

Childminding Sustainability

Survey Report 2023/2024



Introduction

About Childminding UK

Childminding UK has been supporting childminders for over 30 years. Formed in 1991 by and for local working childminders in Northamptonshire, we now support childminders across the country. A registered charity, we are the only national organisation that solely supports childminders and we have achieved the Princess Royal Training Award for ‘Ensuring high quality childcare through training and support’.

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Part one

Background

It is widely recognised that the first 5 years of a child's life are fundamental to their future chances, both in education, their opportunities for employment and building and maintaining effective relationships. It is vital that good early years education focusses on the needs of the children at all times.

We know that there are two main factors that constitute good quality care and education. This is the qualification and training levels of adults and those all-important adult-child interactions.

The government expansion of what they term 'FREE' childcare, is aimed at encouraging and enabling more parents to work and will provide up to 30 hours of funded childcare to children over the age of 9 months for eligible families. It is estimated that £28 billion would be generated for the economy if more women were able to work.

To enable parents to work, there needs to be sustainable, good quality and affordable childcare available. But childcare is not available evenly across the country - there's more in affluent areas than less affluent areas. We also have an unprecedented decline in the availability of childcare places. Last year alone, we lost 3,500 childminders and 400 group settings, with large percentages of the current workforce saying they are considering leaving within the next year.

Cathy Nutbrown, along with many others, states that early years is undervalued and underpaid. The Government's 'FREE' childcare offer only covers two thirds of the cost of providing a place, but parents are prevented from being charged the difference, which is putting childcare settings at risk of closure. Many are worried about the roll out to all children over the age of 9 months because currently it is the additional hours and younger children which keeps settings viable. Some childminders are telling us they will have to close as they can't survive if all children receive funding. Others are saying they won't provide funded places but will only offer private places.

We know that staff are 4 times less likely to leave early years if they can access training, but Local Authorities training and support has been reduced by around 80%. Settings have to source and pay for their training and support - which many are happy to do, but they need to be able to afford to.

Part two

Methodology

Childminding UK currently has almost 1,300 members. We invited members and non members to complete a survey from the beginning of November until 11th December 2023 and received 424 responses.

The focus of the survey was on:

- How many childminders provide funded places
- If childminders limit the number of funded places they offer
- How many childminders request voluntary payments or consumables payments
- If childminders are worried about the sustainability of their provision as the childcare expansion is rolled out to all eligible children over 9 months of age
- What is needed to enable childminders to remain sustainable.



Part three

Key findings

Providing funded places

87.2% of respondents currently provide funded places. Of the **13%** who don't, **20.3%** said they would consider providing funded places if the funding rate was adequate. Others suggested they would provide funded places for 2 year olds and under but not 3 and 4 year olds as the payment is less and therefore not sustainable.

Limiting the number of funded hours in a day

Currently, only **19.9%** of respondents limit the number of funded hours available during the day, with **68.3%** not limiting at all. Some respondents stated that they must do this to remain sustainable or that they will introduce limits when the expansion is rolled out otherwise they won't survive.

Voluntary contributions or charges for consumables

Currently **50.8%** of respondents request a voluntary contribution to childcare costs and **49.5%** charge for consumables.

Childminders worried about sustainability

62.4% of respondents are worried about the sustainability of their childminding setting when the expansion is rolled out to all eligible children. Some cite the low hourly rate that doesn't meet their usual rates, but many also citing that their Local Authority only pays termly and they can't survive unless payments are monthly.

Part four

Survey results

The survey results paint a clear picture of childminders who want to provide a childminding service but feel that government funding and processes threaten their very existence as childcare professionals. We received an unprecedented number of comments from respondents which clearly explain their frustrations and barriers to continuing in a job they love. Those childminders in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) are reporting that the HMRC allowances for childminding expenses are not recognised by Universal Credit, meaning childminders losing out.

A widespread concern highlighted is exemplified here. “I am extremely worried. I am a single parent minder with two assistants and have just been moved from Tax Credits to Universal Credit. Our funding is paid in two lump sums per term rather than monthly. Funded months will wipe out my UC completely even though the funding covers 2-3 months of expenditure. In non-funded months I will then get below minimum income floor income so will lose UC help then too. UC do not work to the same rules as HMRC. I am already £600 a month down and will be over £1000 a month down when all get funding. My beloved Outstanding setting will most likely close. “

Others say that their local authority only paying termly or twice termly, means they are not eligible for Universal Credit payments those months.

“With Birmingham City Council only paying termly for funding I financially cannot afford to offer more than 1 space as the bulk payment effects my universal payments leaving me short in money to pay essential bills. One respondent was told by Universal Credit advisors to look for other employment. “As funding is only paid for 38 weeks per year I cannot have feasible self-employment with filling my spaces with 3 children and getting paid only 38 weeks of the year at £5.14 it doesn’t even meet MIF for Universal Credit, then Universal credit says I need to find different job!”



Part four

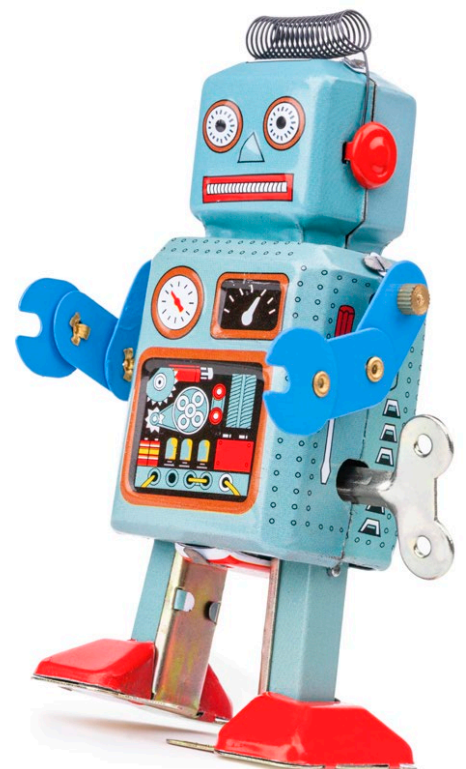
Survey results continued...

Providing funded places

87% of respondents currently provide funded places. Of the 13% who don't offer funded places, 7.3% of respondents have suggested they will not offer funded places, even when the expansion is fully rolled out. For the remainder, they are watching and waiting to see what the hourly rate is before committing or waiting to see if their Local Authority will pay them monthly instead of termly so they can afford to.

“As we can only have a maximum of 3 children, the rate for 3 year olds is too low. Once outgoings are paid, I would be working for less than minimum wage. I would only be able to do it for the lower age ranges. I enjoy working with the older age range so it's unlikely I would childmind for much longer knowing they will have to leave when they turn 3”

“If we could deduct the funded amount from our fees then yes. Not being allowed to charge the difference, even though we are self-employed, can decide the amount of funded spaces we can afford to offer.”



Part four

Survey results continued...

Limits to the number of places on offer

16% of respondents already limit the number of funded places they offer and give a variety of reasons for doing so. Reasons given include practicalities such as needing to take time off for dentist appointments which they say is not permitted with funded places, the amount of time the additional admin takes to provide funded places and also the financial implications of being able to provide both private and funded places in order to be financially viable as the 'non funded' children keep the business afloat. One voiced a common concern "I cannot afford all the children to be funded".

All but one respondent reported that the hourly rate is below what they usually charge. Some said that as self-employed people, they believe they should be able to set their own fees. "If this is going to be available to all children from 9months to 4yrs it will be dependent on hourly rate offered - as being self-employed I should be allowed to choose my own hourly rate to ensure my own sustainability".

"If I offer funded spaces, I feel to be financially sustainable I will be forced to limit spaces available."

"The funding rate is a lot lower than my hourly rate so to offer all funded places would not be sustainable".

"I do not currently limit funding but with funding coming in I will not be taking children that want only finding hours as the additional hours will be what makes the place sustainable and cover business costs"

For some childminders, they have already made the difficult decision to close. "I have decided to stop childminding entirely when it comes in".

"Financially I need to make my business profitable I cannot operate as a charity I need to keep a roof over my own children's heads".

Part four

Survey results continued...

Limiting the number of funded hours in a day

A slightly higher figure of **19.8%** already limit the number of funded hours available in a day, with **68.4%** not limiting at all, but enabling parents to access the hours they need. More though are considering introducing this limit if they are to remain sustainable, with increased fees for non-funded hours.

“Not at present, but with the new scheme coming in from next year, I’m seriously considering it due to very poor funding rates”.

“Going forwards I intend to fully limit this further to ensure I don’t financially suffer - currently our LA doesn’t pay monthly and the rate is lower than what I charge”.

“Not at present but I intend to when the full funding for all children from 9 months comes into play”.

“I do either 7.5 hours a day or 10 hours a day of funding, there is no ‘pick n mix’ option available as the admin burden of funding is far greater than just invoicing fee paying parents. I also do ‘whole’ days of childminding, not half days”.

“I feel it’s sad that childcare providers have to manipulate the funding system in order to get a fair income. The issue is in both the funded rate being lower than the standard space rate, plus huge issues around funding not being paid in the month that the actual care takes place in line with UC requirements”.

Part four

Survey results continued...

The stretched offer

Most respondents (42.8%) provide funded places during term time with parents paying in full during school holidays. Some state that holiday payments enable them to be sustainable. Many offer both term time and stretched offers depending on parents requirements. Others report difficulties with complicated local authority admin requirements which they say limits what they will offer parents, or 9.9% who say local authorities who won't permit the stretched offer. One stated "Our LA will not allow us to offer stretched".

Until now I have allowed parents to stretch funding but it is too complicated and I fear losing out financially if a child leaves - so I'm considering no longer offering the option to stretch."

"The system for claiming is so complicated I can't afford the time spent trying to work out funding and invoices"



Part four

Survey results continued...

Voluntary payments and charges for consumables

The government guidance for local authorities makes it clear that early years settings are not permitted to charge top up fees to make up the difference between government payments and settings usual fees, but they can make charges for consumables as long as charges are voluntary and not compulsory. Our survey results showed that **50.6%** of respondents requested a voluntary payment and **49.5%** requested a consumables payment. Most introducing voluntary payments called them either voluntary or sustainability payments and **43.6%** have a set amount per hour and **28%** per day. **67.8%** of respondents set a set consumable charge per child with **32.2%** setting it according to the individual child.

“My parents pay a flat voluntary contribution of £60 per week. This is specifically to cover travel, dance class, zoo pass, theatre and forest school experiences all which are additional to our core EYFS delivery. Some parents volunteer not to pay the contribution, some offer to pay a proportion of what is requested according to their means.”

“I explain that the funding amount is less than my hourly rate and ask for a voluntary payment to cover the difference otherwise I will struggle to provide the experience I would like for the children in my care.”

“Additional educational enrichment & consumables including food (it’s one amount) not shown separately from food / consumables.”

Most respondents say that the majority of parents are happy with making the payments, and only **6.1%** of prospective parents refusing and **6.4%** of existing parents. When this happens, childminders have reported they fund this out of their own pocket, or do not offer the place to the child, explaining to parents that they can’t afford to.

Part four

Survey results continued...

“It’s important to understand why a family is unwilling or unable to pay. Honest open, compassionate approach is required. Children should never be disadvantaged or left out if their parent cannot pay. Often the cost of the trips in this circumstance comes directly out of my own wage. I would not discriminate against a child on the basis of affordability of a voluntary contribution”

“I tell them it is also voluntary to offer funding so I fill the space with someone else who is supportive of my business.”

“Nothing we still offer space and just make a loss on the hours.”

“I simply explained the figures and what we would lose over the year and that it wasn’t free but subsidised, she owned a business and I asked her if she would do a job for a reduced rate and her answer was no - she wouldn’t.”

“Some parents are not in a situation to be able to pay the voluntary contribution . For example I have been supporting a parent who is very young and is trying to survive.”

