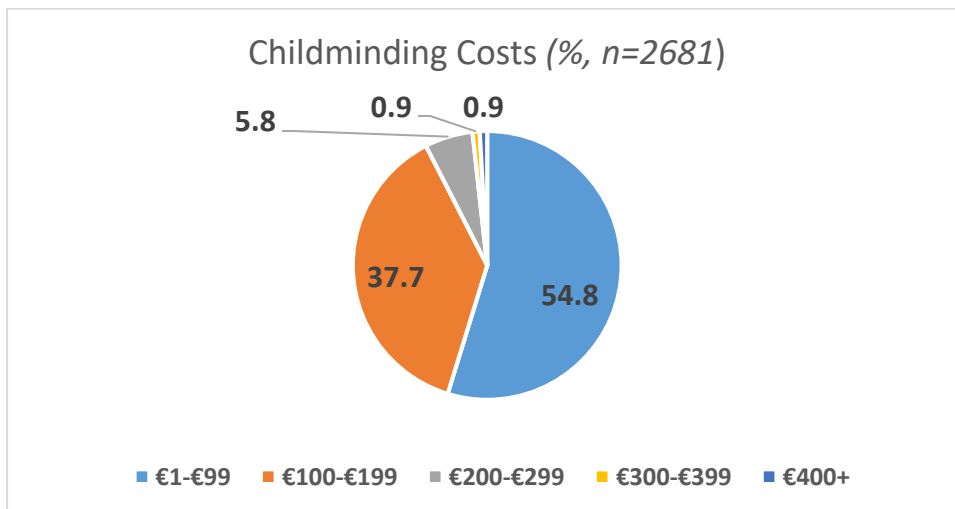


Figure 8: Childminding Costs per child per week

Cost was an issue that provoked strong responses from a lot of the participants and emerged as a constant theme throughout the survey. Words and phrases such as “insanely expensive”, “impossible”, “crippling”, “extremely high”, “struggle”, “not affordable”, “so high” and “huge concern” emerged in the comments. There was also a strong concern that new regulations and requirements would drive up the rates that are already considered by many to be too high.

“..... too over regulated and driving up costs”

“I can’t afford proper qualified childcare. This costs €10 an hour, I pay €6 per hour”

There were some suggestions regarding the need for tax benefits for either / both parents and childminders. Some of these comments referred to the arrangements existing in other countries.

“I feel there should be tax benefits / subsidies for working parentsin relation to childcare which is not limited to crèche”

“safe after school care options provided and /or subsidised by the stateI hope that Ireland can progressively look to countries such as Sweden.....”

“We need to look at how Nordic countries support families financially with working parents / parents that choose to stay at home to raise their children”

Participants were given categories of 1-9 hours, 10-19 hours, 20-29 hours, 30-39 hours and 40+ numbers and asked to select, for each child, how many hours per week they use their childminding service. When the results were being analysed, as there were very few using it for 40+ hours, it was decided to combine two categories together and use 30+ hours as the final category. There is a relatively even spread across the categories for how many hours they use their childminding service (**Figures 9**). An estimated mean of 19.4 hours per child per week was calculated, again using the midpoint value of each group.

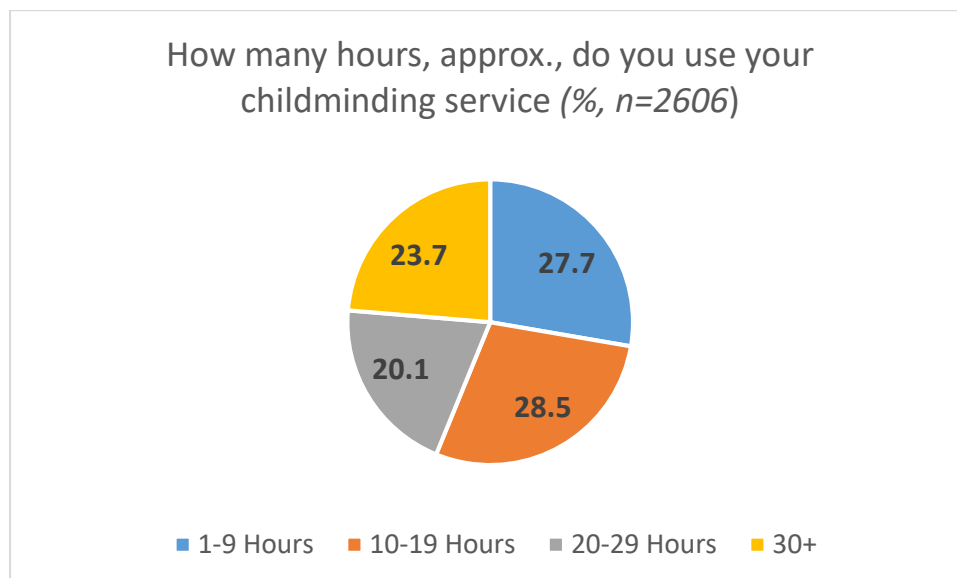


Figure 9: Hours using Childminding service

ATTITUDE TO QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

Question 11 in the survey asked respondents to rate, on a scale of 0 to 5 (0 indicating they did not consider it important and 5 indicating they felt it was very important) the importance of certain formal requirements, for example, Garda vetting, official inspections, etc. There was also an option available to them to indicate that they had no opinion about it. The results show that a majority (62%) rate their childminder being Garda vetted as very important.

“I am particularly worried at the lack of Garda vetting as our children are very vulnerable to abuse with the current lack of regulation”

The next highest “Very Important” category was that they be subjected to official inspections (approx. 32%) with each of the remaining statements - having a minimum childcare qualification, having access to on-going training and having support and development visits from appropriate organisations – having approximately 25% respondents ranking them as very important. **(Figure 10)**

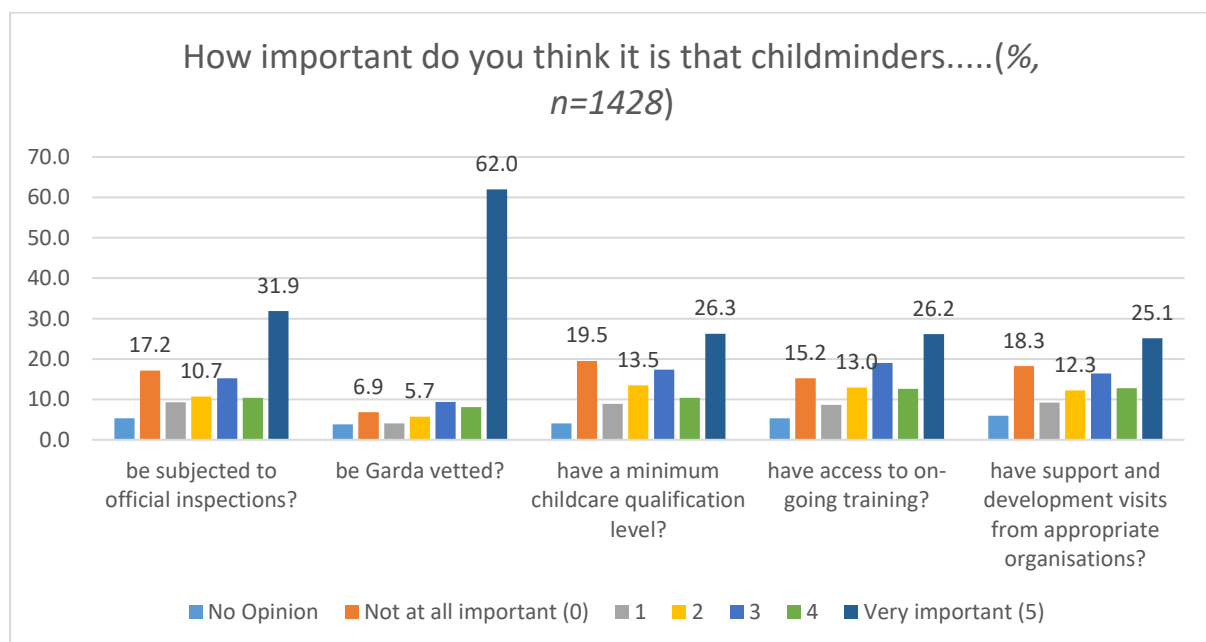


Figure 10: How important do you think it is that childminders.....

