Parent survey of funded early learning and childcare (2025)

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Modes:

This instrument will be used for Web/CAWI.

Programming instructions:

All questions to have hidden DK (-8) and/or Prefer not to say (-9) codes unless otherwise specified.

Please generate timestamps at the start of each section (sections identified in the Contents table above).

All questions specify if single or multi-code.

All instructions for CAWI respondents to display in blue.

G_Grid_II1 “Grid instructions 1”
“Please select one answer on every row”

G_Multi_II1 “Multicode instructions 1”
“Please select all that apply”

Short URL:

The short URL for the pilot survey will be:	survey.natcen.ac.uk/ELCparents
The short URL for the mainstage survey will be:	survey.natcen.ac.uk/ELCparents

Programming notes and textfills

Other (please specify)

Where a list of multicode options have an option that includes (please specify), in the CAWI, please have an option for respondents to write in their answer (we have specified separate follow-up questions for the CAPI)

Textfills

Textfills are specified throughout the questionnaire. Noted with a ^

Variables from the sample/feedforward file are generally indicated by use of {} where they are used as textfills. In the routing they are simply listed by their variable name in the sample/feedforward file

Support links

Please include a link in the top right corner on every page in the CAWI saying ‘Support and advice’ (like on EOPS-B/Five to Twelve). Link to this page: https://natcen.ac.uk/parentscarers-views-and-use-early-learning-and-childcare-sources-support

Privacy link

Please include a link to the privacy notice in the top right corner on every page in the CAWI, saying ‘Privacy notice’ and linked to this page: https://natcen.ac.uk/parentscarers-views-and-use-early-learning-and-childcare-privacy-notice

End page/ thank you page text:

You have now completed the questionnaire. Thank you for your participation.

Introduction

{ASK ALL}
Intro
Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Parent Survey

Hello, welcome to this online survey about early learning and childcare. It will take no more than 20 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for taking part in this survey.

We are interested in getting views from parents and carers of children **aged under 6** who **have not yet started school**.

In Scotland, children aged 3 and 4 are now entitled to 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare every year. Some 2- and 5-year-olds are also eligible to this. This is funded by the Scottish Government or the local council. Funded places are provided by a range of settings, including school nurseries, playgroups, private nurseries, family centres and childminders.

The offer of 1140 hours of funded ELC is a relatively new offer in Scotland, and we want to find out from parents and carers how well it works and what improvements could be made, if any.

We would also like to get views from people who don't currently use funded early learning and childcare, including those whose children are not yet old enough to be eligible.

The survey is being carried out by the Scottish Centre for Social Research (ScotCen), an independent research company, on behalf of the Scottish Government. **The answers you give will be entirely confidential.** Your survey answers will be combined with answers from other people who have taken part to give overall survey findings. No one will be able to identify you individually from the data. You can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer, by selecting 'prefer not to answer'.

This survey includes collecting some personal information from you such as your age and gender, but you do not have to answer these questions if you do not want to. You can view our privacy notice here: Privacy notice

Everyone taking part has the chance to enter a **prize draw to win one of 8 x £100 cash prizes**. Click here for prize draw terms and conditions.

Please complete the survey in one go. If you leave without finishing the survey, your answers will be saved but you won't be able to return to your answers. Instead, you will have to start the survey again.

By completing and submitting this survey, you are consenting to be part of this research.

Household information

{ASK ALL}
Chldu6
[SINGLE CODE]
Before we start, do you have any children in your household under 6 years old who have **not yet started school**?

1. Yes
2. No **=> END**

NODK NOREF **=> END**

{ASK IF Chldu6 = 1}
ChldNo
[SINGLE CODE]
Before we ask about your children who have not yet started school, we would like to ask you about your household.

How many children do you have up to the age of 18?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6
7. 7
8. 8
9. 9
10. 10
11. No children in household **=> END**

{ASK IF ChldNo 1-10}
HHintro
We would like to find out the following about your {TEXTFILL: IF ChldNot = 1 “child”; IF ChldNo > 1 “children”}:

- Name
- Age
- Type of childcare
- How many hours of childcare
- Costs of childcare

This information will help us understand what childcare is being used for children of different ages. If you have more than one child, the questions will be asked about one child at a time.

