

# Assessing school age childcare in rural and island areas: Technical report



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

snook

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Methodology</b> .....	<b>4</b>
2.1 Recruitment sampling.....	4
2.2 Surveys.....	4
2.3 Interviews.....	5
<b>3. Discussion guides</b> .....	<b>6</b>
3.1 Discussion Guide for Parents and Carers .....	6
3.2 Discussion Guide for providers.....	12
<b>4. Survey Questions</b> .....	<b>17</b>
4.1 Parent and carer survey questions.....	17
4.2 Provider survey questions .....	27
<b>5. Systems Maps</b> .....	<b>34</b>
5.1 Map of System Actors .....	34
5.2 Map of Overlap between parent and provider challenges .....	36
<b>6. Participant Information/Consent</b> .....	<b>37</b>
6.1 Consent form - parents/carers .....	37
6.2 Consent form - providers .....	40

# 1. Introduction

The Scottish Government commissioned this research to explore how to address the challenges of providing consistent, affordable, school age childcare (SAC) in rural and island areas. It builds on recent Scottish government research and policy focused on childcare, employment, and economic development.

The aim of this research project is to provide a holistic view of school age childcare (for ages 4 to 14) in rural and island areas in Scotland, addressing the following research questions:

- What models of childcare provision, formal and informal, exist in rural and island areas of Scotland, and how do they differ across regions?
- What are the challenges for providing school age childcare in rural areas?
- What are the challenges for accessing school age childcare in rural and island areas?
- What are the drivers behind families' choice of school age childcare, including informal care?
- How might challenges faced by rural and island childcare providers be addressed?
- What opportunities exist to help sustain and support these businesses and organisations throughout the year, including their ability to provide a wraparound provision?
- What can be learned from existing pilot projects and research into rural childcare providers?
- Where could future pilot projects be established, and what model would these pilots follow?

## 2. Methodology

The research involved a mix of primary and secondary research techniques, and comprised three main elements: desk research, surveys, and in-depth interviews.

### 2.1 Recruitment sampling

In order to address the research aims above, two groups were targeted for recruitment:

- parents or carers of a child or children aged from 4 to 14 years, living in rural and island areas.
- school age childcare service providers for children aged from 4 to 14 years, providing the service in rural and island areas.

Data collection was confined to parents and school age childcare service providers in rural Scotland. Research took place in six defined local authorities of Scotland: Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, Highland, Shetland, and Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles).

Locations were chosen to reach participants from a cross-section of demographics and spread of communities across rural and island areas of Scotland. The local authorities represent a range of rurality, based on categories three to six on the Scottish Government's six-fold Urban Rural Classification.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.2 Surveys

Two online surveys were conducted, one for parents or carers, and one for school age childcare providers. Survey and research invites were distributed via email and social media using Scottish childcare networks, local authorities, local authority schools and third sector organisations.

Questions covered demographics of families living in rural and island areas, drivers behind childcare choices, and core challenges, opportunities and good practice from childcare providers.

Both surveys were open for four weeks between March and April 2022. The survey for parents or carers resulted in 878 completed surveys. The survey for childcare providers resulted in 72 completed surveys.

Surveys were hosted on Smartsurvey, and available in English and Gaelic. To ensure accessibility, we asked survey participants if they would rather answer the survey over a phone or online call.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Government's six-fold Urban Rural Classification is described on the Scottish website available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2016/pages/2/>

## 2.3 Interviews

A total of 27 interviews were conducted between mid-April and mid-May 2022. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling approach to ensure we engaged with parents or carers, as well as school age childcare providers, from a variety of contexts and geographies. This meant that participants were purposefully chosen to represent the following characteristics:

Parents/carers:

- Location: across the six defined research locations.
- Priority family types: lone parent families, larger families (3+ children), families with a younger mother (under 25), adults or children with additional support needs, minority ethnic families.
- Age of child(ren): 4 to 14 years old.
- Parental employment status: full time employment, part time employment, student, full time carer, searching for employment.

Childcare providers:

- Location: across the six defined research locations.
- Type of provision:<sup>2</sup> childminders, local authority run childcare, private childcare, charitable organisations.
- Additional provisions: those that provide childcare for children with additional support needs, outdoor learning and Gaelic medium education.
- Role of person interviewed: manager, practitioner and chair member.

Interviewees were recruited primarily via the surveys. In order to meet some of the criteria set out above, researchers actively recruited three participants from outside of the survey.

Interviews were done by video conferencing or phone call, depending on the preferences and conditions of interviewees. To ensure accessibility, participants were asked if they had any particular needs or requirements. In addition parents and carers received shopping vouchers as incentives. Each interview lasted for approximately one hour.

---

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that whilst informal carers were invited to participate in the research, no informal carers could be recruited for an interview.

## 3. Discussion guides

### 3.1 Discussion Guide for Parents and Carers

#### Research objectives

- What models of childcare provision, formal and informal, exist in rural and island areas of Scotland, and how do they differ?
- What are the challenges to providing SAC in rural areas?
- What are the challenges for accessing SAC in rural and island areas?
- What are the drivers behind families' choice of SAC, including informal care?
- How might challenges faced by rural and island childcare providers be addressed?
- What opportunities exist to help sustain and support these businesses and organisations throughout the year, including their ability to provide a 'wraparound' provision?
- What can be learned from existing pilot projects and research into rural and island childcare providers?
- Where could future pilot projects be established, and what models could these pilots follow/trial?

The following discussion guide will be used to aid conversations with parents and carers. It will be used as a guide and prompt for discussion only. In order for the sessions to feel natural, we will not be using this document in a strict question and answer format.

Each session will take 50 - 60 minutes using Zoom.

#### Introduction (5 mins)

- Introductions  
Hello, we are *[introduce everyone on call]* and we work for a design agency called Snook. We've been hired by the Scottish Government to assess school age childcare in Scotland's rural and island regions
- Project background:  
We will be conducting research during April 2022 in the specific targeted areas of Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, Highland, Shetland, Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles) speaking to parents, carers, informal carers and school age childcare providers.

The research findings will provide a holistic view of school age childcare (4-14 years old) by including informed conclusions on the presence, challenges

of, and opportunities for childcare providers in the different specified areas, and allow us to make recommendations based on those conclusions for the wider rural and island areas of Scotland.