It is interesting to note that apart from Garda vetting, the percentage of respondents stating that they felt it was “not at all important” that their childminder be subjected to official inspection (17.2%), have a minimum childcare qualification level (19.5%), have access to on-going training (15.2%) and have support and development visits from appropriate organisations (18.3%) was relatively high. An insight into why these figures were so high can be found in the comments from question 19, examples of which are quoted below

“..the nurturing and caring personality of the childminder is of utmost importance to most parents.....I don’t care about Garda Vetting.....”

“Over regulation will destroy the sector”

“I like that childcare isn’t really structured and subject to loads of regulations and paperwork. I want it to be as natural as being in his home for my child”

The responses are strongly linked to the participants’ experiences within the childminding sector, as is evident from the quotation below.

“I had a childminder who was Garda vetted, registered and had a qualification and she was appalling. Current Childminders have none of above but my children are safe and happy”.

Perhaps these respondents sum it up when stating

“I would categorise childminders into two categories, one where the parents know the person well and know they are well able to do the job. These childminders can be vetted by and monitored by parents themselves. If I was looking for someone unknown to me, then Garda vetting, insurance, childcare qualifications, and monitoring by an outside agency would be extremely important to me”

“I agree with all the checks and monitoring, but should be a way of respecting the experience of having successful raised a family” (sic)

To further investigate these results, they were disaggregated by demographic factors to explore for statistically significant relationships. It should be noted that the respondents within any specific category cannot be viewed as homogenous. A more detailed analysis would be required to gain a deeper understanding. As the results were in the form of frequency counts, a chi-square test of independence was used. The results are displayed in **Table 3** below, in the form of a matrix. “Yes” indicates that there is a significant relationship between two variables and the asterisk illustrates the level of significance. “No” indicates that the two variables are independent of each other.

| | Age Group | Net Annual Household Income | Location |
|---|-----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| be subjected to official inspections? | No | Yes* | Yes* |
| be Garda vetted? | Yes** | No | No |
| have a minimum childcare qualification level? | Yes** | No | Yes* |
| have access to on-going training? | Yes** | Yes* | No |
| have support and development visits from appropriate organisations? | Yes* | Yes** | Yes** |

*p<.05 **p<.01

Table 3: How important do you think it is that childminders - Results of significance testing by demographic groups

More respondents on lower net annual household incomes rated as “very important” that childminders be subjected to official inspections whereas as net annual household income increased, fewer than expected rated it as important.

A higher number of rural residents had either “no opinion” or rated being subjected to official inspections of low importance than respondents who lived in villages or cities. More of the latter respondents viewed inspections as being important (>3) than expected. These results were independent of age group.

A respondent’s net annual household income and location did not significantly affect how they responded to the importance of their childminder being Garda vetted. However, more than expected people in the younger age groups rated Garda vetting as being very important than those in the oldest age group. More respondents aged over 45 years rated it as “not at all important” than would be expected.

How important a respondent considered having a minimum childcare qualification level is, was found to be independent of net annual household income, but significantly related to age and location. Those in urban locations were more likely to rank it as being very important, while more than expected rural dwellers had either “no opinion” or rated it as “not at all important”. Respondents aged 45+ years of age were more likely to have either “no opinion” or rate it as “not at all important”.

Access to ongoing training was statistically significantly related to both age group and net annual household income group. Fewer people than expected in the 45+ age group rated this as “very important”. Those on higher net annual household incomes were more inclined to rate it as being of lower importance (<3).

The importance of how Support and Development visits were ranked showed a statistically significant relationship with all three groupings. As the age groups increase, the number of observed responses decreased compared to expected responses (i.e. more younger people than expected rate this as “very important” while the reverse is true for the older age groups). Lower earners place a significantly higher rating on this than expected, while fewer than expected high earners rate it as “very important”. Rural dwellers had a higher than expected number of people who had either “no opinion” or ranked it as “not important at all” but also had a higher than expected number of respondents who rated it as “very important”. City dwellers consistently had higher than expected numbers rating this as important (>3)

These results show a difference in attitude between younger and older parents / guardians. It is possible that this is linked to having a growing confidence in your own intuition as you are more experienced and are therefore more likely to rely on this when choosing a childminder. It also indicates, though, that high numbers of younger respondents rate, for example, Support and Development visits, access to ongoing training, etc. as important. This is a positive result as regards moving forward and implementing these regulations.

The results also indicate that there is a difference in attitude between urban and rural dwellers. This is possibly due to rural dwellers having a more detailed knowledge of the community they live in and are happier to rely on this knowledge when choosing their childminder, rather than feeling the need to rely on state help and guidance.

It is recommended that these differences be investigated in greater detail in order to understand more deeply the reasons for them. A more in-depth investigation will help determine the implications they will have for future policy makers and for the successful implementation of policies and structures.

The next question on the survey asked respondents whether they had either considered or asked for evidence of whether their childminder was garda vetted, had access to support and training, had insurance or a childcare qualification (**Figure 11a**) and also whether they had considered or asked for evidence of experience, policy implementation, being a member of childcare organisation, having a first aid qualification or completed a child protection course (**Figure 11b**).