“Parents know I can only offer funded hrs if that pay a voluntary/ consumables fee to top up the hourly rate to meet what I normally charge. The fee includes meals, snacks, outings, nappies and wipes. My parents know I cannot sustain without that support. I wouldn’t be able to offer funded hrs. My business would end after 17 years of something I’ve put my heart and soul into.”

“Parents have been happy to pay a consumable fee. Most have already been paying my rate of £5.50 hour and are delighted with the saving.”

Part four

Survey results continued...

Worries about sustainability as the programme is rolled out

62.5% of respondents state they are worried about sustainability as the programme is expanded, with only **25.7%** saying they aren't because they will continue to charge a consumables fee that covers the difference. Many name the hourly rate being less than their usual and others are concerned about the payments being termly and that this affects Universal Credit payments but also the delay in payments makes it untenable to pay their own monthly bills if there are no privately funded children to allow some income regularly. Most respondents state that if they were permitted to charge a simple top up fee, they would be able guarantee sustainability of their service.

"It's not very helpful for childminders as the payment is quarterly and I don't pay my bills and rent quarterly".

"Very poor funding rates will make it harder to stay sustainable. I've took the bullet by not charging any additional fees, but with more children being eligible to funding, I won't be able to carry on in this way"

"The funding process is time consuming as a childminder, the LA contract is weighted in the parent's favour not setting with notice periods / deposits etc. The funding isn't paid in advance and the difference between funding amount and private fees is widening for 3&4 year olds. The parents have to be in a position where they are able to pay extra for educational trips, consumables and food as otherwise I can't afford to put myself into poverty for the parent's financial gain."

Part four

Survey results continued...

“I am a single mother soon to be transferred to universal credits. Being paid a lump sum once a term will wipe out any payments I should receive from U.C, plunging me into very real poverty. Unless Hertfordshire agree to monthly payment, I will have no choice but to close my business”

“I don't really like being fully dictated what we will be paid when we are self employed and have no benefits of being employed (holiday pay, sick pay etc).”

“As a childminder on universal credit as I am a widow with 3 small children getting paid 6 times a year is difficult as I have to pay my bills myself weekly then universals credits say I can't claim until my money runs out in which they will top up but I will have zero income as my weekly money has ran out, that and the fact we can not claim for gas electric water council tax, the only reason I heat my home 40 hours per week is for children, it's forcing me to give this job up”.

Reported lack of information or late information from Local Authorities makes it harder for childminders to plan and budget for childcare places.

“The lack of information especially in a timely manner is the problem with the amount the LA are going to pass on and whether this amount is going to remain the same, lower or higher each term or financial year. It is impossible to budget and set fees when the LA only announced what they were paying for this autumn term mid September, when children had already started and there is no guarantee it is going to remain the same for summer term. I wonder if it is still really going to go ahead and whether the government will change and it will all change. The free is the issue, having government funded contribution towards childcare wouldn't be a problem. “

Part four

Survey results continued...

The survey identified many objections to the use of government language in allowing parents to think places are free when they are 'subsidised' and not fully funded.

"Please don't use the word free even in dittos, it is a subsidised funding"

"The word "Free" makes the parents believe it is a god given right for childminders to care for their children for Free! It's not free! The government should in fact call it subsidised funding and parents should be made to understand that we don't work for free or for the amount the government deems we are worth. We are losing childminders at an unprecedented rate and the government only wants to help the parents to return to work. Making life better more financially beneficial for them. I have families with both parents working earning double my monthly wage and they are pleading poverty!!"

The following 2 comment sum up the strength of feeling among many respondents.

"Why have you written FREE in capital letters, if you had any idea how infuriating this is to our industry you wouldn't even call it free, it's not free it's under funded and the childminder has to take the punch for the 'free' portion that the government doesn't cover, it's not free it's at a small businesses expense that the government exploits. Sustainability is already strained, if this additional funding offered to you for children is not covered properly by the government and local councils, many providers will close their doors, no one runs a business at a loss"

Part four

Survey results continued...

“For the government to say it’s supplemented and not free. For the government to pay the parents rather than us as I’m self-employed and not a public sector worker. If I am a public sector worker now being paid by the government then I should be entitled to a pension. They have enforced a pay cut on me (which in any other company would be illegal) and then told me to make up the difference in order to be sustainable I must say it’s voluntary. So I must now be a charity because the parents livelihoods are more important than mine. If they are concerned some parents can’t pay then this should have been means tested. Why should I say a charge of £15 a day be voluntary in order to continue working at my present hourly rate when some of these parents earn just under 100k a year or more. What the government have done is completely underhand. They have forced us into a situation and if we can’t afford to continue as a result, many childminders and nurseries will close and then there won’t be any childcare available at all. So governments plan to get more people to work will just backfire and put us out of work and many unable to work. It appears for the 2 year provision they will pay enough to cover our hourly rate but for children over 3, this won’t be the case. Many childminders may even choose not to care for them when they turn 3 because they simple can’t afford to.”

With shortages of childcare places currently and predicted to get worse, one respondent raised concerns about vulnerable 2 year olds accessing a funded place.

“Not enough settings to provide care. Quality will suffer. Differing rates will make it hard for us to budget AND provide continuity of care for older children who need a small setting. Disadvantaged 2 year olds will get pushed out as easier to offer 30 hours rather than 15”.

Part five

Summary & Recommendations

The responses to this survey show how strong the feelings and frustrations are among the childminders who responded to the survey, many of whom state they are being forced to give up a job they love and have put 'their heart and soul into'.

Childminding numbers have reduced significantly over the last few years and according to our survey, Childminding UK is saddened to see that many more are planning to cease trading due to the expansion of what the government call 'free childcare places'.

We know that the amounts of funding the government set for their 'free places' is determined by nursery ratios which are very different to childminding ratios. For example, the rate for 3 and 4 year olds is set at the ratio of 8 children per adult, but childminders are not permitted to care for 8 children. Childminders are saying they are having to consider only caring for younger children which would disrupt the continuity of care that is so important for young children.

The introduction of start up grants to encourage more to register will only work long term if childminders can afford to keep the job they are registered to do.

The majority of respondents are requesting a voluntary or 'sustainability' payment, to bring the funding rates up to their usual hourly rate in order to survive and provide the high-quality provision they want to, with many reporting that parents are happy to pay. Others are stating that some parents are refusing to pay, which is leaving childminders out of pocket and threatening the future of their setting or leaving childminders no choice but to not offer a funded place to the child.

Others are limiting the funded hours in a day or week so that parents pay for some privately funded hours too and these hourly rates are set at a level to supplement the funded shortfall. These privately funded hours will largely cease to exist after the expansion is completed, apart from childminders who tell us they will only offer private places.

Part five

Summary & Recommendations continued...

Most respondents state that if they were simply permitted to charge a top up fee, they would be sustainable and that parents wouldn't expect their child's place to be free. For this to happen, the government would need to change the narrative from 'free places' to 'subsidised or part funded' places.

Early Years has several types of setting, from nursery schools who have to employ and pay teachers, chain nurseries in purpose-built buildings, independent pre-schools operating from village or church halls and childminders operating from home, all with differing running costs, ratio requirements and different fees for parents. Childminding UK believes that the government has a difficult task if it is trying to set one hourly rate that will pay each setting what they need to without over paying or underpaying others, and that changing the narrative and permitting settings to charge a top up fee would be a fair way for parents to understand the government contribution but allows them to choose the setting they feel is best for their child.

Although not a survey question, we heard from childminders who feel it is unfair they can't claim funding for related children as they do in Wales and is permitted in group settings in England.

A slightly lower percentage than expected said that they are concerned the roll out childcare places will threaten the sustainability of their business. This may be due to the high number of childminders who are already successfully receiving voluntary payments from parents and plan to continue. It is saddening to hear from so many that are planning to close their business who may continue to thrive if the rules and guidance were changed.

Local Authority processes and delays in payment and information being relayed to childminders is cited as causing difficulties in childminders future planning, but also causing financial hardship with one respondent waiting over 6 months for payment. Childminders have families to support and need to be able to rely on the income from their business. For those respondents on Universal Credit, the differences in childminding expenses that are accepted by HMRC and Universal Credit is causing childminders to lose essential benefits.

Part five

Summary & Recommendations continued...

Recommendations

- Increase the amount of funding to fully cover the cost of a childcare place, **or** change the narrative around what the government call 'free' childcare places to 'subsidised places' so that parents are aware the funding doesn't cover all the costs of a childcare place
- Allow providers to charge a top up fee to cover any shortfall in government payments
- Ensure that all Local Authorities offer monthly payments to childminders
- Set time-scales for Local Authorities to inform providers of future funding rates
- Require Local Authorities to have a robust but simple to operate platform for claiming for funded children
- Align the childminding expenses that are allowable with HMRC to Universal Credit claims to prevent childminders losing benefits
- Set funding rates for childminders based on childminder ratios and not nursery ratios
- Enable childminders to claim funding for related children as they do in Wales and as nursery counterparts can.

Part six

Full survey

Question 1

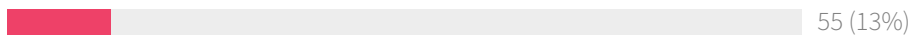
Do you offer funded places?

424 answers (Radio buttons)

Yes



No

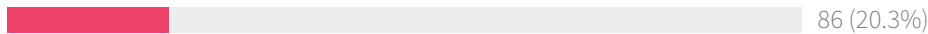


Question 2

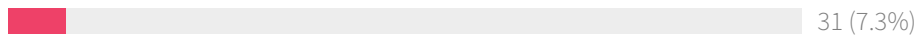
If no, will the government's plan to expand funded places to all eligible children over 9 months, mean you will offer funded places in future?

141 answers (Checkboxes)

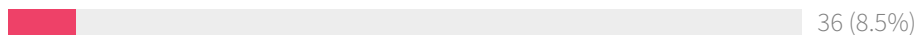
Yes



No



Comments



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"if the funded rates are decent, all depends on my LA's offer"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Ongoing."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure, depends on how the money is paid."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I will consider"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I will have to or the 2 year olds will go elsewhere."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I would like some training & more knowledge on how this would impact a setting & its staff"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I think the funded places are a load of rubbish just to make the government look good. They don't tell the whole truth. 1. They aren't all year round, only 38 weeks. 2 The onus lies with the childminder to do the work, the government and parents have to do nothing to get it... i.e. we now have more work to do.."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only because I'll have to, to keep my business going."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"As we can only have a maximum of 3 children, the rate for 3 year olds is too low. Once outgoings are paid, I would be working for less than minimum wage. I would only be able to do it for the lower age ranges. I enjoy working with the older age range so it's unlikely I would childmind for much longer knowing they will have to leave when they turn 3"

'Personal details removed' said:

"maybe - but only because parents cannot get support any other way and I will be advising against it. As the LA take funding away if a setting gets an Ofsted inadequate which is not a regulated grading. I offer an amazing setting and have worked hard spent a fortune so feel it is not adequate to offer care and education to children and families which is dependent on an inadequate system. When their funding is rescinded the business struggles to continue to invest itself to develop offering spaces for free or reduced rate to ensure children's continuity of care."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Depends on funding"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Possibly but I honestly do not believe the scheme is sustainable or will go ahead, if it does, it will not be at the rate they are stating. If the LA I am in pay my rate as a minimum on a monthly basis then yes I will offer it."

'Personal details removed' said:

"not sure not sure yet, all my families are double high income earners."

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/a"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Depends on hourly rate offered & how the contracts link in to us childminders being self employed"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If they can't pay our he rate then they are not thinking how much it cost to run a childminding business"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I do offer funding but the problem is it's lower than my hourly rate."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I really do not want to as I am a single mum on universal credits. Funded payments means I lose out hundreds of pounds every year from my universal credits. I am funding parents and am not earning anything like they are."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only if the money is more than my hourly rate"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I really don't want to so will need to either offer it or close In my view the system is not suitable for childminders

It is a system more suited to larger nursery settings only

In my borough funding is less than my hourly rate and paid termly. This will be extremely difficult for small settings who have monthly financial commitments

All parents have use of the tax free childcare system

This system works well so the obvious thing would have been to increase this allowance to working parents and not have childcare providers do added admin alongside caring for and supporting the children in their care

The government decision to proceed with this free hour system will result in the closure of many good settings and limit provision to parents instead of supporting parents.

