

# **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**



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# **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

## Executive Summary

Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration Trust (CERT) has been established to help *Clackmannanshire to become a vibrant place to live where people are happy, healthy and where opportunities, connections and support are available for all*. During the delivery of their employability programmes the lack of affordable childcare was identified as a major barrier to employment. Subsequently, with the support of funding from the Robertson Trust and the Tackling Child Poverty Fund, CERT have started a programme of work to address this. This strategic case and plan provide a basis of this work.

The UK and Scottish Governments have identified childcare as a priority both to support the educational and social development of the child as well as help address child poverty and support economic growth. There are a number of policies, strategies, and plans, including at the local authority level to help families access childcare. These are in the form of economic strategies such as the government funded 1,140 hours of childcare and Child benefit, or in the form of implementation plans such as Best Start Bright Futures, a delivery plan to tackle child poverty and The National Performance Framework which sets out the overall outcomes for the Scottish Government including the aim to reduce inequality.

Clackmannanshire has one of the highest areas of social deprivation in Alloa South and East and this has been the main focus of Local Authority spending to help support families in this community. The Family Wellbeing Partnership has been funded by the Scottish Government and has been investing heavily in childcare, particularly through wrap around care and clubs in Alloa South and East. There are also a number of employability programmes aimed at gaining qualifications and training to help increase earning potential.

Childcare is disparate (including private and public sector nurseries, child minders, after school care, after school clubs, breakfast clubs, creches and nannies). Childcare is heavily regulated by the Care Inspectorate (for overall premises and operation), Scottish Social Services Council (for staffing), Education Scotland (for education and learning aspects) and the Local Authority (to approve partners to access Scottish Government Funded Hours)

Funding for Childcare is complex and often unclear for parents. The largest sources of funding is the Scottish Government funded childcare which funds childcare of 1,140 hours per year for 3 and 4 year old children and some 2 year olds that meet certain criteria for disadvantage. This funding “follows the child” and can be used in any regulated provision which is partnered to deliver – childminders, private nurseries, and local authority nurseries. Funding is also available through “Tax Free Childcare”, DWP Transitions to Employment, and specific funding as part of wider employability and training programmes. Other funds are available to parents which can be used to fund childcare including Child Tax Credit, Scottish Child Payment, Careers Allowance and Best Start Grants (early learning payment,

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school age payment) and the Scottish Child Disability payment. With many of these funds underclaimed, it is clear that many parents are unaware of these, their eligibility and use.

In Scotland the overall population is set to increase, while in Clackmannanshire this is due to decline by 3% by 2039. There were 444 births in 2022, a substantial decrease of 10.8% from the previous year. Across Scotland 79% of 2 to 5 year olds used childcare.

There are a number of different job roles in childcare, such as entry level support workers, practitioners who have higher qualifications and managers. As of April 2021, practitioners made up around three-quarters of the workforce in the private and public sectors and less than two-thirds of the voluntary sector. Within Scotland the public sector is the biggest employer of the daycare childcare workforce (at almost 60%) in Clackmannanshire this is currently accounting for 58% of the workforce. Private nurseries represent the next largest provider of the workforce, in Clacks this is 35%. In Clackmannanshire, 435 are employed in the sector and over 90% are qualified at practitioner level and above (or working towards this)

Across Scotland the public sector has the lowest turnover of staff and the highest retention rates at almost 90%. Retention in Scotland is lowest in the private sector with only around 75% of staff remaining in the same service one year on. There are a number of different routes to gain childcare qualifications, these include college courses which include placement, SVQ on the job training and apprenticeship schemes.

At the time of CERTs childcare provider survey there were 11 staff vacancies across childcare providers in Clacks, with the majority (7) in ELCs. Play Alloa which is the only childcare service in Clacks for children with additional/complex support needs had two staff vacancies for support workers. Private sector salaries were considerably lower than public sector where a practitioner would usually earn between £15,000 - £25,000 compared to between £30,313.27 - £33,799.03 if employed by the Local Authority. Childminders are self-employed and almost all childminders reported that they did not pay themselves the living wage. Most employees were trained up to at least SVQ 3 level.

There are currently 68 childcare providers offering 2,003 child care places in Clackmannanshire, with 14 ELCs, 5 private nurseries, 7 providers of after school clubs/care, 21 breakfast clubs and 21 registered childminders. The total number of places available in day care services in ELC, private nursery and childminders is 1,416 which have a waiting list for approximately 175 spaces indicating that there is a shortfall in provision. The number of childminders is down significantly from previous years and around 50% since pre Covid.

Average charges for childcare in Clacks ranges substantially with Childminders being the most affordable, to private nurseries the most expensive. Charges range from £24.25 - £45.00 for half day at private nursery, £5.40 - £5.90 per hr top up to funded hours at ELC, from £4.00 - £6.00 per hr for childminders. Private breakfast clubs charge between £5 - £15.75 per session and after school care from £12.60 up to £21.25 per session.

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Clackmannanshire parents reported that 55% of them use government funded hours for their childcare provision with 96% using it for a nursery and 4% using it for both nursery and childminder.

Parents found that breakfast clubs were affordable, however nurseries were almost equally split between poor and good rating in terms of affordability. Child minders were regarded as 70% good/very good, Out of School Childcare was rated 65% good/very good. A number of comments made by parents were related to cost of childcare and that it was too expensive. A few commented on how they would like to see government funded childcare hours increasing to help cover costs.

All private and public nurseries confirmed that they offer spaces for children with ASN, and any restrictions on offering this would depend on their individual's needs. Less than half of childminders offer places to children with ASN.

Only 12% of parents reported that childcare was NOT a barrier to employment. With 19% confirming entirely and 48% hugely, a barrier to their employment, with 56% reporting they wanted to work longer hours.

During school holidays 54% out of 90 responses confirmed using friends and family for childcare, 46% for a nursery and 7% for a childminder. Parents preferred hours for childcare were 9 – 3pm (79%) but there being a strong need for more than half of parents for care before and after school hours: 8 – 9am (59%) and 3 – 5pm (55%).

Parents responded that they found it easiest to find a place at breakfast clubs, but poor/very poor for nurseries, childminders and after school care. Most of the waiting lists for childcare places in private nurseries were for up to 1 years and the 2 – 3year olds with a total of 115 children on a waiting list with 27 in ELCs. Childminders had a waiting list of 27 children. Most after school care/clubs had spaces available with some varying from day to day. Play Alloa had a waitlist for 3 places for 6 – 11 year olds for children with ASN.

Overall parents are satisfied with the performance of their chosen childcare provider with the only exception after school provision which is due to the location of childcare provider and lack of provision.

Business challenges cited by providers are dominated by staff recruitment and retention (44% for ELCs, 30% for private nurseries); Regulations (22% for private nurseries and 25% for childminders); Finances and cash flow (ELCs 30%, private nurseries 22% and childminders 24%); Inconsistent demand (11% for private nurseries, 21% for childminders).

Premises were also an issue raised by ELCs and one after school provider.

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Two nurseries, six childminders and four organisations involved in out of school care indicated an interest in expanding their operations.

It is concluded that:

- Lack of affordable childcare is a major barrier to parents taking up employment and/or increasing their hours and income
- The childcare sector is significant in Clackmannanshire employing 435 staff in 68 childcare facilities providing childcare for 2,003 children (1,416 in day care services)
- Funding for childcare is complex, unclear and for parents, under claimed
- The main source of funding for childcare – Scottish Government Funded Hours is delivered overwhelmingly by public sector ELCs, with minimal spend in private nurseries and childminders
- There is a major undersupply of most forms of childcare which will exacerbate when funded hours will extend to all 2 year olds and eligible one year olds. This includes childminders, nurseries and after school provision
- The childcare labour market is not working effectively, with recruitment and training identified as the greatest business challenge, but staff vacancies currently less than new entrants to the sector
- Childcare for those with additional support needs is limited.

In response to these findings, CERT have developed a plan for action to alleviate these challenges. These will all be undertaken in partnership with other organisations in Clacks and elsewhere:

- (i) Work to ensure there is afterschool provision for all primary school age children
- (ii) Work to extend pre school provision to at least 8am
- (iii) Support the existing and encourage more childminders
- (iv) Increase the number of nursery places
- (v) Develop a labour market development plan
- (vi) Further investigate provision for those with Additional Support Needs

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## 1 Overview and Purpose

**Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration Trust (CERT)** was established in July 2020 and has been actively working alongside the community and in partnership with others, to influence positive change and create opportunities for the people of Clackmannanshire. It has recognised that the barriers and constraints to achieving our vision are complex and multiple. Further information on CERT can be found at [www.clacksregen.org.uk](http://www.clacksregen.org.uk). Some of CERT's largest projects are:

- **Positive Moves** – a joint programme with Clackmannanshire Works which helps residents of Clackmannanshire who are seeking work or considering steps to employment. Tailored support is offered for ages 16-67 facing challenges through a key working structure and supports available include work qualifications, confidence building, travel cost assistance, money advice, IT skills, volunteering, work experience, and job search skills.
- **Multiply-** provides support to boost people's literacy and ability to use maths. The programme is for over 19s and is delivered throughout Clacks through workshops and one to one supports.
- **Database of Provision** - An online, searchable database of existing supports and programmes is in place including over 200 projects from over 100 organisations who are actively providing support to Clacks residents.

To support this activity, CERT is an SQA Approved Centre.

During CERT's pre-employability programme (PEC) which ran in 2022, the lack of affordable and flexible childcare provision was identified as one of three major barriers to progressing to employment (childcare, transport and mental health). As part of CERT's mission, we are now seeking to help reduce these barriers.

CERT's objective is to work with others to ensure that access to appropriate childcare is not a barrier to economic growth, employment, and increased income to residents of Clackmannanshire.

The purpose of this Strategic Case is to provide a thorough understanding of the policy and strategic context of childcare in Clackmannanshire; establish the scale and nature of demand; the nature and scale of supply of childcare services and any barriers to the delivery of appropriate childcare services. This information will provide the foundation to allow the development of interventions which will be effective in improving the provision of appropriate childcare in Clackmannanshire.

Within this business case, information is drawn from two surveys undertaken directly by CERT. A survey of 211 parents, carer and guardians on their views of childcare in



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Clackmannanshire and a survey of all providers of childcare in Clackmannanshire. This includes nurseries, childminders, after school clubs and specialised youth / ASN childcare.

### *Acknowledgement*

*Thanks, and acknowledgement goes to the Robertson Trust and Clackmannanshire Council's Tackling Child Poverty Fund who provided financial support to the post of Childcare Project Executive who undertook this work.*

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## 2 Strategies and Policies

There are a range of policies at the UK, Scotland and Clackmannanshire level which have a direct impact on childcare policy and plans. These are set out below.

### 2.1 United Kingdom

The U.K governments **Child Poverty Act 2010**<sup>1</sup> sets out the target to end child poverty by 2020, strengthening families and supporting the most vulnerable. As part of this initiative The **Childcare Act 2016**<sup>2</sup> sets out legislation to offer up to 30 hours a week (570 hours a year) of free childcare over 38 weeks of the year to qualifying children in England and over 48 weeks for Wales. This included a 15 hours entitlement for most disadvantaged 2-year-olds, a universal entitlement of 15 hours for all 3 and 4 year-olds and a 30 hours entitlement for 3- and 4-year-olds of working parents who meet certain HMRC criteria.

The **New Approach to Child Poverty strategy 2011**<sup>3</sup> sets out priorities:

- Supporting families to achieve financial independence
- Supporting family life and children's life chances
- Recognising the role of place in transforming lives through community delivery.

This strategy also sets out a new set of indicators of performance, broadening out from solely income indicators.

**Tax-Free Childcare** can help working families pay for any approved childcare for children aged 11 or under, or, 16 if the child has a disability. (See section on Childcare Funding)

In July 2022 the UK government announced a package of measures designed to **increase childcare support for parents**, boost the **number of childminders** and **drive take up of childcare offers**, to address rising costs. To drive down costs for providers and parents, a new childcare regulatory changes consultation will look at increasing the number of children that can be looked after by each staff member in early years settings.

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<sup>1</sup> Child Poverty Act 2010, U.K Public General Acts, 2010, Part 1, The National Archives, ([legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/6/contents)) accessed on 30/10/23

<sup>2</sup> Childcare Act 2016, U.K Public General Act, 2016, Chapter 5, The National Archives ([legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/12/contents)) accessed on 30/10/23

<sup>3</sup> New Approach to Child Poverty Strategy 2011, A new approach to child poverty: tackling the causes of disadvantage and transforming families' lives, Department of Education, 5/11/2011, [A New Approach to Child Poverty \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214421/a-new-approach-to-child-poverty-strategy-2011.pdf)

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It proposes changing staff-to-child ratios from 1:4 to 1:5 for 2-year-olds, giving providers more flexibility in how they run their businesses while maintaining safety and quality of care. This could potentially reduce the cost of this form of childcare by up to 15%.

To support more people to become childminders they:

- reduced the upfront costs of becoming a childminder via financial support
- allowed childminders to spend more of their time working from a greater range of locations – for example a local community centre or village hall rather than their own home
- gave childminders greater flexibilities within the ratios when looking after their own children or siblings of other children
- worked with Ofsted to reduce inspection of childminders
- slimmed down the childminder specific early years foundation stage, reducing the framework by one-third to ensure content is targeted and simpler to navigate

The UK government also renewed a campaign via the Childcare Choices website<sup>4</sup> so parents can access the support they are entitled to, through a ramped-up marketing campaign backed by £1.2 million. This was introduced to encourage providers to take the necessary steps to offer the full range of childcare support to parents using their services.

The campaign signposts parents to all sources of funding clearly setting out eligibility requirements and providing a handy calculator so parents can estimate their entitlement.

## 2.2 Scotland

### 2.2.1 National Performance Framework<sup>5</sup>

This provides a framework for all activities funded by the Scottish Government and provides a context for all strategies and policies across Scotland with a purpose to:

- create a more successful country
- give opportunities to all people living in Scotland
- increase the wellbeing of people living in Scotland
- create sustainable and inclusive growth
- reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental, and social progress

In order to achieve this the framework has set out National Outcomes which set out the kind of Scotland the government would like to create. These outcomes reflect the values and aspirations of the people of Scotland and align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and help track progress in reducing inequality.

<sup>4</sup> [Childcare Choices | 30 Hours Childcare, Tax-Free Childcare and More | Help with Costs | GOV.UK](#)

<sup>5</sup> The Scottish Government (2023, July 20). *National Performance Framework*. Retrieved October 2, 2023, from <https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>

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## 2.2.2 Children and Young People

**Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014<sup>6</sup>.** The Act sets statutory targets which:

- help focus our efforts to tackle and reduce child poverty
- help monitor progress
- are in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The targets state that by 2030 of children living in Scottish households:

- less than 10% should be living in relative poverty (how many families are on low incomes compared with middle income households)
- less than 5% should be living in absolute poverty (how many low income families are not seeing their living standards improving over time)
- less than 5% should be living with combined low income and material deprivation (how many lower income families cannot afford basic necessities)
- less than 5% should be living in persistent poverty (how many families live on low incomes three years out of four)

The core principles of the Act are further strengthened by the:

- **Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRREC)** <sup>7</sup>programme, underlining the need for appropriate, proportionate, and timely support for children through integrated multi-agency intervention where necessary and began to develop tools to aid this;
- **Achieving Our Potential** <sup>8</sup>the anti-poverty framework
- **Better Health, Better Care and Equally Well** <sup>9</sup>and their implementation plans, which shows how early years intervention can contribute to addressing health outcomes;
- **Curriculum for Excellence** <sup>10</sup>to bring coherence to learning experiences for children from 3-18 and build skills for learning, skills for work and skills for life from the outset.
- **Skills for Scotland**, the first cradle to grave skills strategy;

<sup>6</sup>The Scottish Government ( 2014, March 27). *Children and Young People ( Scotland ) Act 2014* . Retrieved October 15, 2023, from [https:// www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/introduction/enacted](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/introduction/enacted)

<sup>7</sup> The Scottish Government (2022, September 30). *Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)*. Retrieved September 17, 2023, from <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/principles-and-values/>

<sup>8</sup> The Scottish Government, (24/11/2008), Achieving Our Potential: A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland. Retrieved from ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)) on 31/10/23.

<sup>9</sup> The Scottish Government, (12/12/2007), Better Health, Better Care: Action Plan. Retrieved from ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)) on 31/10/23.

<sup>10</sup> Education Scotland, (1/1/2017), Curriculum for Excellence: What is curriculum for excellence. Retrieved from [www.education.gov.scot](http://www.education.gov.scot) on 31/10/2023.

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- **Realising the Ambition** (2020)<sup>11</sup> national practice guidance for early years in Scotland covering children's learning and development from birth into the early years of primary school.
- **The Early Years Framework**<sup>12</sup> to ensure that parents, communities, and professionals recognise the value and long-term benefits of play and to promote how critical, play and the arts are for children's development.
- **Scottish Attainment Challenge** part of an education bill policy with a joint agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA on school empowerment, collaboration, parental involvement and engagement and pupil participation.

### 2.2.3 Tackling Child Poverty

In 2016, the First Minister made an announcement that Scotland would 'come together and love its most vulnerable children to give them the childhood they deserve'. In 2020 the work concluded with the publication of seven reports; one of which was The Promise<sup>13</sup>, the implementation plan for 2021-24 identified five priority areas, The right to a childhood, Whole family support; Supporting the workforce; and Planning and Building capacity. With around one in four children in Scotland living in poverty, the Child Poverty Bill was introduced in 2017 which set out targets to reduce the number of children experiencing the effects of poverty by 2030.

**Best Start, Bright Futures** (2022-26)<sup>14</sup> is the Scottish Governments delivery plan to tackle child poverty which sets out further actions to be taken to progress towards the child poverty targets set for 2030. This sets out strategies for helping to provide opportunities and integrated support for parents to enter, sustain and progress in work. The strategic priorities include:

- Realising the benefits of the expansion to 1,140 hours per year of funded Early Learning and Childcare for children and families which is currently available for 3 year olds, 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds.
- Progressing the expansion of the childcare offer, including building a system of school age childcare and developing a new offer for eligible one and two year olds.
- Ensuring that the delivery of priorities is supported by a sustainable, diverse, and thriving sector and profession.

<sup>11</sup> Education Scotland (February 2020), Realising the Ambition: Being Me. Retrieved from [realisingtheambition.pdf \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/publications/realisingtheambition.pdf) on 31/10/2023.

<sup>12</sup> Department for Education (31/3/2014), Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework. Retrieved from [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/282221/Early_years_foundation_stage_(EYFS)_statutory_framework_-_GOV.UK.pdf) on 31/10/2023.

<sup>13</sup> The Promise Scotland (2021 – 2024). *Plan 21 - 24*. Retrieved September 17, 2023, from Plan 21-24 ([thepromise.scot](https://thepromise.scot/))

<sup>14</sup> The Scottish Government (24/03/2022). Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026. Retrieved from [Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/best-start-bright-futures-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2022-to-2026/pages/1-2022-2026.pdf) on 31/10/2023

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- Ensuring that ambitions are underpinned by fair funding and outcomes frameworks, robust data and organisations that work together to regulate services and support quality improvement.

The vision for this plan is, through access to rich and nurturing early learning and school age childcare experiences, children, families, and their communities are enabled to reach their full potential and the poverty-related outcome gap narrows. Three outcomes are:

- Parents' and carers' opportunities to take up or sustain work, training, and study increase;
- Family wellbeing improves; and
- Children's development improves and the poverty-related outcomes gap narrows

Through Best Start, Bright Futures, to promote fair work practices through public procurement policy and practice, a requirement on public sector grant recipients to pay at least the Real Living Wage to all employees was introduced.

**The Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF)**<sup>15</sup> funded by Scottish Government is delivered by local authorities and provides dedicated support for low-income families.

PESF offers support to:

- Lone Parents
- Parents with disabilities
- Young parents aged 25 years and less
- Minority ethnic families
- Families with a disabled child
- Families with 3 or more children
- Families where the youngest child is under 1 year

A holistic Key Worker approach is used to support parents to upskill and/or re-train, allowing them to increase family income, and help lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

The fund provides personalised support for parents who face barriers to progressing their careers, including help to gain qualifications, improving skills or work experience; money advice, and motivational support. They can also help with clothes for interviews or starting a new job, help with childcare costs to enable you to attend training or start a new job and access to affordable childcare.

The **Clackmannanshire Family Wellbeing Partnership (FWP)** project is aimed at supporting low income families. The FWP has recently secured a further £500,000 in 2023/24 to continue with its work making a positive difference to families. This funding has come from the Scottish Government and the Hunter Foundation, who already fund the Partnership.

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<sup>15</sup> The Scottish Government (29/3/2018). Parental Employability Support Fund, Retrieved on 14/11/2023 from [Parental Employability Support Fund | Employability in Scotland](#)

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The Clackmannanshire FWP is a series of projects that support young people and their families to make a difference in their communities. It is designed to encourage families to have a say in improving things that matter to them. It is made up of Clackmannanshire council, Scottish Government, third sector organisations and community groups.

These projects aim to help families out of poverty and draw on collective local and joint resources to improve whole family wellbeing and outcomes. The funding will improve the flexibility, affordability and accessibility of childcare and activities provision.

The project has focused on Alloa South and East as an area with particularly concentrated levels of deprivation. This project centred on providing families with additional support in the form of wrap around childcare and hot meal provision for over 100 children.

**Challenge Fund** was set up to test out new approaches to supporting parents into work. As a part of the package of enhanced support, a **new Parental Transition Fund** was introduced to tackle the financial barriers parents face in entering the labour market, particularly over the initial period of employment, investing up to £15 million each year. This provides support to gain qualifications, improving skills or work experience, money advice and motivational support.

### 2.2.4 Economic Strategies and Employability

Scotland's **National Strategy for Economic Transformation** published in March 2022 includes Six Programmes and seeks to generate a step-change in the way the Scottish Government and business listen to, support and work with each other nationally in an endeavour to transform the economy.