{ASK IF ChldNo 1-10} REPEAT FOR NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENTERED AT ChldNo
ChName
[Open text]
What is the name of your {first} child?
(You can just put the initials of your child if you feel more comfortable doing so)

{ASK IF ChldNo 1-10}
ChAge
[SINGLE CODE]
How old is {ChName}?

1. Under 1
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 4
6. 5
7. 6
8. 7
9. 8
10. 9
11. 10
12. 11
13. 12
14. 13
15. 14
16. 15
17. 16
18. 17
19. 18

{ASK IF ChAge 1-6}
ChIdcare
[MULTI CODE]
Which of the following types of childcare and early learning do you use for {ChName}?

[help box: What is funded early learning and childcare?]

1. Funded early learning and childcare
2. Childcare or early learning that I pay for myself
3. Informal childcare (e.g. grandparent, other relative, friend) on a **regular or frequent basis**
4. Informal childcare (e.g. grandparent, other relative, friend) on an **occasional or irregular basis**
5. None of these [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF ChIdcare = 2}
PaidHrs
You said that you pay for some childcare for {ChName}. **On a typical week**, on average how many hours of paid-for childcare does {ChName} receive? If you don't use any paid-for childcare during one of these periods, please enter '0'.

1. During term time [numeric input 0…100]
2. During school holidays [numeric input 0…100]

{ASK IF ChIdcare = 3 OR 4}
InfCare
You said that {ChName} receives informal childcare on a regular and/or occasional basis. **On a typical week**, on average how many hours of informal childcare does {ChName} receive? If you don't use any informal childcare during one of these periods, please enter '0'.

1. During term time [numeric input 0…100]
2. During school holidays [numeric input 0…100]

{ASK IF ChldAge = 1-6 AND Chldcare = 2}
carespnd
On average, how much do you currently spend in total per month on childcare for {ChName}? Please include all costs, any fees that you pay, as well as additional expenses that you are responsible for, such as nappies or snacks. An approximate figure will do.

Please write in the box below:

Total spend per month on childcare for {ChName}
[0…5000]

Use of funded ELC (3–5-year-olds)

{ASK ALL}
35intro1
Throughout this questionnaire we are interested in getting opinions of free early learning and childcare which is funded by the Scottish Government or your Council. For short we will refer to this as funded early learning and childcare or funded ELC.

These questions relate to your pre-school child/children aged 3 to 5 years.

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5, ChldAge = GRID COLUMN 4, 5, 6}
35intro2
The following questions relate to childcare for children aged 3 to 5 years.

If you have more than one child in this age-group, please choose one child who is receiving funded ELC to think about when answering the questions.

If none of your children aged 3 to 5 years have received funded ELC then please choose one of them to answer the following questions about.

{ASK IF has a more than one preschool child aged 3-5, ChldNo >1 AND ChldAge = 4, 5, 6}
35ChldName
[Open text]
Which child will you be answering the questionnaire in reference to?

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5, ChldAge = 4, 5, 6}
35ELCstat
[SINGLE CODE]
Which of these statements apply to 35ChldName?

1. My child is currently attending funded early learning and childcare (or starts in the next few weeks)
2. My child is not currently attending funded early learning and childcare, but has done so since August 2024
3. My child does not currently attend funded early learning and childcare, and has not done so since August 2024

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5 AND (child is currently attending ELC OR has attended ELC since August 2024), ChldAge = 4, 5, 6 AND (35ELCstat = 1 OR 2)}
35ELCtyp
[MULTICODE]
What types of funded early learning and childcare has your child attended since August 2024?

{#G_Multi_II1}

1. Local authority nursery class (including within a school or stand-alone)
2. Private nursery
3. Community/voluntary nursery
4. Playgroup (where child attends without parent/carer)
5. Family centre (where child attends without parent/carer)
6. Childminder
7. Other (please specify)
8. I don’t know [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5 AND (child is currently attending ELC OR has attended ELC since August 2024), ChldAge = 4, 5, 6 AND (35ELCstat = 1 OR 2)}
35fullent
[SINGLE CODE]
{Textfill IF 35ELCstat =1 'Do} {If 35ELCstat = 2 'Did'} you use the full 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare for your child?

For example, using the full entitlement would equate to around:

- 30 hours per week during term time
- 22 hours per week over the whole year

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5 AND (child is currently attending ELC OR has attended ELC since August 2024), ChldAge = 4, 5, 6 AND (35ELCstat = 1 OR 2)}
35termtime
[SINGLE CODE]
Which of the following best describes how the funded early learning and childcare hours you use for {35ChldName} are spread over the year?