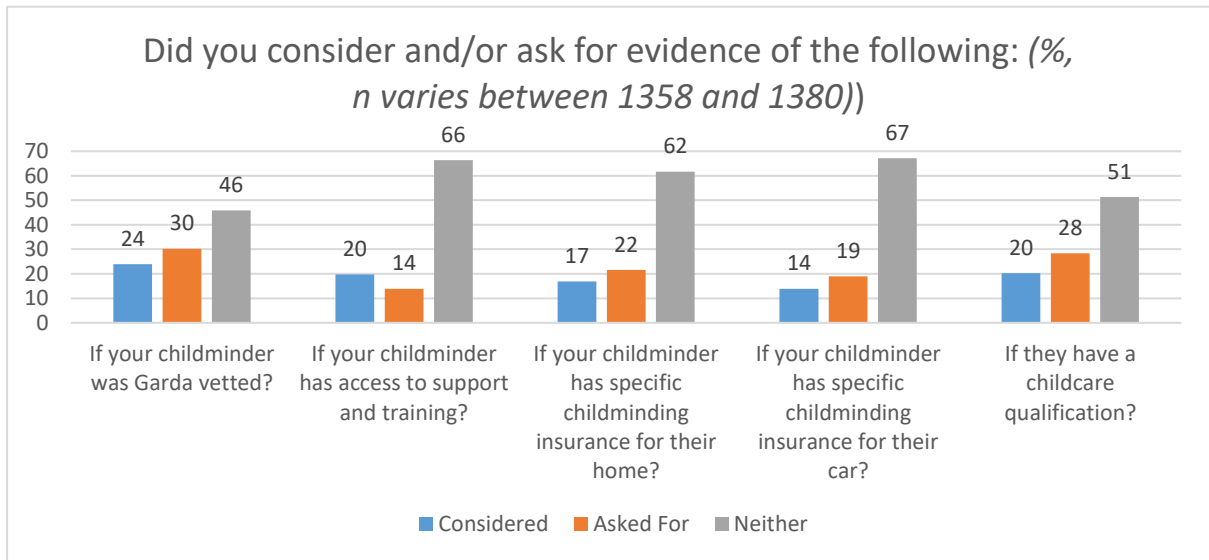


Figure 11a: Did you consider and/or ask for evidence of the following

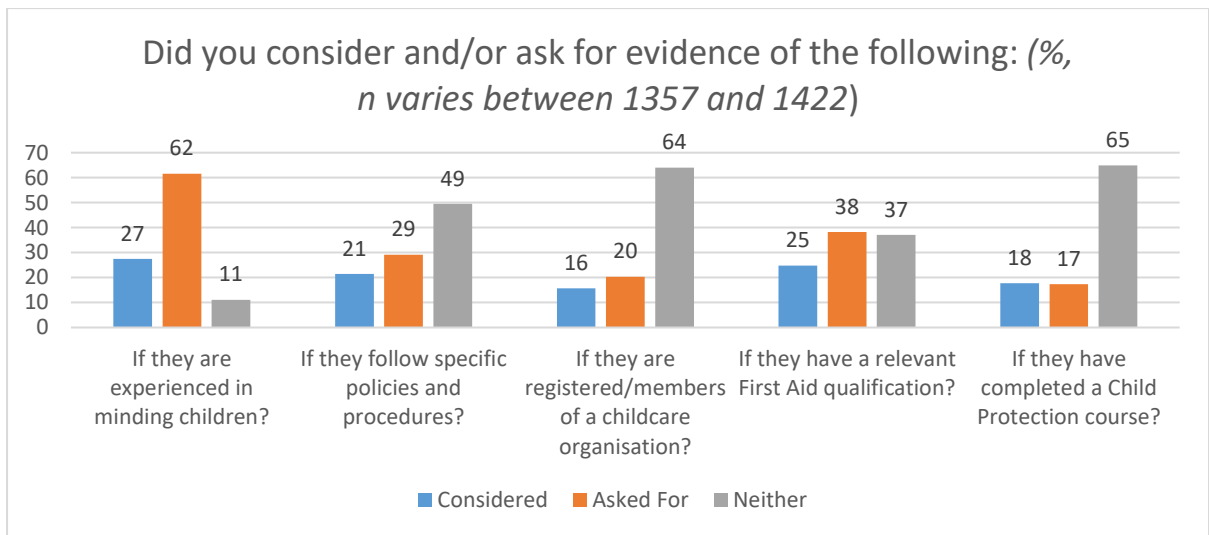


Figure 11b: Did you consider and/or ask for evidence of the following

With the exception of experience in minding children and having a relevant first aid qualification, the largest cohort of respondents neither considered nor asked for evidence of any of the other questions. This is an interesting contrast to the previous question, where a high percentage of respondents ranked the issues of garda vetting, having a minimum childcare qualification and having access to on-going training as “important” (>3 ranking).

A comparison of the responses is displayed in **Figure 12**.

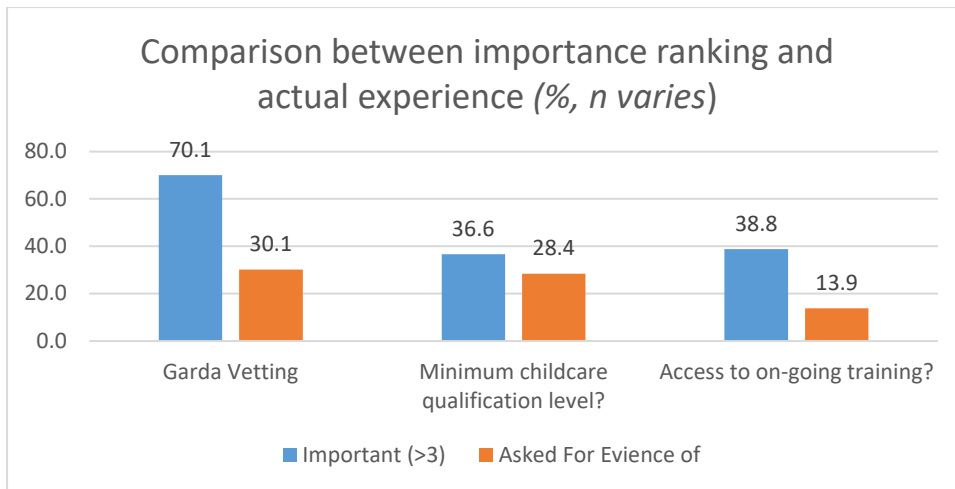


Figure 12: A comparison between importance ranking and actual experience

This raises the question of why, when so many people consider these issues as important, they are not asking for evidence from their childminder? It is possible that with increased awareness of these quality indicators, the respondents will be more likely to ask for them in the future.

It may be that the respondents are not comfortable, or feel they do not have a right to, ask for evidence of insurance, qualifications, training, etc. This indicates a need for change in the culture of childminding, where requesting evidence becomes the norm, rather than the exception. This issue is being examined in greater detail in the Working Group on Reforms and Supports for the Childminding Sector.

CHILDMINDER AND CHILDMINDING ENVIRONMENT

Participants were asked to rank the importance of 12 statements on a scale of 0 (Not at all important) to 5 (Very important). The results are displayed in **Figures 13a** and **Figure 13b**. With the exception of accepting children with special needs / requirements, the highest percentage of respondents ranked as “very important” all the other statements. An overwhelming majority of 92.4% ranked the childminder’s personal qualities – kind, caring – as “very important”. More than three quarters of people ranked continuity of care, physical environment and having a home from home setting as “very important”.

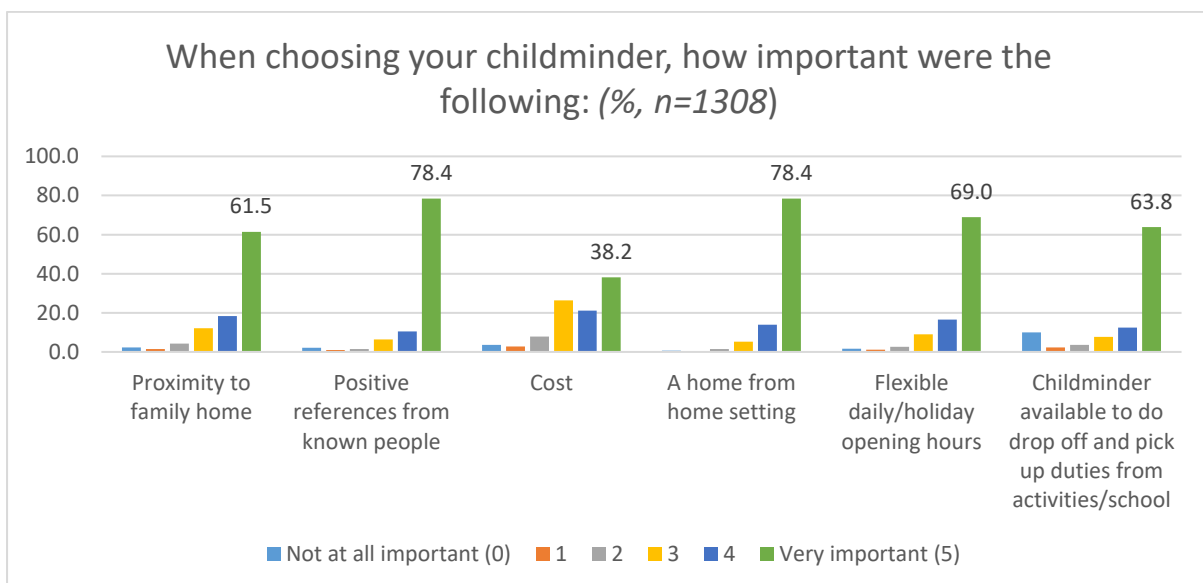


Figure 13a: How important were these issues to you, when choosing your childminder?