We are aware there are different challenges to accessing childcare in rural and island regions, therefore you can help us understand the specific needs and interests of rural and island regions that should be taken into account and inform new/revised policies, strategies and services.

- What we'll cover

Over the next 50/60 minutes, we will be exploring your current childcare provision, why you have chosen this particular arrangement, and the logistical challenges that might arise as a result of this. Towards the end of the session we would like to understand what your idealised version of childcare might look like.

A few admin things before we jump into the questions, to check we're all on the same page...

- Roles in interview

X will ask questions, X will take notes - but might jump in with some questions or clarifications.

- Confirming consent

We've sent you a participant information letter and consent form. Checking you've seen it/signed it? Key points to confirm:

**Notes:** We will keep notes from this interview in a private folder that only the research team can see - and will delete these once the project ends.

**Anonymity** - You can decide if you would like what you say to be anonymous. If so, quotes you share will be anonymised when we share them more widely. If not, we may attribute quotes to you directly.

**Voluntary** - if there's anything I ask that you are not comfortable answering, that's fine. Just let me know. If after the interview you think of anything that you said that you don't want to be included, message me to let me know.

**Recording** - if you're happy for us to, we would like to audio/video record this conversation - just for our own note-taking purposes, to make sure we capture any useful insights you share. If not, no worries and we'll just take notes.

Any questions? Still happy to take part? Feel free to stand up, take a break at any time

**[start recording, if consent given]**

### **Background (5 mins)**

If you can please share with us a bit about you?

- Where do you live? How long have you lived there?
- Is Gaelic spoken in your household?
- How many children do you have? How old are they?
- Does your child attend a Gaelic Medium School? If so, is Gaelic the primary language at their school?
- What is your current employment status?
- Why did you want to take part in this research?

### **Current Childcare arrangements (30 mins)**

[Aim to understand main characteristics of their current childcare provision. Aspects we would like to explore in more detail are: Why they have chosen this provision, barriers to accessing alternative childcare, understanding other pressures which prevent access to other childcare].

- Can you tell me a little bit about the current childcare provision that you have at the moment?
  - What type of childcare is it? Do you have different options for your different children? (if applicable).
  - Is your current arrangement to ensure that someone is just looking out for your child?
  - What transport method do you use?
  - Are there additional provisions as part of this care (prompt - possibly food? Additional learning? Activities?).
  - Are any of these activities delivered in Gaelic? Moreover, is this something that you expect in the provision of childcare for your child? [if not, probe to understand why].
- What does a normal school day look like, how do you arrange childcare around your day-to-day life?
- What periods of the day do you need extra support for your childcare provision?
- What does this look like during the holiday period?
- Can you tell me a little more about what this childcare allows you to do (Why do you need it?).

### **Why they have chosen this particular arrangement**



- What are the reasons behind your current setup?
  - Is it due to closeness to home, school or work?
  - How are the costs?
  - Are the activities provided the most suitable for your child?
  - How would you assess the quality of staff? What do you understand by qualified staff?
- What other options are available in your area? Why don't you use these?
  - Is distance or transport an issue?
  - How are the costs?
  - Are the opening hours suitable for you?
  - Does the language these services are delivered in act as a barrier (for instance, only delivered in English)?
- Have you tried alternative provisions?
  - How come you stopped?
  - What benefits were lost/gained from switching?
  - Are the opening hours suitable for you?
  - How far would you be willing to travel for a more suitable option?
- Are you aware of friends who use different forms of childcare? Do any of these appeal to you?
- What impact has Covid had on your childcare provision?

## Logistics

I'd like to move the conversation onto **the logistical challenge of transporting your children to childcare**. How do you drop off and pick up your children?

Prompt questions:

- Has this always been the way you have done it? Or has it changed in recent years?
- How far do you currently travel?
- Would it be preferable if you were able to use a different mode of transport?
- How far would you be able to travel to collect your children from childcare to drop them off in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon?
- If you had the choice, what would be the ideal route for them to arrive at their current provision? Why is this? (*Interrogate the travel distance from home, work, school, relatives etc*).

**What would better wraparound childcare allow you to do? (10 mins)**

We've spoken so far about the challenges faced when accessing childcare, the logistics of accessing it, and unpicked the reasons behind why you have chosen your current arrangement. Now I would like us to focus on **what an improved form of childcare would allow you to do? I'd like to take a moment to really distinguish between the needs of your child/children and your own needs.**

- What would better wrap-around childcare allow you to do?
  - Would there be an economic impact for you? What would the economic benefit be to you and your family if there was more wraparound childcare available in your area?
  - What other benefits would you be able to gain from greater childcare provision?
- If wraparound childcare provision was achieved in your area and was accessible for you and your family, how do you think this might change your current employment? Have you thought about whether you would do more hours? Or would you consider a different type of job? What might this be?
- Are there certain things that get pushed back/deprioritised as a result of not having sufficient childcare provision?
  - How has access to childcare affected you or your partner's career?
  - Are these leisure activities/taking care of yourself?

### **What does good look like? (5 mins)**

I am going to ask you to imagine you had a magic wand, and with this magic wand you are able to design the perfect childcare which would allow you and your child/children to thrive.

- What would this childcare look like to you?
  - Are there certain activities that you would like your child/children to be doing?
  - How would your child/children get to and from this childcare provision?
  - Where would you imagine this childcare would be hosted?
  - Would this childcare be delivered in Gaelic?
- Now that you have outlined what good looks like, how much would you be willing to pay for this additional service per hour?

### **Wrap up & thank you (5 mins)**

- Is there anything else you'd like to tell us? Anything we should have asked you but didn't?
- [Notetaker - any questions?]

If there's anything else you think of afterwards, just let us know.

Or if you have **any concerns about anything you said**, just come back to us and we can make sure we remove that part of the interview when we do the analysis.

**Really grateful** for your time. Thank you and have a great rest of your day!

## 3.2 Discussion Guide for providers

### Research questions

- What **models of childcare provision**, formal and informal, exist in rural and island areas of Scotland, and how do they differ?
- What are the **challenges to providing** SAC in rural areas?
- What are the challenges for **accessing** SAC in rural and island areas?
- What are the drivers behind families' choice of SAC, including informal care?
- How might **challenges** faced by rural and island childcare providers **be addressed**?
- What opportunities exist to help sustain and support these businesses and organisations throughout the year, including their **ability to provide a 'wraparound' provision**?
- What can be learned from existing pilot projects and research into rural and island childcare providers?
- Where could **future pilot projects** be established, and what models could these pilots follow/trial?