- 1 Entrepreneurial people and culture
- 2 New market opportunities
- 3 Productive businesses and regions
- 4 Skilled workforce
- 5 A fairer and more equal society
- 6 A culture of delivery

**No One Left behind**<sup>16</sup> – This delivery plan (2022) was set up to deliver an overall Scottish approach to employability, with a greater focus on the needs of the individual. A person-centred system that is more flexible and responsive to the changing labour market, tackles inequalities and grows Scotland's economy. This was introduced particularly with the expectation of increasing levels of unemployment, underemployment, and child poverty as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Joint Scottish and Local Government No One Left

<sup>16</sup> The Scottish Government, (24/11/2020) No One Left Behind: Delivery Plan. Retrieved 1/11/2023 from [No One Left Behind: delivery plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/no-one-left-behind-delivery-plan/pages/1-1.aspx)

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Behind Employability Action Plan, sets out key deliverables across six No One Left Behind Workstreams:

- **Service Design** - To use the Scottish Approach to Service Design to co-produce a national framework which establishes an all age employability system that is person centred, more joined up, flexible and responsive to individual needs.
- **Governance and Risk** - To ensure an appropriate approach to governance providing collective leadership ensuring a robust framework for decision-making and risk management.
- **Shared Measurement Framework** - To establish a national outcomes and shared measurement framework.
- **Policy & Finance** - To develop a strategic financial approach that reflects an overall national coherence and balances this with appropriate levels of local and regional flexibility, evidenced by the needs of individuals and local/regional geographies.
- **Alignment and Integration** - To align public policy and practice to improve outcomes and value from public expenditure.
- **Communications** - To effectively communicate with partners, stakeholders and service users adopting an inclusive, collaborative, and flexible approach.

**Fair Start Scotland<sup>17</sup>** is an employment support service which provides 12-18 months of tailored, flexible, and person-centred pre-employment support to people who have a disability or additional support need and want help to find and stay in fair and sustainable work. Funded by the Scottish Government, the programme is delivered by Clackmannanshire Council and includes key working and wider supports prior to and once in employment. The programme also works with employers to help with recruitment and support for the employer and their new employee by offering up to 12 months in-work support.

In September 2023 The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) announced that they were expanding their **Youth Offer** to include economically inactive claimants, who were previously ineligible. This will give over 30,000 of 16-24-year-olds additional support in finding and securing work, the option to access three types of support through the Youth Offer are:

- Additional time with a Work Coach early in their claim
- Access to Youth Hubs; and
- Youth Employability Coaches.

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<sup>17</sup> The Scottish Government, (3/4/2018) Fair Start Scotland, Retrieved 14/11/23 from [Fair Start Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)



## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

**Skills Development Scotland (SDS)** is Scotland's national skills body. They contribute to Scotland's sustainable economic growth by supporting people and businesses to develop and apply their skills. They have a number of different supports available such as:

- **Individual Training Accounts** to help people develop the skills they need for work, giving learners who meet the eligibility criteria up to £200 towards a single training course or training episode per year.
- **Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE)**, provides skills development and employability support, for those affected by redundancy are out of work and to maximise opportunities for them to secure good jobs.
- **Career Information, Advice and Guidance**, free career services are available to use where you can get support from Careers Advisers in SDS centres or community venues across the country, to support people of all ages and all stages of their career.
- SDS administers **Scottish Apprenticeships**<sup>18</sup> on behalf of Scottish Government, which incorporates Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs), Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) and Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs).

### 2.3 Clackmannanshire

A part of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires that each Community Planning Partnership (CPP) produce and publish a **Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)**<sup>19</sup>, a key element in the delivery of public service reform at local level. The LOIP provides a shared and explicit plan for local communities in each CPP area, providing a vision and focus, based on agreed local priorities.

The Clackmannanshire Alliance is the community planning partnership for Clackmannanshire, responsible for forward community planning locally. Their role is to provide strategic vision and direction for community planning as well as monitoring the implementation of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017-27. Members of the Clackmannanshire Alliance is made up of members of:

- NHS Forth Valley
- Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface (CTSi)
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
- Scottish Enterprise
- Clackmannanshire Business
- Clackmannanshire Council

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<sup>18</sup> **Apprenticeships. Scot**

<sup>19</sup> Clackmannanshire Council (2017, March 24). *Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2017-2027*.

Retrieved September 27, 2023, from

[https://www.clacks.gov.uk/searchresults.php?cx=003785486861710258727%3Azojhh\\_daw0a&cof=FORID%3A10&ie=UTF-8&bootstrap=true&q=LOIP](https://www.clacks.gov.uk/searchresults.php?cx=003785486861710258727%3Azojhh_daw0a&cof=FORID%3A10&ie=UTF-8&bootstrap=true&q=LOIP)

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

The **Single Outcome Agreement for Clackmannanshire** 2013/23 sets out the requirements of Scottish Government Funding. In this there is a joint commitment to tackle the inequalities that exist in Clackmannanshire as a result of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage. In order to achieve this vision, 4 long term strategic outcomes are set out over the next 10 years:

- Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses and people and ensure fair opportunities for all.
- Our families: children and young people will have the best possible start in life.
- Women and girls will be confident and aspirational and achieve their full potential.
- Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish.

For Improving outcomes for children and young people living in poverty, the LOIP has identified three key action areas:

- Early Years and Family Support and Intervention for young people and families who are vulnerable
- Attainment and transition from Education for young people facing disadvantage
- Support and advice for workless and low income families.

Strategic Priorities to help support these groups are:

- Implementation of Children's Services Plan for 2017/2020.
- Develop and Implement a new Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2018/2021.
- Ensure that there are approaches to identify, understand, and take early action to support children and families affected by alcohol and substance misuse.
- Implement 2017/18 Strategic Plan for Child Protection in Clackmannanshire including multidisciplinary workforce development.
- Develop a new Parent and Family Support Strategy with a focus on parenting and emotional wellbeing for the most vulnerable families 2018/2021.
- To develop and deliver targeted partnership approaches to support vulnerable families impacted by domestic abuse
- To develop a suicide prevention strategy for Clackmannanshire in line with the Choose Life campaign and as part of that deliver targeted programmes to support vulnerable families impacted by poor mental health
- Put in place targeted and intensive early intervention support programmes which address the impact of poverty and invests in the long term outcomes for children and young people.
- To develop a young carer's strategy to ensure provision of support for young people with caring responsibilities.

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

In Clacks certain groups have been identified as being at particular risk of inequality and poverty these are: –

- Low income households and workless households particularly where there are children;
- Women;
- lone parent families and young mothers/teenage pregnancies
- Those living with poor physical and mental health and those affected by alcohol and substance use
- Young people in and leaving the care system
- Community of Alloa South and East which has experienced deep rooted poverty for decades
- People living with disability
- People with caring responsibilities
- Refugee and Asylum Families

Clackmannanshire Council and partners are also responsible for ensuring the delivery of the national employability programmes including NOLB, Fair Start Scotland and the Child Poverty programmes including PESF and Family Wellbeing Partnership.

# **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

## 3 What are the forms of Childcare?

There are a number of types of childcare provision available, depending on the needs of the parents and child. Regulations differ depending on the service. The different types of services available are:

- Nursery
- Children and Family Centres
- After Schools Care
- After School Clubs
- Pre-school and breakfast clubs
- Childminders
- Family and Friends
- Creche
- Nanny

**Nursery** - A centre based facility that provides childcare from babies up to age 5. Children can attend usually between the hours of 8am – 6pm but these times can vary depending on the establishment. Parents would be allocated a space for their child which may be full-time or part-time, nurseries do not generally offer a drop in service. Nurseries usually have different rooms to cater for different age ranges.

A nursery is defined as a facility where:

- the children are under the age of 8
- the nursery is on non-domestic premises
- sessions are more than 2 hours in any one day
- the service is provided at least 6 days a year

Children will learn through play and from age 3 onwards the Curriculum for Excellence will be used to help them transition through to primary school. Staff in a nursery need to have certain qualifications depending on the job role. (See section on Childcare Workforce). Nurseries that are run by the Local Authority as opposed to privately run are known as Early Learning Centres (ELC).

*Regulations for Nurseries:* You must register with the Care Inspectorate if you want to run a day nursery in Scotland and staff must be registered with The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and checked through Disclosure Scotland for suitability to work with children.

**Children and Family Centres** - Sometimes called community nurseries, children and family centres usually provide a full-day service for children aged 0-5 years. The majority are provided by local authorities. They usually provide services for children with the greatest needs together with a range of support services for families.

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

*Regulations for Children and Family Centres:* These must be registered with the Care Inspectorate and staff registered with SSSC.

There are no family centres in Clackmannanshire.

**After School Care** - This is also sometimes referred to as wrap around care and is for school age children and usually available from the hours of 3 – 6pm. This kind of childcare provision is not structured and is generally play orientated, with staff normally qualified as playworkers or practitioners. These can occasionally be set up within a primary school or other suitable venue and parents would be charged a session fee, they can use this service Monday – Friday or just on certain days.

*Regulations for After School Care:* After school care is regulated childcare, which is defined as a daycare of children service and registered and inspected by the Care Inspectorate. Daycare of children's service applies to services whose primary function is childcare and who operate for 2 hours or more in any one day and for more than 6 days in any one calendar year. All staff must have a PVG check with Disclosure Scotland.

**After School clubs** – Separately to registered out of school care services there are many supervised activity clubs which operate during term time often for less than two hours at the beginning or end of the school day. These clubs can either be set up to deliver one particular type of activity e.g., football, or a range of different activities that children can choose from. There are also many holiday clubs which although they operate for more than 2 hours a day, their main function isn't to provide a daycare service for children. Their primary function is to provide activities for children. These clubs are also not required to register with the Care Inspectorate and staff are not required to be registered with Scottish Social Services Council or have childcare qualifications.

*Regulations for After school clubs:* These do not require to be registered or inspected by the Care Inspectorate, staff will need to have been checked with Disclosure Scotland in order to establish they are deemed suitable to work with children.

**School Based Pre School and Breakfast Clubs** – These are classed as childcare and are catering for children who need to be dropped off at school early and/or require breakfast. This is set up within the schools dining area and children will have access to a number of breakfast options where they can then sit and eat, there is often the option for children to access the school playground after eating until school starts.

*Regulations for Pre-school clubs:* As these clubs are held in school premises and are classed as childcare, they come under Care Inspectorate guidelines and the staff need to meet the same requirements as if working in an after school care setting. All staff need to be PVG checked through Disclosure Scotland.

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

**Creche** – In Scotland, a Creche is a drop – in type of childcare service generally for pre-school age children. This may be used at an event such as a training course/workshop, family events like weddings, shopping centres, corporate company uses for staff children only.

*Regulations for Creches:* Creches are regulated by the Care Inspectorate and must meet the same requirements as that of a nursery.

**Childminder** – A childminder is usually an individual, although occasionally they can work in small groups, who will look after children in their own home. Childminders are able to deliver the Scottish Government’s “Funded Hours”. Childminders are typically self-employed and paid an hourly rate and parents need to arrange hours and days of provision in advance.

*Regulations for Childminders:* Childminders are regulated by the Care Inspectorate and are required to be PVG checked. To be eligible for funded hours payments, childminders are required to have, or be working towards, a practitioner qualification gaining an SVQ 3, SCQF Level 7 in Social Care (Children & Young People).

**Family and Friends** – They are often called upon to help support parents with childcare.  
*Family and Friends Regulations:* As an informal type of provision, it is not regulated.

**Nannies** – A nanny provides childcare for one or more children in the parent’s own home. Nannies can sometimes live in with the family. Some families have a full time nanny, or a nanny can be employed on a part time basis just for after school care on a live out basis. Some nannies are employed to provide care for newborn babies during the night.

*Regulations for Nannies:* A nanny must be at least 18 years old and if supplied or introduced through a childcare agency is subject to regulation under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 (‘the Act’)<sup>20</sup>. Sometimes parents enter into arrangements directly with a nanny for childcare in their home, without the involvement of a childcare agency. In these cases, the arrangements are not subject to regulation under the Act.

*Regulation of Early Education and Childcare - The Way Ahead*, published by the Scottish Executive, outlines standards and guidelines used by local authorities to regulate childcare. These also ensure good practice for established sitter services and nanny agencies are also considered.

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<sup>20</sup> Care Information Scotland (2001), *Regulations of Care (Scotland) Act 2001*. Retrieved from *Regulations of Care (Scotland) Act 2001* ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk) on 27/11/23).

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

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**Table 1 : Overview of Types of Childcare**

Type of Childcare	Under 5s	Age 5 -11	Pre School	School Hours	Post School	W/ends Holidays	Registered With Care Inspectorate	SSSC Regulated
Nursery	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Possibly	Yes	Yes
After school care	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Possibly	Yes	Yes
After school club	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Possibly	No	No
Pre school & Breakfast club	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Childminders	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Possibly	Yes	No
Family & Friends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Possibly	No	No
Creche	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Possibly	Yes	Yes
Nanny	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Possibly	No	No

*Providers are required to be registered with the local authority to get access to Government Funded Places*

# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

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## 4 Regulations for Scottish Childcare Providers

### Care Inspectorate

In Scotland the Care Inspectorate is the national regulator for childcare services. Childcare services (nurseries; childminders; pre-school clubs/breakfast clubs when located in schools; after school care; creches) cannot operate unless they are registered by the Care Inspectorate and they inspect services and premises and evaluate the quality of care being delivered, as well as support improvement in individual services and across the care sector nationally.

The required standards are set out in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 and the National Care Standards, which set out standards of care that people should expect. If a service is not meeting these standards, the Act gives the Care Inspectorate powers to make the service improve. The information they gather from inspections and other work is used to report to Scottish Government and the public on how well Scotland's social care services are performing.

Childminders are separately registered and may work together in the home of one of the registered childminding providers. In this situation 'individual applicants' would undertake separate childminding registrations and once registered, would be inspected separately by the Care Inspectorate, and are required to pay separate yearly continuation fees.

**Clackmannanshire Council's Approval for Government Funded Places** have duties to regulate and review and hold a register of local day care services that offer the government's funded childcare entitlement, this includes all public, private, third sector nurseries and childminders. Registration is a means of ensuring that all services reach acceptable minimum standards and that children receive satisfactory care and protection in these settings

To be an approved supplier, a childcare provider needs to adhere to the National Standard by the Care Inspectorate. The registration of the ELC workforce is regulated by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), all registered ELC managers/lead practitioners must either hold the SCQF level 9 in Social Services (Children & Young People) benchmark qualification or agree that their registration is subject to a condition that they secure this within their first period of registration. For practitioner grade, the benchmark qualification is SCQF level 7, and for support workers, the benchmark qualification is the SCQF Level 6.

Under the Children 1989 Act <sup>21</sup>local authorities are required to review their day care services for children under eight at least once every three years. Information about the level, organisation and delivery of services should be collated and evaluated in the light of the local authority's policies and standards for the development of the service. Reviewing services

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<sup>21</sup> [Children Act 1989 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41)



## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

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requires consultation with providers, referrers, families, and children themselves. The standards expected of day care services should be of at least the same quality whether they are managed by local authorities or an independent provider. Currently early learning and primary school settings are inspected on a proportionate basis, using a sampling approach, rather than a cyclical model.

**Education Scotland** also inspect ELC settings with a focus on learning and education. They liaise with the Care Inspectorate to determine which settings to inspect and have increased the period between inspections to 18 months. Their inspectors focus on the quality of children's learning and achievement. They have a particular interest in how the setting is developing children's skills and understanding in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. If a service has been inspected by the Care Inspectorate, they will not receive an inspection from Education Scotland within 18 months. The same timescale applies if they have been inspected by Education Scotland. Inspections may be carried out during this period in response to risk.

The **Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA)** is an organisation dedicated to supporting childminders in Scotland. They help shape policy, share knowledge and guidance, provide professional training and events for members and the wider childminding community. Membership is voluntary but includes a range of benefits including provision of liability insurance for childminders.

### **Child to Staff Ratios**

Under Care Inspectorate regulations there are limits on the number of children that can be included in each facility as a staff ratios to children:

#### Nurseries

- 1 member of staff to 3 children under 2
- 1 member of staff to 5 children aged 2 – 3
- 1 member of staff to 8 children over 3

#### After School Child care

- 1 member of staff to 5 children under 8
- 1 member of staff to 10 children over 8

#### Childminders \*

- 1 childminder to 3 children under 2
- 1 childminder to 5 children aged 2 – 3
- 1 childminder to 8 children aged 3 up to 8
- 1 childminder to 10 children aged 8 or over

*(\*) this includes the children under 16 of the childminder.*

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

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**Scottish Social Services Council** are the regulator for the social work, social care and children and young people workforce in Scotland. All regulated childcare, defined as a daycare of children service and registered and inspected by the Care Inspectorate, require staff working within these services to register and meet qualifications standards (See Childcare Workforce section) and codes of conduct equivalent to those working in early learning and childcare including a degree level qualification for all managers.

The exception is childminders who, while required to register with the Care Inspectorate do not have to be registered with the SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council). This is, however, good practice and essential if they wish to access the Scottish Governments' "funded hours".

Although the SSSC do not carry out inspections they will investigate concerns about workers and take action where necessary.

Those working with children in daycare of children settings are required to register with SSSC within six months of beginning employment in the ELC sector.

# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

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## 5 Childcare Funding in Scotland

### 5.1 Funding for Childcare costs

**“Funded Hours”** This funds early learning and childcare and is free to parents, funded by the Scottish Government. Each child gets up to 1,140 hours of funded early learning and childcare a year (around 30 hours a week in term time or 6 hours a day over 38 weeks) if your child is 3 or 4 years old. Some 2-year-olds are also eligible if they meet the following criteria

- Looked after by a local council
- In kinship care
- Appointed a guardian
- Children of care experienced parents born between certain birth dates
- Children whose family are in receipt of certain benefits (out of work benefits or income-related benefits with income below a certain threshold).

The **“Funding Follows the Child”** approach places choice in parents' and carers' hands allowing them to access their child's funded entitlement from any setting – in the public, private or third sector, including from a childminder – who meet the National Standard, has a place available and is willing to enter into a contract with their local authority.

Local authorities set the rate and in Clackmannanshire it is currently £5.92 per hour (2023/24). In addition, every child receiving a funded ELC session receives a free meal.

**Tax-Free Childcare** can help working families pay for any approved childcare for children aged 11 or under, or, 16 if the child has a disability - whether the child goes to nursery, a childminder, attends breakfast or after school club, has holiday care or goes to an out of school activity. For every £8 paid into an online account, families will automatically receive an additional £2 from the UK Government. Parents can receive up to £500 every three months, the equivalent to £2,000 a year, or £1,000 (£4,000 a year) if their child is disabled. You can get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 30 hours free childcare if you're eligible for both. Your eligibility depends on:

- if you're working (employed, self-employed, or both)
- your income (and your partner's income if you have one)
- your child's age and circumstances
- your immigration status

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

**Childcare when in Education or Training.** Specific programmes including the Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) as well as Forth Valley College provide support for their clients/students to access childcare. This is paid directly by the Council/College to the childcare provider.

**DWP: Support to transition to employment .** Up front childcare costs are available from DWP to allow a parent to return to work or increase their hours of employment, this is available through the Flexible Support Fund. The individuals assigned work coach from the Job Centre will decide if you are eligible for help from the Flexible Support Fund. They will consider things like:

- whether the childcare provider was registered
- whether the amount being charged is reasonable for the local area
- whether you could have got help with childcare payments from elsewhere

### 5.2 Funding to support children and families which could be used for childcare

**Child Tax Credit** is paid by the UK government to help with the cost of bringing up a child. You can only make a claim for Child Tax Credit if you already get Working Tax Credit. The amount you could get depends on when your child(ren) were born and if they have a disability. This money is only accessed as a discount to tax paid. Child Tax Credit is gradually being replaced with Universal Credit which is a new benefit that combines several means tested benefits.

**Table 2: Child Tax Credit rates for the 2023 to 2024 tax year**

Element	Yearly Amount
The basic amount (known as “the family element”)	up to £545
For each child (this is known as the “child element”)	up to £3,235
For each disabled child	Up to £3,905 ( in addition to the child element)
For each severely disabled child	up to £1,575 (on top of child element and the disabled child element)

This funding can be used for any purpose and does not need to be used to fund Childcare costs.

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

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**Child Benefit.** Where you are responsible for bringing up a child who is under 16 or under 20 if they stay in approved education or training. This provides £24.00 per week for your eldest child, and you will get £15.90 per week for every other child. There is no limit to how many children you can claim for. These funds are not restricted for use for childcare.

Child benefit is available for all children irrespective of the employment status of the parent(s) or if they are a tax payer.

The **Scottish Child Payment** provides support of £25 per week for every child you look after who's under 16 years of age. You'll get the payment every 4 weeks, and it does not affect any other UK or Scottish Government benefits that you, or any person in your household, currently get. To be eligible, you must be in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)

**The Carers Allowance** is a payment you can get if you care for a disabled person. The allowance is £76.75 a week and to get it you must:

- be over 16
- earn less than £139 a week
- spend at least 35 hours a week caring for them

You don't have to be related or live with the person you care for to receive the payment. The person you care for needs to receive certain disability benefits.

**Carer's Allowance Supplement** (Scotland) is an extra payment of £288.60, twice a year (2023/24) To be eligible you must live in Scotland and be in receipt of the main Carers Allowance on the qualifying date. The qualifying dates for 2024 are:

- 08 April 2024
- 07 October 2024

**Best Start Grant** and **Best Start Foods** are Scottish Government payments that help towards the costs of being pregnant or looking after a child. Best Start Grant is made up of 3 one-off payments available if the parent/guardian is in receipt of certain benefits or tax credits or if the parent is under 18. Each are available for multiple children:

- **Early Learning Payment** –£294.70 per child to help with the costs of early learning. Available when your child is aged between 2 years old and 3 years and 6 months old

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

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- **School Age Payment** –£294.70 per child. It helps with the costs of preparing for school when your child is first old enough to start primary school.
- **Pregnancy and Baby Payment** – (replacing the UK Maternity Grant) Is a £600 payment for a first child and £300 for other children. There will be an extra £300 if you have a multiple birth.
- **Best Start Foods** is a prepaid card that can be used in shops or online to buy healthy foods

**Scottish Child Disability Payment** is the replacement of the Disability Living Allowance for Children in Scotland, which was previously delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions. It is the first application-based disability benefit to be introduced by the Scottish Government and is administered by Social Security Scotland from Autumn 2021. It provides money to help with the extra care and mobility costs that a child living with a disability might have. Payments range from a weekly rate of £26.90 up to £101.75 a week depending on the needs of the child.