1. Year-round, including school holidays
2. School term time only
3. Other (please specify)
4. I don't know

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5 AND (child is currently attending ELC OR has attended ELC since August 2024), ChldAge = 4, 5, 6 AND (35ELCstat = 1 OR 2)}
35hrs
Still thinking about {35ChldName}…

In a typical week, roughly how many hours {TEXTFILL: IF 35ELCstat = 1 "does {35ChldName} currently spend"; IF 35ELCstat = 2 "did {35ChldName} previously spend"} at funded early learning and childcare? If you don't use any funded hours during one of these periods, please enter '0'.

1. During term time [numeric input 0…100]
2. During school holidays [numeric input 0…100]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5 AND (child is currently attending ELC OR has attended ELC since August 2024), ChldAge = 4, 5, 6 AND (35ELCstat = 1,2)}
35ELCsat
[SINGLE CODE]
How satisfied or dissatisfied {TEXTFILL: IF 35ELCstat = 1 "are"; IF 35ELCstat = 2 "were"} you that you have been offered the flexibility to use your funded hours in a way that meets your family's needs?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Fairly dissatisfied
4. Very dissatisfied
5. Don't know

{ASK IF 35ELCsat = 3,4}
35ELCpref
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1…9]
How would you prefer to use your funded hours?
{#G_Multi_II1}

1. Throughout the year including school holidays
2. School term time only
3. As a blended arrangement with a nursery and childminder
4. Longer sessions on fewer days per week (e.g. 3 days from 8am to 4pm – please use the box on the next page to provide more detail)
5. Sessions during school hours (mirroring the start and finish times of the local schools)
6. Shorter sessions on more days per week (e.g. 5 days for part of the day – please use the box on the next page to provide more detail)
7. Provision outside of normal working hours (e.g. before 8am and after 6pm)
8. More flexibility with when the hours can be used week to week
9. Hours can be changed at short notice
10. Other (please specify)
11. Don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF 35ELCpref = 4}
35ELCprefLo
You said you would like longer sessions on fewer days per week. Please use the box below if you would like to provide more detail on how you would prefer to use your funded hours.

{ASK IF 35ELCpref = 6}
35ELCprefSh
You said you would like shorter sessions on more days per week. Please use the box below if you would like to provide more detail on how you would prefer to use your funded hours.

[open text]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5 AND (child is currently attending ELC OR has attended ELC since August 2024), ChldAge = GRID COLUMN 4, 5, 6 AND (35ELCstat = 1 OR 2)}
35usersn
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1…11]
What {TEXTFILL: IF 35ELCstat = 1 "are; IF 35ELCstat = 2 "were" your main reasons for using funded early learning and childcare?

{#G_Multi_II1}

1. I think it will be good for my child's learning (e.g. speech and language skills, counting, creativity etc)
2. I think it will be good for my child's social, emotional or behavioural development (including mixing with other children)
3. I think it will help build my child's independence/confidence
4. I think it will be good for my ability to help my child's learning and development at home

5. To work or look for work (yourself or your partner)
6. To increase the number of hours that I or my partner work
7. To study or improve work-related skills (yourself or your partner)
8. To have more time for household tasks such as cooking, DIY, cleaning, etc (yourself or your partner)
9. To have more time to look after other children (yourself or your partner)
10. To have more time to look after myself (ourselves): to rest, de-stress, exercise, socialise, etc
11. To reduce the burden on grandparents/ because informal care not available
12. Other reason (please specify)

{ASK IF 35fullent = 2,3}
35notuse
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-13]
Why do you not use all the funded hours of early learning and childcare for your 3–5-year-old that you are entitled to?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. I don’t need childcare for so many hours
2. I don’t want childcare for so many hours
3. I prefer that a grandparent or other close relative looks after my child some of the time
4. My child wouldn’t like to be separated from myself or my partner for so many hours
5. I don’t think it would be good for my child’s wellbeing or development
6. I don’t think it would be good for my relationship with my child
7. I feel children should not be in nursery for that long
8. I can’t get the days/hours I want at the setting of my choice
9. It is more convenient for me to drop off my children at ELC and school at the same time
10. My travel time to childcare setting is too long
11. Public Transport to childcare setting is not available
12. Transport to childcare setting is expensive
13. I am not confident that my provider/others available can meet the additional support needs of my child
14. Other reason (please specify)
15. Don’t know [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 3-5 AND child does not/has not attended funded ELC, ChldAge = GRID COLUMN 4, 5, 6 AND 35ELCstat = 3}
35reasnot
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-12]
Since August 2021 all pre-school children aged 3 and 4 are eligible for 1140 hours per year of funded early learning and childcare. Are there particular reasons that you are not using funded ELC for your child?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. I was not aware of the availability of funded early learning and childcare
2. I don’t know how to apply for funded early learning and childcare/I find applying difficult
3. A lack of flexibility or choice in opening hours or sessions available to me