Each session will take 45 - 60 minutes using **Zoom**.

### Introduction (3 mins)

- Introductions

Hello, we are *[introduce everyone on call]* and we work for a service design agency called Snook. The Scottish Government has commissioned us to explore how to address the challenges of providing consistent, affordable, school age childcare (SAC) in rural and island areas.

- Project background:

We will be conducting research during April 2022 in the specific targeted areas of Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, Highland, Shetland, Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles) speaking to parents, carers, informal carers and school age childcare providers.

The research findings will provide a holistic view of school age childcare (4-14 years old) by including informed conclusions on the presence, challenges of, and opportunities for childcare providers in the different specified areas, and will allow us to make recommendations based on those conclusions for the wider rural and island areas of Scotland.

We are aware there are different challenges to providing childcare in rural and island regions, therefore you can help us understand the specific needs and interests of rural and island regions that need to be taken into account and inform new/revised policies, strategies and services.

- What we'll cover

Over the next 50/60 minutes, we would like to get to know your opinion and experience providing childcare in rural and island areas of Scotland.

First we will cover general questions about providing SAC, what is needed to provide wraparound care and what are the implications of providing this service in a rural or island setting.

Second we would like to uncover the challenges that may arise for those involved, for example levels of demand, recruiting staff, etc.

Finally we'll explore potential opportunities to address these.

**A few admin things before we jump into the questions, to check we're all on the same page...**

- Roles in interview

X will ask questions, X will take notes - but might jump in with some questions or clarifications.

- Confirming consent

We've sent you a permission form for handling personal data. Checking you've seen it/signed it? Key points to confirm:

**Notes:** We will keep notes from this interview in a private folder that only the research team can see - and will delete these once the project ends

**Anonymity** - You can decide if you would like what you say to be quoted. If so, quotes you share will be anonymised when we share them more widely.

**Voluntary** - if there's anything I ask that you are not comfortable answering, that's fine. Just let me know. If after the interview you think of anything that you said that you don't want to be included, message me to let me know.

**Recording** - if you're happy for us to, we would like to audio/video record this conversation - just for our own note-taking purposes, to make sure we capture any useful insights you share. If not, no worries and we'll just take notes.

- Any questions? Still happy to take part?

**[start recording, if consent given]**

### **Background (2 mins)**

- If you can please share with us a bit about you?
- Where do you work? What is your role?

- How long have you been there? Do you live nearby?

### **What service do you provide (10 mins)**

Can you tell us about the service you provide?

- What best describes the service you provide, is it day care, childminder, school club?
- From what time to what time is this service provided?
- How many children do you look after? What is their age range?
- Any specific reason for this?
- Is your service delivered in Gaelic? [if not, probe as to why this is].
- What does a typical day look like when caring for a child?
- What type of activities do you undertake when caring for children?
- To deliver those activities are there any specific logistics you have to look after?
- Do you provide transport and food to the children you take care of? And if not, why?
- Do you do holiday provision? And if not, why?

### **Practicalities of providing the service (20 mins)**

[Aim to identify the different challenges and/or good practices. Explore the implications of providing this service in a rural or island setting.]

- Where are you located?
  - How do children normally get there?
  - Is it easily accessible by public transport?
  - How close is it to the school?
  - Is the venue yours?
  - Autonomy to use space? Difficulty with storage and cleaning?
  - How do you manage venue repairs and maintenance?
  - How concerned are you about further increases in the cost of energy and heating? What might this mean for your business? What support does your organisation need to overcome this challenge?
- How are the levels of demand within your area?
  - Are there any periods that you know of that will be higher or lower demand?
  - Is there a request for more drop-in or ad hoc childcare?

- Is there any 'competition' in your area?
- Has your business faced fluctuations in demand before? How did you overcome this?
- Do parents demand provision to be delivered in Gaelic?
- Any issues with staffing (recruiting and maintaining staff)?
- When it comes to training for yourself or staff are there any particular issues in accessing, or maintaining certificates, getting qualifications?
  - Are there any barriers to having staff fluent in Gaelic?
  - What would you do to ensure there were consistent wages in your profession?
- What other challenges do you face when trying to deliver your services in Gaelic?
- We are aware there are some requirements to be registered with the care inspectorate, can you tell us more about this?
  - Are there any particular venue requirements that have affected you?
  - Are there any particular training requirements that you find challenging?

### **Funding and ELC 1140 (10 mins)**

- How is the running of the service funded?
  - How is your service mainly funded?
  - Have you applied for grants or done fundraisers?
- Are there any particular costs that weigh more than others?
- How has the new ELC 1140 affected your service provision?
- What type of funding do you have available? Is it different for each child's age group? What administrative challenges might this bring?
- CHILDMINDER - What type of economic support is available?
- What access to funding do you have to help with running costs and wages of the organisation?

### **Support needed (10 mins)**

[Aim to identify the main needs as a provider, pinpoint the more felt pain points, and the areas that if addressed would let them thrive.]

- What are the key components for a successful childcare model?
- What would be the ideal setting for you to provide your service?
  - What are the areas you would need more support with?

- What could the care inspectorate do to make the provision of your childcare more accessible?
- How can you make your services more accessible to children in your community?
- How important to you is it that the delivery of your services is in Gaelic?
- What are the areas you would like to develop or explore more for your provision of childcare? outdoor learning?
- Have there been any initiatives where local businesses get involved/support funding for provision?
- If you were able to change a piece of legislation around childcare, what would this look like? And what would this allow you to do?

### **Wrap up & thank you**

- Is there anything else you'd like to tell us? Anything we should have asked you but didn't?
- [Notetaker - any questions?]

If there's anything else you think of afterwards, just let us know.

Or if you have **any concerns about anything you said**, just come back to us and we can make sure we remove that part of the interview when we do the analysis.