It's flawed in my opinion."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We will have to but it will mean our jobs are at risk"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We will have to but it will mean our jobs are at risk."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We will have to but it will mean our jobs are at risk"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only if they change to monthly payments because it affects my uc payments"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Everyone will be offering 2 year spaces meaning 3/4 will have less chance of quality care"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We will have no choice at the majority of children are funded.

I am extremely worried. I am a single parent minder with two assistants and have just been moved from Tax Credits to UC.

Our funding is paid in two lump sums per term rather than monthly. Funded months with wipe out my UC completely even though the funding covers 2-3 months of expenditure.

In non funded months I will then get below minimum income floor income so will lose UC help then too.

UC do not work to the same rules as HMRC. I am already £600 a month down and will be over £1000 a month down when all get funding.

My beloved Outstanding setting will most likely close."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The county I live in do not offer a high enough funding rate they are unreliable paying and they don't offer enough protection if a family decides to leave an attend a new setting. We lose money."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Unsure"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"It depends on children already on roll, age of child wanting to join, only one founded place available"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The issue is that it will feel like we are working with the local government as they will be the ones paying us"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If we could deduct the funded amount from our fees then yes. Not being allowed to charge the difference, even though we are self-employed, can decide the amount of funded spaces we can afford to offer."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Feel I may have to be pushed into"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If forced to do so"

Part six

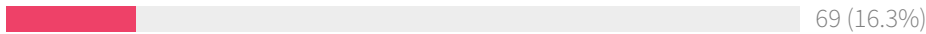
Full survey continued...

Question 3

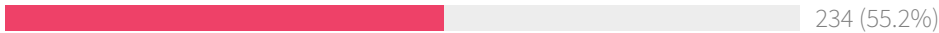
Do you limit the number of funded places you offer? (please explain your reasoning)

316 answers (Checkboxes)

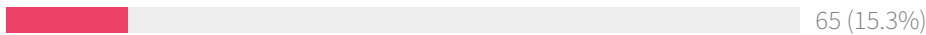
Yes



No



Additional comments



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"Need to be able to attend doctor/dentist etc. Can not get time off."

'Personal details removed' said:

"A mixture of public service and filling vacancies in the setting. The funding covers the child's place, but not their food, materials, outings etc. I prefer to have a vibrant setting to operating at a low percentage of capacity."

'Personal details removed' said:

"If the funding is paid in arrears then yes as I have to have enough income to cover the cost of staffing equipment etc. There has been occasions where the funding took months to be paid which is ridiculous as how are we meant to run with no funds"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I definitely would limit the places"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I only do two children during the day."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Once I know more about it then I will be able to comment"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I personally don't want to offer funded places as it means more work for me. I'll sign up and offer it, but if it's to much extra work... I'll stop doing it."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Never had a funded request yet"

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/A"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Can't afford to live if all places were funded. It's ok given families funded places to save them money but what about those providing them. Funded places don't pay the daily going rate, why should we take a pay cut government want to offer funded places they should pay minders better"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm a small setting. It will be funded children or no children. I have no choice"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I only offer one 3 and 4 years place as is not enough funding to cover the cost."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I can not afford all the children to be funded"

'Personal details removed' said:

"3 and 4 yr rate is less than my hourly rate"

'Personal details removed' said:

"As the LA are the middleman in the equation it is unlikely that I would offer unlimited spaces as they will dictate the terms which I do not agree are lawful and would therefore effect sustainability of the business and care of children."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I offer but prefer not to offer as rate is a lot less than my fees."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding is less than my hourly rate"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Am only allowed 3/4 funding places as work alone"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If I offer funded spaces I feel to be financially sustainable I will be forced to limit spaces available."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding process is time consuming as a childminder, the LA contract is weighted in the parent's favour not setting with notice periods / deposits etc. The funding isn't paid in advance and the difference between funding amount and private fees is widening for 3&4 year olds. The parents have to be in a position where they are able to pay extra for educational trips, consumables and food as otherwise I can't afford to put myself into poverty for the parent's financial gain."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Limited as per guidance for ratio numbers."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Ratios"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not at the present time - (for 3&4 year olds) However, if this is going to be available to all children from 9months to 4yrs it will be dependent on hourly rate offered - as being self employed I should be allowed to choose my own hourly rate to ensure my own sustainability"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not at present, but with the new scheme coming in from next year, I'm seriously considering it due to very poor funding rates"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I stay within my ratio number"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"With the way local authority pays (termly) at present I could not manage the cash flow easily. Our La are looking at possibly paying monthly but not decided yet. In addition if the rate is less than my own rate I would need to limit places"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't receive enough money from funding and it's not paid monthly like I don't have bills to pay"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Ideally only one but with funding coming in April 2024 I will have no choice."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The way it is paid means I need some children to pay monthly to survive to pay my bills."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not at the moment, but I may have to if I don't get paid my proper fees in the future."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Parents only want term time with funded places and cannot afford to lose the school holidays payments."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Currently no but I am keeping a very close eye on the financial side moving forward towards the new funding offerings"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Because we would lose out to nurseries in the area"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have to work within my ratios."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I limit the number of EYFS places I offer, not simply based on funding. I limit my places to 2 under 4s based purely on the fact I don't drive so getting out and about would be somewhat difficult with potentially 3 non walkers"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I can't afford to have all places funded"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Currently they are either disadvantaged 2 year olds or 3-4 year olds who have been with me for a long time."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Due to working alone I have to limit the amount of Children I have in the setting at anyone time."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"the hourly rate being banded about sounds good, but relity depends upon you LA"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have only started recently and with the average rate for 2 and under being higher than my hourly charge, I feel this would be more beneficial financially and offers all families equally."

'Personal details removed' said:

"With Birmingham city council only paying termly for funding I financially can not afford to offer more than 1 space as the bulk payment effects my universal payments leaving me short in money to pay essential bills."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Yes because I can't afford to take a pay cut and still pay my assistant"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding doesn't cover my daily rate so if was to offer funded hours full days would be at a loss for my business with cost of food and resources and trips"

'Personal details removed' said:

"This may have to be looked at again due to pricing"

'Personal details removed' said:

"As funding is only paid for 38 weeks per year I can not have feasible self employment with filling my spaces with 3 children and getting paid only 38 weeks of the year at £5.14 it doesn't even meet MIF for Universal Credit, then Universal credit says I need to find different job!"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"My rate is less than funding. My biggest issue is how funding is paid. Universal credits do not take into account we get paid twice termly. From sept 2024 all my children will be on funding."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I believe that access to quality childcare should be available to all children funded or otherwise and that parents should have lots of choice."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Because our LA does not pay us the rates as quoted in this piece of literature"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding is under funded and business is not sustainable otherwise, funding is paid termly and in arrears, again not sustainable"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Financially I need to make my business profitable I cannot operate as a charity I need to keep a roof over my own childrens heads"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I am SEND specific so ratios are halved anyway. Funding does not pay at all enough if i was to accept only FEEE children"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have decided to stop childminding entirely when it comes in"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding rate is a lot lower than my hourly rate so to offer all funded places would not be sustainable."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I can just about cope with the delay in receiving money for one child but couldn't if more than one. Fortunately this hadn't had to happen yet."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Yes I do limit funded places as I feel I would like to still give the same quality care to my children. I feel if I increase my spaces, I wouldn't Be able to offer the same service."

I work alone , without an assistant. I like to go out a lot with my children and increasing the amount of children I have will effect my ability to do so"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't at the moment as I usually have one or two children that access funding. If I got to a point where all the children in my care used funding then I might have to limit hours or the amount of children accessing it for sustainability reasons."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I do not currently limit funding but with funding coming in I will not be taking children that want 9nly finding hours as the additional hours will be what makes the place sustainable and cover business costs"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"It could mean the difference of having an income or no income."

'Personal details removed' said:

"May need too if the rate falls beneath my standard rate"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I can't afford to offer more than 1 place. That place has to be a full time place."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I cannot afford to subsidise these spaces out of my own pocket."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I only have space for three children under 5 as a childminder and I take the children I feel would suit the setting over payment method"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I limit it to two/ three children. This is due to living wages against getting funding at set times. I have a family and a mortgage that needs to be paid every month not every term"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't like how it's paid termly"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funded places are currently only offered as a continuation from a previously fee paying family and there are 0 stand alone fully funded places on offer. The funding, even for the new higher rates for 3 and 4 year olds just doesn't compare with the usual fees charged (2 year olds I won't need to make any additional charges at the moment) and I can't subsidise families from my other childminding income.

Funded places are also paid in arrears from the LA, within the last few years I managed to change it to monthly based on actuals, but that still leaves up to 3 weeks of potentially 0 income while having expenses and outgoings associated with the children e.g. food and entrance costs."

Part six

Full survey continued...

Question 4

Do you limit the number of funded hours per day/ session with parents paying in full for additional hours?

385 answers (Checkboxes)

Yes



No



Additional comments



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"I will have to do this or I won't earn enough money"

'Personal details removed' said:

"As above"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I charge a higher hourly rate than the current funding as my rate also includes all meals, snacks and playgroup fees etc. this means that the parents have to pay more and as such top up the funded place as the money I receive for funded places doesn't cover my fees. From next year the funding for 2 year olds will go up and then the funding will cover my fees."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/A"

'Personal details removed' said:

"No one wants full days every day. So I have no choice but offer fully funded hours"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Takes up whole day space and unfair to others to be doing pre school pick ups"

'Personal details removed' said:

"When I offered spaces to funded I did not limit sessions or days and enabled parents to be flexible to suit needs."

'Personal details removed' said:

"For business finances it is vital to do this. Also, the administration of funding take up too much time. It's not viable to do it."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Offer 10 hour day funded and if parents need more they pay extra"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I intend to only offer 9am until 3pm with hours outside of this limitation been much higher than they are currently."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I offer either 3 x 10 hour days or 4 x 7.5 hour days for 30 hours. I don't and will not offer shared / wrap around funded care from another setting. Child has to pay full fees in school holidays. No term time only spaces available."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not at the present time - I offer what the child is eligible for and charge my usual hourly rate for any hours required above that."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not at present, but with the new scheme coming in from next year, im seriously considering it due to very poor funding rates"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I only offer funded places to children I already have on my books this is to keep familiarity for the child. I don't offer funding places to new children because I then work at a loss"

'Personal details removed' said:

"going forwards I intend to fully limit this further to ensure I don't financially suffer - currently our LA doesn't pay monthly and the rate is lower than what I charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't offer stretched hours."

'Personal details removed' said:

"This depends on families circumstances and I try to be as flexible as possible"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"We already charge for consumables and have done this for quite a while"

'Personal details removed' said:

"On a full time child I allow 3 full days of funding and charge for the remaining hours."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not currently but would consider doing so in future"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Due to bank holidays not being covered by funding in Northamptonshire I won't offer funding on a Monday unless I really have to. I use the funding hours up on the other 4 days as my policy is I get paid on bank holidays, like other employed workers"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I might have to when the funding comes in next year"

'Personal details removed' said:

"But I need to ask for top up payment if funding amount is less than hourly rate"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Yes for 3/4 year olds as funding rate is so low."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"parents need flexibility however I already work 7.30am-6pm with shared care with a nursery, not easy to manage funded hours when there are school and nursery runs throughout my day"

'Personal details removed' said:

"As above"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Have to, to be cost effective."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I only take full day funding as below is under my daily charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I believe it is wrong to do this. I feel it's sad that childcare providers have to manipulate the funding system in order to get a fair income.

The issue is in both the funded rate being lower than the standard space rate, plus huge issues around funding not being paid in the month that the actual care takes place in line with UC requirements."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I make up what I am owed with what they pay compared to what I get from funding. And this is not per hour as we are not allowed to top our selves up in Leicestershire I have to justify what I am claiming for"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"It would be unsustainable"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I offer 10 hours max per day"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not at present but I I tend to when the full funding for all children from 9 months comes into play"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I can't work out the stretched offer. The system and admin is so complicated I don't have the time to mess around."