4. A lack of flexibility or choice in available childcare settings and/or types of childcare
5. I have concerns about the associated costs, even if it's funded
6. My travel time is too long, or transport is not available/too expensive to get to a suitable provider
7. I couldn't find any available providers near me
8. I think my child is too young
9. I want/am able to look after my child myself most of the time
10. I prefer a family member – e.g. a grandparent – to look after my child when I/my partner is not able to
11. I don't think it would benefit my child's wellbeing and/or development
12. I am not confident that the providers available can meet the additional support needs of my child
13. Other reason (please specify)
14. Don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

Use of funded ELC (2-year-olds)

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old, ChldAge = GRID COLUMN 3}
2intro
The following questions relate to childcare for children aged 2 years. If you have more than one child of this age, please choose one of your children to think about when answering the questions:

- If none of your children aged 2 years have experience of free/funded ELC since August 2024, please choose one of them to answer the following questions about.

{ASK IF has a more than one preschool child aged 2, ChldNo >1 AND ChldAge = 3}
2ChldName
[Open text]
Which child will you be answering the questionnaire in reference to?
(You can just put the initials of your child if you feel more comfortable doing so)

[open text]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old, ChldAge = 3}
2ELCelig
[SINGLE CODE]
Is {2ChldName} entitled to the 1140 hours of government funded early learning and childcare?

A 2-year-old is usually eligible if they are (or have been) looked after by a Local Council, are the subject of a kinship care order or a guardianship order, or if their parent receives certain benefits.

1. Definitely eligible
2. Heard of funded hours but unsure if eligible
3. Definitely not eligible
4. Never heard of funded hours for 2-year-olds

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old AND doesn't know if eligible for funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCelig = 2,4}
2ELCuse
[SINGLE CODE]
If your {2ChldName} was eligible for the 1140 hours per year of funded early learning and childcare, would you use at least some of these hours?

Using the full entitlement would equate to around:

- 30 hours per week during term time
- 22 hours per week over the whole year

1. Yes – all of the 1140 hours
2. Yes – some of the 1140 hours
3. No – none of the hours
4. I don't know

{ASK IF would not use funded ELC for 2-year-old, 2ELCuse = 3}
2notuse
[MULTICODE]

[RANDOMISE 1-14]
Are there particular reasons that you would not use funded early learning and childcare if {2ChldName} was eligible?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. I was not aware of the availability of funded early learning and childcare
2. I don't know how to apply for funded early learning and childcare/I find applying difficult
3. A lack of flexibility or choice in opening hours or sessions available to me
4. A lack of flexibility or choice in available childcare settings and/or types of childcare
5. I have concerns about the associated costs, even if it's funded
6. My travel time to childcare setting is too long,
7. Public transport to childcare setting is not available
8. Transport to childcare setting is expensive
9. I couldn't find any available providers near me
10. I think my child is too young
11. I want/am able to look after my child myself most of the time
12. I prefer a family member – e.g. a grandparent – to look after my child when I/my partner is not able to
13. I don't think it would benefit my child's wellbeing and/or development
14. I am not confident that the providers available can meet the additional support needs of my child
15. Other reason (please specify)
16. Don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old AND definitely eligible for funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCelig = 1}
2ELCstat
[SINGLE CODE]
Which of these statements apply to {2ChldName}?
1. My child is currently attending funded early learning and childcare (or starts in the next few weeks)
2. My child is not currently attending funded early learning and childcare, but has done so in the past 12 months
3. My child does not currently attend funded early learning and childcare, and has not done so in the past 12 months

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old AND is/has attended funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCstat = 1,2}
2ELCtyp
[MULTICODE]
What types of funded early learning and childcare have you used for {2ChldName} ?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. Local authority nursery class (including within a school or stand-alone)
2. Private nursery
3. Community/voluntary nursery
4. Playgroup (where child attends without parent/carer)
5. Family centre (where child attends without parent/carer)
6. Childminder
7. Other (please specify)
8. I don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old AND is/has attended funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCstat = 1,2}
2fullent
[SINGLE CODE]
{Textfill IF 2ELCstat =1 'Do} {If 2ELCstat = 2 'Did'} you use the full 1140 hours of funded childcare for {2ChldName}?