We will be writing up a report for the Scottish Government with concluding insights gathered from this research. The aim is to provide robust evidence to support different ideas for supporting the development and provision/access of SAC that is specific to the needs and interests of rural and island areas of Scotland. This report most likely will be published by July.

Really grateful for your time. Thank you and have a great rest of your day!



## 4. Survey Questions

### 4.1 Parent and carer survey questions

**About the research:**

#### **Rural and Island Childcare**

**Cùram-chloinne dùthchail is eileanach**

#### **What this is about**

The Scottish Government has commissioned Snook to explore how to address the challenges of providing consistent, affordable, school age childcare (SAC) in rural and island areas.

#### **What is our ask**

Please complete this survey if you are a parent or carer of a child(ren) between the ages of 4 and 14 years and you live in Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, Highland, Shetland, or Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles).

Access to quality childcare can have an impact on family life. By completing this survey you can help the Scottish Government understand the specific needs and interests of rural and island regions to inform policies, strategies and services.

#### **This survey**

The purpose of this survey is to identify people that would be interested to take part in further research, collect their contact details, and help inform the next stage of the research.

This survey will take around 15 to 20 minutes to complete. You can also choose to leave your details for a chance to win a £40, £20 or £15 shopping voucher.

#### **Support available**

If you would like support, please tick one of the options or contact [researcher email]

#### **Questions**

##### **1. To take part in this research do you:**

(If you do require additional support you will be redirected to the contacts page where you can leave your details and someone will be in touch) - required

- Need additional support to take part in this research?

- Would prefer to receive this survey in Gaelic?
- Rather answer the survey over a phone call?
- Would rather only take part in an interview.
- I don't need any additional support and I'm happy to proceed.

## **2. Permission for handling personal information**

### **How we will use your data**

As part of this research we may need to collect some personal information about you (data that could identify you). You are being asked this to ensure we have good representation from a number of parents and carers across Scotland. We will use your contact details only to get in touch with you if you want to take part in further research, and your personal information will be used only for research purposes - to have a better idea of who has responded to the survey.

Your participation in the research will be kept confidential. If you decide to take part in the research you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

### **What information is being collected**

This survey is being administered through SmartSurvey platform, which is in compliance with UK data protection regulations. In this survey, the personal information you will be asked about includes optional questions on your contact information, age, gender, employment status, marital status, disability, ethnicity, and age of children.

### **How we store your information**

This information will be securely stored in encrypted servers and will not be shared with any other organisation. All personal information and any quotes will be anonymised. Only the Snook researchers of this project will have access, and only anonymised data (any personal identifiers will be removed) will be given to the Scottish Government.

All personal data will be securely deleted 12 months after completion of the research project (31st May 2023).

We need your permission before you can take part in the survey. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask for clarification (by getting in touch with us at [researcher email]) before ticking the following boxes in this form.

**2. I grant permission to be a participant in this survey. I understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the research at any time, without giving a reason. - required**

- Yes
- No

**3. I grant permission to the information I provide being quoted in research outputs. I understand that all quotes will be anonymised (personal identifiers removed).** - required

- Yes
- No

### **Your rights**

You have rights around your personal information under UK data protection legislation. If you decide to take part in our research you are still free to withdraw, modify your consent or withdraw your consent at any time, without giving a reason, by getting in touch with us. To find out more visit <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/>

### **What if you have concerns?**

If you have concerns about how your personal data has been used, you can contact the Scottish Government's Data Protection Officer: [contact information].

For further information or if you feel the Scottish Government has not resolved your concerns, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at [contact information].

### **4. What local authority do you live in?**

(This survey is only applicable for people that live in the below local authorities) - required

- Aberdeenshire
- Argyll and Bute
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Highland
- Shetland
- Western Isles/Na h-Eileanan Siar

### **5. What is your postcode?**

**6. Are you a parent or carer of a child(ren) between the age of 4 to 14?** - required

- Yes
- No

**7. How many children do you have/care for?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

**8. What is the age range of your child(ren)? Please tick all that apply**

- 0-3
- 4-8
- 9-13
- 14+

**9. Do you care for a child(ren) who has additional support needs?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**10. Does your child(ren) receive Gaelic Medium Education?**

- Yes
- No

**11. Is your child(ren) exposed to Gaelic in any of the following ways? Please tick all that apply**

- Gaelic is spoken in your household
- Have family members (eg. grandparents) that speak Gaelic
- Have family members that are learning Gaelic
- Listen to Gaelic-language media such as BBC Alba or Radio nan Gaidheal
- Attend community events through medium of Gaelic e.g. Local Mòd, events organised by Fèisean etc.
- Other (please specify):

**12. Do you use any childcare outside of school hours? Please tick all that apply**

- No, I take care of them
- My partner
- After school club
- Breakfast club
- Childminder
- Holiday clubs
- Relative or close friend (informal care)
- Other (please specify):

**13. What is your current method of transport for dropping off and/or picking up your child(ren) at the childcare?** Please tick all that apply

- Bus
- Cycle
- Driving
- Park & stride (driven most of the way and then walk the rest)
- Relative or friend drives them
- Walk
- Taxi
- Scooter/skate
- Other (please specify):

**14. How much time does it take to drop off your child(ren) to the childcare location?**

**15. How much time does it take to pick up your child(ren) from the childcare location?**

**16. What additional services would you benefit from, or are needed in your area?**

Please DRAG the options in order of preference, with 1 being the most needed/preferred and 7 being the least needed/preferred

- After school clubs
- Childminders
- Creative arts
- Holiday clubs or programs
- Outdoor learning
- Sports
- Weekend provision
- Other (please specify)

**17. Where do you prefer that childcare services be delivered?**

Please DRAG the options in order of preference, with 1 being the most preferred and 5 being the least preferred

- Community facilities
- Family or friend's home
- Leisure facilities
- Outdoor setting
- School premises
- Other (please specify)

**18. What is most important to you when selecting childcare?**

Please DRAG the options in order of preference, with 1 being most important and 8 being least important

- Location
- Availability of transport
- Affordable cost
- Friendly staff
- Qualified staff
- Opening times
- Type of activity
- Other (please specify)

**19. What would you prefer for wrap around childcare provision in Gaelic to look like? Please tick all that apply**

- Childcare provided fully in Gaelic
- Some of the childcare activities provided in Gaelic
- Bilingual staff (English and Gaelic) available
- No need to have childcare provided in Gaelic

Can you tell us more about this? (optional)

**20. Would any of the options below make childcare more accessible to you?**

Please tick all that apply

- More flexibility in cancellation periods
- More local options
- Seasonal availability
- School holiday availability
- Last minute availability
- Short term financial assistance (e.g. when starting a new job?)
- Weekend availability
- Short term/ad-hoc availability (e.g. the odd week/weekend)
- Other (please specify):

**21. Are there any changes you would make to childcare services in your area?**

**22. What is the most important aspect of your child(s) childcare?**

**23. Would you be interested in supporting a community or parent-led initiative for school age childcare in your area?**

- Yes
- No

Please take 2 more minutes to answer these demographic questions. These questions are voluntary and if there are any questions you do not want to answer, please just go on to the next one.