'Personal details removed' said:

"But may have to depending what the LA's pay us an hour?? Would be nice to know. I may have to limit hours depending on hourly rates"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I work more than 10 hours. Plus need to make my wage up by limiting funded hours and charging more for non funded"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Currently I only offer morning sessions."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"If a child was only here for funded hours I would charge extra for food and activities"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I spread the funding over the week so 6 hours a day for those needing longer days"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Don't offer now"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I do either 7.5 hours a day or 10 hours a day of funding, there is no 'pick n mix' option available as the admin burden of funding is far greater than just invoicing fee paying parents. I also do 'whole' days of childminding, not half days."

Part six

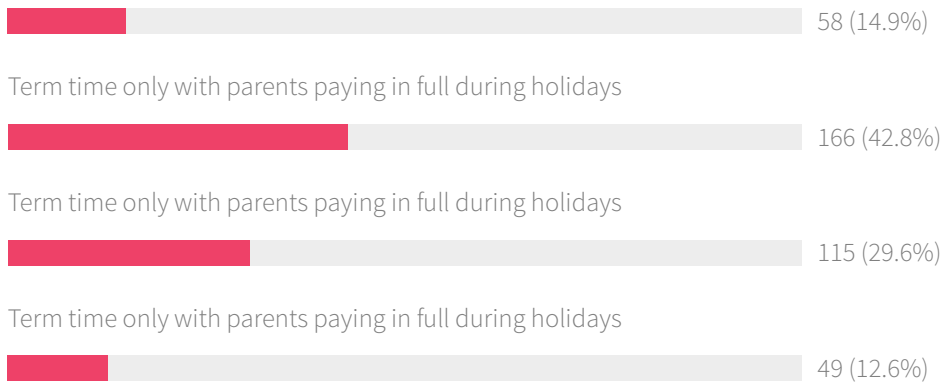
Full survey continued...

Question 5

Do you offer funded places only during term dates or stretched to include school holidays?

388 answers (Radio buttons)

Do you offer funded places only during term dates or stretched to include school holidays?



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have not taken any funded children with funded hours as I am only doing wraparound care"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not applicable currently. Would be willing to negotiate."

'Personal details removed' said:

"A combination of all three, depending on the parent's needs. We adapt to the child, rather than having a rigid policy."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"They pay me every week of the year, paying extra for extra hours."

'Personal details removed' said:

"As above"

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/A"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Some term time only and some stretched"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I am only open term time"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have offered stretched but I will no longer be doing this as it is too complicated for me to do the admin"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Stretched for each funding period"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I try to be as flexible as possible with my family's and therefore do a mixture of the above."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I choose term time only funded places not parents That pay for odd days in holidays when they need it"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Stretching the funding becomes ridiculous and so charging full in the holidays is one of the ways to make a living."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Our LA will not allow us to offer stretched"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Term time only - as I don't work during school holidays"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Both - depending on total number of hours required per week"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not prepared to offer stretched as it becomes a nightmare working it all out, and if child changes days/hours or even leaves, its not worth all the admin"

'Personal details removed' said:

"All of the above"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"term time only. I only work those days"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Depends on family needs we offer term time and stretched"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Which ever option suits the parents needs."

'Personal details removed' said:

"This allows me to boost my wage during holidays which helps sustain my business during term time."

'Personal details removed' said:

"A combination, depends on what the family require, some children add term time only, some stretch their hours throughout the year to cover full time working parents"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Just about to change to term time only as struggle every time with local county now saying there are no maximum numbers in each term like there used to be and the max is term time only hours what you can claim so might as well be on term time only and not how we've been doing it for the last, is it 7 years"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only term time"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Stretched throughout year or term time only depending on what family need. I currently stretch the hours of a 3 year old who attends preschool term time mornings to cover full days in the holidays."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I offer both in line with a parents individual requirements"

'Personal details removed' said:

"As parents require. Some are term time only and others require holidays too. So this is stretched to meet the needs of the family, with them paying the remaining hours beyond funding"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Term time only as this is when I am open"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Stretched. To fit in with my 9 hour day."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only give 48weeks"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Both term time only and stretched as per family requirements"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Term time only as that's when I a open"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only term time and I run a separate holiday club in the holidays"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Stretched per term as parents prefer this"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I offer both term time and stretched"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Both. Some parents want stretched throughout the year Some term time pay at holidays"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Until now I have allowed parents to stretch funding but it is too complicated and I fear losing out financially if a child leaves - so I'm considering no longer offering the option to stretch."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I offer what the parents needs. Some stretch. Some term time. Parents need help I will stretch it"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I only work term time"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The system for claiming is so complicated I can't afford the time spent trying to work out funding and invoices"

'Personal details removed' said:

"This isn't only one option. This is both term time options."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Term time only as this is my preferred work schedule"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I've got some stretched, some term time. Whatever the parents want or need"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I offer funded hours for the calculated Term allocated hours and parent pays any hours funding doesn't cover as I have several families on shift work so contract is not for static hours within the week"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm happy to offer either"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm only term time childminder"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm only term time childminder"

Part six

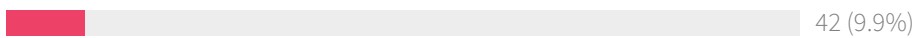
Full survey continued...

Question 6

Are you restricted by your local authority in how you can stretch hours? (If yes please explain how)

369 answers (Checkboxes)

Yes



No



Additional comments



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure as not offering funded places yet."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure"

'Personal details removed' said:

"As above"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't know as yet... neither does my local council. They didn't even know the rates the government is planning on offering."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/A"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't know"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Bromley allows stretched hours but it is so confusing and complicated it's not worth the mental energy and time I'd spend on it."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Don't know"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The LA headcount requires us to submit as though term time only. The stretching is a complete nightmare to calculate for both the provider and parent as it only works properly for children starting funding in Sept for 3 terms. Stretching the remaining funding over Spring & summer term means the remaining hours need to be recalculated for a new stretch calculation as otherwise the child will receive far more hours than are being funded. If a child should move settings then it is also an admin burden to work out how many hours the child has received and see if it matches the payment."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure as never requested."

'Personal details removed' said:

"15/30 hours over 38 weeks or 12/24 hours over 48 weeks"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding can be stretched at LA discretion"

'Personal details removed' said:

"My understanding is Surrey do not allow stretched funding"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We are only allowed to offer term time funding"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Our LA works out and divides the funding to cover"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't do this"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Never do official stretched offer so don't know"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't think so. I haven't done stretched before"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"As my local authority pays the funding per term, I can't afford to stretch it out further eg- across the year"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Can stretch to 22 hours per week but this is different is the child begins their finding uptake in January or April"

'Personal details removed' said:

"My local authority will tell us how to work out the stretched funding."

'Personal details removed' said:

"They've introduced options of different weeks that none of them fit my setting so again produces a regular discussion over hours"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I actually don't know"

'Personal details removed' said:

"From a recent meeting to discuss new funding, they seem to be pushing for us to only claim per term and charge parents for extra. But they split the terms in to 3 lots of 12.67 weeks regardless of actual weeks. So I work out child's hours for the year and divide by 3 to make sure parents get all the hours they are entitled to."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"i am happy with NNC current guidelines, potential parents may not"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding model on the portal isn't very flexible. Sometimes the term dates don't align with the maximum term time funding available in the term and in stretched funding, my 46 weeks open isn't reflected in the claim options. I have to make the best fit."

'Personal details removed' said:

"It's no more than 10 a day"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Yes I can only stretch into 11.40 or 22.40 hrs per week and it does cover only 50 weeks not wholly a year"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The LA place too many rules on how funding can be used which hugely discriminates against shift working parents who do not have set patterns."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding can only be taken during term time West Berkshire"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"has to be stretched from September to July"

'Personal details removed' said:

"They don't like more hours in one term than another even though the weeks I take off are more in particular terms."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Stretch per term"

'Personal details removed' said:

"They limit er funding block, this doesn't always cover hours needed."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We are given the hours/weeks we can claim"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Unsure"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Although I'm not 100% sure on this as I only offer term time funding."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding only covers so many weeks and stretch is more limited."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Don't know"

'Personal details removed' said:

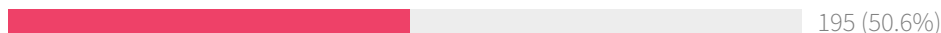
"They ask for whole to be shown on headcount / census but the admin burden of stretching it and then having holidays or closure of the childminder, let alone bank holidays when the was an extra one thrown in for the queen dying we were told we needed to either open on that day or work another day in compensation to the families."

Question 7

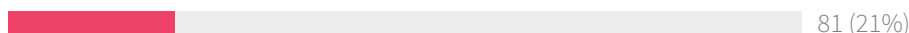
Do you request voluntary payments (different from charging for consumables) from parents for children accessing funded hours if lower than your usual hourly rate?

385 answers (X)

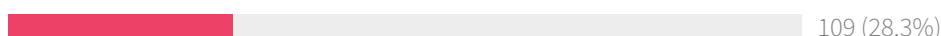
Yes

 195 (50.6%)

No - because only some hours are funded with others paying in full

 81 (21%)

No - I provide childminding for the amount I receive

 109 (28.3%)

Part six

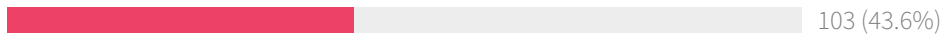
Full survey continued...

Question 8

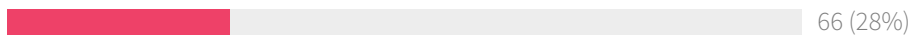
If yes, are these payments...

236 answers (Radio buttons)

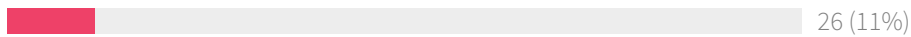
Per hour?



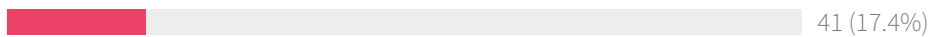
Per day?



Per week?



Other - additional comments



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"per month with CMA"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not sure yet"

'Personal details removed' said:

"As above"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"These payments will top up my fees. Parents are welcome to use the government scheme to ease their burden. I have a monthly fee and if the government "free" childcare doesn't fully cover my fees... parents WILL pay the difference or their child will not be offered a place at my setting."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Takes me up to my daily rate"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I charge a 'higher than usual' hourly rate for the difference in funding and my formal day rate; so that I don't have the forbidden language of 'top up' being used."

'Personal details removed' said:

"If funding doesn't cover my daily rate then yes parents top up, usually only a few pounds per month"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Trying to word everything so it meets the LA funding requirements is a challenge. The easiest way to explain to parents is you are currently paying for all inclusive. Funding covers just bed and breakfast of your current fees."

'Personal details removed' said:

"n/a"

'Personal details removed' said:

"No voluntary charges - consumables charge instead"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"lunchtime hour"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Monthly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"They have been per hour but I currently don't have funded children on role till April and I will review this for the summer term 2024"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Per month"

'Personal details removed' said:

"But moving to a daily rate in Sept 2024"

'Personal details removed' said:

"For big trips out and about"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only for 3/4 year olds and is made very clear is voluntary we wouldn't restrict access to hours if they didn't pay."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"subject to what a parent prefers to supply such as nappies, foodstuffs etc"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Monthly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"One child was 1/2 day so charged £30 for the other session to make my daily wage"

'Personal details removed' said:

"My parents pay a flat voluntary contribution of £60 per week. This is specifically to cover travel, dance class, zoo pass, theatre and forest school experiences all which are additional to our core EYFS delivery. Some parents volunteer not to pay the contribution, some offer to pay a proportion of what is requested according to their means."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Monthly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I ask for a voluntary payment if parents choose not to pay that's perfectly acceptable there is no pressure to pay it"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Currently I do not but I may do in future dependent on how many of my current children will want to claim 15 and 30 hours"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I can survive on what government pay"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I Cannot answer this as this has not come about yet. I have been on lots of groups where they are limiting funding access to certain hours and this may be an option"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I currently don't charge for any extra as at the moment the funding rate provided by my LA matches my own private hourly rate. BUT... if LA rate falls below my 'deserved' rate based on my qualifications, experience, expertise and flexibility then I will have to reconsider"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I would charge if losing money per month"

Part six

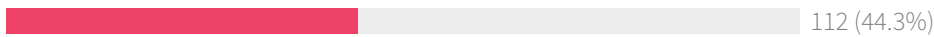
Full survey continued...