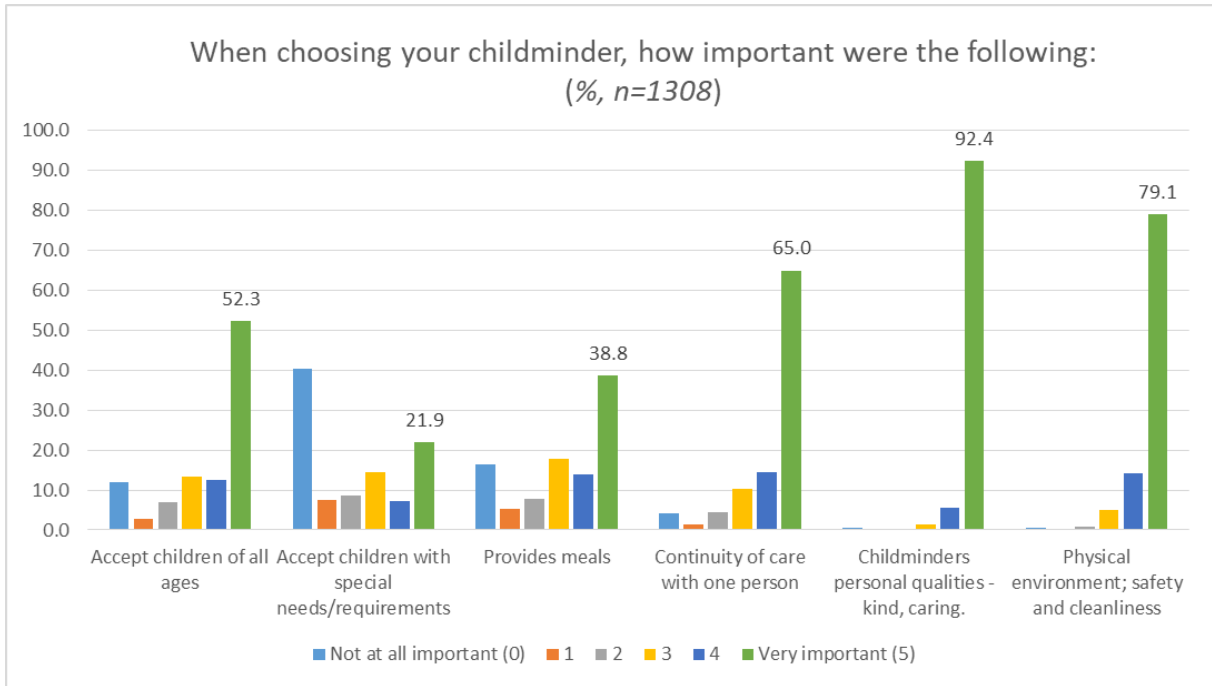


Figure 13b: How important were these issues to you, when choosing your childminder?

It is interesting to compare these high percentages to those in **Figure 10**, which illustrated how important people felt issues such as having inspections, qualification, training, etc are. In order to illustrate the differences, the percentage of participants who gave a “Very Important” rating to each statement is shown in **Figure 14** below.

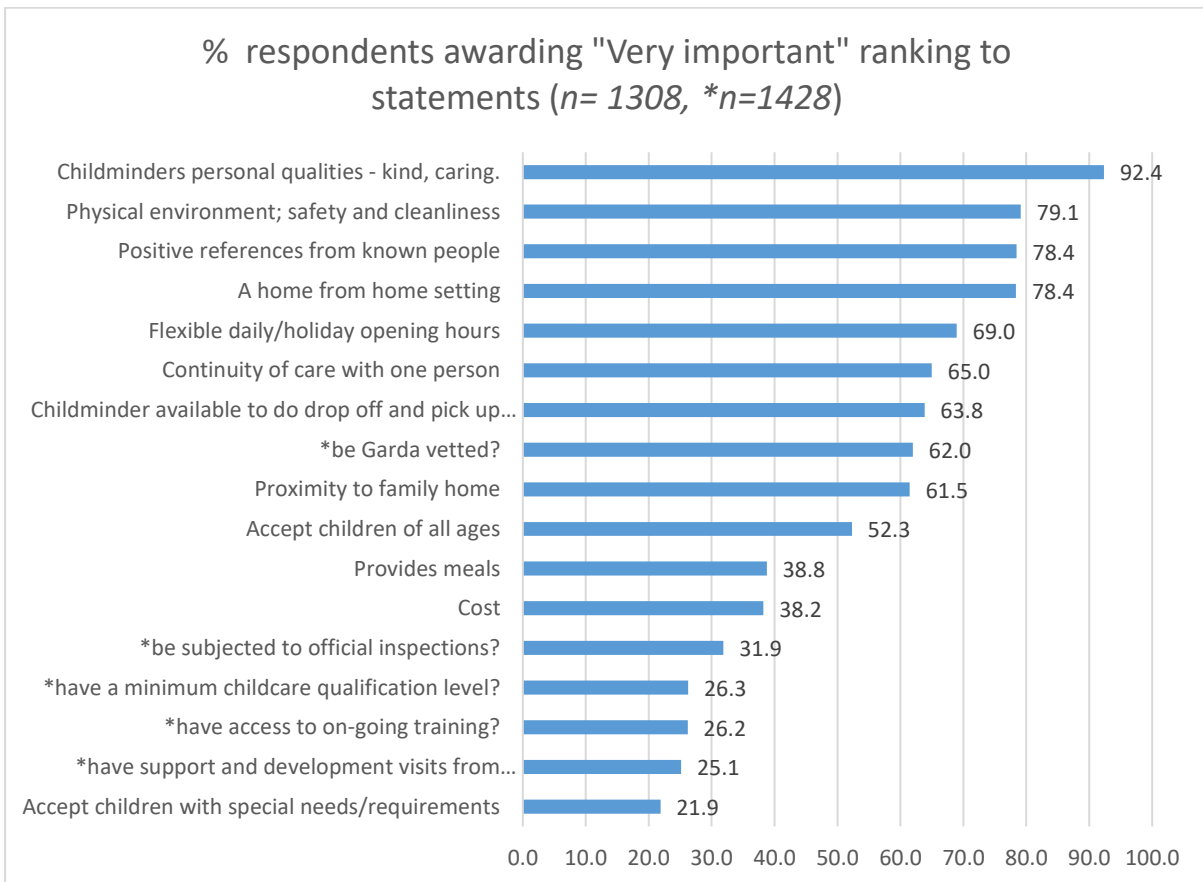


Figure 14: Percentage of respondents ranking statements as “Very Important”

It would appear from these results that parents / guardians, are more concerned with having continuity of care, a home from home setting, a safe physical environment and positive references from known people than with childcare qualification, training, official inspections, etc. This implies that it will be a challenge to successfully implement changes to the childcare system. It will involve taking account of a culturally aligned understanding of quality to assure parents / guardians that the qualities they regard as very important are respected.