The Scottish Government is required to collect equality evidence to meet requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. This information is not mandatory and will be used for statistical and research purposes only.

This data is anonymous, your name will not be associated with it. We will use it purely for research purposes - to understand who we have engaged with.

**24. What is your age?**

- 16-25
- 26-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61 and over
- Prefer not to say

We would like to know some general information about your occupation as we are aware this can influence your childcare.

**25. What is your current occupational status? Please tick all that apply**

- Employed
- Retired
- Stay-at-home parent/carer
- Student
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Unable to work
- Volunteer
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

**26. Which of these best describe your working (formal and informal) patterns? Please tick all that apply**

- Part-time

- Full time
- Split shifts
- Multiple part-time jobs
- Seasonal employment
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify):

**27. If you are employed tick the sector that best describes what you do:**

- Administration
- Agriculture and farming
- Education
- Health and social care
- Hospitality
- Manufacturing
- Retail
- Public sector
- Tourism
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify):

**28. Are you in receipt of any of the following? Please tick all that apply**

- Best Start Grant/Best Start Foods
- Child maintenance
- Child support (Scottish/UK Child Payment or Child Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

**29. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? Please include problems related to old age.**

- Yes, limited a lot
- Yes, limited a little
- No
- Prefer not to say

If yes, and you are happy to do so, please specify:

**30. What is your marital status?**

- Never married and never registered a same-sex civil partnership
- In a registered same-sex civil partnership
- Married



- Separated, but still legally married
- Separated, but still legally in a same-sex civil partnership
- Divorced
- Formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
- Widowed
- Surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership
- Prefer not to say

**31. What sex are you?**

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

**32. Do you consider yourself to be trans, or have a trans history?** (Answer only if you are aged 16 or over. Trans is a term used to describe people whose gender identity is not the same as their sex registered at birth.)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**33. If yes, and if you would like to, please describe your trans status (for example non-binary, trans man, trans woman):**

**34. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?** (Answer only if you are aged 16 or over.)

- Straight/Heterosexual
- Gay or Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Prefer not to say
- Other sexual orientation (please specify):

**35. What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?**

- None
- Church of Scotland
- Roman Catholic
- Other Christian, please write in below:
- Muslim, write in denomination or school below:
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Sikh
- Jewish

- Pagan
- Prefer not to say
- Another religion or body, please write in:

**36. What is your ethnic group?**

- White
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian
- African, Scottish African or British African
- Caribbean or Black
- Other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

We invite you to take part in further research. This is an opportunity to further explain your needs and interest on the topic and share general opinions and experience.

We will be providing shopping vouchers for those who take part in an interview as a thank you for their time.

**37. Would you be interested in discussing this topic further with a member of the Snook research team? (either by phone or on a video call)**

- required

- Yes
- No

**38. Do you agree to share your contact details with us, and grant us permission to contact you to arrange interview? - required**

- Yes
- No

**39. We will be randomly selecting three survey respondents to receive a £40, £20 or £15 shopping voucher. If you would like to be included in this draw please tick Yes and provide your contact details below. - required**

- Yes
- No

If you have agreed so, please provide details

## 4.2 Provider survey questions

### About the research:

#### Rural and Island Childcare

#### Cùram-chloinne dùthchail is eileanach

### What this is about

The Scottish Government has commissioned Snook to explore how to address the challenges of providing consistent, affordable, school age childcare (SAC) in rural and island areas.

### What is our ask

Please complete this survey if you provide school age childcare (for child(ren) between the ages of 4 and 14 years) in Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, Highland, Shetland, or Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles).

Access to quality childcare can have an impact on family life. By completing this survey you can help the Scottish Government understand the specific needs and interests of rural and island regions to inform policies, strategies and services.

### This survey

The purpose of this survey is to identify people that would be interested to take part in further research, collect their contact details and help inform the next stage of the research.

This survey will take around 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

### Support available

If you would like support, please tick one of the options or contact [researcher email].

### Questions

#### 1. To take part in this research do you: - required

- Need additional support to take part in this research?
- Would prefer to receive this survey in Gaelic?
- Rather answer the survey over a phone call?
- I don't need any additional support and I'm happy to proceed
- Would rather only take part in an interview

#### 2. Permission for handling personal information

## **How we will use your data**

As part of this research we may need to collect some personal information about you (data that could identify you). You are being asked this to ensure we have good representation from a number of different childcare providers across Scotland. We will use your contact details only to get in touch with you if you want to take part in further research, and your personal information will be used only for research purposes - to have a better idea of who has replied to the survey.

Your participation in the research will be kept confidential. If you decide to take part in the research you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

## **What information is being collected**

This survey is being administered through SmartSurvey platform which is in compliance with UK data protection regulations. In this survey, the personal information you will be asked about includes optional questions on your contact information and role.

## **How we store your information**

This information will be securely stored in encrypted servers and will not be shared with any other organisation. All personal information and any quotes will be anonymised (any personal identifiers will be removed). Only the Snook researchers of this project will have access, and only anonymised data will be given to the Scottish Government.

All personal data will be securely deleted 12 months after completion of the research project (31st May 2023).

We need your permission before you can take part in the survey. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask for clarification (by getting in touch with us at [researcher email]) before ticking the following boxes in this form).