Question 9

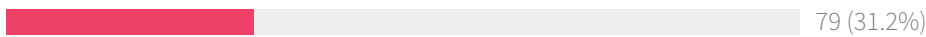
What do you call your voluntary payments?

253 answers (Radio buttons)

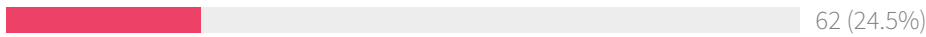
Voluntary payments



Sustainability payments



Other - please explain



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't charge extra"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funded contribution"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't charge voluntary payments. The difference between the funding and my rate is not voluntary, it is a compulsory amount that the parents have to top up or find another provider that can work for below minimum wage"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't charge voluntary fees"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Trips out, museum tickets"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have a name for the voluntary payment. I am choosing not to tell you what I am planning on calling it."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't understand the question"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Outings/food/nappies/miscellaneous"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Snacks and consumables"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Consumables (towards resources and"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Outings payment"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I charge for consumables which equate to the amount lost from funding reduced from my hourly rate"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Voluntary payments towards outings and consumables"

'Personal details removed' said:

"It's for their food. They can either pay me to provide food or not pay extra and they bring a packed lunch"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I just explained That funding doesn't cover my daily rate my parents are happy to top up"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Parental contribution"

'Personal details removed' said:

"n/a"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Additionally"

'Personal details removed' said:

"No voluntary charges - consumables charge instead"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Consumables"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Consumables"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Consumables because that's all I am allowed too"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't do this at the present time - BUT ...if funding rates fall below my own desired self employed hourly rate (my worth) then I may need to review this. The Government should NOT be calling their funding 'help' to the parents as FREE childcare but should offer it as subsidized childcare payments to help 'towards' the cost of childcare"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Haven't started doing funding yet so likely sustainability payment"

'Personal details removed' said:

"lunchtime hour. They can pick up if they want to"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't have any"

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/a. But charge separate for substantial trips"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"currently discussing with LA as they used to accept additional services and now they wont - not sure of my wording going forwards"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I say parents can use their funding money towards my fees and stress that the funding payments do not include consumables etc"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have called it voluntary but as above I will be reviewing this and will be guided by the LA"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Food outing car petrol insurance etc"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Voluntary contributions"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Meals and consumables charge broken down to show what it includes"

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/A"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Consumables charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Good will gesture payment"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Consumables"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Food and outings"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I call it a voluntary to up to sustain business and being able to offer funding in the first instance"

'Personal details removed' said:

"only trips"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I just charge up to my hourly rate."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Administration/resources fee"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I explain that that the funding amount is less than my hourly rate and ask for a voluntary payment to cover the difference otherwise I will struggle. To provide the experience I would like for the children in my care."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm not currently charging but would call them voluntary"

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/A"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Enhanced activities and experiences voluntary contribution"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Additional charges"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have a consumables charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Don't do"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Consumables"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Additional payments"

'Personal details removed' said:

"No idea"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Additional service charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"sundries"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Additional educational enrichment & consumables including food (it's one amount)
not shown separately from food / consumables"

Part six

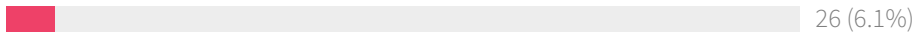
Full survey continued...

Question 10

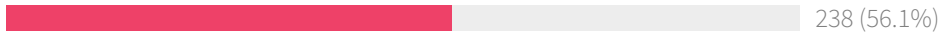
Have prospective parents ever refused to pay voluntary payments?

269 answers (Checkboxes)

Yes



No



If yes, please explain what you do in this instance?



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"They want the space for free even though it underpaid"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I tell them I can't afford to live"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Didn't offer them the space"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Verbally explain to them how poorly paid the government funding is and that I cannot offer places without the additional income so they will need to find another provider."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I tell them it is also voluntary to offer funding so I fill the space with someone else who is supportive of my business."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The space is withdrawn before contracts are signed"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Didn't offer the place"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I say I can't offer the funded hours"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If they aren't prepared to pay voluntarily contributions then there is no funding available"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Explain I am unable to offer place as it's not sustainable"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If they did I would refuse to claim funding for them"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Nothing we still offer space and just make a loss on the hours"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I've explained that I can't provide care at a loss so they will have to look else where."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I had to cover the costs from my pocket"

'Personal details removed' said:

"It's important to understand why a family is unwilling or unable to pay. Honest open, compassionate approach is required. Children should never be disadvantaged or left out if their parent cannot pay. Often the cost of the trips in this circumstance comes directly out of my own wage. I would not discriminate against a child on the basis of affordability of a voluntary contribution"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Nothing it is voluntary."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not much I can do"

'Personal details removed' said:

"They find alternative childcare"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If my business is not sustainable from taking a particular family then I choose not to take them on"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"They can't afford to"

'Personal details removed' said:

"They can find childcare elsewhere at the price they wish to pay."

Part six

Full survey continued...

Question 11

Have existing parents ever refused or been unable to pay?

300 answers (Checkboxes)

Yes



No



If yes, please explain what you do in this instance?



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"I started to charge payment in advance"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I will say refused. I will say founding it difficult to pay"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I refuse childcare until paid"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I take a non- refundable deposit at the beginning as a security against this happening"

'Personal details removed' said:

"When Covid happened most of my parents paid half but 2 parents refused to pay"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"If they wouldn't pay then I couldn't offer them a place. If they couldn't afford it that's different and I wouldn't charge them extra"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Operated at a loss sadly."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I simply explained the figures and what we would lose over the year and that it wasn't free but subsidised, she owned a business and I asked her if she would do a job for a reduced rate and her answer was no - she wouldn't."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have refused the child until parents pay"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We allow them to claim hours and don't change anything we just accept the face we are having to lose out financially. We have had to limit hours to 15 a week per child because of this"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Please see comment on previous answer. The same applies"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Nothing it is voluntary."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Still mind the child"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Some parents are not in a situation to be able to pay the voluntary contribution . For example I have been supporting a parent who is very young and is trying to survive."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Agree to find alternative childcare"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I let them have it free"

Part six

Full survey continued...

Question 12

Do you charge parents for consumables?

379 answers (Radio buttons)

Yes



No



Part six

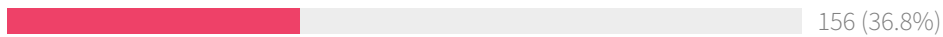
Full survey continued...

Question 13

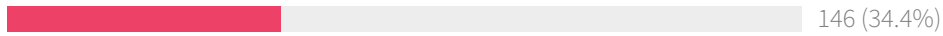
If yes, what do you charge for?

207 answers (Checkboxes)

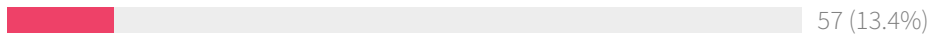
Food



Outings



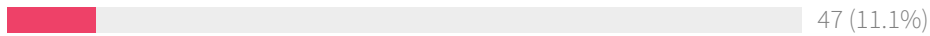
Nappies



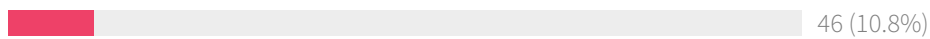
Baby wipes



Cleaning products



Other - please state



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"Anything outside my settings requested by Parents"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Arts and craft materials"

'Personal details removed' said:

"This will be reviewed once I know more?"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"It is all included in my rates."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Sunscreen, Toddler groups"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Petrol"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Play groups, soft play"

'Personal details removed' said:

"other activities not included in outings such as craft supplies"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Miscellaneous"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I build food into the daily rate and tell the in advance about outings to expect in their invoice"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Art and craft, cookery and gardening activities that I provide"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Sun cream trips outing groups art materials"

'Personal details removed' said:

"n/a I charge an hourly rate which is inclusive. Parents provide food, nappies. I provide snack and all my own cleaning products."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Group fees, activities/resources"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Arts crafts"

'Personal details removed' said:

"N/a"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Craft resources, playgroup / groups fees."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Larger outings."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only when funded"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"not listed so I apparently have to change this as additional services isnt accepted (but used to be) but its basically a top up"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Toilet paper, face tissues etc etc"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I provide an all inclusive"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Yoga"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We charge a fee for school nursery drop offs/collections. We also charge for meals for wraparound care only as we need to bridge the gap in lost income when a child is at another setting for part of the day. Our normal fee is lower than the funded rate we receive."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Resources"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Arts and crafts etc"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"French class. Forest school teacher"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Resources"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I include these in my hourly rate"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Parents provide nappies and wipes. If there is a more expensive outing I would like to do I check with parents as to whether they are happy to pay for that and we only go ahead if all parents agree to, although I usually subsidise 2 year old funded children currently."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Consumables come under my day rate payment to come in line with my daily charge."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Administration, maintenance, sustaining resources"

'Personal details removed' said:

"More expensive trips voluntary contribution I.e theatre, zoo, Santa."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"We provide food and nappies etc. we are lucky our funding rate is higher than our fee rate."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Admin"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Snacks, outings and consumables"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Outings, entrance fees, craft materials"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Suncream... All of these are itemised in voluntary contribution payments."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Craft"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Anything extra that's needed"

'Personal details removed' said:

"My hourly rate covers the above . But it is voluntary."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"All resources"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Some crafts, and outings"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Toys. Also goes towards heat and light as I can only claim (hmrc allows) small percentage of heat water electricity but am in a self contained chalet. So all bills from 7am to 6pm are work related as nobody in my house."

'Personal details removed' said:

"My ASC includes all of the above apart from nappies plus memberships to National Trust, forest school etc and visits to payable activities."

'Personal details removed' said:

"suncream!"

Part six

Full survey continued...

Question 14

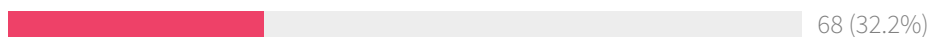
If you charge a consumable rate, do you charge a set amount or base charges on what children use? (e.g. if you provide nappies for some children)

211 answers (Radio buttons)

Set fee per child



Fee based on individual child's requirements



Question 15

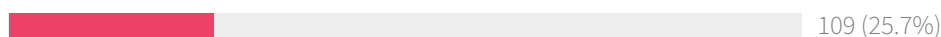
Are you worried about the sustainability of your business when the 'FREE' childcare is rolled out to all eligible children?

386 answers (Checkboxes)

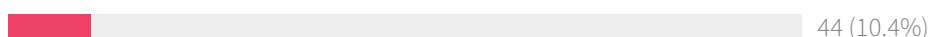
Yes



No



Comments



Open text responses to 'other':

'Personal details removed' said:

"Parents only wanting to use their funded hours, difficulty to fill spaces on days / hours not used by parents"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"It's not very helpful for childminders as the payment is quarterly and I don't pay my bills and rent quarterly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Yes as the 3 and 4 year old funding is quite less. The others is okay but worried about not getting paid monthly to cover my monthly expenses."