“While I appreciate the government’s preference to register and regulate childminders from a child protection viewpoint, I feel that this approach will mean the loss of childminders such as ours who genuinely loves children and is in effect a second mother to my son and daughter”

“My childminder is fully registered for tax. Apart from first aid I can’t see her doing ongoing courses. I think the changes proposed are great but it is a shame (from what I understand) that it will exclude people like her”

“The government are not listening to parents or childminders. They seem to want to make childminding similar to a crèche and we as parents DO NOT want this.....excluding voluntary notified childminders from accessing funding and support.....”

The results shown in **Figure 13a** and **Figure 13b** were investigated further by disaggregating the results by age group, net annual household income group and place of residence group and tested for statistically significant relationships. The results of the chi-square tests of independence are displayed in **Table 4**.

| | Age Group | Net annual household Income | Location |
|---|-----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Proximity to family home | No | No | No |
| Positive references from known people | No | No | No |
| Cost | Yes** | Yes** | No |
| A home from home setting | No | No | No |
| Flexible daily/holiday opening hours | No | No | No |
| Childminder available to do drop off and pick up duties from activities/school | Yes** | No | No |
| Accept children of all ages | No | No | No |
| Accept children with special needs/requirements | No | Yes** | No |
| Provides meals | No | No | Yes** |
| Continuity of care with one person | No | No | No |
| Childminders personal qualities - kind, caring. | No | No | No |
| Physical environment; safety and cleanliness | Yes** | No | No |

*p<.05 **p<.01

Table 4: Results of significance testing by demographic groups

The importance of “Proximity to family home”, “positive references”, “home from home setting”, “flexible daily / holiday opening hours”, “accepting children of all ages”, “continuity of care” and childminders personal qualities” were all independent of age group, net annual household income group and place residence.

Cost however, showed a statistically significant relationship with both age group, and as would be expected, net annual household income. Respondents under 34 years of age had a higher than expected number of people rating it as “very important” whereas those aged in the two highest age groups had fewer than expected. All net annual household income groups except for the highest (€60,000 plus) had higher than expected numbers of people rating it as “very important”.

Availability of childminder to do drop off and collection duties was significantly more important to those in the younger age group (<34 years of age)

Accepting children with special needs / requirements was independent of age group and residence but was related to net annual household income. Those on lower net annual household incomes were more likely to rate this as “important” than those on higher net annual household incomes.

The responses to how important it is for a childminder to provide meals varied significantly depending on location. Parents/Guardians who lived in rural areas or villages had higher than expected numbers rating this as “very important”, with the reverse being true for those living in cities and towns.

How important people feel that the physical environment their child is minded in, was independent of a person’s net annual household income or where they live but did show variation depending on their age. Younger people (<34 years of age) were more likely to rate it as “very important” than those in the older age groups.

These results again illustrate that needs and concerns vary depending on age and place of residence.

AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE SCHEME

In October 2016, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs announced that an additional €19m has been agreed in Budget 2017 to enable the introduction of a new Single Affordable Childcare Scheme (Affordable Childcare Scheme). This aims ultimately to replace the existing childcare subsidisation schemes (excluding the free pre-school scheme) with a single, streamlined scheme.

In the 2017 budget, money was allocated for a universal subsidy to be paid, to parents, for children between the ages of 6 and 36 months (or until the child qualifies for the free pre-school programme if later) who are availing of childcare by a Tusla registered childcare service. This subsidy of €20.00 per day will not be means-tested and will therefore be available for families at any net annual household income level. Parents may also qualify for a subsidy based on their net annual household income. Targeted subsidies will be available for children aged from 6 months up to 15 years.

Participants were asked if they were aware of this scheme and if they knew whether their childminder was eligible for it. The results (**Figure 15** and **Figure 16**) indicate that there remains a lot of work to be done by the Department to inform parents and childminders about it. Only 36% of people said they knew about the scheme and 74.5% of respondents did not know if their childminder is eligible to avail of it. It should be noted, however, that this survey preceded the Department of Children and Youth Affairs communication campaign about the scheme.

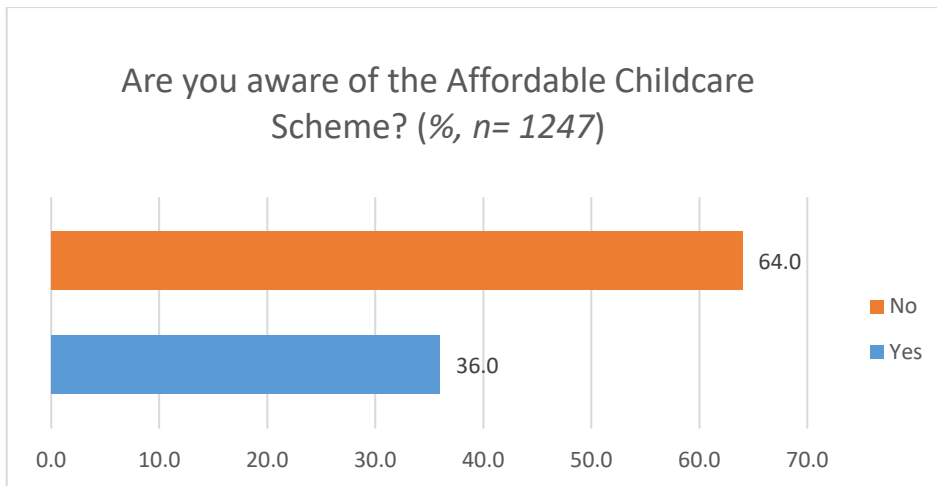


Figure 15: Awareness of the Affordable Childcare Scheme

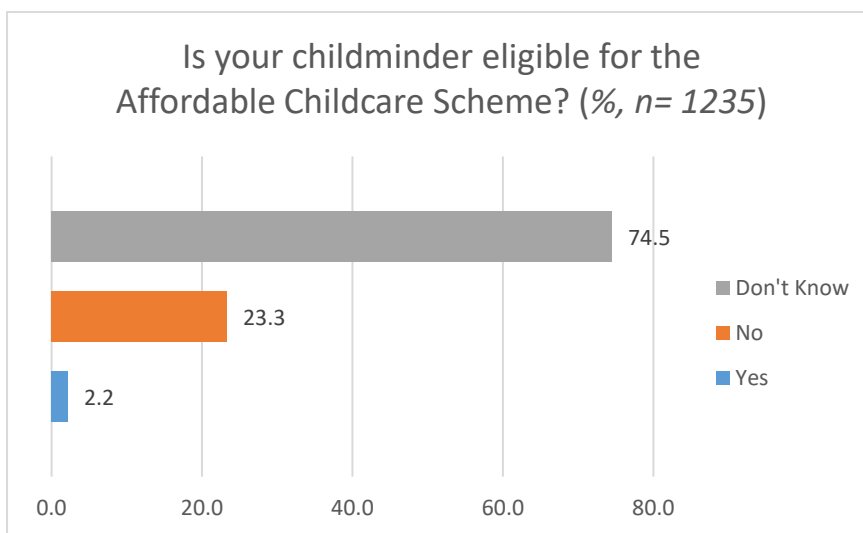


Figure 16: Awareness of eligibility for ACS

Although there was a relatively low level of awareness about the scheme, it elicited strong opinions from respondents in the comments question on the survey. Some of these comments link in with concerns referred to in sections above.