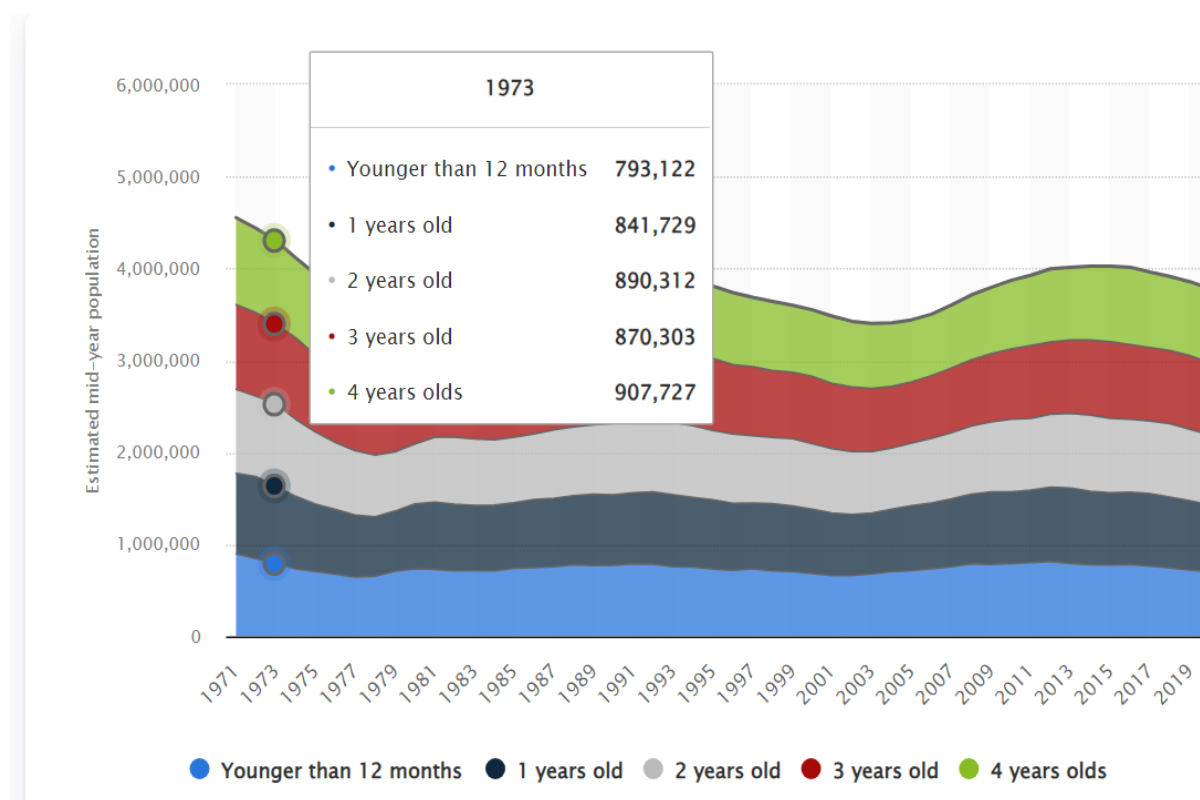
# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

## 6 Demand for Childcare

### 6.1 Population

There were approximately 3.78 million children younger than five years old in the U.K in 2020, which was around 5.6% of the population in that year. Among regions of the UK, London had both the highest population of young children at 595,800 slightly more males aged 0 – 4 than females, while the most common single year of age were four-year-olds, of which there were 807,500.

**Figure 1: Population of young children (aged 0-4) in the United Kingdom from 1971 to 2020, by single year of age<sup>22</sup>**



On Census Day, 20 March 2022, the population of Scotland was estimated to be 5,436,600. This is the largest population ever recorded by Scotland's Census.

<sup>22</sup> Statista (2020, June 6). *Population of young children (aged 0-4) in the United Kingdom from 1971 to 2020, by single year of age*. Statista - Society - Demographics. Retrieved September 29, 2023, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/766134/uk-young-children-population-by-single-year-of-age/>

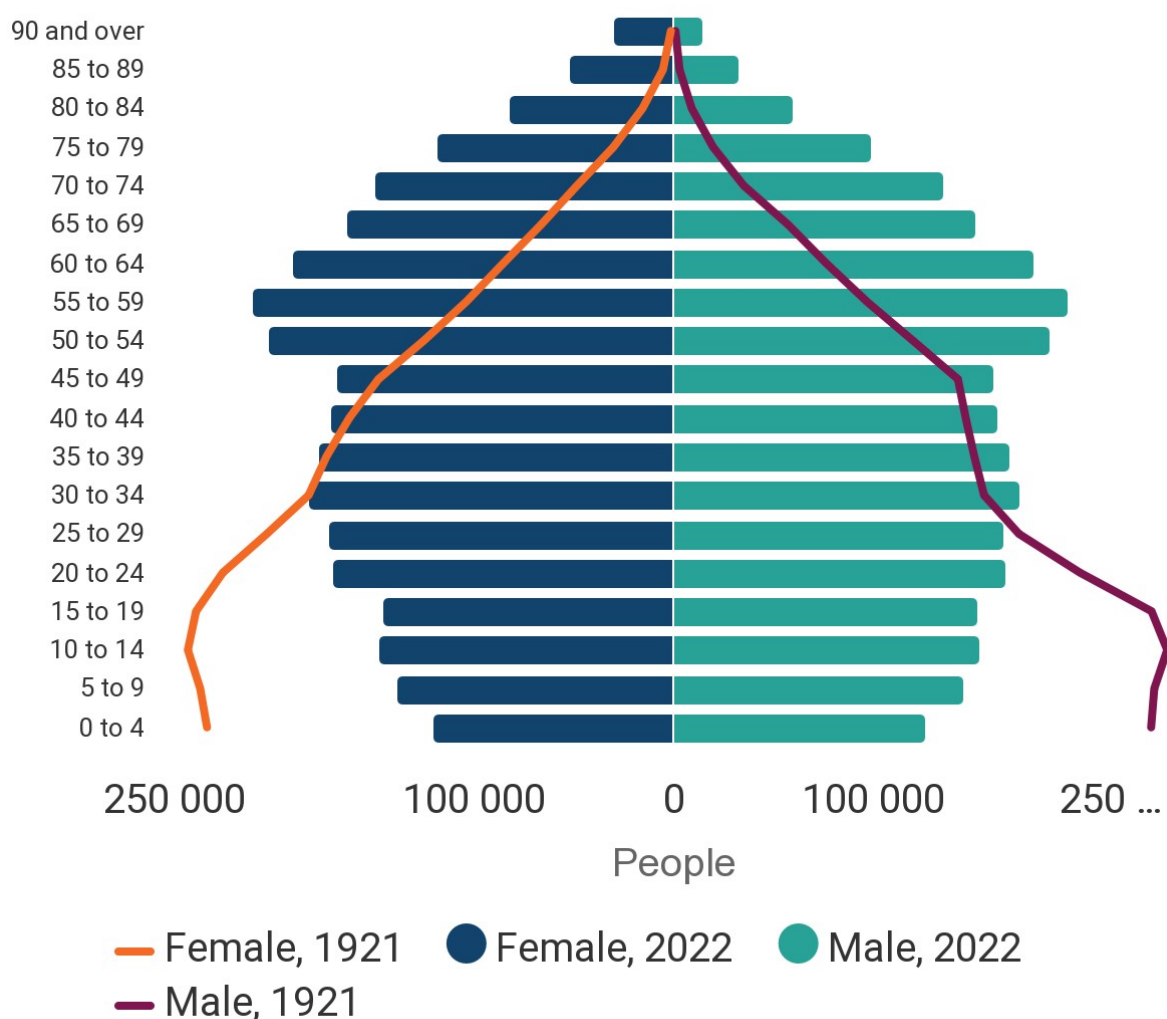
## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

Since the 2011 Census the 0 to 14 year old population decreased by 21,800 (down 2.5%). The 2022 Census showed a population of 247,100, 0 to 4 year olds (120,100 females and 127,000 males). There were 284,100 5 to 9 year olds (138,300 females aged 5 – 9 and 145,800 males and 147,200 females aged 10 – 14 and 153,900 males.) It is predicted that the populations for children under the age of 16 in Scotland will continue to decrease in 2024. The population of Scotland is projected in the graph below.

**Figure 2: Population by Age Group and Sex 1921 and 2022 Scotland**

### Figure 3: The structure of Scotland's population is changing

Population by age group and sex, 1921 and 2022, Scotland



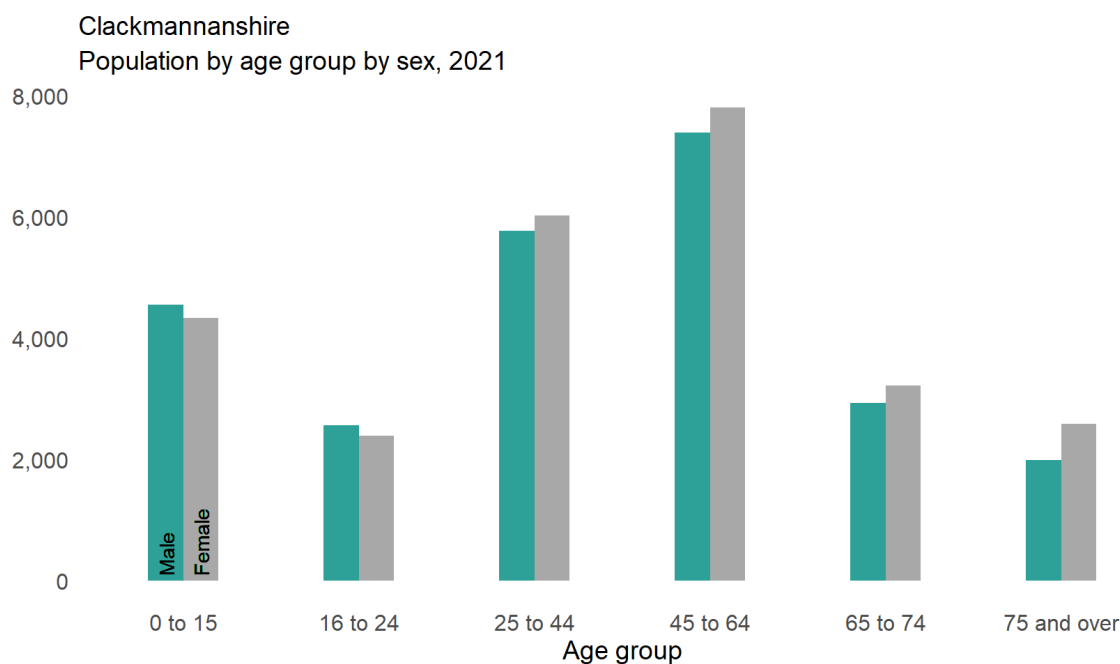
*Scotland's Census 2022 (National Records of Scotland)– last updated 14<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023*



## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

The population of **Clackmannanshire** has grown fairly steadily over the past decade and in 2015 was estimated at around 51, 000 people<sup>23</sup>. Population projections however buck national trends. Whilst the population of Scotland is set to increase by almost 6.5% by 2039 from 2014 levels, the population in Clackmannanshire is projected to fall by around 3% over the same period to around 49,643. The population of all age groups except those aged 65+ is set to fall between now and 2037 which will create particular challenges for Clackmannanshire.<sup>24</sup>

**Figure 3: Clackmannanshire Population by Age Group and Sex 2021**



<sup>23</sup> National Records of Scotland (2022, July 15). *Clackmannanshire Council Area Profile*.

Www.Nrscotland.gov.uk. Retrieved September 21, 2023, from

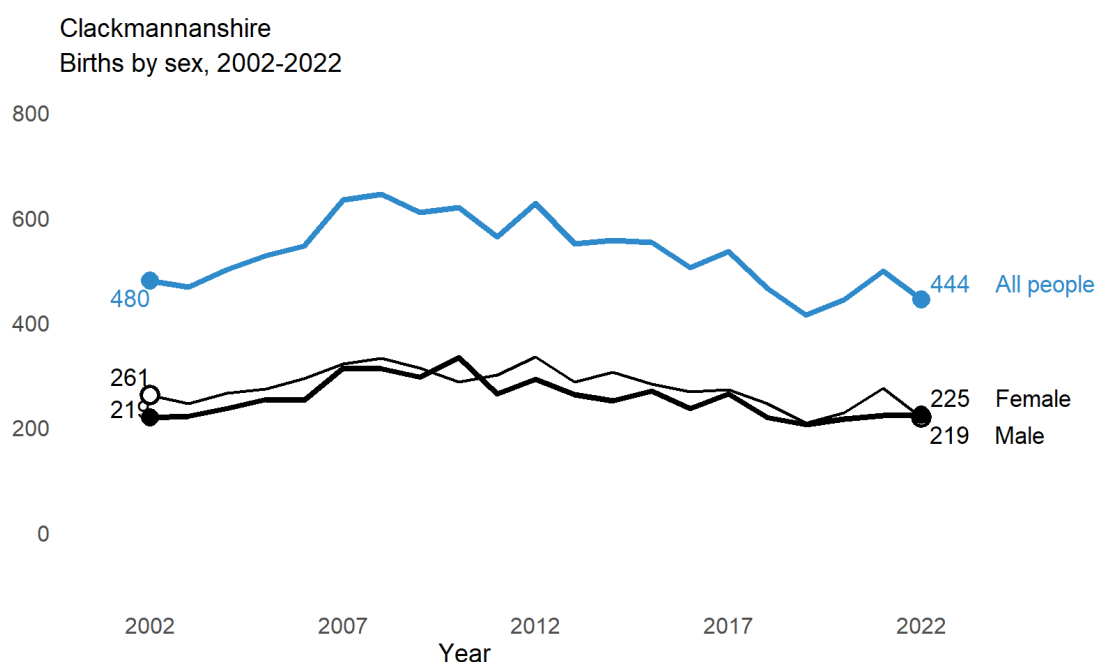
<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/council-area-data-sheets/clackmannanshire-council-profile.html>

<sup>24</sup> National Records of Scotland (30/6/2021) Population Estimates. Retrieved November 27<sup>th</sup> 2023 from Clackmannanshire Council Area Profile (nrscotland.gov.uk)

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

In 2022, there were 444 births in Clackmannanshire. This is a decrease of 10.8% from 498 births in 2021. Of these 444 births, 225 (50.7%) were female and 219 (49.3%) were male.

**Figure 4: Clackmannanshire Births by Sex 2002 to 2022**



*National Records of Scotland (2022, July 15). Clackmannanshire Council Area Profile.*

### 6.2 Use of Childcare

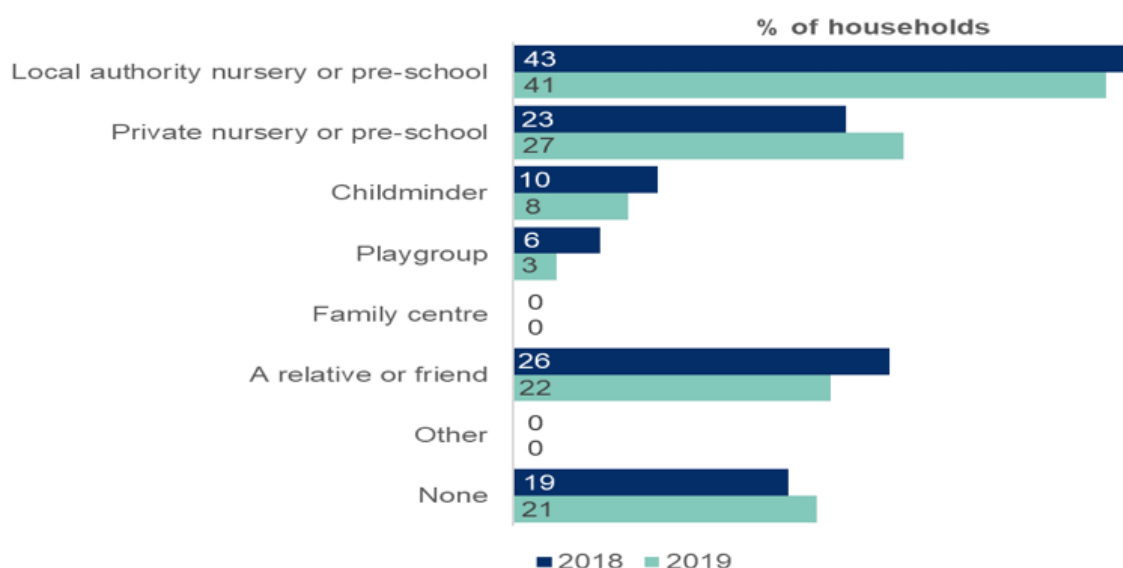
Overall, in 2021, almost three in five (57%) children in England aged 0 to 14 had used some form of childcare (such as nurseries, childminders, breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, grandparents) during their most recent term-time week, equating to 5.8 million children. Formal childcare was used by just over two in five (44%) children, equating to 4.5 million children, this is a fall from 52% in 2018<sup>25</sup>.

The decline in the use of childcare may be due to COVID-19 impacts. For example, 26% of parents of 0-14-year-olds said that they did not use formal childcare because they rarely needed to be away from their child, a marked increase from 11% in 2018. For children aged 0 to 4 years there is also a fall from 76% in 2018 to 68% in 2019 who used childcare during their most recent term-time week.

<sup>25</sup> U.K Government (2022, August 25). *Reporting year 2021 Childcare and early years survey of parents*. GOV.UK. Retrieved September 26, 2023, from <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/childcare-and-early-years-survey-of-parents/2021>

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

Figure 5: Type of childcare used Percentage of Scottish households, 2018 and 2019 data



Source: *The Scottish Household Survey(2019)*<sup>26</sup>

In Scotland, overall, 79% of households with a child aged two to five years used some form of childcare in 2019. The graph above shows that the most common form of childcare used, was a local authority nursery or pre-school. With 27% of households using a private nursery or pre-school, 22% using a relative or friend, 21% using no childcare, and 8% using a childminder. Only 3% used a playgroup.

Local authority nurseries are used by the majority of parents/carers who have children aged three years old (53%) and four or five years old (60%). Only nine per cent of parents/carers of two year olds used this type of childcare. This difference by age is likely to be due to the eligibility criteria for accessing funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). The statutory entitlement to funded early years entitlement begins the term after a child's third birthday. In addition, around 25% of two year olds are entitled to funded childcare.

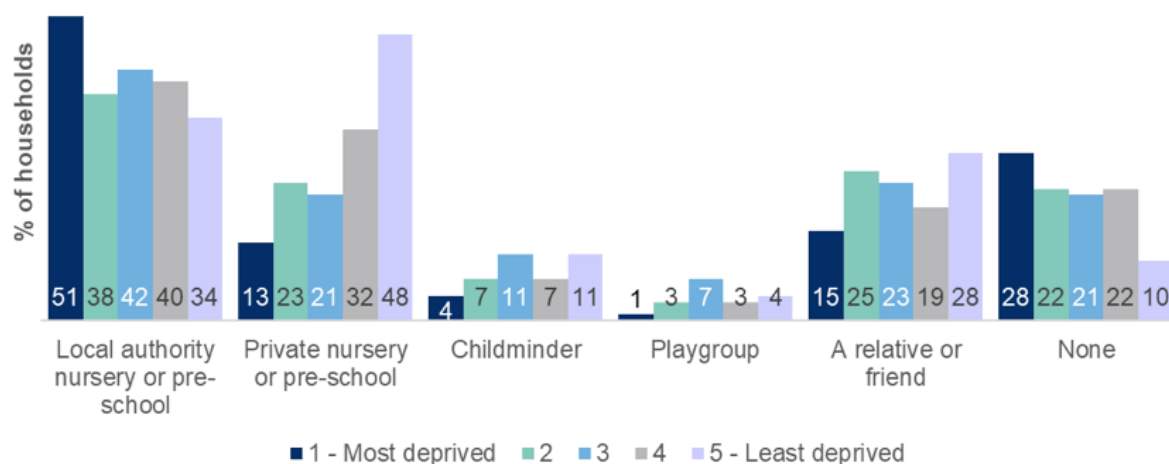
Private nurseries were the type of childcare most commonly used by households with a two year old (33%), followed by a relative or friend (23%). Households with a two year old were more likely to use no childcare (33%) than households with a three year old (12%) or a four or five year old (17%).

<sup>26</sup> Scottish Government (2020, September 15). *Scottish Household Survey: Childcare topic report*. [www.gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-childcare-topic-report/pages/2/). Retrieved September 23, 2023, from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-childcare-topic-report/pages/2/>

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

It should be noted that some parents/carers choose to use one or a mix of two or more of the types of childcare, with some parents not using any kind of childcare.

**Figure 6: Type of childcare used by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 quintiles<sup>27</sup>**



Source: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

The graph above illustrates the type of childcare used according to the level of deprivation in the area in which respondents live (using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD 2020)). Use of local authority nursery provision generally increases as the SIMD ranking of the area declined. Over half (51%) of households in the 20% most deprived areas used local authority nurseries compared with one third (34%) of households in the 20% least deprived areas.

<sup>27</sup> Scottish Government (2020). *Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation*, Retrieved on 27/11/2023 from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

## 7 Supply of Childcare

**Children Registered.** Overall, there were 221,200 children registered with an early learning and childcare setting on 31 December 2021 in Scotland, a slight increase on the previous year. Of the total registered, 196,320 children (88.8% of the total) were registered with daycare services (defined as nurseries, creches, after school care and play groups) and 24,880 (11.2%) were registered with childminding services. Compared to 2020 this represents an increase of 6% in the number of children registered with daycare services ; a 4% increase in the number of out of school care places; and a continued decline in the number of children registered with childminding services.