'Personal details removed' said:

"LA Pay different each term, this one is 60% at Xmas and then 40% end of Feb. It's all so confusing. I never known whats going on with the amount of email, its overwhelming"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only if what I am paid is less than what I charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I am not worried for myself but for others in the sector, continually being expected to do more, for, and with, less."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Free means without any additional charge. 'Entitled' is also another phrase for parents to think they are in full control of paying nothing and asking for everything. When the 2 year olds were rolled out parents were phoning demanding the way they wanted to use their 15 hours e.g. from 9.15."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I will continue to charge a consumables fee per hour, for all funded hours attended"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Very poor funding rates will make it harder to stay sustainable. Ive took the bullet by not charging any additional fees, but with more children being eligible to funding, i wont be able to carry on in this way"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The word "Free" makes the parents believe it is a god given right for childminders to care for their children for Free ! It's not free it's funded. The government should in fact call it subsidised funding and parents should be made to understand that we don't work for free or for the amount the government deems we are worth. We are losing childminders at an unprecedented rate and the government only wants to help the parents to return to work. Making life better more financially beneficial for them. I have families with both parents working earning double my monthly wage and they are pleading poverty!!"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I've worked very hard still don't charge as much as x nursery but the Government under pay I can't afford to drop money"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The way we get paid 60% first and then 40% I can't live of that for my bills and looking after my own family. I need it to be paid monthly really to mean I can childmind properly"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"As my rates are roughly the same as funding, and the younger ones rates will be more than the parents all pay for extra hours over funding entitlement."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I don't think so but time will tell"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I will be if we can't continue to charge for consumables etc"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Unsure as payment amounts have not been publicised"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm looking forward to it. The government pay me more than I charge. But I live in Wales so not sure we will be eligible"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Yes and no - it's up to me to sort the figures out and if they simply don't add up or the government or local authority say that we can't charge extra then quite simply the business will close as it's not my responsibility to be financially responsible for other peoples children whilst they go to work whilst I'm struggling to make minimum wage"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Demands will be too high. Parents will send their children to childcare simply because it is 'free' and therefore an entitlement."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"All depends on the rate set! If we're running at a loss it doesn't make sense"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Please don't use the word free even in dittos, it is a subsidised funding."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Still awaiting confirmation of how our county will pay the funding across the year.."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We get paid in arrears , this is going to be a huge financial struggle"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not enough settings to provide care. Quality will suffer. Differing rates will make it hard for us to budget AND provide continuity of care for older children who need a small setting. Disadvantaged 2 year olds will get pushed out as easier to offer 30 hours rather than 15."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I feel I can prove my worth to families and I can make adjustments in April with price increases or consumable fees if I feel it is needed to remain sustainable. That being said, I do feel it will be difficult to gauge my financial status on prospective children and the funding/ hours they may receive."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"My business is already suffering. Funding needs to change to matching our hourly rate and being paid monthly, so many child minders are giving up and nurseries are closing because all of the expenses we have are going up but funding isn't. Those of us who employ people their wages aren't even quite covered by having 2 funded children, and each child has an expense to look after too. The system is failing us all."

'Personal details removed' said:

"possibly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"What will happen to those who get an inadequate or requires improvement. As in our area you have to have above these grades"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I am a single mother soon to be transferred to universal credits. Being paid a lump sum once a term will wipe out any payments I should receive from u.c, plunging me into very real poverty. Unless Hertfordshire agree to monthly payment I will have no choice but to to close my business"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Other funding rates are higher in other areas. I feel that younger age require more so the rate should be higher so we wouldn't need to charge parents"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I am a small setting and only have 2 children plus my son. I currently earn under minimum wage, if the funding amount actually creates a working wage for childminders this will be a good thing. My charge is £5 an hour and funding rate is £4.65 so hopefully it will improve this."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm not sure. I think there will not be enough childcare as parents that are not working and do not currently need childcare will take up the opportunity to use their FREE hours. I have already had enquiries.

The biggest problem will be payment budgeting. I get paid monthly and if this is now paid termly although a lump sum is nice is also tempting to spend therefore run out by the end of the term."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Mainly due to how universal credit look at our earnings. It's not the same as tax credits or even HMRC. We can only claim flat rates for expenses regardless of how much we spend. And they don't understand we don't get paid monthly."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Why have you written FREE in capital letters, if you had any idea how infuriating this is to our industry you wouldn't even call it free, it's not free it's under funded and the childminder has to take the punch for the 'free' portion that the government doesn't cover, it's not free it's at a small businesses expense that the government exploits. Sustainability is already strained, if this additional funding offered to you get children is not covered properly by the government and local councils, many providers will close their doors, no one runs a business at a loss"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm concerned that elements of our contracts will not be honoured and we'll be left in financial difficulty. Funding follows the child, so if a parent takes a child out without any notice we're left with no pay."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"We provide a free breakfast for all children (Early years and School children) if required. All Early Years parents provide their child with a lunch box, wipes, nappies etc. Any theatre/farm/zoo trips and groups we choose to take the children, we fund as its our choice to offer these things. We hope that above all, this Government Scheme will help the parents"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Only if it's lower rate. As parents see it as free childcare"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding isn't free, it's subsidised"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm worried because at the moment I set my fees with funding payments in mind. At present everything is so up in the air that it's impossible to know how much we'll receive. Of course finding rates have not been set yet either and I don't really like being fully dictated what we will be paid when we are self employed and have no benefits of being employed (holiday pay, sick pay etc)."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Yes I am! Some practitioner's are saying they may lose up to £600 a month. That is not sustainable."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We currently charge £4.40 an hour for all children (additional hours, before/after school, holidays only) so are considering putting our fees up in line with funding rates."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"We are no longer in control of what we charge, and feel we will be ultimately be working for the local council."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Being paid terms will impact my finances dramatically"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The lack of information especially in a timely manor is the problem with the amount the LA are going to pass on and whether this amount is going to remain the same, lower or higher each term or financial year. It is impossible to budget and set fees when the LA only announced what they were paying for this autumn term mid September, when children already started and there is no guarantee it is going to remain the same for summer term.

I wonder if it is still really going to go ahead and whether the government will change and it will all change.

The free is the issue, having government funded contribution towards childcare wouldn't be a problem."

Part six

Full survey continued...

Question 16

What information or support would you find beneficial to help you ensure that your business remains financially viable?

215 answers (Open text)

'Personal details removed' said:

"Business Funding And Rates Childminders or Childcare Practitioners can Charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Rather than "free" childcare, it should be called "subsidised", to show it as a contribution towards the cost."

'Personal details removed' said:

"About the payment and much government is going to pay per child"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Better rates than the ones we have at the moment"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"For the government to say it's supplemented and not free. For the government to pay the parents rather than us as I'm self employed and not a public sector worker. If I am a public sector worker now being paid by the government then I should be entitled to a pension.

They have enforced a pay cut on me (which in any other company would be illegal) and then told me to make up the difference in order to be sustainable I must say it's voluntary. So I must now be a charity because the parents livelihoods are more important than mine. If they are concerned some parents can't pay then this should have been means tested. Why should I say a charge of £15 a day be voluntary in order to continue working at my present hourly rate when some of these parents earn just under 100k a year or more between them.

What the government have done is completely underhand. They have forced us into a situation and if we can't afford to continue as a result, many childminders and nurseries will close and then there won't be any childcare available at all.

So governments plan to get more people to work will just back fire and put us out of work and many unable to work.

It appears for the 2 year provision they will pay enough to cover our hourly rate but for children over 3, this won't be the case. Many childminders may even choose not to care for them when they turn 3 because they simple can't afford to."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding per hour for 3 year olds needs to be at least £8 an hour"

'Personal details removed' said:

"funded rate. ratio"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Hourly rate for children of all ages needs to reflect areas where payment is more than others."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Payments need to be made monthly rather than quarterly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"It will only be viable if the parents can top up the difference for LA payment so that I am still getting my hourly rate"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Any information that is relevant to the childminder would be helpful"

'Personal details removed' said:

"For the government to know that parents circumstances are different"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The local authorities rate is very low to what I charge per day. I'm loosing out a lot."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The payments for over 3year olds are much lower than funding for 2 and under. It would tempt me to give my notice when child turn 3 and have only 2 and under funded children."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The name should be changed from Free Childcare to Subsidised Childcare and it should be made clear that what the Council is given to provide this service is not what we are given to provide this service"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding rates should be the same across all aged children to be fair. They will be no reason to keep on 3 year old paying a lower rate. Not all three year olds go to nursery there aren't the places. I feel this will encourage childminders to take younger children for the money. We have been under funded for to long."

'Personal details removed' said:

"All children attending a childminder should be funded at the same rate as ratios are 1:3 for early years children regardless as to whether they are 9 months 2 years or 3 or 4 years old."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Change the payment monthly. We don't eat every quarter 10 weeks how the government pays We eat daily and pay bills weekly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"More eligible free childcare will contribute my business to be stainable."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I would appreciate a higher hourly rate, especially for 3-4 year olds. Due to parents working from home, most of my current families only need 9-3 Monday to Friday, so this only pays around £30 per day. Plus, my hourly rate is £10 per hour, so it is only half of what I usually charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"?"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I need monthly payments that are paid on time"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Would like to get paid every month and the portal to be easy to use. Would like to know more information about who is eligible for the funding and how to apply. More information for the parents."

'Personal details removed' said:

"It's more about being paid enough- that would make it more financially viable."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Monthly pay and 100%"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Quicker knowledge from my local authority of the rate I will be paid. Much clearer communication. A more equal spread across the ages of the funding amounts. The model suggested is based on nursery ratios and does not take into account Childminder ratios. So the 3/4 yr old rate still remains significantly below my hourly rate."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"A lot of my children are between 2 & 3 I need to know that this "funded" rate will be raised to an amount near my charge out rate.

Also that we are going to get paid monthly. I will not be able to pay my bills if Hertfordshire authority continue to pay us termly up to 6 months in arrears!!!"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I think the restrictions in how we offer the hours with the label of free funding and no top up fees etc makes this so hard to deliver as a childminder with limited places. I feel there is little information or support possible while we have our hands tied."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Confirmation that the payment from wcc will be more than I charge which is £5 per hour"

'Personal details removed' said:

"What we can actually charge for funded children."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Higher 3-4 yr rate. Should be minimum £6hr"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Help with form filling understanding funding and making sure we are not treated like a nursery but individuals. I'm scared about my uc as I'm a single parent trying to manage work and payments and uc don't take into consideration the expense we have"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"That the LA do not change the goal posts for consumable charges. I have seen some LAs say we cannot charge for XYZ as these are business costs. That the LA do not take away funding when a setting is 'deemed' inadequate by an inadequate Ofsted Inspector."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Exactly what we can charge for and making it clear to parents that funded hours are funded and not free."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The councils to hurry up and decide how much per hour per child so I can decide if it is viable or not"

'Personal details removed' said:

"better info better rates so no need to ask for voluntary payments."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Removing of free childcare label. More explanation to parents that:

- 1) the figure the government pay isn't what we get, our local authorities take a portion of the fee.
 - 2) the funding doesn't our hourly rate."
-

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Being allowed to ask more freely for a top up of payments.

Being given better tax advantages. For example, childcare children take up way more than a 10% of my water bills.

Calling the places subsidised, not free, would help manage expectations for parents.

Government agreement to pay as a minimum commitment the cost of the living wage of any employees. Early years educators ought to be paid like teachers not less than babysitters. We need help with staff retention and paying for the training it takes to do training."

'Personal details removed' said:

"What the hourly rate will be per child, this will help me find out if I can offer funding and what ages I can offer it to"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We get very helpful support from our Early Years team."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Please stop calling it free child care, it isn't free"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I think if we paid individuals direct via the tax free scheme it would enable a lot more providers to sign up and be willing to be a FEEE provider. A lot of the data inputting and forms to fill out making us jump through hoops puts a lot of people off. I also think if the government and local authorities will start to prevent providers from being able to request voluntary contributions, the scheme will fail. If I am told what I am paid and how I run my business, I will stop being self-employed and go find a job that will pay me at least the pension within the boundaries they set"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding payments need to increase annually (average pay rise 5%) we have been paid less and less each year so far"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I need to know the amount the LA is actually going to pass onto per hour per child. The headline uplift figure for the 2 yr olds is nearly 1/3 less =£5 per hour less than the official DFE excel spreadsheet but that is only continuing to March. I need to know the funding rate for the whole academic or financial year, with plenty of time - at least 6 weeks ideally more so I can properly plan to make my business sustainable and put up fees. In my current situation I am likely to increase my fees dramatically to be able to accommodate the uncertainties of funding so my income remains relatively stable. It would be far easier to be able to continue to set my own all inclusive fees and the parents pay the difference off their whole invoice with the funding."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Rates our council will pay us released in plenty of time. We usually only get a few days notice, and in the past it has also been once the term had started. Also for the government to check that the council is not taking a bigger top slice than they are allowed ` this has happened in the past too"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Be nice to know exactly how much we are to receive so we can plan ahead with our families"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Needs to be paid monthly, we should be able to dictate own extra fees - we should be able to accept funding for family members"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Reduction in utility bills."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I would need the payment for care to be in the line with the cost of living."