“The “affordable” childcare being based on means testing is a shame and disgrace. It should be equal for everyone.”

“This setting should not have to have increased beurocracy (sic) and inspections just to apply the affordable childcare scheme to it. It will end up costing us more”

“..I cannot get any help with cost of childcare because my childminder is not eligible for affordable childcare scheme”

“I feel that the €47,000 net income ceiling on the ACS is too low”

“My main concern about the affordable childcare scheme is that high quality childminders may be affected because they are not registered for tax.”

“I think it would be more beneficial if you could claim a Child Care Credit, similar to health Expenses”

When asked if they would consider choosing childcare that is eligible, again there was a high percentage of “Don’t know”s (43.9) and approximately 31% stating that would consider it. **(Figure 17)** It should be noted, that this is only the percentage of people who would consider it, it cannot be extrapolated from this that they would definitely choose it. It is, however, also possible that the large number of “Don’t know”s results from a lack of awareness about the scheme and that a large number of these respondents, when informed of it, might move to the “yes” category. This could create a potential capacity issue in the childcare sector, particularly in rural areas, if respondents wish to change their existing childcare arrangements in order to avail of the subsidy.

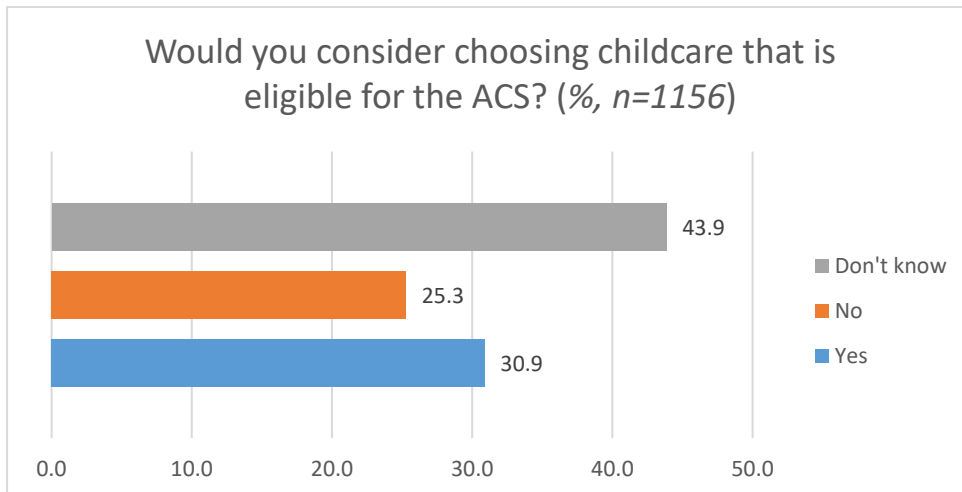


Figure 17: Considering choosing childcare that is eligible for the ACS

IMPACT OF, AND SATISFACTION WITH, CHILDMINDERS

Participants were asked to rank, from 0 to 5, the impact that their childminder has had on various areas of their lives. A ranking of 0 indicates that they thought their childminder has had no impact, with 5 indicating they considered that they had a high impact. The results are displayed in **Figure 18** below and give an indication of how important a role that participants feel their childminder has on the four areas specified. The area where respondents felt that their childminder had the highest impact was allowing them to return to work. A very high percentage (64.1%) also felt that their childminder had a high impact on the education and care of their children. This result could be interpreted as reinforcing the need for childminders to have relevant childcare qualifications / training in the area of education but more research would need to be carried out to validate that assertion.

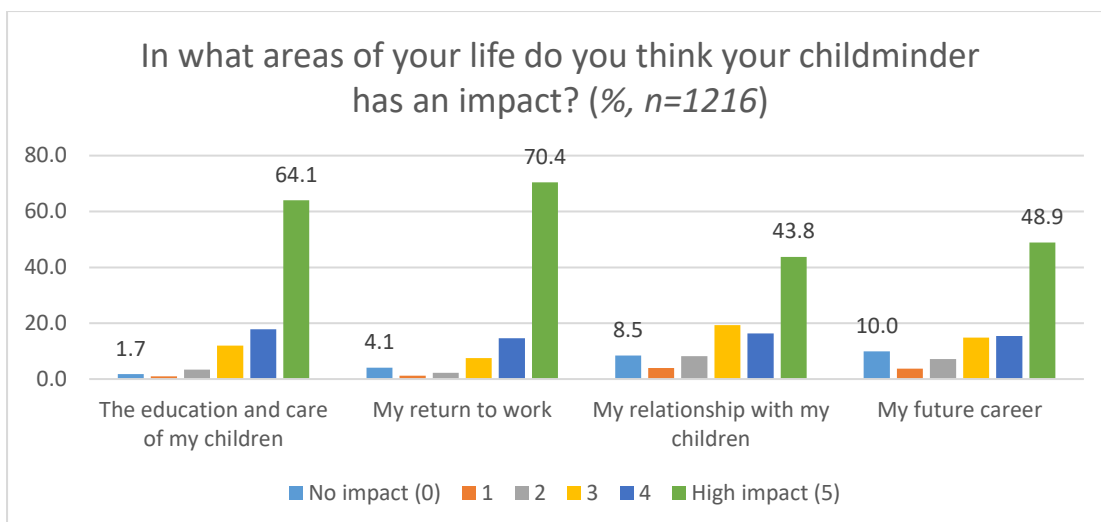


Figure 18: Impact of childminder

As with previous questions, the figures for this question were again disaggregated by age group, net annual household income group and place of residence to test for statistically significant relationships. The results can be seen in **Table 5** below:

| | Age Group | Net annual household Income | Location |
|--|-----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| The education and care of my children | Yes** | No | No |
| My return to work | No | No | No |
| My relationship with my children | No | No | No |
| My future career | No | Yes* | No |

*p<.05 **p<.01

Table 5: Results of significance testing by demographic groups

“Returning to work” and “relationship with children” showed no statistically significant relationship with any of the three groups – age, net annual household income or location.

Younger people (<34 years of age) rated the impact on the education and care of their children as significantly higher than those in the older age groups. Respondents aged 45+ years had more than expected people responding that their childminder had “no impact” in this area.

There was a statistically significant relationship between a person’s net annual household income and the impact they feel their childminder has on their future career. As net annual household income increased, fewer than expected people rated the impact as “very important”. Those on net annual household incomes between €20,000 and €40,000 were more likely to rate the impact as “very important”. Earners on the highest net annual household income group (€60,000+) had more than expected respondents rating it as “not at all important” and lower than expected rating it as “very important”.

An overwhelming majority of respondents, approximately 72%, are “Very satisfied” with their childminder. (**Figure 19**) Recurring positive words and phrases used to describe childminders include “home from home”, “kind”, “caring”, “flexible”, “reliable”, and “loved”. This reinforces the high percentage who ranked these qualities as “very important” in previous questions.

Negative themes that emerged from the analysis were concerns with their childminder regarding the lack of flexibility, the physical environment and the cost involved.

“Issues arise when the children are sick” “does not have a proper bed for the nap”, “physical surroundings are poor” “....cost is high....” “the cost is excruciating”

Some respondents also stated that, due to the lack of childminders in their area, they had no choice but to stay with a particular childminder, regardless of satisfaction.