Using the full entitlement would equate to around:

- 30 hours per week during term time
- 22 hours per week over the whole year

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old AND is/has attended funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCstat = 1,2}
2termtime
[SINGLE CODE]
Which of the following best describes how the funded early learning and childcare hours you use are spread over the year?

1. Year-round, including school holidays
2. School term time only
3. Other (please specify)
4. I don't know

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old AND is/has attended funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCstat = 1,2}
2hrs
Still thinking about {2ChldName}…

In a typical week, roughly how many hours {TEXTFILL: IF 2ELCstat = 1 "does {2ChldName} currently spend"; IF 2ELCstat = 2 "did {2ChldName} spend"} at funded early learning and childcare? If you don't use any funded hours during one of these periods, please enter '0'.

1. During term time [numeric input 0…100]
2. During school holidays [numeric input 0…100]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old AND definitely eligible for ELC AND is currently/has previously used funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCelig = 1 AND 2ELCstat = 1,2}
2ELCsat
[SINGLE CODE]
How satisfied or dissatisfied {Textfill IF 2ELCstat =1 'are} {If 2ELCstat = 2 'were'} you that you have been offered the flexibility to use your funded hours in a way that meets your family's needs?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Fairly dissatisfied
4. Very dissatisfied
5. Don't know

{ASK IF 2ELCsat = 3,4}
2ELCpref
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-8]
How would you prefer to use your funded hours?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. Throughout school holidays
2. As a blended arrangement with a nursery and childminder
3. Longer sessions on fewer days per week (e.g. 3 days from 8am to 4pm – please use the box on the next page to provide more detail)
4. Sessions during school hours (mirroring the start and finish times of the local schools)
5. Shorter sessions on more days per week (e.g. 5 days for part of the day – please use the box on the next page to provide more detail)
6. Provision outside of normal working hours (e.g. before 8am and after 6pm)
7. More flexibility with when hours can be used week to week
8. Hours can be changed at short notice
9. Other (please specify)
10. Don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF 2ELCpref = 3}
2ELCprefLo
You said you would like longer sessions on fewer days per week. Please use the box below if you would like to provide more detail on how you would prefer to use your funded hours.

[open text]

{ASK IF 2ELCpref = 5}
2ELCprefSh
You said you would like shorter sessions on more days per week. Please use the box below if you would like to provide more detail on how you would prefer to use your funded hours.

[open text]

{ASK IF has a preschool child aged 2 years old AND definitely eligible for ELC AND is currently/has previously used funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCelig = 1 AND 2ELCstat = 1,2}
2usersn
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-11]
What {Textfill IF 2ELCstat =1 'are} {If 2ELCstat = 2 'were'} your main reasons for using funded early learning and childcare for {2ChldName}?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. I think it will be good for my child's learning (e.g. speech and language skills, etc)
2. I think it will be good for my child's social, emotional or behavioural development (including mixing with other children)

3. I think it will help build my child's independence/confidence
4. I think it will be good for my ability to help my child's learning and development at home
5. To work or look for work (yourself or your partner)
6. To increase the number of hours that I or my partner work
7. To study or improve work-related skills (yourself or your partner)
8. To have more time for household tasks such as cooking, DIY, cleaning, etc (yourself or your partner)
9. To have more time to look after other children (yourself or your partner)
10. To have more time to look after myself (ourselves): to rest, de-stress, exercise, socialise, etc
11. To reduce the burden on grandparents/ because informal care not available
12. Other reason (please specify)