**2. I grant permission to be a participant in this survey. I understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the research at any time, without giving a reason. - required**

- Yes
- No

**3. I grant permission to the information I provide being quoted in research outputs using a pseudonym (fake name). - required**

- Yes
- No

## **Your rights**

You have rights around your personal information under UK data protection legislation. If you decide to take part in our research you are still free to withdraw, modify your consent or withdraw your consent at any time, without giving a reason, by getting in touch with us. To find out more visit <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/>

## **What if you have concerns?**

If you have concerns about how your personal data has been used, you can contact the Scottish Government's Data Protection Officer: [contact information].

For further information or if you feel the Scottish Government has not resolved your concerns, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at [contact information].

## **4. In what local authority do you operate? - required**

- Aberdeenshire
- Argyll and Bute
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Highland
- Shetland
- Western Isles/Na h-Eileanan Siar
- None of these

Before we start we would like to know a little bit more about you and your organisation, so that we can have a better idea of who has taken part in the research.

## **5. Where do you operate? (name of town/village)**

## **6. What is your role?**

## **7. What service do you provide? Please tick all that apply**

- After school clubs
- Breakfast club
- Creative arts
- Day care (ELC and school age childcare)
- Day care (only school age childcare)
- Holiday clubs/programs
- Outdoor learning

- Sports
- Other (please specify):

**8. What type of service provision best describes you?**

- Babysitting
- Childminder
- Charity run organisation
- Community or voluntary service
- Informal carer (family or friend)
- Local authority run
- Private organisation
- Other (please specify):

**9. How many children do you look after in your setting?**

- 1 to 3
- 3 to 6
- 6 to 9
- 9 to 15
- 15 to 20
- 20 to 30
- 30+

**10. What is the predominant age range of the children?**

- 0-4
- 4-8
- 8-12
- 12-14
- Mix

**11. In what type of venue/facility do you provide childcare? Please tick all that apply**

- Community space
- Leisure facilities
- In your own home
- Rented facility
- School
- Other (please specify):

**12. How are your services funded? Please tick all that apply**

- Fully or partially funded by local authority
- Grants

- Private paid-for service (e.g. in the case of childminder or organisation)
- Unpaid (e.g. family or friend, volunteer)
- Other (please specify):

**13. Do you receive any alternative or extra funding?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide details:

**14. Do you provide a transport option to pick up and/or drop off children?**

- Yes
- No

Can you tell us more about this, are there any particular challenges?

**15. Do you provide food for children during childcare provision?**

- Yes
- No

Can you tell us more about this, are there any particular challenges?

**16. Is your service delivered in Gaelic?** Please tick all that apply

- Childcare provided fully in Gaelic
- Some of the childcare activities provided in Gaelic
- Bilingual staff (English and Gaelic) available
- There is no provision of childcare in Gaelic

**17. Which of these locational challenges affects you?** Please tick all that apply

- Cost of rent
- Cost of energy/heating
- Inability to provide flexible opening times
- Inability to provide transport
- Lack of suitable premises

Can you tell us more about this? (optional)

**18. Which of these affects your service provision?** Please tick all that apply

- Low demand
- Unreliable/inconsistent levels of demand
- High demand

Can you tell us more about this? (optional)

**19. Which of these staffing challenges affects your service provision?** Please

tick all that apply

- Access to training for staff
- Difficulty recruiting/retaining staff
- Shortage of suitable staff

Can you tell us more about these challenges? (optional)

**20. Are there any barriers to providing childcare in Gaelic?**

**21. Which of these challenges affects you the most?** Please tick the THREE that most affect your service provision.

- Cost of rent
- Cost of energy/heating
- Lack of suitable premises
- Inability to provide flexible opening times
- Inability to provide transport
- Low demand
- Unreliable/inconsistent levels of demand
- High demand
- Access to training for staff
- Difficulty recruiting/retaining staff
- Shortage of suitable staff

Are there any other challenges to service provision that affect you and are not mentioned above? (optional)

**22. What support do you need to meet the needs of families and/your staff?**

Please tick all that apply

- Access to better public transport
- Funding/grants for running costs i.e heating, venue hire
- Incentives for staff
- Subsidised funding for low attendance
- Other (please specify):

Can you tell us more about this? (optional)

**Would you be interested in taking part in an interview (phone or online interview)?**

This interview is an opportunity to further explain your needs and interest on the topic and share general opinions and experience.