“there’s not a lot I can do as like I said all crèches are full and there was literally no other childminder available”

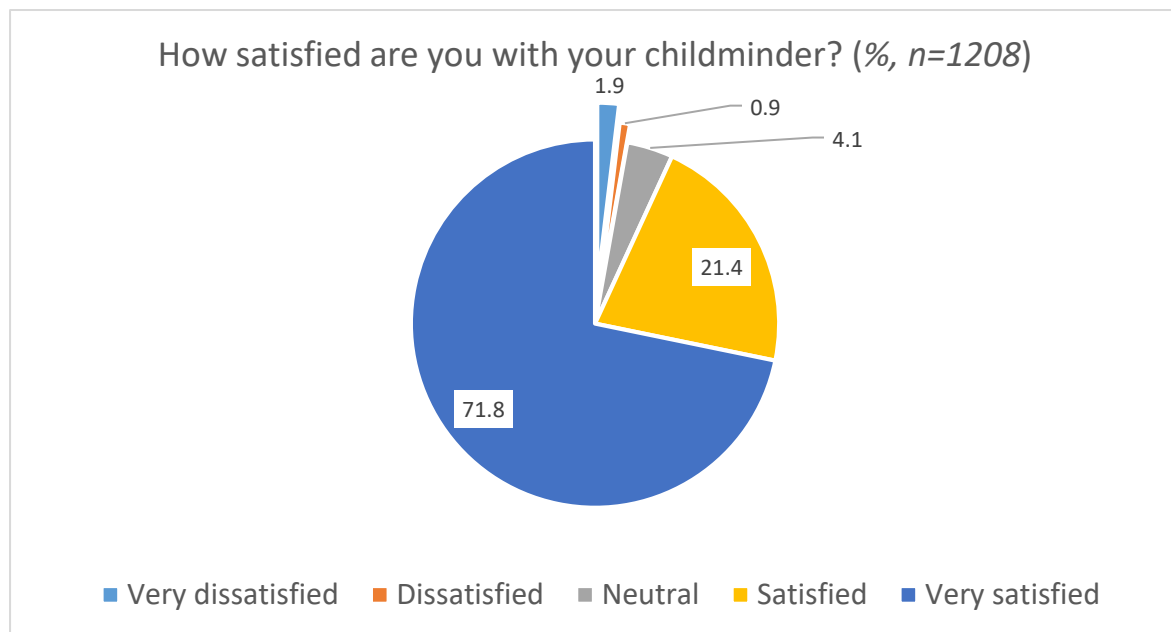


Figure 19: Satisfaction with childminder

CONCLUSION

Childminding continues to be at the centre of strong political debate. In recent years, there has been an increased focus on issues such as accessibility, subsidisation and quality (for example, childcare qualifications, insurance, facilities, management structures) and the importance of supporting an inclusive childcare system which caters for all, regardless of their situation. It is a complex area to negotiate as, historically, it has been seen as a private decision that parents / guardians control.

The results of this survey show the very varied opinions, concerns and needs concerning childminding services that parents have. These opinions, concerns and needs are influenced by their situation in life, for example, their age, their place of residence, their working hours, etc. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs faces a serious challenge in attempting to address these needs, particularly issues of flexibility and affordability, which some respondents seem to feel are better addressed by non-regulated childminders as opposed to regulated childminders or crèches.

The results indicate an inherent suspicion of regulations and legislation, with fears that this will reduce both the number and quality of childminders that are currently available. For a successful implementation of new schemes and legislation to take place, these fears will have to be acknowledged and addressed. In addition, increased information and education around childcare guidelines could help create new cultural norms regarding feeling able to ask for evidence of, for example, qualifications, insurance, garda vetting, etc.

There is a very obvious lack of knowledge surrounding the Affordable Childcare Scheme (this survey predates the DCYA communications campaign) and once parents and guardians are supplied with information, this may impact on parents/guardians decisions concerning their childcare arrangements.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Children 2020: Cost-Benefit Analysis (2011) Goodbody Economic Consultants

PARENTS SURVEY - APPENDIX 1

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE PARENTS' SURVEY

Bernadette Orbinski Burke, Childminding Ireland

Mary Tynan, Childminding Ireland

Bernie Byrne Childminding Ireland

Maireád Hurley, Childminding Ireland

Fionnuala Ní Mhórdha, Maynooth University

Liz Kerrins, Children's Rights Alliance

Dr. Marianne Boogaard, Kohnstamm Institute, University of Amsterdam

Miriam O' Regan, Dublin Institute of Technology

Dr Ana Cruz Garcia Cork Institute of Technology

Working Group on Reforms and Supports for the Childminding Sector

PARENTS SURVEY - APPENDIX 2
SURVEY (ENGLISH AND IRISH VERSIONS)

Welcome to Childminding Parents Survey

Dear Parent,

Do you use a Childminder to care for your children in the Childminder's home? If so, we would be grateful if you would complete this survey, so that we can capture your views on Childminding. This survey is part of the work being undertaken by the Working Group on Reforms and Supports for the Childminding Sector. This Working Group was commissioned by Dr Katherine Zappone, T.D., Minister for Children & Youth Affairs.

This survey should take approximately ten minutes of your time and all responses are anonymous.

Thank you for your input.

Bernadette Orbinski Burke

Chairperson - Working Group on Reforms and Supports for the Childminding Sector
Chief Executive - Childminding Ireland

1. Are you a Parent/Guardian of child/children under age 16?

Yes

No

* 2. Which of the following, if any, apply to you? Select as many as applicable.

- Paying for childminding in childminder's home
- Paying for Crèche
- Paying for childcare in child's' own home
- Paying for preschool not with childminder
- Paying for after-school childcare not with childminder
- Not paying for childcare

Other (please specify)

3. Please select your age group below?

- Under 25
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45+

4. Where do you currently live?

- Rural area
- Village
- Town
- City
- Other (please specify)

5. In years, approximately how long have you been using the services of a childminder?

6. Where did you first hear about your current childminder?

- Word of mouth
- Newspaper/Advertisement
- Relevant organisation/committee
- Online search
- Local noticeboard
- Other (please specify)

7. What is your approximate annual household income after taxes are deducted? (please include all sources of income e.g. employment, social welfare etc.)

- €1-€9,999
- €10,000-€19,999
- €20,000-€29,999
- €30,000-€39,999
- €40,000-€49,999
- €50,000-€59,999
- €60,000+

QUESTION 8,9,10 - PLEASE **ONLY** INCLUDE INFORMATION RELATING TO YOUR CHILDMINDER. PLEASE EXCLUDE ANY OTHER FORMS OF CHILDCARE YOU MAY BE USING.

8. Please indicate the ages of each of your children who are with a childminder.

| | Under 1 year | 1-2 years | 3-4 years | 5-6 years | 7-12 years | 13-16 years |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Child 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 2 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 3 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 4 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 5 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 6 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

9. How much are you paying your childminder approximately per week per child?

| | €1-€99 | €100-€199 | €200-€299 | €300-€399 | €400+ |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Child 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 2 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 3 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 4 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 5 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 6 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |


10. How many hours approximately per week do you use your childminding service?

| | 1-9 Hours | 10-19 Hours | 20-29 Hours | 30-39 Hours | 40+ Hours |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Child 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 2 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 3 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 4 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 5 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Child 6 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

* 11. Using a scale 0=Not at all important to 5=Very important please rate the following:

In terms of ensuring good quality of service, how important **do you think** it is that childminders

| | No Opinion | Not at all important 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Very important 5 |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| be subjected to official inspections? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| be Garda vetted? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| have a minimum childcare qualification level? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| have access to on-going training? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| have support and development visits from appropriate organisations? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



* 12. When you were deciding on a childminder, did you **consider** and/or **ask for evidence** of the following:

| | Considered | Asked for | Neither |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| If your childminder was Garda vetted? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If your childminder has access to support and training? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If your childminder has specific childminding insurance for their home? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If your childminder has specific childminding insurance for their car? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If they have a childcare qualification? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If they are experienced in minding children? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If they follow specific policies and procedures? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If they are registered/members of a childcare organisation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If they have a relevant First Aid qualification? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If they have completed a Child Protection course? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |


Other (please specify)



* 13. Using a scale 0=Not at all important to 5=Very important, please rate the following.