**Table 3: Number of children registered with early learning and childcare services in Scotland by main type of service on 31 December 2019, 2020, and 2021.<sup>28</sup>**

Care Service Type	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021	% provision Dec 21	Change 20 to 21
Childminding	31,560	25,800	24,880	11.2%	-3.6%
Children & Family Centre	10,430	8,480	8,160	3.7%	-3.8%
Holiday Playscheme	4,690	4,070	3,780	1.7%	-0.71%
Nursery	145,970	132,360	140,420	63.5%	+6%
Out of School Care	53,260	38,810	40,480	18.3%	+4.3%
Playgroup	4,650	3,620	3,480	1.6%	-3.8%
<b>All childcare service types</b>	<b>250,560</b>	<b>213,140</b>	<b>221,200</b>		<b>+3.8%</b>

*Source: Care Inspectorate Early Learning and Childcare Statistics 2021*

Overall, compared to 2020, the number of children registered with early learning and childcare services has increased by 3.8% and nurseries and out of school care services increasing in number of children registered compared to 2020. Other types of early years services reported a decline in the number of children registered compared to 2020, however these decreases were smaller than the decline seen when comparing 2020 to 2019. Overall, there was a 3.6% decrease in the number of children registered with childminding services in 2021. This is a smaller decrease compared to the 18.3% reported in 2020, which was thought to be driven mainly by the covid-19 pandemic. The decline in 2021 is similar (in percentage terms) to that reported in 2019, comparing December 2018 to December 2019 which better reflects a smaller consistent decline.

<sup>28</sup> Care Inspectorate (31/12/2021) Early Learning & Childcare Statistics 2021, Retrieved on 9/11/2023 from [Early Learning and Childcare Statistics 2021 Final 14092022.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/early-learning-and-childcare-statistics-2021-final-14092022.pdf)

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

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The 2- year-old age group saw a slight increase, with 7.7 children registered per 100 population, up from 7.6 per 100 population in 2020. The average number of children registered per childminding service on 31 December 2021 was 6.2 children per service. This is an increase compared to the rate of 6.0 children per service at the same point in 2020, however it is lower than the rate of 6.6 children per service reported in 2019.

Other than nurseries, all other types of day childcare services decreased in number. Over 63% of daycare child services are nurseries, of these the public sector runs 62%, the private sector 30% and the voluntary sector 8%.

There are no Children and Family Centres in Clackmannanshire.

**Childcare Services and Facilities.** In 2022 there were 2,606 Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) across Scotland. Compared to 2020, there are fewer early learning and childcare (ELC) services operating, but despite this, the number of places available has once again increased. There were 3,573 daycare of children services, a small decrease over the year (15 fewer services compared to 2020). However, the average size of daycare of children services has continued to increase every year. The average size of service in 2021 was 50.3 places, compared to 49.1 in 2020 and 47.4 in 2019.<sup>29</sup>

The number of childminders registered decreased by 9.0% to 3,998 compared to 4,395 in 2020. The overall capacity for registered childminders in 2021 decreased 9.4% to 24,866 registered places compared to 27,440 registered places in 2020. In terms of the rate of children registered with childminding services (per 100 population), the largest decline in children registered during 2021 was in the 3- and 4-year-old age groups.

Most services (51.9%) offering funded places, provide these for children aged 3 years and older only. A further 46.8% of services offer funded places for 2-year-olds in addition to children aged 3 or older, which is an increase from 41.6% in 2020. Only 1.3% of services offering funded places do so exclusively for 2-year-olds.

The majority of private and voluntary or not for profit nurseries that provide funded places offer funded places for 2-year-olds (most of these offer places for 2-year-olds in addition to 3 and 4-year-olds). With 45.6% of nurseries offering funded places for 2-year-olds (including those offering places for 2- year-olds and 3 and 4-year-olds), this is a slight increase from 43.5% in 2020.<sup>30</sup>

Section 9.1 sets out the supply of child care in Clackmannanshire.

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<sup>29</sup> The Care Inspectorate, (Sept 2022) Early learning and childcare statistics 2021. Retrieved on 5/11/2023 from Early Learning and Childcare Statistics 2021 Final 14092022.pdf (careinspectorate.com)

<sup>30</sup> Scottish Private Nursery association (May 2022) Review of the Implementation of the 1140 funded hours of Early Learning and Childcare policy. Retrieved on 27/11/2023 from 20220525-scottish-pno-submissions-for-review-of-the-implementation-of-the-1140-funded-hours-of-elc-p.pdf (parliament.scot)

# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

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## 8 Childcare Workforce

### 8.1 Roles in Childcare

There are a number of roles within childcare:

- Playworker
- Support Worker
- Practitioner
- Manager
- Childminder
- Nannies

All staff involved in childcare must be PVG checked by Disclosure Scotland. This includes all adults over 16 living in a childminder's premises. Newly qualified staff with a SVQ level 2 or level 3 early years qualification, awarded after 30 June 2016, must also have, either a full paediatric first aid (PFA) or an emergency PFA certificate within 3 months of starting work. An early learning and childcare service or out of school care setting providing food, including snacks for children is likely to be considered a food business by Environmental Health. Food Safety is regulated in all care settings by the local authority Environmental Health department, and it is good practice for staff to be trained in food hygiene.

**Playworker** - is someone who works organising, planning, and facilitating play activities for young children. As well as enabling play by creating and joining in with fun activities for children, they also help equip children with the skills and resources needed to facilitate their own play. They may also be called play assistants or play carers, depending on the setting. They usually work in after school / wrap around childcare provision. **Qualifications** required are SVQ Play work SCQF level 6/ 7.

**Support Worker** - This is an entry level position and usually work in a nursery, creche or ELC setting. **Qualifications** required are NC in Early Education and Childcare (SCQF Level 6) or SVQ Social Services (Children and or Young People) (SCQF Level 6)

**Practitioner** - It's a Practitioner's responsibility to identify and meet the care, support, and learning needs of the children they support. As part of a team, they make sure that the activities and games provided are educational, fun, and engaging. A practitioner may be tasked to look after a specific room or group of children, this is a more senior role than that of support worker. **Qualifications** required are HNC in Childhood Practice (SCQF Level 7) or SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) (SCQF Level 7) (Part-time)

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

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**Manager or Lead Practitioner-** A Manager (or Lead Practitioner) will be tasked with the development, management, and quality assurance of the childcare setting – including the supervision of staff and the management of resources. **Qualifications** required can be a BA Hons Childhood Practice (4 year course), BA Childhood Practice (3 year course), Graduate Diploma Childhood Practice (1 year course), SQA Professional Development Award Childhood Practice (1 year course), PgDip in Childhood Practice (1 year course), MEd Childhood Practice – usually completed once you’re working at Manager/Lead Practitioner level (1 year course). Graduate Apprenticeships are now available for Early Learning and Childcare

**Childminders** – All childminders need to complete an induction training programme and be registered with the Care Inspectorate. **Qualifications.** If partnered with their Local Authority, they must now be qualified to the National Standard for an ELC practitioner which is Level 3 SVQ in Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF level 7 or be working towards this qualification within the first 5 years of starting to deliver funded hours. All childminders must have completed a paediatric first aid course within the first 6 months of their registration. If a childminder is preparing meals or snacks, then they have to be a registered food business with the local authority, and it is best practice to hold a food hygiene certification.

**Nannies** – Some nannies have no qualifications, though many employers and employment agencies will prefer you to have some training in play work or childcare.

All practitioners are required to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD), as part of the registration with SSSC. During every 5 year registration period the SSSC requires practitioners to complete 60 hours or 10 days of CPD.

### 8.2 [Securing Qualifications and Continuing Professional Development](#)

There are many routes into Early Learning and Childcare. There are no set career paths but rather a range of ways in which you can develop your practice and skills to reflect your career development. There are also opportunities to join Modern Apprenticeship schemes or to train on the job. So, for example, you could get a job in Early Learning and Childcare and then study with a training provider for a part of your week.



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**Table 4: Routes to Qualifications**

Course	Required for	Delivered by	Comment
SVQ Play work SCQF level 6/ 7	Playworker	Employer or a training provider	Recommended, not required to work in play settings
HNC in Childhood Practice SCQF 7	Practitioners (including childminders in receipt of funded hours)	Colleges including Forth Valley College	Including work placement
SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People) (SCQF Level 7)	Practitioner (including childminders in receipt of funded hours)	Employers and training providers	Delivered as an in work apprenticeship with an external training provider
BA Hons Childhood Practice (4 year course), BA Childhood Practice (3 year course), Graduate Diploma Childhood Practice (1 year course), SQA Professional Development Award Childhood Practice (1 year course),	Manager	Universities and Colleges	Typically secured prior to appointment
MEd Childhood Practice (1 year full time or 24/36 months part time)	Manager	University	Typically secured when in post
Childminder: Induction programme	Childminders	SCMA or other training provider	Applicable for all childminders

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## 9 Childcare in Clackmannanshire

### 9.1 Supply of Childcare

There are currently 68 childcare providers offering 2,003 child care places in Clackmannanshire.

**Table 5: Number of childcare facilities in Clackmannanshire 2023**

Type of childcare provider	Number	Current Roll/ Max Capacity
Early Learning & Childcare Centre (ELC)	14	924
Private Nurseries*	5	366
Childminders registered with Care Inspectorate	21	126
After School Clubs*	4	108
After School Care*	3	124
Breakfast Clubs	21	355
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>2,003</b>
<b>Of which Day Care Services</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1,416</b>

(\*) Kidzworld is a nursery, after school club and after school care

Across Scotland 60% of day care facilities are run by the public sector (74% in Clacks)

#### Public Nurseries

There are 14 Local Authority run Early Learning & Childcare Centres in Clackmannanshire with a maximum number of spaces of 924. These are:

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

**Table 6: ELC Operating times, maximum capacity & booking options**

Name of ELC	Opening days	Weekly operating hours	Open in the holidays	Max spaces	Ways to book places
Menstrie	Mon - Fri	50	Yes	100	Part time weekly & for wrap around care
Park	Mon - Fri	50	Yes	100	Full & part time weekly
Sauchie	Mon - Fri	48	Yes	100	Full & part time weekly
Tulach	Mon - Fri	40	Yes	100	Full & part time weekly & wrap around care
Strathdevon	Mon - Fri	30	No	39	Full & part time weekly
Redwell	Mon - Fri	30	No	80	Full & part time weekly
Tillicoultry	Mon - Fri	30	No	80	Full & part time weekly
Coalsnaughton	Mon - Fri	30	No	29	Full & part time weekly
Craigbank	Mon - Fri	30	No	48	Full & part time weekly
Sunnyside	Mon - Fri	30	No	55	Full & part time weekly
Clackmannan	Mon - Fri	30	No	94	Full & part time weekly
Banchory	Mon - Fri	30	No	24	Full & part time weekly
St Serfs	Mon - Fri	30	No	75	Full & part time weekly & hourly
Alva	Mon - Fri	30	No	74	Full & part time weekly
<b>Total</b>				<b>998</b>	

All of the ELCs that completed the survey confirmed that they offer spaces for children with additional support needs and there were no reported restrictions for this availability. All ELCs provide outdoor play areas, and all own their own resources. Most confirmed that as well as the nursery space, they also utilise spaces within the local primary school, parks, libraries, and other outdoor areas in the local community.

### Private Nurseries

There are 5 private nurseries in Clackmannanshire with a maximum capacity of 366. these are:

**Table 7: Private Nurseries operating times, maximum capacity & booking options**

Nursery	Opening Hours	Average Weekly Operating Hours	Max Capacity
Flying Start	8am – 6pm	50	60
Little Stars	8am – 6pm	70	98
Kidzworld	7.30am – 6pm	70	100
Dollar Nursery	7.30am – 6pm	43	56
Glenview Cottage	8.00 – 6pm	70	52
<b>Total</b>		<b>303</b>	<b>366</b>

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

All of these private nurseries operate Monday – Friday and also open during school holidays. Parents can book places full time weekly, or part time weekly and part time can also be booked in half day sessions. Two of the nurseries allow parents to just book wrap around care if required. Apart from two providers most nurseries do not allow parents to book per hour and do not allow last minute bookings.

Most respondents did not confirm a particularly popular time of day for parents to book, however a couple mentioned that the half day sessions were popular, and they confirmed that parents were usually or most of the time able to get their preferred hours. All of the nurseries offer outdoor spaces for children to play and most access other spaces such as soft play, local library, park, and local farm. All of the nurseries provide separate areas for children depending on age, with the number of rooms varying depending on the size of the provider.

When asked if these nurseries provide spaces for children with additional support needs (ASN) they all confirmed that they do and any restrictions on offering a space would depend on the individual's needs.

All of the nurseries confirmed that they are registered with the Care Inspectorate and all but one with the Scottish Social Services Council. Two of the nurseries were also members of the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) and one a member of Early Years Scotland.

### After School Clubs and Care

There are 4 after school clubs in Clacks that offer various activities, these are:

**Table 8: After School Clubs operating times, max capacity & booking options**

Name of Provider	Days of Operation	Weekly operating hours	Open during School holidays	Max Spaces	How can parents book
Community House	Mon – Friday	37	Yes	20	Part time weekly
Hawkhill Community Centre	Mon - Friday	10	Yes	16	Sessional wrap around care
Play Alloa	7 Days a week	20	Occasionally	32	One off sessions
Connect Alloa	Wed, Thurs & Fridays	15	Yes	40	Full & part time weekly, hourly, one off sessions & last minute bookings
Kidzworl	Mon - Friday	15	Yes	126	Sessional wrap around care
<b>Total</b>				<b>234</b>	

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

There are 4 after school childcare settings in Clacks these are:

**Table 9: After School Care operating times, max capacity & booking options**

Name of Provider	Days of Operation	Weekly operating hours	Open during School holidays	Max Spaces	How can parents book
Kidzone	Mon - Friday	15	No	60	Hourly
Alva PlayPals	Mon - Friday	19	Yes	40	Hourly or sessional
Menstrie	Mon - Thursday	12	Yes	24	Hourly or sessional
Dollar Nursery	Mon – Friday	15	Yes	10	Hourly or sessional
<b>Total</b>				<b>124</b>	

### Breakfast Clubs

Breakfast Clubs are currently available in all primary schools within Clackmannanshire, and this is free of charge for children that register for free school meals (based on income) and £1.40 for any children not applicable for this. This service begins at 8.30am. There are pre-school breakfast sessions available at Dollar Nursery which start at 7.30am, Alva Play Pals starting at 8.00am and Kidzworld from 7.30am.

### Childminders

There are currently 21 active childminders working across Clackmannanshire that provide childcare, and their hours and availability vary. This figure is an approximation as there are childminders that may be practicing without being registered with the Care Inspectorate and this figure does not account for new childminders still undergoing training and PVG checks. Many of these childminders are based in Alloa and Tullibody which are the most densely populated areas within Clackmannanshire. There are a number of villages that currently do not have registered childminders operating.

The capacity of childminders is on average up to 6 per childminder (assuming that there are no other children in the house, and all are over 2). This provides an approximate capacity of up to 126 spaces depending on the age of the children and the number of children in the childminders household. Out of the 21 childminders 20 responded to the Childcare Provider survey, with all but 2 of them providing childcare during the school holidays as well as term time. The hours worked each week varied from 24 – 60 hrs, with all except 1 operating Monday – Fridays. Only 7 out of the 20 respondents, confirmed that they are paying themselves the living wage and those that are, work between 45 – 50 hrs to achieve this.

# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

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## Other Provision

**Play Alloa** is a charitable organisation that specifically offers a range of creative play and social activities for *children and adults with disabilities and additional support needs*. This includes the provision of user services such as play sessions, social groups, adult life skills workshops, playschemes, volunteer befriending, parent information sessions and respite care and support opportunities.

The children's sessions for service users aged 5+ meets at the Play Alloa Base on Saturday mornings during term-time (and additional sessions through holidays where funding permits).

**Family Community Centres** in Clacks provide many useful services to local families, by offering discounted food shops, workshops for children and adults, playgroups, support groups, events, after school childcare etc. Some of these centres are run by the Local Authority such as:

- Bowmar Community Centre – Alloa
- Ben Cleuch Centre – Tillicoultry

There are a range of other third sector organisations who offer non childcare support to parents and families in Clacks. These are not included here.

## 9.2 Price of Childcare

### 9.2.1 Charges

Below is a table with the charges on average for each type of childcare service.

The public sector ELC's confirmed that they do not have any additional charges, however Clackmannan ELC confirmed that they do charge between £5 - £8 for special outings. They did comment that "we haven't been able to go on a big trip for a few years due to the cost especially of the buses"

Breakfast clubs were only used by 27% of parents. These are available in all primary schools and three private providers also offer breakfast clubs, that can be accessed earlier than the Local Authority run services, with Dollar Nursery charging £15.75 from 7.30 – 9am, Kidzworld £11.50 from 7 – 9am and Alva Play Pals £5 from 8 – 9am.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

**Table 10: Average charges for each type of childcare service**

Type of Childcare Service	Charges
Private Nurseries	Range from £24.25 - £45.00 for half day
ELC	Provide funded childcare, parents can potentially top up hrs and cost varies from £5.40 - £5.90 per hr
Childminders	Ranges from £4.00 - £6.00 per hr
Breakfast Clubs	Primary schools charge 50p per day, Private providers charge between £5 - £15.75 per session
After school care	Ranges from £12.60 up to £21.25 depending on location
After school club	These are all funded places except for Play Alloo who charge £6.00 per hr

From CERTs Parent, Carer and Guardian Childcare Survey, parents were asked to rate the affordability of their childcare provider with results shown in the diagrams below. When parents were asked what improvements they would like to see with childcare provision in their area, there were a number of comments that were related to cost of childcare.

Comments such as “We desperately need an affordable wrap around service in Dollar. There is a very limited offering at Strathdevon Primary and Dollar Nursery is expensive and not really fit for purpose”, “ Give free childcare to all ages, not able to work full time as can’t afford nursery”, “ Less expensive makes it harder to work as use more than half my wage for childcare cost”, “ More affordable, the fees are crippling. My child won’t get any free hours until she is 3yrs and 4 months old. I currently pay £700 per month for 3 days”. Affordability came up as a factor in 42% of all comments made in the survey, with a dissatisfaction at how expensive childcare costs are.

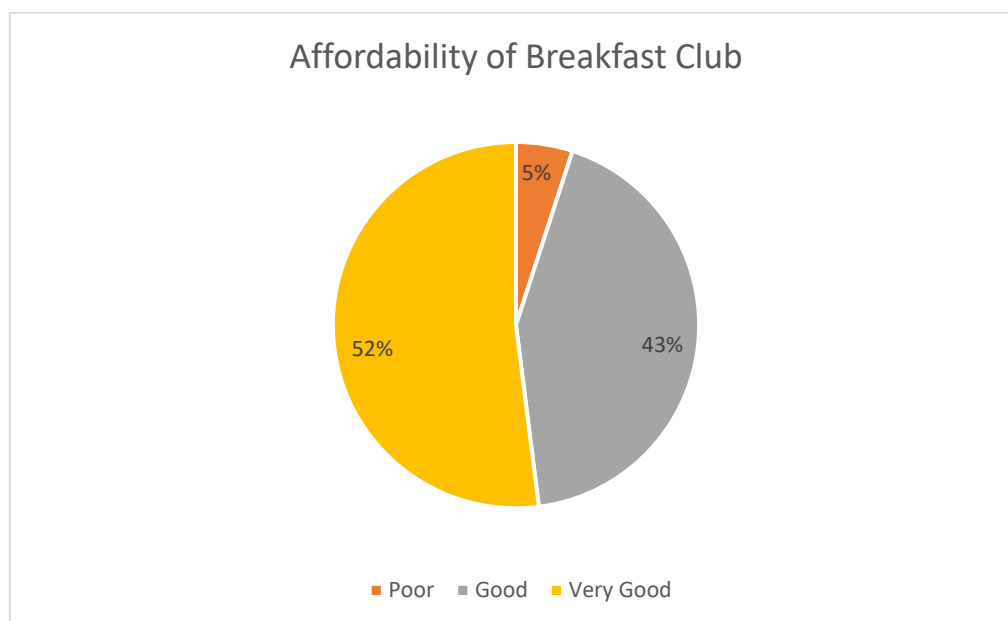
The Scottish government provides “Funded hours” – see section on Childcare funding. This is the main source of public funds to meet childcare costs. When asked if parents are currently using their funded hours entitlement for childcare provision 55% confirmed yes with 45% no, out of 91 responses. When asked which type of service they use funded hours with, nursery, childminder, or both, 96% confirmed nursery with 4% using it for both nursery and childminder.

It is interesting to note that although 17% of parents surveyed use childminders hardly any of these are using funded hours to pay for this provision.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

### 9.2.2 View of Affordability

The majority of parents regarded the breakfast club as very good or good in affordability (95%). This is largely due to the subsidised approach by Clackmannanshire Council in all primary schools costing 50p per day or free to eligible children.