{ASK IF 2fullent = 2,3}
2whynotuse
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-12]
Why is it that you do not use all the funded hours of early learning and childcare for {2ChldName} that you are entitled to?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. I don't need childcare for so many hours
2. I don't want childcare for so many hours
3. I prefer that a grandparent or other close relative looks after my child some of the time
4. My child wouldn't like to be separated from myself or my partner for so many hours
5. I don't think it would be good for my child's wellbeing or development
6. I don't think it would be good for my relationship with my child
7. I feel children should not be in nursery for that long
8. I can't get the days/hours I want at the setting of my choice
9. My travel time to childcare setting to too long
10. Public transport to childcare setting is not available
11. Transport to childcare setting is expensive
12. I am not confident that my provider / others available can meet the additional support needs of my child
13. Other reason (please specify)
14. Don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF their 2-year-old is eligible, and they don't use funded ELC 2ELCelig=1 AND 2ELCstat=2 or 3}
2reasnot
[MULTICODE]
Your 2-year-old may be/is eligible for 1140 hours per year of free early learning and childcare. Are there particular reasons that you are not using this free early learning and childcare?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. I was not aware of the availability of funded early learning and childcare
2. I don't know how to apply for funded early learning and childcare/I find applying difficult
3. A lack of flexibility or choice in opening hours or sessions available to me

4. A lack of flexibility or choice in available childcare settings and/or types of childcare
5. I have concerns about the associated costs, even if it's funded
6. My travel time would be too long, or transport is not available/too expensive to get to a suitable provider
7. I couldn't find any available providers near me
8. I think my child is too young
9. I want/am able to look after my child myself most of the time
10. I prefer a family member – e.g. a grandparent – to look after my child when I/my partner is not able to
11. I don't think it would benefit my child's wellbeing and/or development
12. I am not confident that the providers available can meet the additional support needs of my child
13. Other reason (please specify)
14. Don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

Childcare and early learning for children aged under 3

Two elements of routing for this section:

- *This section to be asked of those who have a child aged under 3 and/or a 2-year-old child who is not or may not be eligible for funded EL:*
  {ChldAge = 1,2,3 AND/OR 2ELCelig = 2,3,4}

- *Not to be asked of those who have already answered both the 3-5 year olds section and the 2-year-olds], i.e. they have a child aged 2 and 3-5:*
  {ChldAge = 3 and 4,5 or 6}

{ASK IF [ROUTING ABOVE]}
u3intro
These questions relate to your pre-school child/children aged under 3 years who are not eligible for funded early learning and childcare.

If you have more than one child of this age who is not eligible for funded early learning and childcare, please choose one of your children to think about when answering the questions.

{ASK IF has a more than one preschool child aged 0-2, ChldNo >1 AND ChldAge = 1,2,3 AND 2ELCelig = 2,3,4}
02ChldName
[Open text]
Which child will you be answering the questionnaire in reference to?
(You can just put the initials of your child if you feel more comfortable doing so)

{ASK IF (has a child aged 1 or under, ChldAge = 1,2) OR (has a 2 year old ineligible/unsure if eligible for funded ELC, ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCelig = 2,3,4)}
chldcareO
[MULTICODE]
What types of childcare or early learning that you pay for yourself has {02ChldName} attended since August?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. None [EXCLUSIVE]
2. Private nursery
3. Community/voluntary nursery
4. Playgroup (**without** a parent/carer attending)
5. Family centre (**without** a parent/carer attending)
6. Nanny
7. Childminder
8. Other (please specify)
9. Not sure

{ASK IF not using any paid childcare, chldcareO = 1}
u2notuse
[MULTICODE]
Are there particular reasons that you are not using paid childcare for {02ChldName}

{#G_Multi_II1}

1. I want/am able to look after my child myself most of the time
2. I prefer that a grandparent or other close relative looks after my child
3. I can't afford to pay for childcare
4. My travel time would be too long, or transport is not available/too expensive to get to a suitable provider
5. I think my child is too young
6. My child wouldn't like to be separated from myself or my partner for so many hours
7. I don't think it would be good for my child's wellbeing or development
8. I can't get the days/hours I want at the setting of my choice
9. I don't know how to find childcare or I find applying difficult
10. I couldn't find any good providers near me
11. There is no or limited childcare for under 3 years olds in my area
12. I am not confident that the providers available can meet the additional support needs of my child
13. I am not confident that the providers available can meet the cultural needs of my child'
14. Other reason (please specify)

{ASK IF (has a child aged 1 or under, ChldAge = 1,2) OR (has a 2 year old ineligible/unsure if eligible for funded ELC, ChldAge = 1,2 AND 2ELCelig = 2,3,4)}
u2intrst
[SINGLE CODE]
If it were to be made available, how interested would you be in using funded childcare or early learning provision for {02ChldName}?