**23. If yes, do you agree to share your contact details with us, and grant us permission to contact you? - required**

- Yes
- No



If you have agreed so, please provide your details

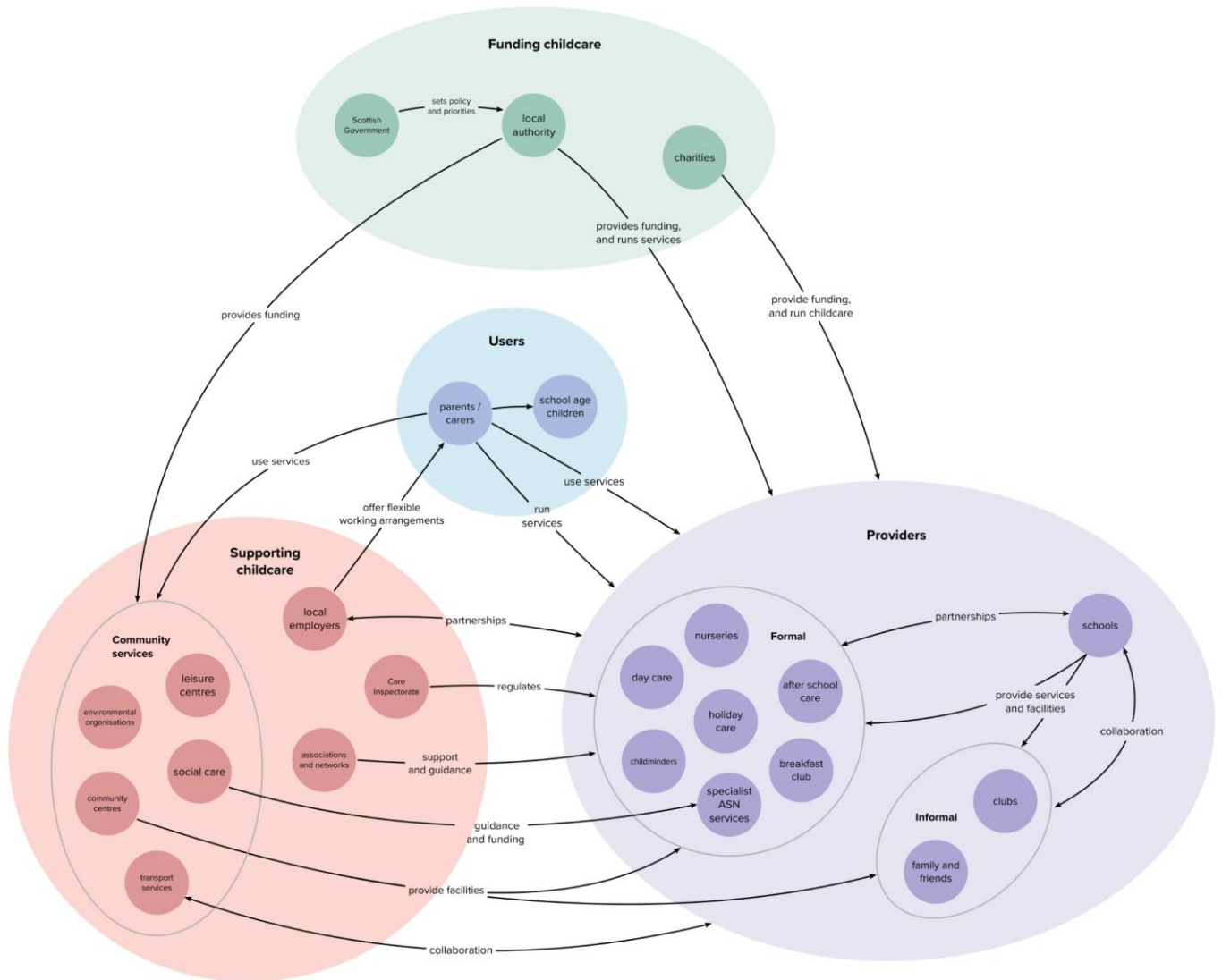
## 5. Systems Maps

### 5.1 Map of System Actors

This map shows the range of actors involved in childcare in rural and island areas that we identified through our survey and interviews. It is divided into four sections: actors which provide childcare, actors which use childcare, actors which support childcare, and actors which fund childcare.

It allows users to see which actors are involved in the childcare system and where. This is useful when trying to understand how relationships in the system are arranged.

The black arrows describe the relationship between actors, and the direction of the relationships.

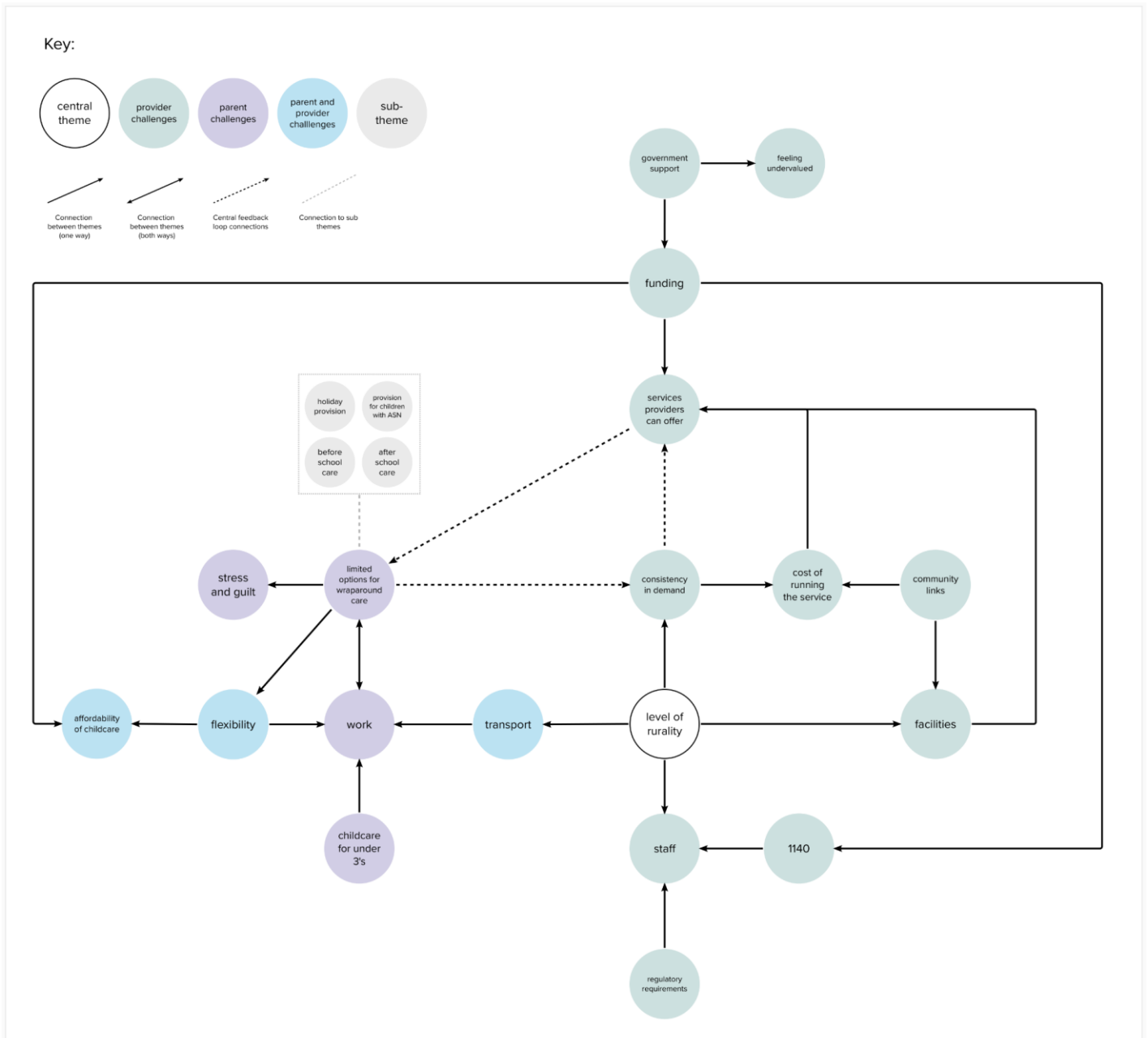


## 5.2 Map of Overlap between parent and provider challenges

This map shows how parents' challenges connect to providers' challenges. As well as how both sets of problems are impacted by the level of rurality.