'Personal details removed' said:

"not calling funded hours 'free' - timely information about what the rates are - locally, not an average!"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Exactly how much we will receive and if its paid monthly."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Needs to be made clearer it is not free, rate needs to be higher The amount we receive is 1/3 of national minimum wage"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Simplify the whole system. Joe to manage a reduction in rates from 2 to 3"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Actual hourly rate we will get 3nmintjs before so we can plan financially especially when employing an assistant"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"The difference in my hourly rate and funded rate is currently £1.50.

I'm have only been charging a £1/hr voluntary payment so losing £30/week with 3 funded children."

'Personal details removed' said:

"A list of fees etc in chart by each borough"

'Personal details removed' said:

"always have children in the setting"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding payments need to be paid monthly not termly as this has a huge effect on those on benefits like universal credit"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Our biggest threat is Ofsted. They are deliberately targeting childminders and no-one is standing up to them.

We need support and protection from Ofsted and we need access to the same funding as nurseries and schools. Free breakfasts? Why can't childminders claim for it?

The free early years entitlement is a nursery concern. I'm sick of fighting their battles while they sacrifice us to Ofsted."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We need same amount for all ages as our ratios remain the same regardless of age"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"We as childminders are supposed to be self employed which should allow us to offer our services at the price / fee that we feel our delivered services deserve - This Government scheme is taking the individuality of our unique services away and making us feel 'employed' and restricted by our Local Authority decisions"

'Personal details removed' said:

"What we can actually charge for. We should be able to charge a top up fee, parents are still getting help with fees through the funding, so to help keep settings we must add top ups!"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I'm looking elsewhere for employment in the new year."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Being kept up to date with the amounts paid to our local Authorities. Funding or grant support"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We need to know the rate for our area, everything will hang on that"

'Personal details removed' said:

"How I can legally charge parents a fee to ensure they pay the same rate for all other children. Info to give to parents to explain this and how the hourly rate is lower than my normal fee rate ..I speak to parents to explain this but literature to explain this would be very helpful ! And they can hopefully take it away and read it and not forget or dismiss what we have spoken about"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I wish they didn't call it free childcare.

More info on the actual rates and hoping the system we use can actually work, had new local authority system and it definitely hasn't worked ever time I have used it the computer people have to input it by hand.

I am dreading when the new two year olds come on that system.

I am glad that working parents are getting extra financial help but I am concerned about the very low rate for the 3/4 year olds one of the lowest in the country in Leicestershire"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Pay our hr rate."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funded payment should received monthly."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I need to be paid monthly instead of part at the start of term and the rest at the end of term. I have bills to pay and my own family with young children to ensure they are feed, bathed and housed."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I look after two of my grandchildren which I can not claim funding for but this family pays me - I can not afford to give free and the family can not afford not to go somewhere else to claim free childcare. Disturbing the routine and settled children"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"payments need to be monthly in advance from our LA, more allowances to charge a daily rate rather than an hourly rate and be treated like an equal to a nursery that can freely do this without comeback"

'Personal details removed' said:

"That the funding is paid out on a monthly basis so I'm able to cover the basics, eg-bills, rent, food for my business"

'Personal details removed' said:

"To know how much we will be paid"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If the funding was paid at my hourly rate."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Pay my hourly rate. Allow the LA to pay deposits and notice periods. Make the uploading easier, surely the voucher code is enough?"

'Personal details removed' said:

"As I can only offer morning places I'm hoping there will be more children available for me .Parents hopefully will seek more childminders if they are offering the funded places"

'Personal details removed' said:

"For funding to be a higher rate. To be paid monthly instead of termly."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Monthly payments for funded places, Allowing us to charge a top up fee, Government info should call them funded spaces, rather than free, Gov should ensure childminders are mentioned in all information instead of often writing 'nursery hours'"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Need local authority to change payment structure- Gloucestershire"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Clear guidance from our La about how we can charge.

The ability to be transparent with parents and charge the difference in funded payment and our hourly rate without going about it in, what is my opinion an underhanded sneaky way, I feel it is dishonest.

We should be able to charge this difference without it being voluntary and parents can choose to pay it and except our service or choose another provider."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Help understand it"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have offered funding but I worry about not being paid monthly as I am now"

'Personal details removed' said:

"It's not free but substituted"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"How much we will be paid. More clarity on what we can charge for. Will we be paid monthly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"To pay at least our hourly rate or allow us to top up without jumping through hoops. Explain to parents it's not free"

'Personal details removed' said:

"There is no such thing as free, it's subsidised. I will continue to charge as I take children out to classes such as Dance Class and Forest School class"

'Personal details removed' said:

"More suitable, appropriate, realistic hourly rate. Parents not informed its 'free childcare'"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Being paid more per hour so not giving to charge for consumables"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Being able to keep caring for family members children as at the moment we cannot claim funding, my niece will have to find a place for her son in a nursery when the funding comes in"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Increase funding payments for all age groups or limit every child to 15 hrs per week"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I think it's unfair that I am unable to charge for meals provided because my usual fees include all meals and outings etc. I try and keep my fees fair and affordable."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Clarification on exactly what the figures are going to be and how we are supposed to work it out when or if we have a change of government and they alter the system"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Better laws to protect childminders. We often encounter parents who refuse to pay fee's and think our contract's are worthless. The rigmarole to claim our fees through the small courts is exhausting. We are not treated with respect and often thought of as glorified baby sitters ! The government should be more on our side."

'Personal details removed' said:

"So far very little information has been handed over. I have parents asking about it and I have to say to them I have no idea! Government need to Government clear guidelines and soon"

'Personal details removed' said:

"User friendly portal to help claiming for payments for these extra children easier and payments from the council to be paid on time without mess-ups and a more user friendly breakdown so it's easier to work out what payments should be"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Knowing what rate we will be paid long term for the childcare places ... all children should be paid a set 'price' for the childcare place ... after all a 2 year old doesn't cost more than a 3 year old! Also being allowed to charge a top up if the funding doesn't cover our hourly rate"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

“Knowing if we are being paid monthly rather than termly.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“Higher funding rate. Funding not to be labelled as free as it isn't.

It also needs to be made clear to parents/carers that their rate is a lower rate than most providers usual rates and that we are taking a loss. It also needs to be made more clear it is term time only, it is unfair to expect us to go 6 weeks in summer with no wages”

'Personal details removed' said:

“Stop calling it FREE. The difference in 2y & 3yr funding rates are the difference between meeting my current hourly rate & not; so no Idea how I will charge when a child time 3 & their rate reduces.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“To be paid monthly in advance for funding”

'Personal details removed' said:

“Just communication around the funding dates and funding rates for when they roll it out.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“The main issue is the funding is paid twice a term so not sure how anything can help with that.”

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"It would be beneficial for us if funding was adapted to suit childminders. As at the moment it is a scheme only made for schools to use efficiently

Also, payment dates would be an issue. Being childminders with monthly subscriptions such as childminding uk, supplies etc. being paid termly would be difficult to manage effectively."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I feel the word FREE should be removed & the word FUNDED put in it's place. I also feel the government should look after childminders in the way they look after nurseries & pre-school as parents often feel these are better option & we are therefore used as a stop gap until a nursery/pre-school place becomes available."

'Personal details removed' said:

"That parents don't pass childminders by once they don't have to pay as we are usually cheaper than a nursery so parents take the place on cost but if they don't pay may find nursery easier option as they have more cope to offer longer hrs as have more staff ratios"

'Personal details removed' said:

"funded payment made the short fall is paid by parent"

'Personal details removed' said:

"hardest part will be that parents still need to meet a criteria and may not accept there will not be enough spaces for all the children,, information needs to be clear and concise for both parties"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"To have these "Free" hours labelled as "Funded" rather than free and allow childminders to charge a "top up" if the funded rate does not meet the rate they charge. Currently, my local authority does not allow childminders to charge a "top up" on funded hours, which in turn could mean working below the average per hour for my area."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Childminders need to be labelled as childcare professionals and people like doctors and health visitors need to understand what a great job we do for our children to get them to be the level they need to be for school and also the parents..they don't know enough about childminders in this sector and they don't believe still that we can do the same job as a nursery nurse"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Would be better if council paid more regularly than twice a term"

'Personal details removed' said:

"That the government make sure wording is funded/subsidised places not FREE. That there is agreements that settings can charge a fee (within reason) to keep in line with their daily fees and councils relax the rules a bit on invoicing/what we can/cannot charge for."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I have read about the average rate, but my local authority does not offer that amount and if they did then I would not need to charge the parents extra"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"With the funding as long as parent top up the hourly it will be OK.. If they don't I will not be taking on funded children and will be looking for another job . As a childminder have big out goings and would not be a sustainable job any more"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Better paid funding and please stop calling it free it gives parents the wrong message"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding to be paid monthly is the most important thing."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Have lost lots of 3 year olds due to school offering 30 hours and before and after school care for 3 year olds. Have had to reduce my assistants hours abs wondering how my business will survive next year."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We need to ensure that funding is paid monthly, on time and correctly. They also need to make it easier to use and the headcount form needs to be more user friendly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"More children."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I need it monthly to pay my own bills especially if I have a child start after the start date it means that I'm sort until the catch up payment. Who can afford to live like that?"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Faster payment by local authority as we have to wait for it in arrears for nearly 4 weeks
. I charge parents in advance which is helpful for budgeting"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We need to be able to claim expenses fairly on universal credit and we are given
information but not considered in decisions"

'Personal details removed' said:

"more support for childminders and job recognition"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding paid rate to reflect my hourly rate"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Knowing the new funding rates to plan, there will be no places available by the time
we are told"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If the government provide funded places they should pay the rate that would be
charged or allow us to charge a top up fee so we do not lose money"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Information on the funding rate in plenty of time for providers to make the decision
whether it is worth while"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"We should not have to ask for a voluntary payment. We should be allowed to charge the difference to make up our hourly rate otherwise our businesses will become unsustainable. We do not charge that much per hour as it is."

'Personal details removed' said:

"It would help to know the funding rates"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Parents have been happy to pay a consumable fee. Most have already been paying my rate of £5.50 hour and are delighted with the saving."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The government needs to change the no funding to related children."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Monthly payments and being allowed to "top up" funding to my hourly rate. I need Hertfordshire LA to also honour my 4 week notice period as I've had funded parents just leave with no notice, I've had to pay back months worth of funding and it's left me struggling financially"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Universal credit assessment periods need to allow childminders to use the same expenses as HMRC do for self assessment tax return. They also need to lower the MIF as our hourly rate is so low unless we work at constant capacity it's hard to reach it"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Rates to be increased if not explained as free hours and explained as help towards your childcare fees"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Flexible ratios to accommodate families"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I've been childminding 17 years. In this time the government has changed our business on us without little support. I recently went over to UC and it's become a nightmare for people receiving UC who offer funded hrs as we get paid a lump sum upfront which then has a detrimental effect on my payments from UC for months.

Parents know I can only offer funded hrs if that pay a voluntary/ consumables fee to top up the hourly rate to meet what I normally charge.

The fee includes meals, snacks, outings, nappies and wipes. My parents know I cannot sustain without that support. I wouldn't be able to offer funded hrs. My business would end after 17 years of something I've put my heart and soul into."