1. Very interested
2. Fairly interested
3. Not very interested
4. Not at all interested
5. Don't know

{ASK IF interested/DK in funded u2 ELC, u2intrst = 1,2,5}
u2imprt
How important or unimportant would each of the following be to you when thinking about funded provision for {02ChldName}?

{#G_Grid_II1}
GRID ROWS:
1. Being able to stay and play/learn with my child
2. A small, homely setting
3. Opportunity for my child to meet and play with other children
4. Opportunity for me to meet and talk with other parents
5. Convenient location for home
6. Convenient location for my or my partner's work
7. Provide good outdoor experiences
8. Confidence in the staff
9. Near to my other children's schools/nurseries
10. Flexible hours/sessions
11. Being able to drop-in with my child when I like/not having to book ahead
12. Staff's ability to meet my child's additional support needs

GRID COLUMNS:
1. Very important

2. Important
3. Not very important
4. Not at all important
5. Don’t know
6. Not applicable

Choosing a provider

{ASK IF has a child in funded ELC, 35ELCstat = 1 OR 2ELCstat = 1}
ELCchse
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-16]
Thinking about the provider you use for your child(ren)'s **funded** early learning and childcare hours, how did you choose your current provider?

If you use funded ELC for more than one of the children that you have answered the survey about, please answer this question for one of your 3-5-year-olds.

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. Provider had a good reputation
2. I read inspection reports
3. Convenient location for my home
4. Convenient location for my or my partner's work
5. I liked/trusted the staff
6. It was the only provider available in the area
7. It had no (or a short) waiting list
8. Because everyone in my local area/neighbourhood goes there
9. It would provide good outdoor experiences for my child
10. My child's older sibling went to same provider
11. It is attached to the primary school which my child will go to
12. It provided the flexibility in hours I needed
13. It provided a homely environment/smaller setting
14. I needed reliability of service
15. It was the only provider where I was offered a place
16. It was able to meet my child's additional support needs
17. Other (please specify):

{ASK IF has a child in funded ELC, 35ELCstat = 1 OR 2ELCstat = 1}
ELCsat
[SINGLE CODE]
Thinking about the main provider that you use for your funded early learning and childcare hours, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with the quality of the provision?

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Dissatisfied
4. Very dissatisfied
5. Don't know

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your main provider (that you use for your funded early learning and childcare hours):

GRID ROWS:
1. They communicate openly and regularly with me about my child's progress and achievements **(ELCcomm)**

2. Families are meaningfully involved in influencing change **(ELCchge)**

3. They help further my understanding of how best I can support my child's learning and development at home **(ELCUnd)**

4. They provide daily access to outdoor play. **(ELCotdr)**

5. I am satisfied with the quality of meals and snacks that the setting provides. **(ELCfood)**

6. I am satisfied that my child's dietary requirements are met by the setting. E.g. Allergies and intolerances or health and cultural requirements. **(ELCdiet)**

GRID COLUMNS:

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Don't know
7. Not applicable

Children with additional support needs

{ASK of each child aged 1-6 or under: ChldAge = 1-7}
ASN
[MULTICODE]
Does ChName have any of the following Additional Support Needs?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. No additional support needs [EXCLUSIVE]
2. Autistic spectrum disorder
3. English as an additional language
4. Family circumstances (including bereavement and young carers)
5. Hearing or visual impairment, or deafblind
6. Language, speech and communication difficulties
7. Learning difficulties (e.g. Dyslexia)
8. Learning disabilities (e.g. Down syndrome)
9. Looked after (e.g. by the local authority or in kinship care)
10. Physical or motor impairment, or physical or mental health difficulty
11. Social, emotional or behavioural difficulty
12. Other

{ASK IF has a child with ASN who is also eligible for funded ELC: ASK IF ASN <> 1 AND ((ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCelig = 1) OR ChldAge = 4, 5, 6)}
ASNsat
[SINGLE CODE]
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your funded early learning and childcare provision meets your child(ren)'s additional support needs?