When **choosing** your childminder, how important were the following?

| | Not at all important 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Very important 5 |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Proximity to family home | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Positive references from known people | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Cost | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A home from home setting | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Flexible daily/holiday opening hours | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Childminder available to do drop off and pick up duties from activities/school | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Accept children of all ages | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Accept children with special needs/requirements | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Provides meals | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Continuity of care with one person | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Childminders personal qualities - kind, caring. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Physical environment; safety and cleanliness | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



* 14. Are you aware of the Affordable Childcare Scheme?

Yes

No

FOR INFORMATION ON THE AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE SCHEME, PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING LINK

<https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/earlyyears/20170130QandAonAffordableChildcareScheme.pdf>

15. Is your childminder eligible for the Affordable Childcare Scheme?

Yes

No

Don't Know

18. How satisfied are you with your childminder?

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

Please expand on the reason for your answer



19. Please share any advice, comments or concerns you may have that have not been covered in this survey?



Thank you for your interest, however, as you have indicated you do not use a Childminding service you do not need to complete any further questions in this survey.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Please feel free to share the link to this survey with other Parents.

A thuismitheoir a chara,

An mbaineann tú úsáid as feighlí leanaí? Má úsáideann, bheimid buíoch díobh dá dtiocfadh libh an suirbhé seo a líonadh isteach ionas go mbeadh eolas againn ar bhur dtuairimí ar fheighlíocht leanaí. Is cuid den obair, an suirbhé seo, atá faoi chaibidil ag an nGrúpa Oibre um Athchóiriú agus Tacaíochtaí don Earnáil Feighlí Leanaí. Choimisiúnaigh an Dochtúir Katherine Zappone T.D. an grúpa oibre seo.

Glacfaidh an suirbhé seo thart fa deich bomaite a líonadh isteach agus beidh na freagraí a thabharfar coimeádta faoi rún.

Go ribh maith agat as d'ionchur sa suirbhé seo.

Bernadette Orbinski Burke

Cathaoirleach – Grúpa Oibre um Athchóiriú agus Tacaíochtaí don Earnáil Feighlí Leanaí

Príomhfheidhmeanach- Cumann Náisiúnta Feighlíocht Leanaí na hÉireann

1. An tuismitheoir / caomhnóir de pháiste / de pháistí faoi aois 16 thú?

- Is ea
 - Ní hea
-

* 2. Cé acu iad seo a leanas a bhaineann leatsa? Roghnaigh an méid a ghabhann leat.

- Ag íoc don fheighlíocht leanaí i dteaghlach an feighlí leanaí
 - Ag íoc as Náiolann
 - Ag íoc do chúram leanaí i dteaghlach an linbh
 - Ag íoc as naíonra gan aon fheighlí leanaí
 - Ag íoc as cúram leanaí tar éis am scoile gan aon fheighlí leanaí
 - Gan a bheith ag íoc as cúram leanaí
 - Ag íoc as cúram de shaghas eile (Tabhair sonraí le do thoil)
-

3. Roghnaigh an aoisghrúpa a oireann duitse le do thoil

- Faoi aois 25
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45+
-

4. Cá chónaíonn tú ag an am seo?

- Foin tuath
- I mBaile Beag
- I mBaile Mór
- I gCathair
- Áit éigean eile (Tabhair sonraí le do thoil)



5. Ar feadh cé mhéad blianta an bhfuil seirbhísí feighlí leanaí á úsáid agat?

6. Cár chuala tú faoi do fheighlí leanaí reatha don chéad uair?

- Ó bhéal
- Fógra Núachtáin
- Cumann nó Coiste a bhaineann le leanaí
- Cuardach ar líne
- Clár fógraíochta áitiúil
- Aon áit ar bith eile (Tabhair sonraí le do thoil)

9. Cé mhéad a íocann tú le d'fheighlí leanaí in aghaidh na seachtaine do gach páiste? (euro)

| | €1-€99 | €100-€199 | €200-€299 | €300-€399 | €400+ |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Páiste 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 2 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 3 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 4 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 5 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 6 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

10. Cé mhéad uair a chloig a úsáideann tú an tseirbhís fheighlí leanaí in aghaidh na seachtaine?

| | 1-9 uaireanta | 10-19 uaireanta | 20-29 uaireanta | 30-39 uaireanta | 40+ uaireanta |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Páiste 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 2 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 3 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 4 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 5 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Páiste 6 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

* 12. Nuair a bhí tú ag roghnú feighlí leanaí, ar chuir tú iad seo san áireamh agus/nó ar lorg tú fianaise ar iad seo a leanas:

| | San áireamh | Ag lorg fianaise | Gan ceachtar acu | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| An ndeachaigh do fheighlí leanaí faoi ghrinnfhiosrúchán an Gharda Síochána? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An bhfuil seans ag do fheighlí leanaí glacadh le traenáil agus le tacaíocht? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An bhfuil árachas feighlí leanaí ar leith acu do a dteaghlach féin? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An bhfuil árachas feighlí leanaí ar leith acu do a ngluaisteán féin? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An bhfuil cáilíocht cúram leanaí acu? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An bhfuil taithí acu ar aire a thabhairt do leanaí? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An leanann siad polasaithe agus modhanna ar leith? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An bhfuil siad cláraithe mar bhall d'eagraíocht cúram leanaí? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An bhfuil cáilíocht garchabhrach cuí acu? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An bhfuil cúrsa maidir le cosaint leanaí déanta acu? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Aon rud eile (Tabhair sonraí le do thoil)



14. An bhfuil eolas agat faoin Scéim Cúram Leanaí Inacmhainne?

- Tá
- Níl

Chun teacht ar eolas ar an Scéim Cúram Leanaí Inacmhainne, tabhair cuairt ar an suíomh seo <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/earlyyears/20170130QandAonAffordableChildcareScheme.pdf>

15. An bhfuil do feighlí leanaí incháilithe leis an Scéim Cúram Leanaí Inacmhainne?

- Tá
- Níl
- Ní fios dom
-

18. Cé chomh sásta is atá tú le do fheighlí leanaí?

- An-míshásta
- Míshásta
- Neodrach
- Sásta
- An-sásta

Tabhair cúis le do fhreagra le do thoil

19. Ma tá aon comhairle agus tuairim agat nó má tá inní ort faoi aon rud nach bhfuil luaite sa suirbhé seo, luaigh iad thíos, le do thoil.

Gabhaimid buíochas as do spéis sa suirbhé seo. De bharr gur chuir tú in iúil nach n-úsáideann tú seirbhís cúram leanaí, áfach, ní gá duit aon cheisteanna eile a fhreagairt



Go raibh maith agat as bheith páirteach sa suirbhé seo