'Personal details removed' said:

"What I'm worried about is being forced on to universal credits. I try hard to be flexible to allow parents to access funding completely free. For example one child does mon,tue one week and weds, Thurs the other. I don't charge anything on top to hold place but by universal credit standards I'd be penalised for not earning enough and would be forced to charge a holding fee"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We need a realistic hourly rate to be confirmed asap for childminders to consider sustainability and make an informed choice re their income/ future in the sector."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Being paid monthly, instead of 60% and then 40%. To be paid the same hourly rate as I charge"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I currently care for my twin grandchildren . The funding structure will mean my caring for them is in doubt . Previous grandchildren only effected 3-4 yrs , these babies are taking spaces with no income"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The 3 & 4 year old funding is below my usual rate so that would need looking at. Maybe change the wording. It should not be FREE funding it should be called something else."

'Personal details removed' said:

"As a childminder on universal credit as I am a widow with 3 small children getting paid 6 times a year is difficult as I have to pay my bills self weekly then universals credits say I can't claim until my money runs out in which they will top up but I will have zero income as my weekly money has ran out, that and the fact we can not claim for gas electric water council tax, the only reason I heat my home 40 hours per week is for children, it's forcing me to give this job up"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funding needs to be put up and should be the same everywhere"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"The way universal credit looks at our income and expenses is different to how every other gov department do. We do not have any special regards. Our rate of pay is dictated by gov and we can't expand past our numbers. They are declaring our business as not profitable and making childminders look for other work despite our ability to reach minimum wage being restricted. Please look into how universal credit are looking at our finances and also local authorities need to pay childminders monthly. This should be priority before all funding comes in sept 2024."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The funded fees the local authority pay me is less than what my fee is to non funded children.

This impacts universal credit as the minimum income floor is based on earning minimum wage but as a childminder we have lots of outgoing that take us below this do universal credit say its not a viable business. Universal credit do not understand that we can only take in a set number of kids per ratio and that our own children are included in these numbers until they are 16. Universal credit work the minimum income floor based in working 52 weeks but self employed do not get paid when sick or on holiday. Childminders are going to leave the profession they love because they are being penalised due to universal credit not understanding our business"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Please, please, please advocate for Childminders on Universal Credit.

Not being able to use the same approach to expenses as the HMRC childminding agreement is crippling and causing huge financial hardship. The 10% wear and tear allowance and utilities are just two of the expenses that UC will not allow.

Lots of single parents provide high quality childcare and education, but we will be better off employed at a minimum wage job

Please campaign for monthly payments for funding by all LA's"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Lobby the government to call funding subsidised not free and pay it into the parents childcare choices account so they can then use it with any registered provider. There's no need for the complicated and convoluted local authority model currently used.

I also believe funding should be means tested on a sliding scale based on household income. Two people earning £99'000 each should not get the same as 2 people earning minimum wage."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Its the sudden drop in funding for 3/4 yr olds which i find incredible"

'Personal details removed' said:

"We require payments in advance not in arrears. We are unable to manage financially if we have more than 2 funded children."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The local authorities putting out their fees before the end of January so we all know what the hourly rate will be."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Proper funding rates. The gov to stop calling it free. The agreement if each LA to pass on the money received from gov. Monthly in advance payments."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I believe that this isn't 'free' childcare. The LA take a cut before it comes to the childminder. Once that happens there is a short fall between the fee given and our hourly fee. I think this needs to be explained to parents more thoroughly."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

“Support is advertising funding as funding and not free!!! Support is paying providers monthly or termly in advance not expecting providers to fit the shortfall until the payment is made. Also if parents leave half way through the term and moves to an alternate provider, the original provider shouldn't have to loose out cause the funding is all passed over to the new provider leave if the original provider out of pocket. Support is like any other business, parents needs to give 4 weeks paid notice when they intend leaving a provider. As a business which shouldn't have to jump through hoops to cover the loss in funding, keep it simple the family get x per month, anything outstanding to the provider should be paid by the family, not providers having to work out voluntary contributions or Consumables to charge to work out fees or to lessen their loss in income.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“Higher hourly rate and able to charge for extras”

'Personal details removed' said:

“Monthly payments at the moment it is termly. I cannot sustain that”

'Personal details removed' said:

“Despite not currently asking for contributions I do feel like the current manner in that funding is paid will cause not only myself but all settings to have significant financial difficulty. The amount of issues north Northamptonshire providers see with funding payments being incorrect each month is worrying if 100% of income is relied on those payments. It is also a very big concern on the amount that will be given to providers and needs to be significantly higher than what is currently given. It is unfair to portray to parents that childcare is FREE when it continues to be completely underfunded. The government needs to advertise it as funded hours and completely remove the term FREE. It's also important for them to be transparent to parents and explain that a percentage of the money given towards each child for funded places is removed by the local authority.”

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Equal fair hourly rates"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Higher funding payments for 3 and 4 year olds.. In Somerset only £4.97 per hour.. Too low."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The council need to make it easier and stop emailing us on bank Holidays or the last day of term at 5pm for example. Their emails are annoying and you then have to log on separately to check the email that was not important. The pay is rubbish and I shouldn't have to justify how I spent the money..."

'Personal details removed' said:

"i have decided to leave childminding all together"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Not be dictated to by the government what I can charge. Communication between government and HMRC to receive universal credit to make up a living wage"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I would like to be paid what my current rate is. At the moment I am not. I would also like to be paid monthly as I have bills to pay."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I object to the council paying us less than we charge and not being allowed to charge parents for the difference. All the parents are horrified that we have to take a cut in wages just so they can get free childcare and they would willingly pay the difference. I don't mind how much we are paid as long as I can charge the difference."

'Personal details removed' said:

"None really but it would be so much easier if they stated it was funded hours and not free. Also I will never be able to care for my own grandchildren, this really needs to change"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Local authority needs to let parents know childminders are Just as valuable"

'Personal details removed' said:

"change the free word, its not free but subsidised"

'Personal details removed' said:

"A confirmed hourly rate. I would like confirmation that we can top up our FEEE hours."

'Personal details removed' said:

"For parents to understand paying the extra helps towards extra educational items and also to pay our own bills. The work we do to make the children exceed before starting school as we are not seen as professionals like nurseries"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding days to be set by local authority without having to work this out and complete a long form. Payment on the 1st day of each month for each funded child - just like a parent would pay"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I am struggling with the funding being paid in blocks !! We need monthly payments here in Essex . My partner is also self employed and it's been so difficult!

So once funding is introduced from earlier ages , this is going to be a massive problem. .how can I run a house waiting constantly with no other money coming in if parents can't pay the voluntary amount?

Very worrying times x"

'Personal details removed' said:

"I only accept 1 funded child per year. It's getting harder to keep my business sustainable with rising costs. My funding amount for 3/4 is less than my hourly rate. 2 year funding is better but in my experience parents think they can only access this if they send their child to nursery. Childminders need a big national campaign to promote our worth & value."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I feel being paid monthly rather than termly, and not being paid less than my usual rate would support my business to remain financially viable if more/all children will be accessing funding."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I always read emails from places like yourself which i do find really informative, thank you . Just any tips , updates would be great."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I would like the funding rate to be what are fees are so we not having to ask for anything else's. Lot parent only want the 15 hrs per week"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Remove the word free as it really isn't unless the government want to pay more an hour"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Any advice /support from cm Uk / government would be greatly appreciated"

'Personal details removed' said:

"A clear and concise document on how we can structure payments (and knowing what the funding structure will be)"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Funding for own children taking up a space in the setting. And to receive the amount of funding for it to be FREE to parents without LA taking their cut"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Higher fee rates."

'Personal details removed' said:

"No children allowed to swap provider part way through the term, I've ended up paying back £150 because a preschool place came up."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

“Clarity on funding rate and how they will increase with inflation and we need to be able to charge a fee to make up the difference in the funding rate and our own billable hours.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“Need to pay at least £5.50 an hour.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“We need to be able to fix our own fees and not rely on the gov to decide for us.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“To know the exact rates we will be paid and how the payments will be made.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“Call it funded & let settings simply take that amount off their fees. It could be so simple and no one would loose out.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“The rate must increase with each persons needs , as happens in all business.”

'Personal details removed' said:

“The amount we are going to be paid. My LA hasn't decided yet. Also being paid on time - my LA is often late paying.”

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"To be paid my hourly rate of £4.75 and no less!"

'Personal details removed' said:

"If the rates are what they have said then it will be ok, the only problem is that they often make mistakes and pay in arrears when this is most of my income it will be more of an issue. I'm concerned at being at the will of the council."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Same finding for all ages. As a childminder we only have 3 spaces and need a reliable income throughout all ages of children. They start at 9m and stay until school and I can't have my income halved just because child turns 3 years old"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Allow us to charge the difference. Also, decreasing the amount as the child gets older (and potentially costs more to care for) doesn't make sense."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The only thing I'm worried about, which actually isn't my problem, but there isn't enough childcare providers who have space for all these new children who will be entitled to childcare. I am full with a waiting list, until Sept 2025. I intend to quit minding in 2026"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Better funding rate for 3/4 yr olds."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Our funding is every 3 months payments, needs to be monthly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The Government ti support Childminders with Grants or some form of financial assistance."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We are currently challenging our LA to pay funded hours monthly rather than in a 70/30 split twice a term. It would be useful for central Government to say that LAs MUST do this if requested"

'Personal details removed' said:

"It would help if we weren't paid in arrears as if all children are funded will have to wait a while before payment which will leave us very short. Also parents need to be made aware that funding may not cover all their hours and outings etc this will cause us many unpleasant conversations."

'Personal details removed' said:

"More Flexibility in the how & what we charge as we are supposed to be Self employed and therefore should be able to have the flexibility to offer a rate suitable for what individual service we ate offering."

'Personal details removed' said:

"We need to know exact funding rate we will receive for our area. This needs to match our hourly rates and increase inline with cost of living. We also need this to be paid in advance and not arrears or have something financial in place for the first term until payments have been made if they continue to be in arrears."

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I think parents should be made aware on sign up to these hours that providers may need to charge to make up to their hourly rate."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Pay the childminders their own rates. They're set at that for a reason!"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The government need to find a better way of supporting the childminders as well as the families that need the support. We are the life line for parents so we should have a bigger say in how we run our business."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I live in a deprived area so the funded rate is equal to my hourly rate."

'Personal details removed' said:

"pay my hourly rate so I don't need the extra payment from parents make it clear to parents that funding is for 38 weeks of the year."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The fact our funding is paid in on lump at the end of the month it is submitted means it's a late payment and struggling though that month for money. Also the that other councils pay childminders In monthly instalments which is easier to budget."

'Personal details removed' said:

"To know what other childminders charge"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"I can't find any information from Surrey council. It would be helpful if councils were more informative."

'Personal details removed' said:

"Same amount for all ages not taking a funding cut once child reaches 3. We can only have 3 max under 5..."

'Personal details removed' said:

"The actual amount per hour my LA will be giving us as opposed to the government."

'Personal details removed' said:

"I think schools will expand to offer 2 year places and I dont want to provide only wrap around care"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The amount of children on it will effect my business"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Our local authority is known for getting it wrong. So with a full setting all funded i risk months where no payment is made or is incorrect. So having a mixture ensure i have some money to survive with"

Part six

Full survey continued...

'Personal details removed' said:

"Universal credit scrapping the minimum income floor for childminders and allowing us to claim our full expenses

To be paid full amount monthly in advance and to tell parents it's not free childcare there will be additional costs depending on your provider"

'Personal details removed' said:

"Pay monthly"

'Personal details removed' said:

"The amount going to be paid per child per hour to be open and honest including to parents in the LA so they can see if there is a gap between the usual fees.

The best possible scenario would be for the gov to fund via the childcare choices so I could invoice parents as usual and they transfer a combination of 'funding', tax free childcare and personal bank transfer.

There is also a situation not being mentioned via this, is out of 3 children / families attending I believe 2 will not be eligible due to the higher earnings thresholds, so perhaps I don't need to worry too much!"