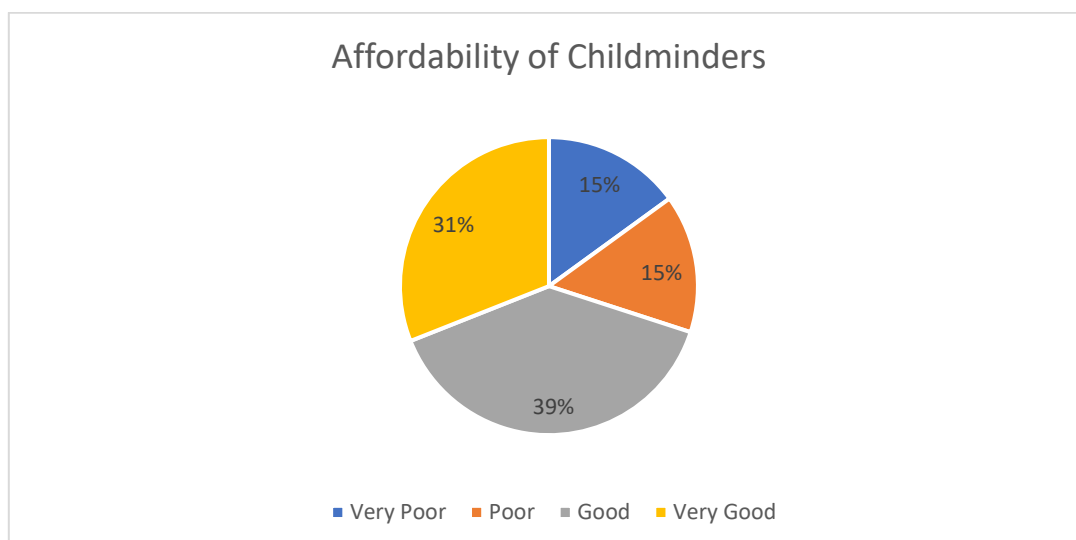


*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Based on 211 responses*

As for Childminders, a small percentage (17%) of parents surveyed used them and were rated mainly very good - good for affordability with 70%, however there were 30% of parents rating between poor – very poor. This was quite a surprising outcome as childminders usually charge an average rate of £4 - £6 per hour, which is less expensive on average than the hourly costs of a private nursery (£5 - £9 per hour) and breakfast/after school care at (£4.50 - £9.50 per hour). Childminders also confirmed on the provider survey that they do not have any additional charges except occasionally for outings where the cost would normally be agreed with the parents.

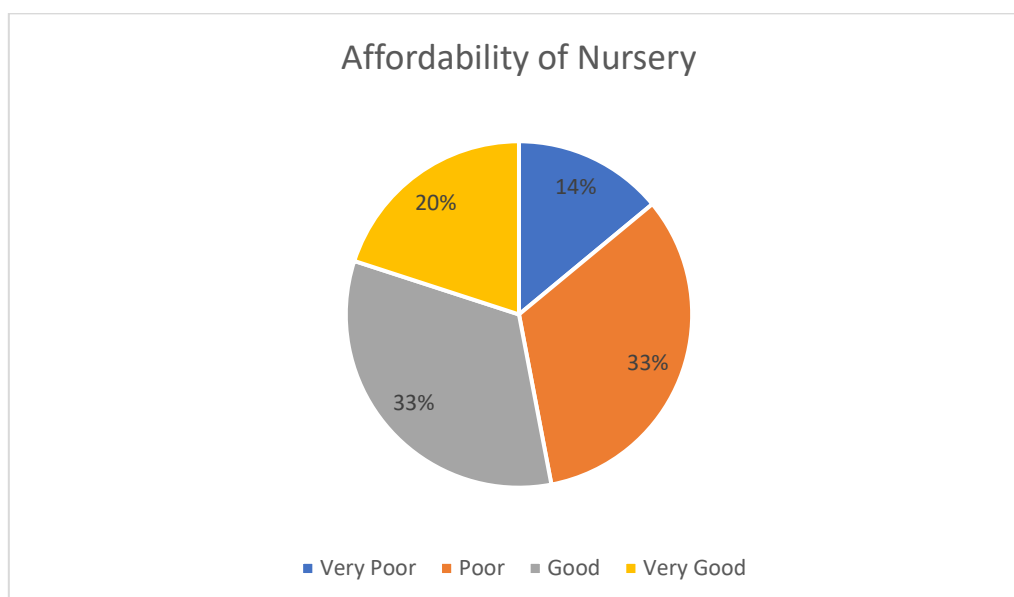


## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan



Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 76 responses (only those who used childminders)

Nursery was the most used type of childcare service (77%) with the rating on affordability split between good - very good (53%) and poor - very poor (47%) being fairly equal. This split could be explained by the difference in pricing charged by the different providers, for example Glenview Nursery charge £24.25 for half a day session whereas Dollar Nursery charge £45.50 for half a day showing that there is a significant difference in cost and therefore affordability depending on location. Again, affordability could also depend on how often the service was being used balanced with income of parents. Out of the 5 private nurseries 3 of them have an additional charge for food, this charge ranges from £2.75 - £3.75 per day.

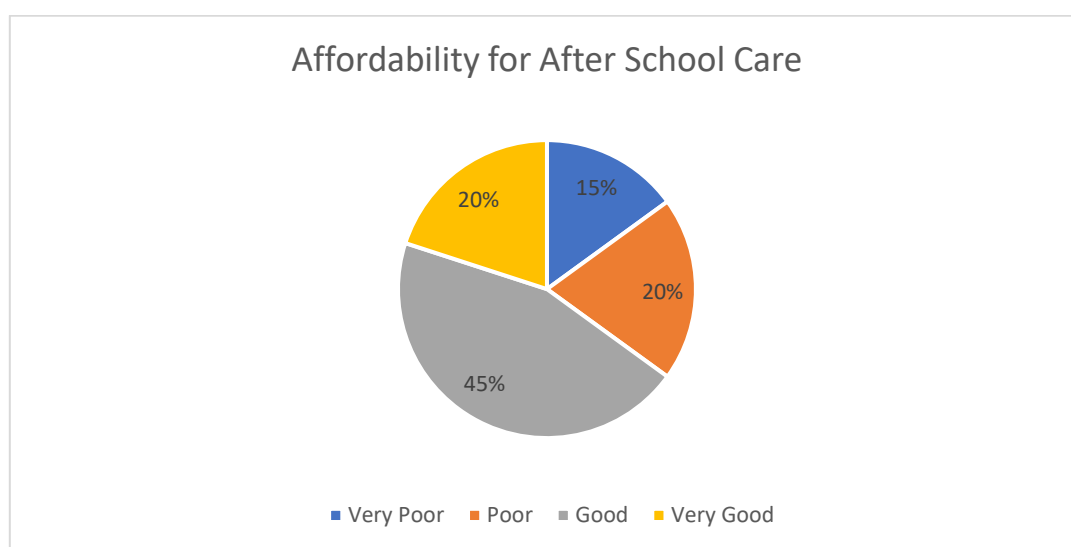


Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 82 responses

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

After school care is a service used by only 27% of parents surveyed, with 65% rating affordability as good -very good for affordability and 35% poor – very poor. There is quite a difference in cost between the lowest priced provider Kidzone which is located within Redwell Primary School at £12.60 for 3 - 6pm compared to Dollar Nursery which charges £21.25 for 3 – 6pm.

Alva Play pals and Kidzworld charge similar prices, with Alva £16 from 3-6 pm and Kidzworld £16.50.



*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 73 responses*

### 9.2.3 Use of Scottish Government Funded Places

The private nurseries that responded to the provider survey were asked if they offer Scottish Government funded childcare places and how many hours per week and proportion of children used them, the results are shown below. All of the providers confirmed that parents only use their funded hours with the nursery as opposed to sharing the allocation with another type of childcare service.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

**Table 11: Private nurseries proportion of usage of government funded childcare hours**

Name of Nursery	How many hours per week paid by funded hours	What proportion of children use funded hours on a weekly basis
Kidzworld	50	50%
Glenview	100	30%
Flying Start	23	50%
Little Stars	100	35%
Dollar Nursey	100	45%

*Source: CERT Childcare Provider Survey Dec 2023*

The 13 ELCs that responded to the survey all offer funded childcare places and the table below shows how these hours are used.

**Table 12: ELC's proportion of usage of government funded childcare hours**

Name of ELC	How many hrs per week used with funded childcare	Proportion of children using funded hours	How do parents use these hours	What proportion of parents top up with paid hours
Strathdevon	100	100%	Entirely	0%
Sauchie	25	100%	Entirely	1 – 25%
Redwell	32	100%	Use some hours elsewhere	0%
Tillicoultry	100	100%	Entirely	0%
Tullach	100	100%	Entirely	1 – 25%
Park	95	100%	Use some hours elsewhere	1 – 25%
Coalsnaughton	30	100%	Entirely	0%
Menstrie	100	100%	Entirely	1 – 25%
Craigbank	30	93%	Use some hours elsewhere	0%
Sunnyside	100	100%	Entirely	0%
Clackmannan	30	99%	Entirely	0%
Banchory	100	100%	Entirely	0%
St Serfs	100	100%	Entirely	0%

*Source: CERT Childcare Provider Survey Dec 2023*

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

ELC provision is dominated by Scottish Government Funded Places, with almost all children using funded hours (other than Craigbank and Clackmannan) and only 4 nurseries having any “top up” paid provision from parents to extend their hours.

Out of the 20 childminders that responded to the provider survey 5 were not partnered with the Local Authority and therefore did not offer the funded childcare hours. Out of the 15 partnered childminders 10 confirmed that they currently have children in their care using funded hours and the results of this are shown in the table below. None of the parents used them exclusively for their funded hours, indicating that they are operating as a secondary or supplementary provider of these hours.

**Table 13: Partnered Childminders proportion of usage of government funded hours**

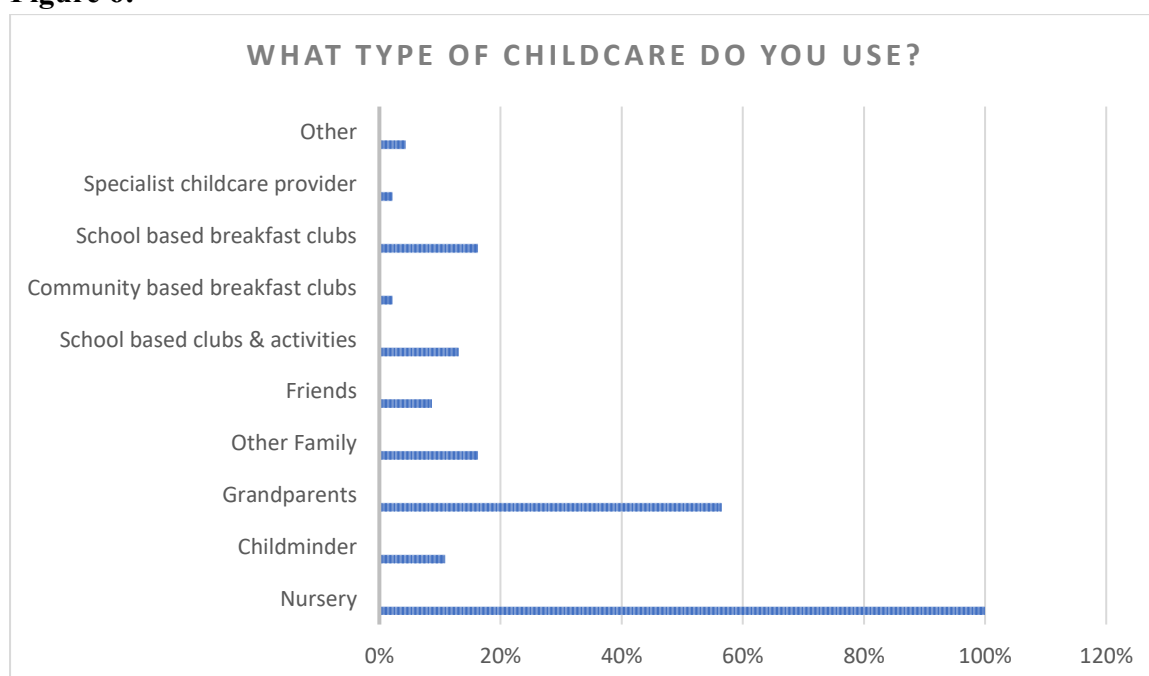
Name of Childminder	How many hours per week are used with funded childcare	Number of children using funded hours	How do parents use these hours	What proportion of parents top up with paid hours
Ishbel Shapcott Childminding	20	1	Use some hours elsewhere	1 – 25%
Lynn Black	12	1	Use some hours elsewhere	None
Alva Childminding Service	32	1	Use some hours elsewhere	None
Lisa Craig Childminder	15	2	Use some hours elsewhere	None
Christine McKinsley Childminding Services	12	6	Use some hours elsewhere	65%
Christine Scobie	21	5	Use some hours elsewhere	51 – 75%
M.A.M Childminding Services	41	6	Use some hours elsewhere	26 – 50%
Lynn Black	12	10	Use some hours elsewhere	1 – 25%
Wee Bairns Childminding	12	1	Use some hours elsewhere	76 – 100%
Jane's Childcare	10	1	Use some hours elsewhere	None

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

### 9.3 Demand for Childcare

From the 212 people that took part in the Parent, guardian, and carers survey, 55% of them are currently utilising childcare. As shown in the graph below the most commonly used type of childcare provision is nursery, followed by grandparents. For the parents that selected other this was mainly for community based after school clubs. The 45% of parents that were not currently utilising childcare were asked why this was and the two reasons given were that they were using maternity leave and or grandparents as childcare providers. When asked if they were to use a childcare service which would suit them best, they chose, nursery, school based clubs & activities and school based breakfast clubs.

**Figure 6:**

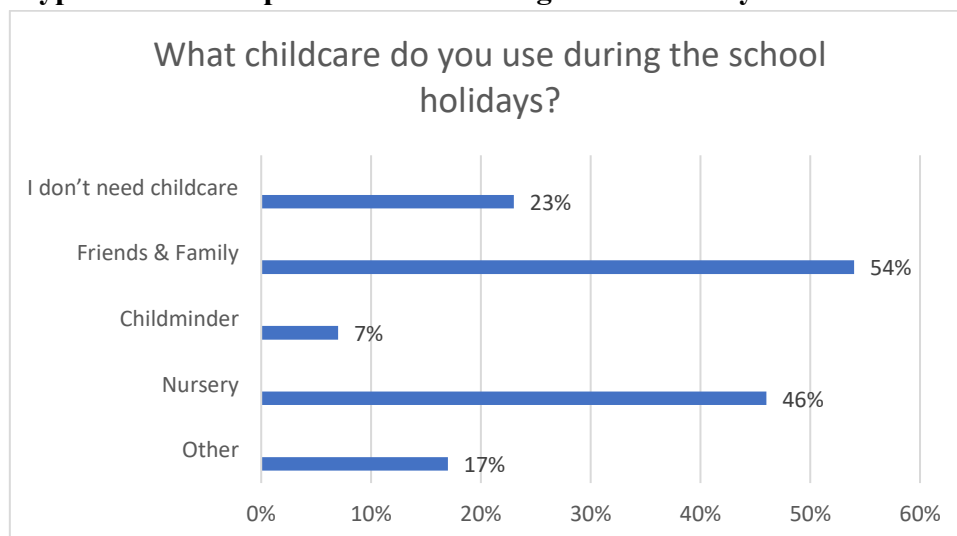


*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 212 responses*

Parents were asked what childcare they use during the school holidays, the majority (54%) relied on friends and family, closely followed by nursery with (46%). For the Other category parents commented that they use holiday clubs / summer camps along with taking time off work in order to take care of their children.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

**Figure 7: Type of childcare provider used during school holidays**



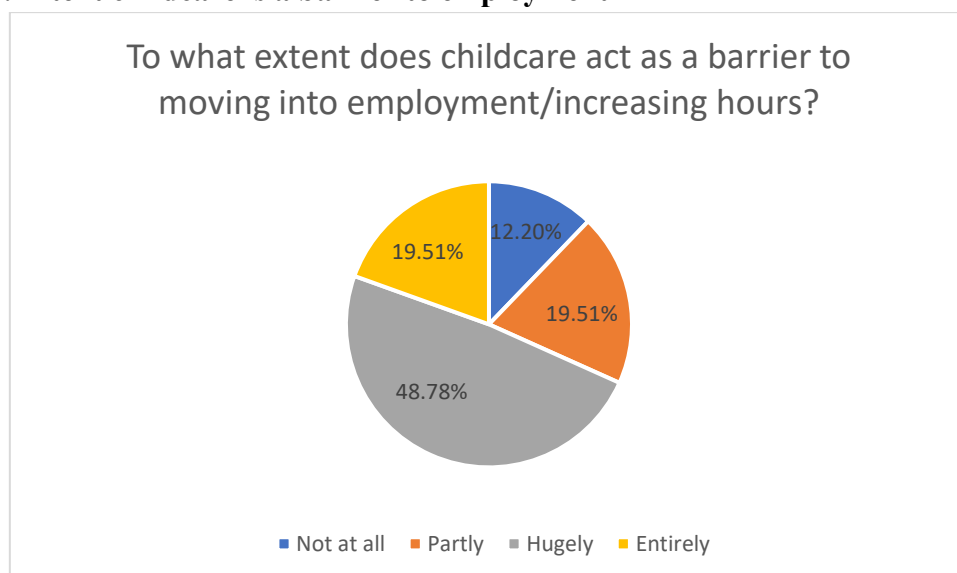
Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 132 responses

### Childcare as a barrier to employment

When asked if parents wanted to work longer hours, of the 41 people who responded to that question, 23 (56%) of them confirmed that they would.

With 19% reporting that childcare was the entire barrier they faced in moving into employment or increasing hours and a further 49% reported that this acted as a huge barrier. Only 12% reported that childcare did not act as a barrier.

**Figure 8: Extent childcare is a barrier to employment**



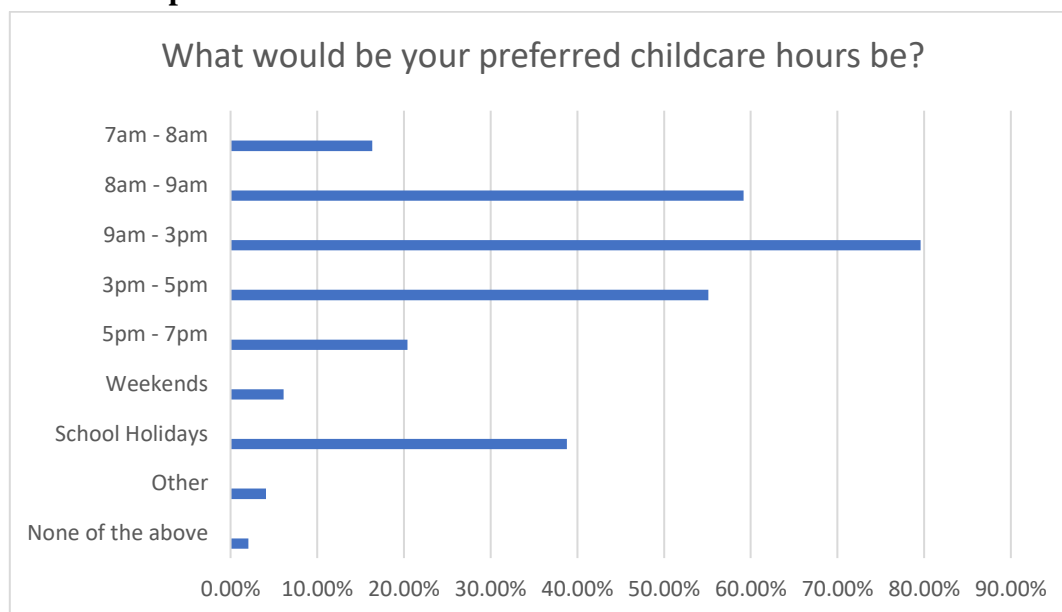
Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 41 responses

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

During school holidays 54% of parents use friends and family to provide childcare and 46% using nursery and 7% using a childminder. Out of the 90 responses, 21 (23%) confirmed that they did not need childcare, and the remaining responses were a mixture of using holiday clubs or taking time off work in order to take care of children themselves.

When parents were asked what their preferred childcare hours would be, the most popular times were from 9am – 3pm with (79%), from 8am – 9am (59%) and 3pm – 5pm (55%) see graph below:

**Figure 9 Parents preferred childcare hours**



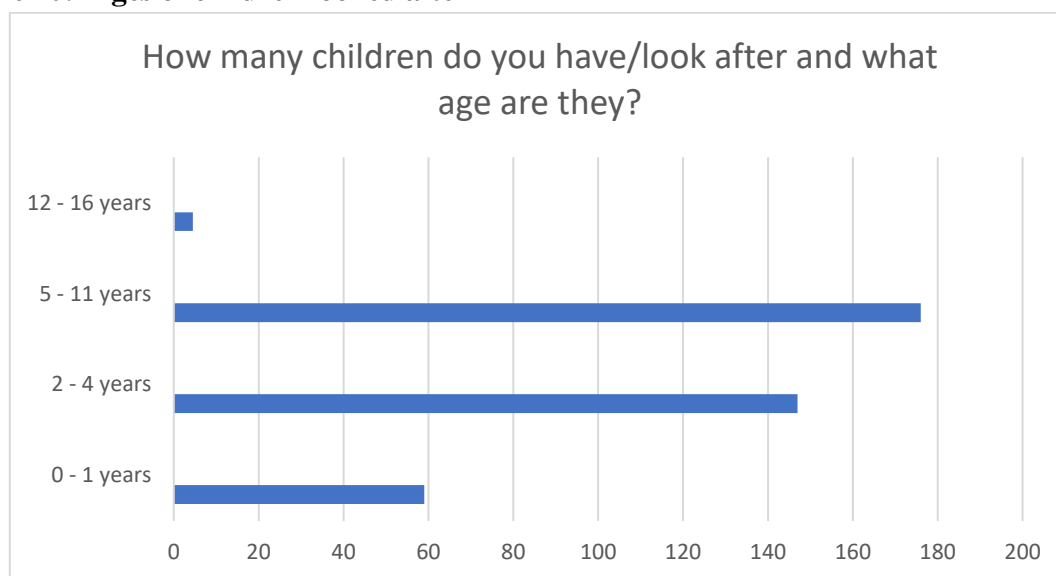
*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 138 responses*

The parents that selected other above, stated that they would like out of school childcare funding, for nursery to be paid for whilst working and that 6pm closing times were no good for commuters coming from Glasgow or Edinburgh.