It allows users to see the various themes and challenges which emerged during this research, and shows how problems are closely interlinked and dependent on one another.

The black arrows show the direction of the relationships between themes.



## 6. Participant Information/Consent

### 6.1 Consent form - parents/carers

#### **Permission for handling personal data**

You are being invited to participate in our research project to help us understand the provision of school age childcare (SAC) in Scotland's rural and island regions. Before you decide whether to take part, please read this information carefully and ask us if you have any questions.

#### ***What is this research about?***

The Scottish Government has commissioned Snook to explore how to address the challenges of providing consistent, affordable, school age childcare (SAC) in rural and island areas. This is in line with policy objectives to provide 'wraparound' school age childcare across Scotland, with care before and after school throughout the year, including school holidays.

#### ***What would I be asked to do if I took part?***

We will be conducting informal interviews with participants, where we ask about your experience and needs around accessing childcare. The aim is to explore together the different challenges involved and potential opportunities to address these. The interview will be online and last between 45 to 60 minutes.

#### ***Will I be paid?***

As a thank you for your time, we will be providing a £40 Love2shop e-Gift Card. Gift cards can be sent physically (paper) upon request.

#### ***What information is being collected?***

As part of this researcher may ask some questions that reveal some personal information about you (data that could identify you) for example age, gender, employment status, age of your children.

Your personal information will be used only for research purposes.

Your participation in the research will be kept confidential. If you decide to take part in the research you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

#### ***Will I be audio-recorded?***

Yes. During the research we will be recording audio and video to ensure we can be present in the research process rather than focussing on taking notes. If you do not want to be recorded on video, you can let us know on the consent form.

#### ***How will information be stored?***

This information will be securely stored in encrypted servers and will not be shared with any other organisation. All personal information and any quotes will be anonymised. Only the Snook researchers of this project will have access, and only anonymised quotes (any personal identifiers will be removed) will be used in the final report if you have granted permission to do so in the consent form.

All personal data will be securely deleted 12 months after completion of the research project (31st May 2023).

**Email**

We need your permission before you can take part in the research project. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask for clarification before ticking the appropriate boxes and signing this consent form.

Please email [researcher contact] if you have any questions.

I have read and understood the Permission to handle personal data or it has been read to me. I have been able to ask questions about the research and they have been answered.

Yes

No

I grant permission to be a participant in this interview. I understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the research at any time, without giving a reason.

Yes

No

I grant permission that the information I provide can be used as anonymise quotes in research outputs. I understand that quotes will be anonymised by removing any personal identifier.

Yes

No

I grant permission to be video recorded during the interview.

Yes

No

I grant permission to be audio recorded during the interview.

Yes

No

*Please provide your full name*

**Your rights**

You have rights around your personal information under UK data protection legislation. If you decide to take part in our research you are still free to withdraw,

modify your consent or withdraw your consent at any time, without giving a reason, by getting in touch with us. To find out more see <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/>

***What if you have concerns?***

If you have concerns about how your personal data has been used, you can contact the Scottish Government's Data Protection Officer: [contact details].

For further information or if you feel Scottish Government has not resolved your concerns, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) by calling: 08456 30 60 60, or through [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

## 6.2 Consent form - providers

### Permission for handling personal data

You are being invited to participate in our research project to help us understand the provision of school age childcare (SAC) in Scotland's rural and island regions. Before you decide whether to take part, please read this information carefully and ask us if you have any questions.

#### ***What is this research about?***

The Scottish Government has commissioned Snook to explore how to address the challenges of providing consistent, affordable, school age childcare (SAC) in rural and island areas. This is in line with policy objectives to provide 'wraparound' school age childcare across Scotland, with care before and after school throughout the year, including school holidays.

#### ***What would I be asked to do if I took part?***

We will be conducting informal interviews with participants, where we ask about your opinion and experience providing childcare in rural and island areas of Scotland. The aim is to explore together the different challenges involved and potential opportunities to address these.

The interview will be online and last between 45 to 60 minutes.

#### ***What information is being collected?***

As part of this researcher may ask some questions that reveal some personal information about you (data that could identify you) for example age, gender, employment status, age of your children.

Your personal information will be used only for research purposes.

Your participation in the research will be kept confidential. If you decide to take part in the research you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

#### ***Will I be audio-recorded?***

Yes. During the research we will be recording audio and video to ensure we can be present in the research process rather than focussing on taking notes. If you do not want to be recorded on video, you can let us know on the consent form.

#### ***How will information be stored?***

This information will be securely stored in encrypted servers and will not be shared with any other organisation. All personal information and any quotes will be anonymised. Only the Snook researchers of this project will have access, and only anonymised quotes (any personal identifiers will be removed) will be used in the final report if you have granted permission to do so in the consent form.

All personal data will be securely deleted 12 months after completion of the research project (31st May 2023).



## **Email**

We need your permission before you can take part in the research project. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask for clarification before ticking the appropriate boxes and signing this consent form.

Please email [researcher contact] if you have any questions.

I have read and understood the Permission to handle personal data or it has been read to me. I have been able to ask questions about the research and they have been answered.

Yes

No

I grant permission to be a participant in this interview. I understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the research at any time, without giving a reason.

Yes

No

I grant permission that the information I provide can be used as anonymise quotes in research outputs. I understand that quotes will be anonymised by removing any personal identifier.

Yes

No

I grant permission to be video recorded during the interview.

Yes

No

I grant permission to be audio recorded during the interview.

Yes

No

*Please provide your full name*

## **Your rights**

You have rights around your personal information under UK data protection legislation. If you decide to take part in our research you are still free to withdraw, modify your consent or withdraw your consent at any time, without giving a reason, by getting in touch with us. To find out more see <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/>

***What if you have concerns?***

If you have concerns about how your personal data has been used, you can contact the Scottish Government's Data Protection Officer: [contact details].

For further information or if you feel Scottish Government has not resolved your concerns, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) by calling: 08456 30 60 60, or through [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)