Of the 211 parents that were asked how many children they have or look after and their ages, the responses for this are shown in the graph below.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

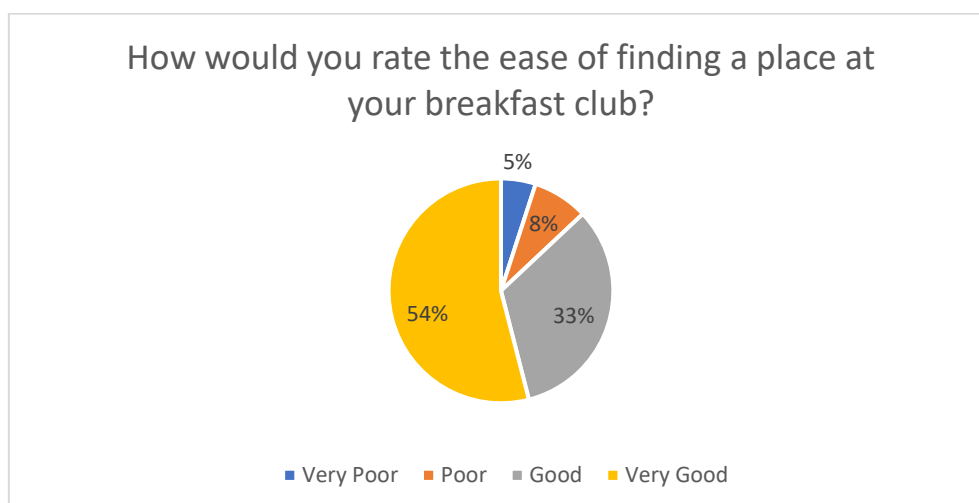
**Figure 10: Ages of children looked after**



*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 164 responses*

The Parent, Carer and Guardian Survey also asked how would you rate the ease of finding a place at your childcare provider? The responses for this are shown in the diagram below. For breakfast clubs most parents (87%) rated good – very good for ease of finding a place which is unsurprising given that all primary schools in Clackmannanshire offer this service as well as three private providers and this would also be a service that many childminders also offer.

**Figure 11: Ease of finding breakfast club place**



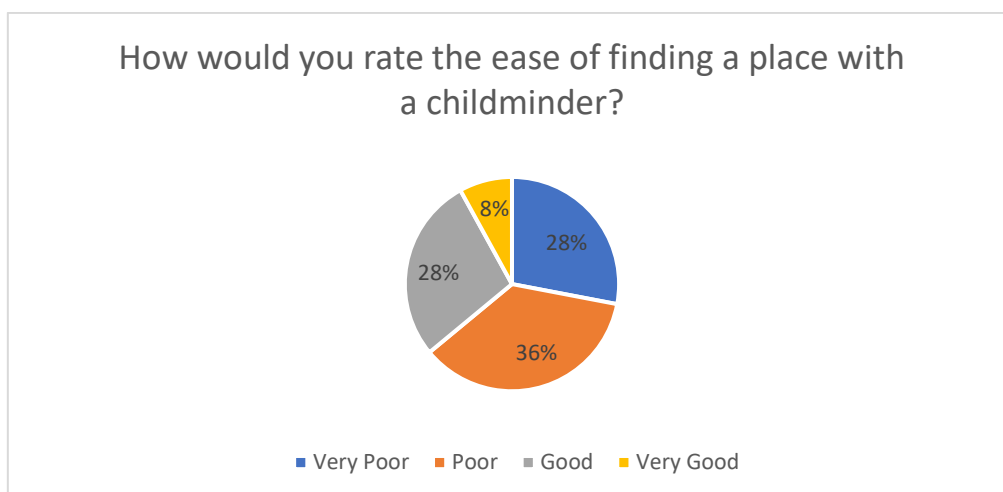
*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 79 responses*



## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

When finding childminder places the majority of parents (64%) rated poor – very poor for ease of finding available places. This is unsurprising given the decline in childminders working in Clackmannanshire and with those that are available being mainly based within higher population areas only such as Alloa, Tullibody and Alva.

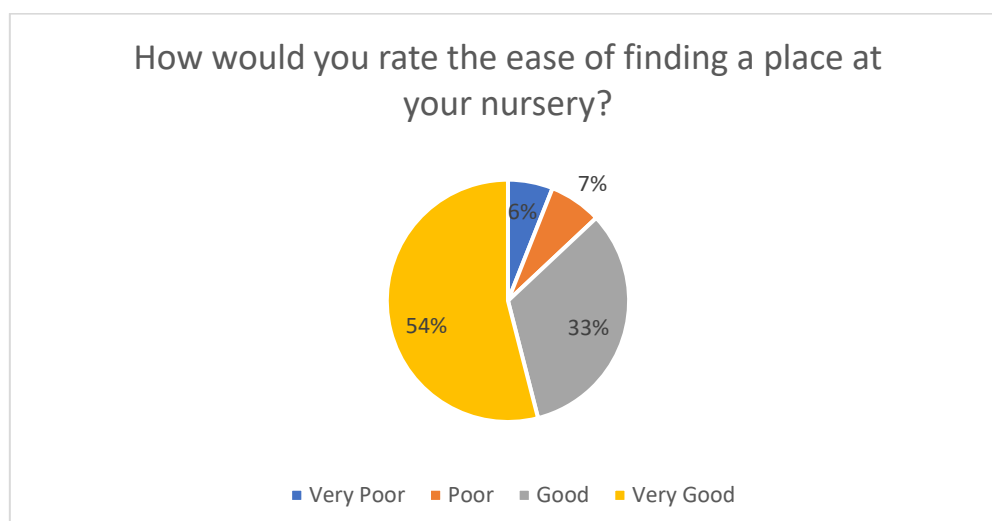
**Figure 12: Ease of finding a childminder place**



*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 74 responses*

For nursery most parents responded with a rating of good – very good (88%) for ease of finding places, with a minority of (13%) rating poor - very poor.

**Figure 13: Ease of finding a nursery place**

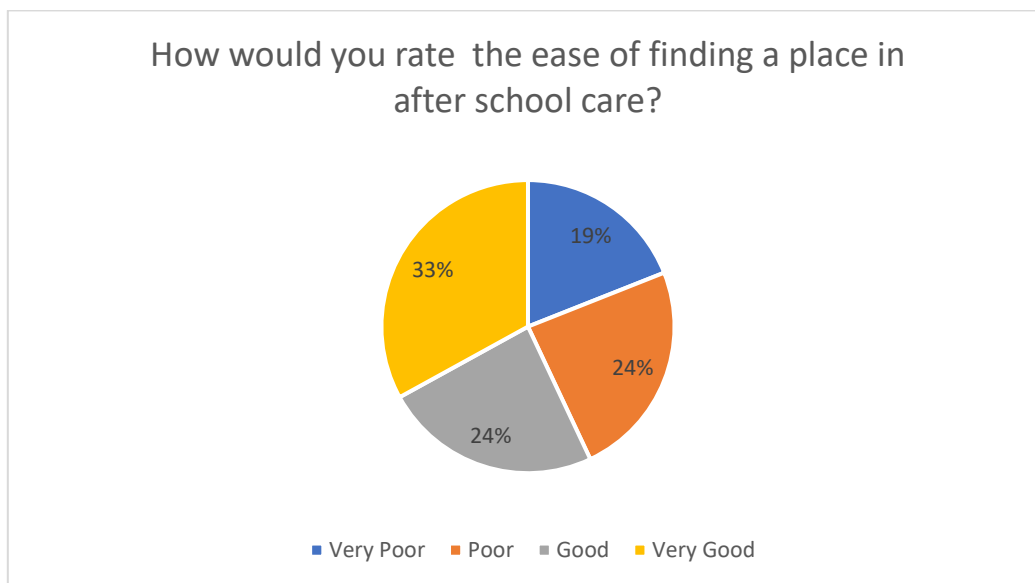


*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 84 responses*

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

When parents rated ease of finding places available at an after school service this was fairly evenly split with (43%) rating poor – very poor and (57%) good – very good.

**Figure 14: Ease of finding an after school care place**



*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 74 responses*

From the childcare provider survey, private nurseries, and public sector ELCs were asked how many spaces they currently had available for the various age groups and if they have a waiting list for spaces, responses are shown below.

This shows that 169 children are on waiting lists for care during the day – across ELCs, private nurseries and childminders. This represents 10% of total capacity.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

Table 14: Spaces and Waiting Lists per Day Care Facility

Name of Facility	Type of facility	Spaces					Waiting List				
		Up to 1	2 to 3 years	4 to 5 years	6 to 11 years	Total Spaces	Up to 1	2 to 3 years	4 to 5 years	6 to 11 years	Total Waiting List
Kidzworld	Private Nursery	8	8	20	40	76	0	0	0	0	0
Glenview	Private Nursery	0	0	0	0	0	20	25	0	0	45
Flying Start	Private Nursery	0	0	10	0	10	30	10	0	0	40
Little Stars	Private Nursery	10	0	21	0	31	3	8	0	0	11
Dollar Nursery	Private Nursery	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	4	5	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>Private Nursery</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>115</b>
Strathdevon	Public Nursery/ELC	0	10	17	0	27	0	0	0	0	0
Sauchie	Public Nursery/ELC	0	25	87	0	112	0	0	0	0	0
Redwell	Public Nursery/ELC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	8
Tillicoultry	Public Nursery/ELC	0	10	70	0	80	0	0	0	0	0
Tullach	Public Nursery/ELC	10	20	120	0	150	0	0	0	0	0
Park	Public Nursery/ELC	0	20	64	0	84	0	8	0	0	8
Coalsnaughton	Public Nursery/ELC	0	5	24	0	29	0	8	0	0	8
Menstrie	Public Nursery/ELC	0	0	34	0	34	0	0	0	0	0
Craigbank	Public Nursery/ELC	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Sunnyside	Public Nursery/ELC	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2
Clackmannan	Public Nursery/ELC	0	1	7	0	8	0	0	0	0	0
Banchory	Public Nursery/ELC	0	0	24	0	24	0	0	0	0	0
St Serf's	Public Nursery/ELC	0	33	18	0	51	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>Public Nursery/ELC</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Childminders overall</b>	<b>Childminders</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>			<b>27</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>169</b>

Source: CERT Childcare Provider Survey Dec 2023 N.B Waitlist places may be for just one session or day per week

## **Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan**

With the exception of Dollar Nursery all of the waiting lists for private nursery places are for either up to 1 years or for between 2 – 3 years. This is likely to be due to the fact that parents cannot access funded childcare until after the child's third birthday unless the child, at age 2, qualifies according to certain benefits criteria. As ELC settings are dominated by providing funded childcare only with parents having the option to top up hours, this means that the provision for this age group is mainly supplied by the private nurseries.

All of the private nurseries confirmed that they offer spaces for children with additional support needs(ASN) and when asked if they had any restrictions on what they could offer they all confirmed no, with a couple commenting that this would also depend on the individual needs of the child.

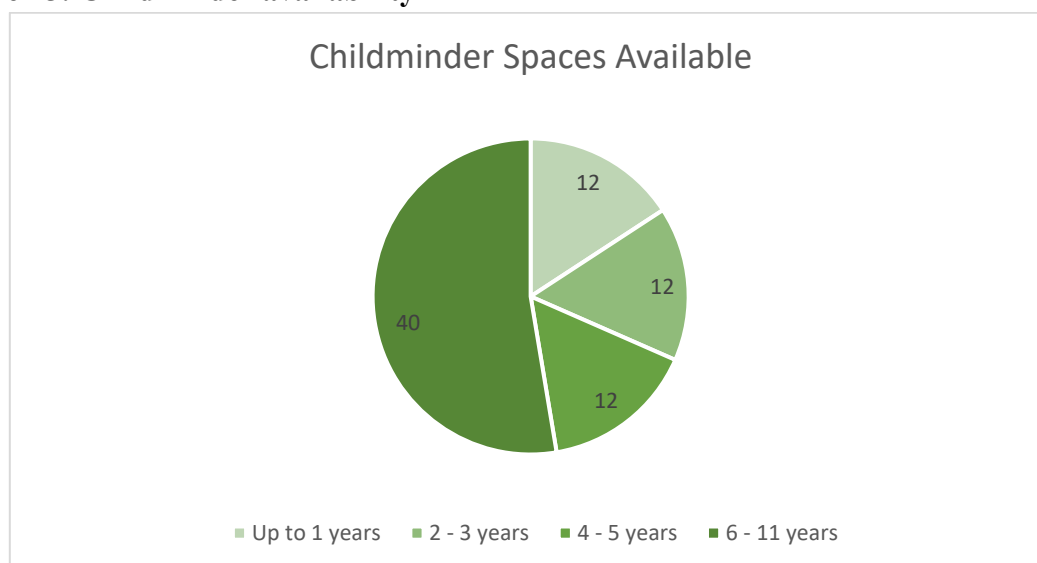
From the childminders survey responses 6 out of 20 confirmed that the most popular times that parents book spaces is for half day sessions, this could be morning – lunch, lunch – afternoon or afternoon – early evening. The remaining childminders responded that there was no particularly popular time of day. The majority of childminders confirmed that parents are able to book the spaces they want most of the time with only 2 childminders responding that this is only sometimes the case or not often.

The average number of places a childminder in Clacks can offer at any one time is 6, however this can vary as some childminders employ assistants therefore allowing an increase in their capacity and some can accept less than 6 if they have to account for their own children too.

Out of the 20 respondents, 11 confirmed that they do not offer spaces to children with ASN and those that do offer this explained that they are restricted to being able to offer 1 space. This is likely due to the extra support required for caring for children with ASN which can be demanding of time and resources. The diagrams below shows the current spaces each childminder has available and also if they have any current waiting lists for spaces.

# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

**Figure 15: Childminder availability**



**Figure 16: Childminder waitlist**



Below are the responses from the After School Club providers survey, which shows that the only provider that currently has a waitlist is Play Alloa which specialises in care for children with additional support needs. This could indicate that there is not enough support in Clacks which specialises in care for children with ASN.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

**Table 15: After School Clubs/Care spaces available & waitlist**

Name of Provider	Spaces currently available	Waitlist
Community House	8 x 6 – 11 years	No
Hawkhill	No	No
Play Alloa	No	3 x 6 – 11 years
Connect Alloa	10 x 6 -11 years	No
Kidzworld	8 x Up to 1 years, 8 x 2 – 3 years, 20 x 4 - 5 years, 40 x 6 – 11 years	No
Dollar ASC	No	5 x 6 – 11 years
Alva Play Pals	Varies each day – Mon x 16, Tues x 18, Wed x 14, Thurs x 10, Fri x 20 spaces	No
Menstrie Play Pals	10 spaces for each day Mon - Thurs	No

### Latent Demand for Childcare

For those not currently using childcare, parents were asked the reason for this and given a number of options to choose from. There were only 2 respondents to this question with one confirming they were on maternity leave so not required and the other was using grandparents for childcare provision. When asked if they were to use a childcare service which type would suit them best, this was only answered by 1 respondent who confirmed that they would use nursery, school based clubs/ activities and a school based breakfast club.

### 9.4 Satisfaction with Childcare Provision

When it came to the performance of childcare service providers used, parents seemed to be satisfied overall with this. A few respondents had made suggestions for improvements, such as “More involvement for parents such as stay and play sessions”, “Better outside area for the babies and children under 2, more sensory related like scented herbs and lavender. Child staff ratio to be brought back in place”, “ More outdoor activities, maybe locally organised nature walks or craft activities”.

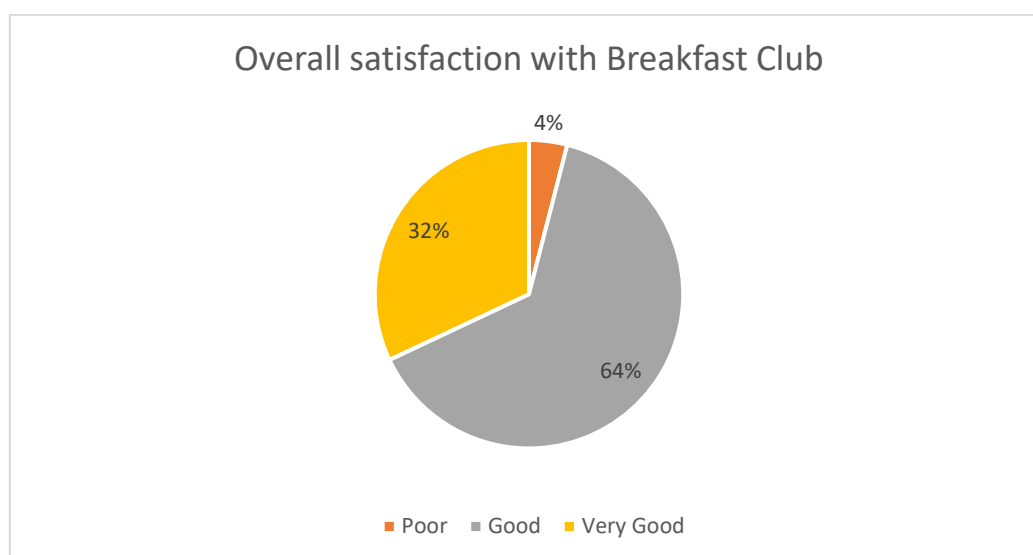
There were also parents that commented on how happy they were with their childcare and did not feel any improvements were necessary, such as: “ I love our nursery – the staff are fab, and the building and equipment are all lovely and looked after well. Purely the times being extended at drop off and pick up would allow me to work longer hours at my school setting job. But I am very happy with the provision of childcare we experience in our area regardless of this”.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

Another commented “ My son attends Park ELC, I couldn’t think of any improvements as I don’t think there are any needed. The key workers are very good at their jobs, and it impresses me when I pick my son up that other key workers who have played with my son tell me little stories of how they have interacted that day whilst we are saying bye and leaving the nursery and it makes me happy to know that all these people know and care about my son and take the time to make me aware of any little funny stories etc. They genuinely seem to care about all of the children that attend the nursery”.

Of the 27% of parents surveyed that use breakfast clubs, the largest majority of them (64%) rated the service as good and 32% very good, with only 4% rating poor. One of the comments where a poor rating was given was due to the limited availability of the service as opposed to the service performance. So overall parents seem to be satisfied with the performance of the breakfast clubs they use.

**Figure 17: Satisfaction of breakfast clubs**

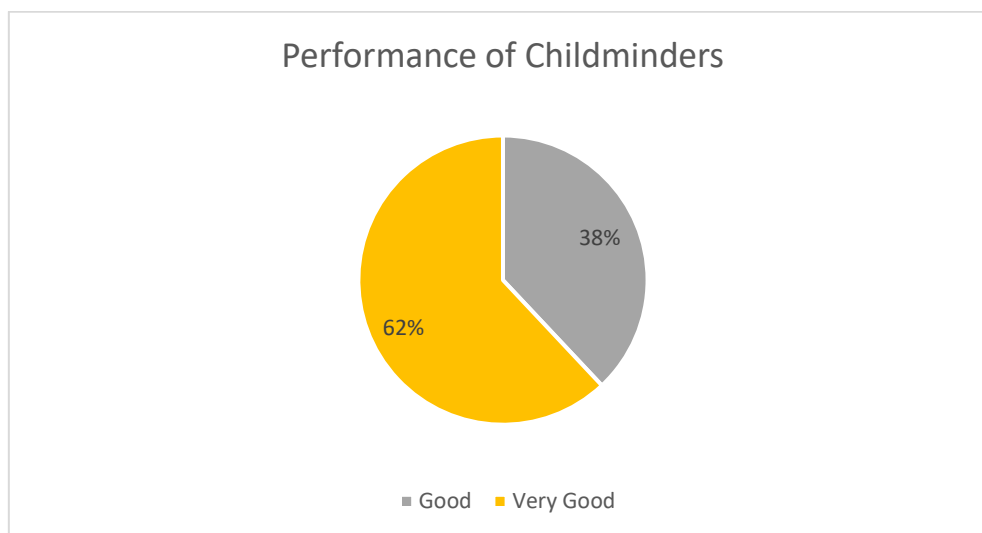


*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 79 responses*

Childminders were the most highly rated type of provider for their performance with mainly a very good rating of 62% and good 38% showing that parents are very satisfied with the service that childminders provide.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

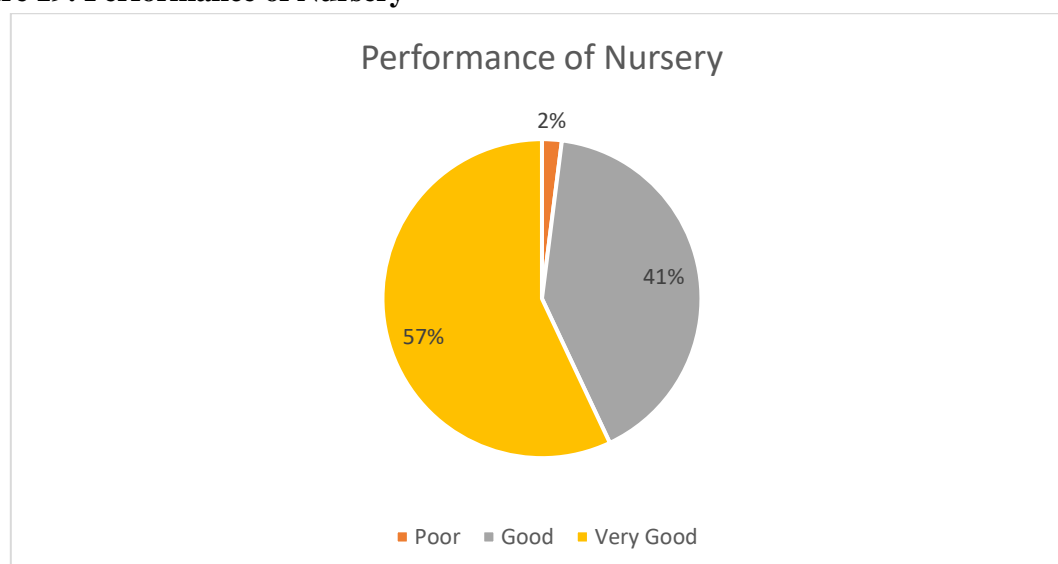
**Figure 18: Performance of childminders**



*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 74 responses*

Nurseries also performed well in the survey with a large majority of good (41%) to very good (57%) rating and a small minority (2%) rating poor. Overall, this indicates a high level of satisfaction with the performance nurseries provide.

**Figure 19: Performance of Nursery**



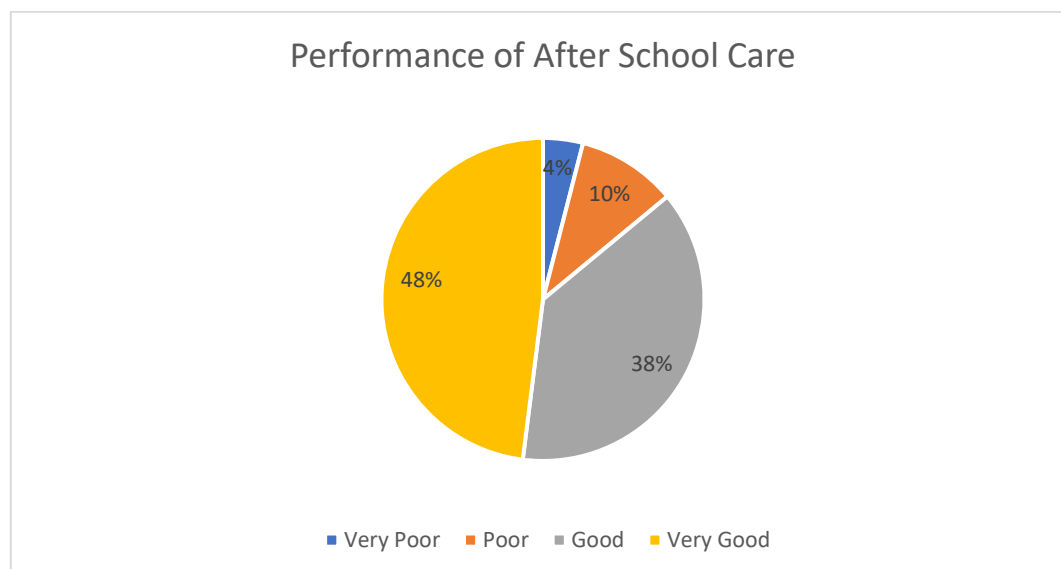
*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 84 responses*

With after school care parents indicated that they are mainly satisfied with the performance of the service with most rating good – very good, with 4% rating poor – very poor.



# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

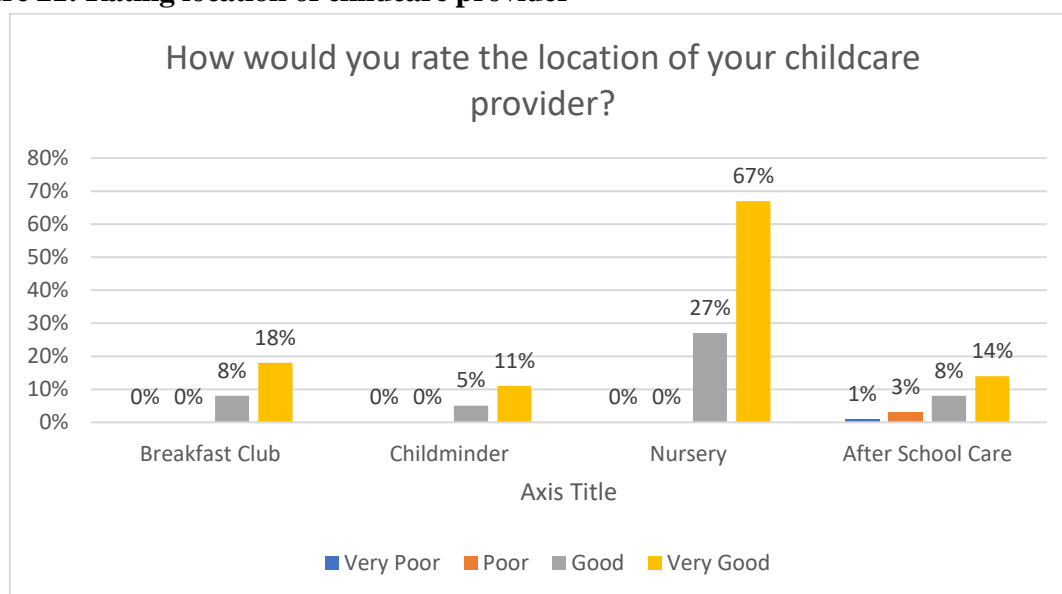
**Figure 20**



*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 74 responses*

When parents were asked to rate the location of their childcare provider all services which included breakfast clubs, childminders and nurseries were rated either good or very good except for after school care with 4% rating location poor – very poor. This is unsurprising given that after school childcare is not readily available in many locations within Clackmannanshire, so parents are having to pay an additional transport charge for children to be collected from school for this service and also travel out of their way to pick children up at the end of the session.

**Figure 21: Rating location of childcare provider**



# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

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*Source: CERT Survey of Parents, Carers and Guardians. 2023 Base 311 responses*

## Areas for Improvement

In the survey of parents, carers and guardians were asked to identify areas for improvement. The main areas identified were, greater provision of after school childcare with parents commenting that they would like to work “longer and better hours”. Affordability was often mentioned as an area for improvement with comments such as “More affordable for working parents” “Childcare is often highly expensive, and a large sum of full time wage goes towards this” and “Give free childcare to all ages not able to work full time as can’t afford nursery costs”.

There were also a number of comments from parents dissatisfied about when they are able to access their funded childcare hours from, as currently children become eligible for a funded place from the term after their 3rd birthday or from the age of 2 under certain criteria. “Children to be given their free hours when they turn 3, not months later due to the date they are born” “The 30 hours funding to be available from the date of the child’s third birthday as opposed to the next school term. Clacks and Stirling appear to be the only councils in Scotland to implement this as other local authorities make funding available from the date of the child’s third birthday” and “Funded hours beginning from a younger age, so parents have a chance at getting back to work and keeping their career. Funding beginning from the age of 1 or 2”.

Another common suggestion for improvement was to extend breakfast club provision to allow parents to drop children off earlier in the mornings. “An earlier start to breakfast club, 8.30 isn’t enough to get to work on time” “Opened earlier at 7am” and “Breakfast club times extended”. Although all primary schools in Clackmannanshire offer a breakfast club the earliest time this can be accessed is 8.15am with a majority starting at 8.30am. Nurseries are generally open earlier some from 7.30am however this varies.

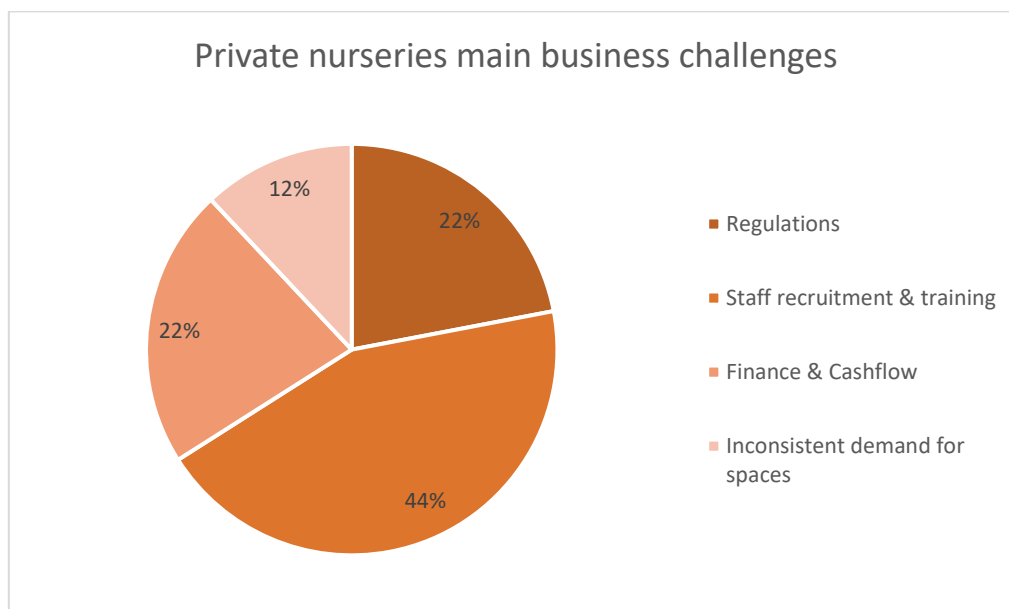
In summary the data from the Parent, Guardian & Carer survey indicates that affordability and flexibility of childcare provision are the areas where parents would like to see the most improvement, with a greater need for wrap around childcare in Clackmannanshire.

# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

## 9.5 Business Challenges and Development

All providers were asked to identify their greatest business challenges and areas of support sought. Private nurseries cited staff recruitment and training as the greatest challenge (44%) followed by regulations (22%) and Finance/Cash Flow (22%)

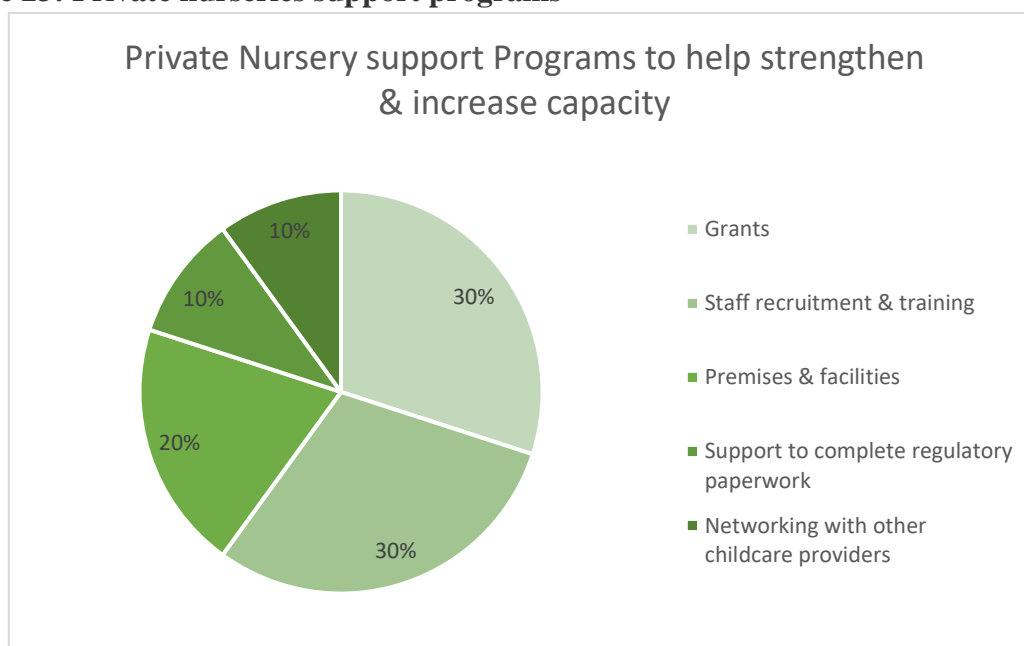
**Figure 22: Private nurseries business challenges**



Source: CERT survey of childcare providers 2023 based on 5 responses

When private nurseries were asked what support programmes would help strengthen and increase their capacity, there were mixed responses, however grants and staff recruitment and training were predominant. These responses are indicated in the figure below.

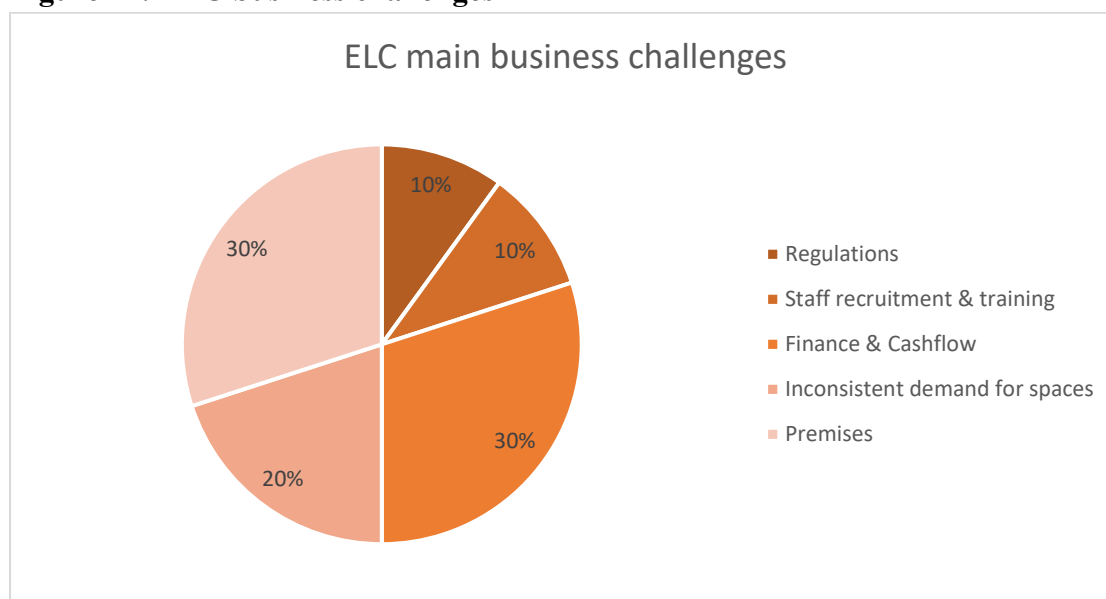
**Figure 23: Private nurseries support programs**



Source: CERT survey of childcare providers 2023 based on 5 responses

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

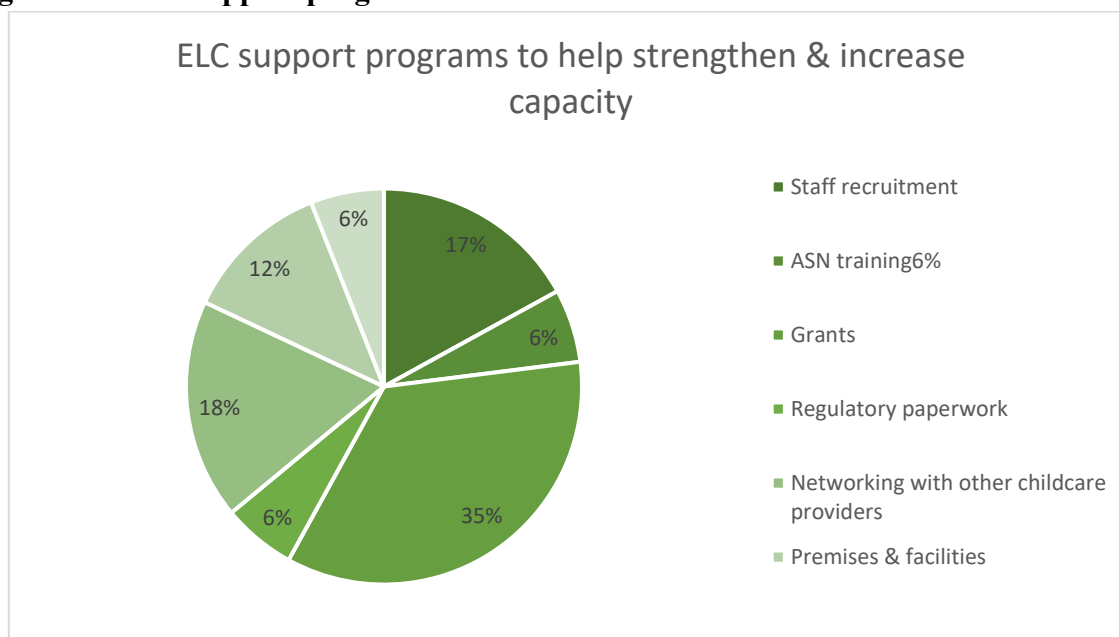
**Figure 24: ELC business challenges**



Out of the 13 ELCs that responded to the survey 6 stated that they did not have any business challenges, from the 7 that did, Finance & Cashflow and Premises were the most common with 30% each.

ELCs cited Grants (35%) and staff recruitment (17%) as the most common areas of support sought.

**Figure 25: ELC support programs**

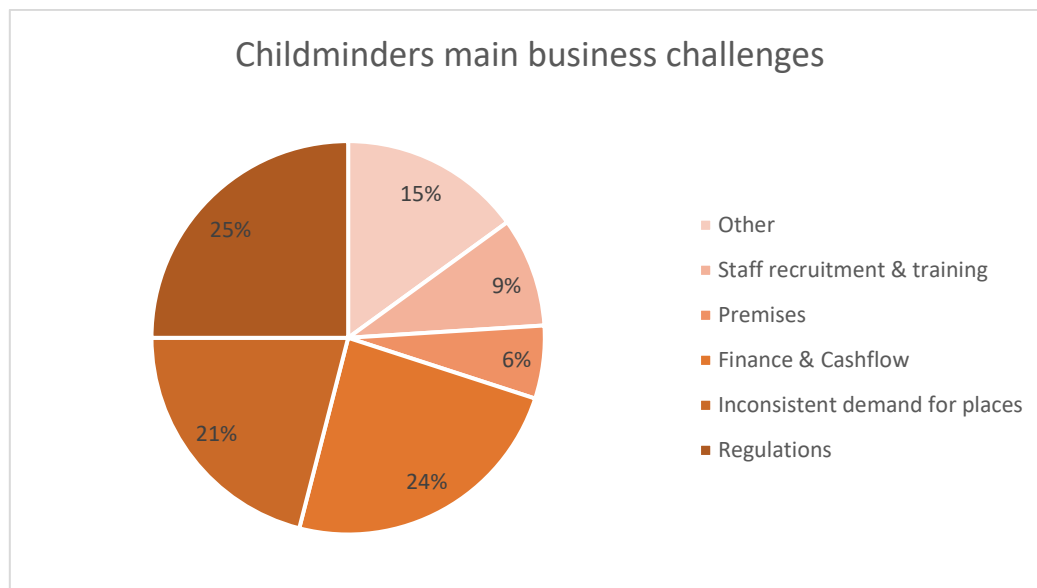


*Source: CERT Childcare Provider Survey Dec 2023*

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

All childminders that responded to the provider survey confirmed that they are registered with The Care Inspectorate (which is a legal requirement) and all apart from 4 out of the 20 respondents are members of the SCMA. The chart below shows the responses childminders gave when asked about their business challenges with the most common response being regulations, with many specifying that they would like support to complete regulatory paperwork.

**Figure 26: Childminders business challenges**

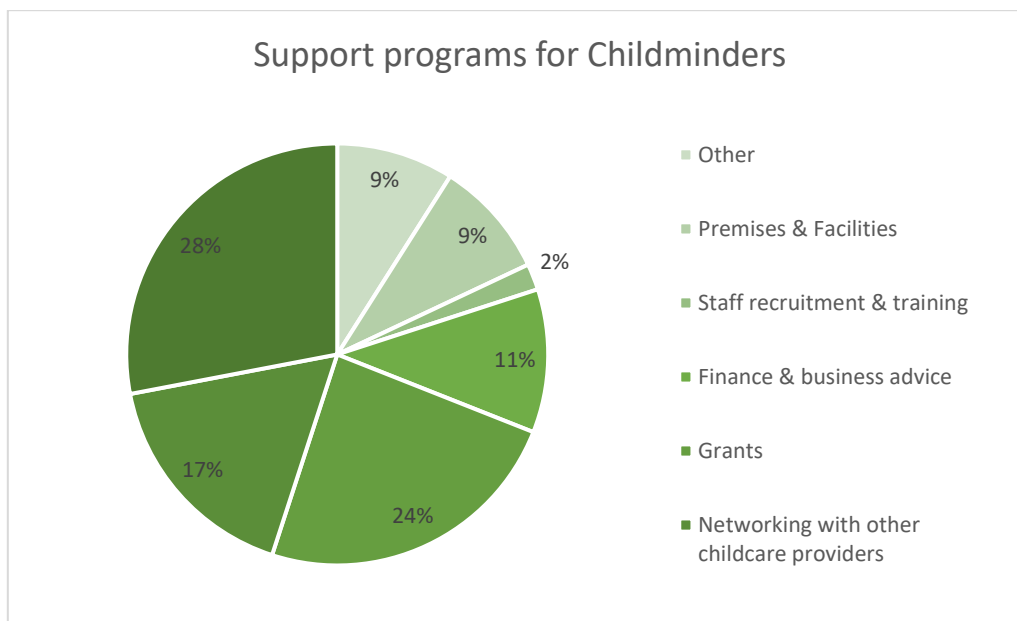


*Source: CERT Childcare Provider Survey Dec 2023*

The other responses included – paperwork, staff wages underpaid, pressure from local authority to fill spaces and people not knowing child minders can provide funded hours. When asked what support program/s they would find useful for their business these responses are shown in the figure below.

## Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

**Figure 27: Support programs for childminders**



*Source: CERT Childcare Provider Survey Dec 2023*

A large majority of childminders responded that they would like support to complete regulatory paperwork, indicating a possible area for improvement with perhaps greater access to resources/guides to help provide this. As well as grants, networking with other providers was a popular request and this is something that CERT is actively engaging in with childminders in Clacks by arranging regular meetings to discuss any issues and also as a platform to engage with one another in an informal environment. The other suggestions for support programs were, advertise spaces available, help with mandatory training, restrictions for allocated spaces.

# Clackmannanshire Childcare Strategic Case and Plan

## 9.6 Childcare Workforce

### 9.6.1 Size of Workforce

Across Scotland, as of April 2021, practitioners made up around three-quarters of the workforce in the private and public sectors and less than two-thirds of the voluntary sector. The public sector has the fewest registered managers at less than 1 in 20. In the private sector 1 in 10 are managers and 1 in 7 in the voluntary sector. Support workers make up approximately 1 in 4 of the voluntary sector workforce, 1 in 5 of the public and fewer than 1 in 6 in the private.

In Clackmannanshire a survey of providers has been undertaken and this has received a very strong 93% response rate, the workforce is estimated at 435 people.

Out of the 14 public sector ELCs in Clacks 13 responded to the Childcare Provider survey, all of the private nurseries, after school care/clubs and specialised childcare services responded. In the table below are the numbers that represent the different job roles within these services, the other category includes administrative roles and also trainee/apprenticeships.

**Table 16: Childcare Workforce in Clackmannanshire**

	<b>Public Nurseries</b>	<b>Private Nurseries</b>	<b>Childminder</b>	<b>After School Care</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Support Worker	20	5	3	8	23	<b>59</b>
Practitioner	177	105	21	1	6	<b>310</b>
Manager	10	8	1	4	3	<b>26</b>
Other	8	14	0	9	9	<b>40</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>435</b>

*Source: CERT survey of Childcare Providers Dec 23*

Within Scotland the public sector is the biggest employer of the daycare childcare workforce (at almost 60%) in Clackmannanshire this is currently accounting for 58% of the workforce. Private nurseries represent the next largest provider of the workforce, in Clacks at 35%.

Across Scotland, in day care services, the public sector has the lowest turnover of staff and the highest retention rates at almost 90%. Of those who do move from a public sector role to another daycare childcare service, over 90% move to another public sector service.

Retention in Scotland is lowest in the private sector with only around 75% of staff remaining in the same service one year on. The voluntary sector retain just over 80% of staff in the same service. Of those moving from the private sector, the majority (over 80%) move to a post in the public sector. The age profile of the workforce varies between the three types of

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employers. The median ages of staff are, 28 in the private sector, 40 in the public and 36 in the voluntary.<sup>31</sup>

The vast majority – 91% of the Clacks childcare workforce are qualified to practitioner level or above or are working towards that qualification.

### 9.6.2 Salaries

From the survey of providers, salaries of childcare workers differ significantly between public and private sector nurseries. The salaries provided within the private nursery sector are all on par with one another, as per the table below:

**Table 17: Salary range of Childcare Staff in Nurseries in Clackmannanshire**

	Public Nurseries	Private
Support Worker	£23,652.02 - £26,024.52	Up to £15,000
Practitioner	£30,313.27 - £33,799.03	£15,000 - £25,000
Manager / Head	£49,877.29 - £56,137.05	£25,000 - £35,000
Admin	£23,652.02 - £26,024.52	£15,000 - £25,000

*Source: CERT Childcare Provider Survey Dec 2023*

As an additional incentive for employees in private nurseries all of the provider survey respondents confirmed that staff are offered discounted childcare and, in some cases, free childcare depending on length of service.

After school club staff are not always qualified in childcare as these services are often provided alongside other services for the community for e.g., adult workshops, bereavement groups etc. Staff are generally paid in comparison to the salaries paid in the private sector on average between £15,000 - £25,000.

Childminders are self-employed and can therefore set their own rates of pay and this varies considerably across Clacks from £4.00 per hour up to £6.00 per hour. The Scottish Government is in the process of increasing the rate that they pay childminders that are partnered with Clacks Council to provide funded childcare hours, and this is to be confirmed. The provider survey has shown that currently 95% of childminders registered in Clacks are not paying themselves the Living Wage.

<sup>31</sup> Scottish Social Services Council, (27/6/2023) Movement of Day Care of Children Staff Report 2023. Retrieved on 27/11/2023 from Movement of Day Care of Children Staff Report 2023 | Scottish Social Services Workforce Data (sssc.uk.com)



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**Table 18: Qualifications of Clackmannanshire Childcare Workforce**

	<b>Public Nurseries</b>	<b>Private Nurseries</b>	<b>Out of School Care</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Level 2/3 SVQ Play work	5	0	3	7	<b>15</b>	<b>4%</b>
Level 2 SVQ Social Services (Children & Young People) SCQF 6	12	4	0	4	<b>20</b>	<b>5%</b>
Level 3 SVQ Social Services (Children & Young People) SCQF 7	127	81	0	8	<b>216</b>	<b>59%</b>
NC in Early Education & Childcare SCQF 6	8	0	0	14	<b>22</b>	<b>6%</b>
HNC in Early Education & Childcare	0	0	4	0	<b>4</b>	<b>1%</b>
NC Childhood Practice SCQF 7	7	21	2	5	<b>35</b>	<b>10%</b>
HNC in Childhood Practice	0	0	2	0	<b>2</b>	<b>1%</b>
Level 6 Childhood Practice (Graduate Diploma)	5	1	0	0	<b>6</b>	<b>2%</b>
PDA Childhood Practice SCQF 9	2	9	0	2	<b>13</b>	<b>4%</b>
BA in Childhood Practice	27	4	0	0	<b>31</b>	<b>8%</b>
BA in Social Work	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>	<b>0%</b>
Master of Education in Childhood Practice	0	1	0	2	<b>3</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: CERT Survey of Childcare Providers Dec 2023 N.B This includes all qualification staff have and are working towards  
To be a registered childminders, all are practitioners and are qualified to level 3 or above.*

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## 9.6.2 Supply of Childcare Staff

The supply of available new entrants to the workforce is unknown, however the annual graduations from courses in Clacks are:

**Table 19: Childcare Course College graduates 2022/23**

Course	Provider	Number
NC in Early Education & Childcare	FVC – Alloa Campus	16
HNC in Childhood Practice	FVC – Alloa Campus	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>32</b>

*Source: Forth Valley College 2022/23*

Over the last 5 years Forth Valley College in Alloa has seen a 50% increase in graduates from their childcare courses. Forth Valley College had approximately 16 students qualify through the Alloa Campus in the 2022/2023 academic year for support worker level roles, having completed the NC Early Education and Childcare programme. Half of these went onto the HNC Childhood Practice programme and half looked for relevant job roles in childcare. At Practitioner level there were approximately 16 students that qualified through the Alloa Campus having completed the HNC Childhood Practice, with most looking for relevant job roles in the local area.

Most graduates seek work within childcare settings, although a few do look at alternative career paths such as primary teaching. Most seek work with ELC settings. The number of places on these courses has increased over the last 5 years to support the workforce expansion, with for example, almost twice as many students now completing the HNC in Childhood Practice than previously.

As well as the college route there are a total of 46 members of staff who are currently working towards a qualification (see Table 6). As these qualifications vary in duration to complete it is not possible to gain a definitive number of annual graduates. There are also a number of staff who have been employed through apprenticeships. According to the childcare provider survey there are 6 services which currently employ apprentices.

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## 9.6.3 Skills Shortages and Gaps

### **Private Sector Nurseries**

From the survey of providers, all of the five private nurseries in Clacks reported that they have problems recruiting staff. The survey asked what posts in particular were difficult to fill and 3 out of 5 responded that it was hard to recruit practitioners.

It was commented that this was “due to 1,140 hours (Scottish Government Funded hours), increased council recruitment so vacancies for good quality staff. Also, people leaving the sector, stress of working with those children with additional support needs, paperwork, and low paid career in the private sector” “Practitioners, pay and conditions not competitive compared to L.A jobs” “ Quality practitioners, cannot compete with council salaries”.

Out of the 5 nurseries only 1 had a current staff vacancy for a practitioner post and despite recruitment issues 3 out of the 5 nurseries confirmed that they have never used agency staff, with the other 2 only occasionally.

### **Public Sector Nurseries/Early Learning Centres**

It is estimated that there are currently 2 support worker vacancies and 5 practitioner vacancies with ELC providers. The private sector nurseries only had 1 practitioner vacancy between them, for after school clubs in the private sector there were no current staff vacancies. The local authority has reported challenges in securing a volume of applications for their vacancies.

Play Alloa which specialises in childcare for children with additional and complex support needs, confirmed vacancies for 2 support workers.

The majority of childminders do not employ others, however within Clacks there are 3 childminders that currently employ assistants and there were no vacancies reported for these roles at the time of the provider survey.

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## 10 Conclusions

Childcare is a policy priority at the UK, Scottish and Clackmannanshire level, which is seeking to improve the educational and social development of children as well as remove barriers to employment for parents which in turn will address child poverty. This was further reinforced in the Scottish Governments priorities announced in 2023.

Parents have confirmed **affordable childcare is a huge or entire barrier to employment**. 19% of parents reported lack of affordable childcare was the entire barrier to their working with a further 49% reporting it as a huge barriers. Only 19% of parents reported that access to childcare was not a barrier. Current charges vary by length of provision but range from £4 to £6 per hour (for childminders); £5.40 to £5.90 per hour (ELCs); £24.25 to £45 per half day (private nurseries).

This was also indicated by the number of comments from parents who were struggling with the cost of childcare and how much this deducted from their wage. This leaves parents deciding whether it is worth going back to work or working longer hours, as they may find that the cost of childcare is too high. Parents commented on how they would like to see greater subsidies or incentives to help bridge this gap, such as more funded childcare hours.

With 54% of parents confirming that they are using friends and family members to provide childcare, this is likely to be due to lack of affordability as 47% of parents rated poor/very poor for nurseries, 30% poor/very poor for childminders and 35% poor/very poor for after school care.

**Childcare Sector in Clacks.** There are 68 providers of childcare in Clacks, providing 2,003 places, of which 1,416 places (70%) are for under 5s, with the remainder wrap around care of breakfast clubs, afterschool clubs or after school care, predominantly for primary school age children. The largest providers are public sector run – breakfast clubs and ELCs – accounting for 64% of the places.

The Scottish Government provides 1,140 “Funded Hours” for childcare provision for 3 and 4 year olds and “eligible 2s” for those facing one or more disadvantage. Although available for use in any approved childcare setting including public sector ELCs, private nurseries and childminders, the public sector ELCs dominate the delivery of these hours.

There are 435 employed in childcare in Clacks, with 91% of the workforce directly working with children, qualified at practitioner level or above and (62% at practitioner level, 14% as support workers and 8% as senior practitioners.) There is a greater proportion of support workers employed in ELCs than private nurseries.

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Childcare in Clackmannanshire is highly rated and delivers a high quality service across all forms of childcare.

Despite this, there are a number of weaknesses in the provision of childcare in Clackmannanshire.

**Funding and Sources of Childcare Unclear.** Although there are a wide range of financial supports in place to help families with childcare this can be very confusing for parents when trying to access the information and finding out what actually applies to them. DWP have confirmed that many benefits go unclaimed suggesting that there are a large proportion of people that are unaware that they are eligible for support. A large majority of parents that are using government funded childcare are using it only for nurseries with only a small number of hours being used for Childminder provision.

**Under Supply of Childcare.** Our research has shown that there is a shortage of most forms of childcare. As the government funded childcare hours are expanding to eligible 1 year olds and 2 year olds, in the future this will further exacerbate this position and is likely to cause longer waitlists unless addressed soon.

**Declining Numbers and shortage of Childminders.** Across Scotland and in Clackmannanshire there has been a marked reduction in the number of Childminders. The reasons for this are complex and in part accelerated by Covid, but also caused by poor levels of income (with only 35% of those surveyed, paying themselves a living wage); inconsistent demand for places, finance and cashflow, high levels of paperwork and regulation; and a lack of promotion and clarity to parents that they can use funded hours with them. There is a reported wait list of 27 children to access childminders (representing a further 21% of overall capacity). The majority of parents rated finding a place with a childminder poor/very poor (64%).

As a result, this highly flexible and customised childcare option is increasingly an inaccessible childcare option in Clacks, particularly out with Alloa and Tullibody.

**Shortage of nursery places.** While only 13% of parents reported that ease of accessing places with nurseries as poor/very poor, there is a waiting list of 115 for private nurseries and a further 27 for public sector ELCs. This is dominated by spaces for 1 year olds and 2 to 3 year olds which are more expensive to provide due to the higher staff to child ratio required and which are less likely to receive government funded places. This represents the equivalent to a need for 2 new nurseries now.

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The lack of flexibility of hours was cited in many comments, often with an obligation to purchase childcare in “blocks” or full days when this may not be required in order to secure the space for when it is required. This also emerged when there was a last minute emergency or need to change hours at short notice.

As our parent survey shows one of the main gaps in provision across Clacks is **wrap around childcare**, in particular **after school care**. Although there is some provision this does not cover all areas and has caused issues for providers and parents when it comes to transportation. There is also a demand for earlier **pre-school provision**. Although most nurseries allow early drop off for breakfast a number of parents wants this to start earlier, as many ELC breakfast clubs start at 8.30am. There is a clear demand for earlier opening hours, from 8am or earlier.

### Childcare providers are facing a number of business challenges.

**Staff Recruitment and Retention.** The provider survey showed that private nurseries are struggling with staff recruitment and retention as they cannot compete with the council run ELCs who pay a much higher wage. This is an area for investigation as these nurseries provide a useful resource for childcare places and also for employability in Clacks. When asking for support programs, grants, staff recruitment and training feature heavily. With 4 out of 5 private nurseries reporting having staff recruitment as a business issue.

At the same time ELCs report challenges in recruiting practitioners due to the lack of permanent employment contracts, with the majority of jobs offering only a 1 year contract. These short term contracts could mean that staff may not be kept on or start to look elsewhere for greater permanency, which could have a potentially negative impact on the children using this service who had formed attachments with their caregivers.

At the time of the survey there were 11 reported vacancies with providers. In the last academic year 32 students graduated in support worker or practitioner level with approximately 24 thought to be looking to enter the workforce. A further 6 providers offer modern apprenticeships. These new entrants do not seem to align with recruitment/vacancies.

**Finances and Cash Flow.** With ELCs, the main business issues centred around finances and cash flow with most providers saying that grants would be useful to support their service. This again would need further investigation to determine what aspects of the provision specifically need financial support and if these issues are

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impacting the level of service they provide. This is echoed by childminders and private nurseries.

### **Additional Support Needs provision is Limited.**

Provision of childcare for those with additional Support Needs (ASN) appears limited and is not thought to meet demand. Play Alloa which is the only childcare service in Clacks to specialise in children with ASN has a waiting list for spaces and there were 12 out of the 40 childcare providers that confirmed they do not accept spaces for these children. Many childminders do not offer ASN spaces due to additional demands of this type of care and as more intensive 1:1 care is required this can affect their ratios and earning potential. Play Alloa confirmed in the survey that they would be interested in expanding their provision for ASN childcare if they had access to bigger, better premises.

Overall, the needs of childcare provision in Clacks are extraordinarily complex and multiple and this makes it difficult when trying to cater to the needs of everyone. It can be included that:

- Lack of affordable childcare is a barrier to 81% of parents working/increasing hours and therefore contributing to reduction of child poverty
- There is a shortage of childcare provision in Clacks particularly for nursery, childminders, and afterschool care
- After school childcare and earlier pre-school childcare are particular barriers to parents increasing their hours working
- This shortage of provision will escalate with the expected expansion of Scottish Government funded places
- The childcare workforce is already a major challenge which will increase as provision expands
- There is a shortage of provision for children with additional support needs with limited organisations providing this.

Clackmannanshire has the additional complexity of having semi-rural areas which offer more limited childcare services and this along with limited public transport can make it extremely hard for parents to access childcare, therefore restricting their options of increasing their earning potential.

Overcoming the barriers of lack of affordable childcare for parents will directly and substantially address child poverty and should be a priority.

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## 11 Recommendations and Next Steps

CERT have already been working with the Council, DWP, Scottish Childminders Association and local providers to complete this strategic case and plan to start the implementation of projects to address the challenges identified.

In CERT's work, we seeking to *“remove the lack of affordable childcare as a barrier to employment.”*

On the basis of this analysis and research, it is proposed that the following are taken forward:

### 11.1 Increase After School Care Provision

CERT will work, with the council to ensure that after school provision is established for every primary school age child in Clackmannanshire.

CERT is already working closely with Alva PlayPals who, with our financial support, have now just set up a new ASC service in Menstrie, which despite only been open a matter of weeks has already secured a base of demand which is growing. CERT are also undertaking a feasibility study into setting up after school care in Tillicoultry which is in the final stages and will hopefully open in August 2024. Community Led Local Development funding is acknowledged in the support of both these projects.

The feasibility study will give us a template to use to ascertain the viability of other after school childcare within Clacks, with a view to increasing this provision across the county. This would include establishing provision close to the primary school or ensuring coverage of children to a facility. Early consideration of an action plan for securing this has been undertaken and set out in the table.

Green shows where there is current provision. Kidzworld provide after school childcare including transport of children from a number of schools.



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**Table 20: Proposed Actions to Secure After School Care Across Clackmannanshire**

For children from ...Primary School	Town	School Roll	Current Provision	Proposed Provision/Development
Abercromby Primary School	Tullibody	326		01/08/2025. Initial feasibility Tullibody site 2024/25
Alva Primary School	Alva	358	Alva Play Pals	
Banchory Primary School	Tullibody	192		01/08/2025. Initial feasibility Tullibody site 2024/25
Clackmannan Primary School	Clackmannan	203		01/08/2025. Initial feasibility 2024/25
Coalsnaughton Primary School	Coalsnaughton	79		Transport children to Tillicoultry
Craigbank Primary School	Sauchie	277		01/08/2026. Initial feasibility Sauchie site 2025/26 (or earlier)
Deerpark Primary School	Sauchie	158		01/08/2026. Initial feasibility Sauchie site 2025/26 (or earlier)
Fishcross Primary School	Fishcross	72		Transport children to Alva
Lochies School (for those with additional needs)	Sauchie	36	FWP funded after school clubs	
Menstrie Primary School	Menstrie	268	Alva Play Pals from Jan 24	
Muckhart Primary School	Muckhart	39		Transport children to Dollar
Park Primary School	Alloa	331	FWP funded after school clubs	
Redwell Primary School	Alloa	386	Kidzone	
St Bernadette's RC Primary School	Tullibody	101		01/08/2025. Initial feasibility Tullibody site 2024/25
St Mungo's RC Primary School	Alloa	133	FWP funded after school clubs	
St Serf's Primary School	Tullibody	183		01/08/2025. Initial feasibility Tullibody site 2024/25
Strathdevon Primary School	Dollar	173	Dollar After School	
Sunnyside Primary School	Alloa	304	FWP funded after school clubs Also mini bus ro Kidzone	
Tillicoultry Primary School	Tillicoultry	253		Bus plan complete March 24; Open August 2024

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A number of locations having been recognised as potentials, due to the size of the school roll and if an area of social deprivation. These are Tullibody, Clackmannan and Sauchie, with Tullibody being the largest which currently has 4 primary schools. We would look to start a feasibility study in 2024 with an aim to start operation of ASC provision in August 2025 along with Clackmannan, a feasibility study for Sauchie will be started in 2025 with an aim to start provision August 2026.

At the time of writing this report Dollar Nursery have confirmed that as of August 2024 they will no longer provide ASC provision so this would potentially be another area that would require a feasibility study as there is currently no other ASC provider there.

Throughout, CERT will work with existing and potential new ASC providers to deliver these services.

### **11.2 Breakfast Clubs are extended to 8am**

As parents are looking for an earlier morning start of 8.00am to help with their commute to work we will begin discussions with the local authority to explore how this could be provided in all of the existing Clacks primary school breakfast clubs.

Where this is not possible, we will explore alternative options for earlier childcare support including the use of afterschool care opening these hours. All private nurseries and ELCs already operate from at least 8am so this would allow parents to drop children off who are different ages from 8am.

### **11.3 Support and increase the number of Childminders**

There is a declining number of childminders who are a potentially major source of childcare provision which can be particularly flexible and able to be delivered close to the family. There are however major challenges in retaining existing childminders in the profession as well as encouraging new childminders.

Clackmannanshire Council have been working with the Scottish Childminders Association to recruit additional childminders and support them to secure rapid registration.

CERT have been working with the existing childminders and helped them consolidate as a group to discuss their issues which are wide-ranging. CERT has so far helped as requested, to fund and co-ordinate training programmes. It is of concern that many childminders do not pay themselves a living wage.

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CERT will work with existing childminders to ensure their support and retention and where appropriate encourage and engage with new childminders, this will include ensuring:

- they have access to general support, ideally through the appointment of a Development Officer as per other areas;
- provision of appropriate training
- provision of business and advisory support to increase the income and financial return from being a childminder
- support them to market themselves as a group and raise their profile with parents on their use, most importantly the ability to use Funded Hours with them. This will include support to establish a web site.
- explore the establishment of a “charter” for the relationship with the council (and the controller of Funded Hours payments) to establish parity of esteem of childminders as a provider of childcare in all promotion and operational practices.
- investigating how regulatory issues and paperwork can be simplified;
- other issues as identified by childminders.

A detailed plan will be prepared for support by April 24 with the objectives to:

- retain ALL existing childminders;
- ensure all childminders are paid at least the living wage; and
- to work with others to grow the number of childminders from 21 to 40 by end of March 26.

### **11.4 Increase nursery places**

On the basis of evidence on waiting list and ease of securing nursery place, there is a need for 2 new nurseries (of average size) in Clackmannanshire. With the extension of funded hours to cover all 2 year olds and eligible one year olds, this is expected to increase the number of children seeking government funded pre-school care. From estimated birth rates this is expected to be a further c450 children which would require a further provision of c4 nurseries. (or increase in the number of places per nursery)

Discussions will begin with providers who are interested in expansion including the public sector to secure this increase in provision.

Two out of the 5 private nurseries surveyed, responded that they would like to expand their operations, this means there may be scope to work with them to help them expand their existing provision. Further investigation will need to be done to establish the need for this within the specific locations and what the implications would be with regards to venues and costs. Approaches would also be made to encourage other providers to establish operations in Clacks.

A detailed plan will be in place by Summer 24.

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### **11.5 Further investigation into the malfunctioning Childcare Labour Market**

Further research is required with providers in both the public and private childcare sectors and suppliers of skilled childcare workers to fully understand the issues with staff recruitment and retention, as the challenges appear to be different for each. This would involve face to face interviews with service providers to discuss the criteria they require from staff, how they recruit, job training given, remuneration etc.

It would also be necessary to get views from staff on how they feel about working in the sector, their terms of employment, their employer and if there are areas for improvement. Further investigation would need to be done on whether job applicants have enough hands on experience when applying for roles and how the relationship between nurseries and colleges with recruiting childcare graduates.

A labour market strategy and plan will be produced by Sept 24.

### **11.6 Further investigation into provision for those with Additional Support Needs**

As there is only one specialist provider of additional & complex support needs childcare in Clacks, which has a waitlist for places, this presents challenges in provision. Childminders offer limited provision of ASN spaces too which means there is a lack of the more 1:1 support that is generally required for this type of care as sometimes nurseries and OSC are not suitable environments.

As Play Alloa are interested in expansion, discussions will be held to determine how we might help support them with this endeavour in order to best serve the community. This may be in the form of helping to acquire better premises and or funding.