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Dissatisfied
4. Very dissatisfied
5. Don't know

{ASK IF dissatisfied with ASN support, ASNsat = 3,4}
ASNdis
[MULTICODE]
If you are dissatisfied with your access to funded early learning and childcare for your child(ren) with additional support needs, which of the following are the reason(s) for this?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. Not enough staff at setting to meet my child's additional support needs (e.g. lack of 1 to 1 support)
2. Staff do not have the time available to meet my child's needs
3. Staff do not have the right training, knowledge or experience to meet my child's needs
4. Lack of activities for my child's development (e.g. Speech and language or sensory activities)
5. Setting not equipped to meet child's food/nutrition requirements
6. Staff do not take parents' concerns about child needs seriously
7. Poor communication with staff
8. Lack of appropriate planning to meet my child's needs
9. Playrooms are too busy and noisy for my child

10. Setting does not have the right facilities or equipment to meet my child's needs
11. I was not offered a suitable place e.g. opening hours or sessions available
12. Other (please specify)

{ASK IF ASN <> 1. ASK IF has a child with ASN who is also eligible for funded ELC: (ChldAge = 3 AND 2ELCelig = 1) OR ChldAge = 4,5,6}
ASNdif
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-8]
Have you experienced any of the following difficulties finding funded early learning and childcare that meets the additional support needs of your child(ren)?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. Language barriers between staff and myself / my child leading to communication difficulties
2. Lack of suitable places offered (e.g. hours or sessions available)
3. A lack of information on how ELC settings support children with additional needs
4. A lack of information on what support is available to my child(ren) with additional support needs or how I can access support
5. I'm not confident staff have the required qualifications, knowledge or experience
6. I'm not confident staff have the time available to meet my child's needs
7. I'm not confident settings have the environment to suit my child's needs
8. I'm not confident settings have the facilities or equipment to suit my child's needs
9. Other (please specify)
10. No difficulties [EXCLUSIVE]

{ASK IF has a child with ASN, ASN <>1}
ASNdec
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-8]
Which of the following do you base your decision on when choosing an early learning and childcare provider to meet the additional support needs of your child(ren)?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. Staff qualifications, training, knowledge or experience
2. Staff who take time to get to know my child(ren) well and how best to support them
3. Staff who work with me and other professionals to make sure that my child(ren)'s needs are met
4. Staff having the time available to meet individual children's needs
5. Staff being able to work with my child(ren) in ways which meet their needs
6. The quality of the environment
7. The quality and range of facilities and equipment
8. Staff who speak my child(ren)'s first language (other than English)
9. Don't know [EXCLUSIVE]
10. Other (please specify)

Affordability of early learning and childcare

{ASK IF has pre-school child aged 0-5 and paying for ELC, ChldAge = 1-6 AND Chldcare = 2}
afford
[SINGLE CODE]
Have you experienced any difficulties in the last 12 months affording your childcare costs for children below primary age?

1. No difficulties
2. Some difficulties
3. Significant difficulties
4. I don't know
5. Prefer not to say

{ASK IF has had difficulty affording childcare, afford = 2,3}
diffreas
[MULTICODE]
[RANDOMISE 1-6]
Have any of the following made it difficult for you to afford childcare?

{#G_Multi_II1}
1. The overall cost of the childcare hours I need
2. Having to pay deposits upfront
3. Having to pay childcare fees upfront (e.g. for an entire month, quarter or year)
4. Having to pay other costs upfront such as registration fees
5. Transport costs
6. Additional costs such as for trips or other activities at the childcare provider
7. Prefer not to say
8. Other (please specify)

Available childcare

{ASK ALL}
CCareIss
[MULTICODE]
Some people can find that the childcare available for children who have not yet started school in their local area doesn't meet their family's needs very well. Do any of these issues cause a problem for you?

{#G_Multi_II1}

1. No, I have not had problems with accessing childcare [EXCLUSIVE]
2. Not enough places available locally **OR** I couldn't find any available providers near me
3. My travel time to preferred childcare setting is too long
4. Public transport to preferred childcare setting is not available
5. Transport to preferred childcare setting is expensive
6. Lack of flexibility or choice in opening hours or sessions available to me
7. Lack of provision in school holidays
8. Lack of provision for preferred type of childcare provider (for example childminder versus nursery setting)
9. Lack of providers I could trust to provide a high-quality service
10. I am not confident that the providers available can meet the additional support needs of my child
11. Other problem (please specify)

General impact questions

{ASK IF currently uses ELC or has used ELC since August 2021, 35ELCstat = 1,2 OR 2ELCstat = 1,2}
ELCimpct
And, could you please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the impact of funded early learning and childcare on you.

{#G_Grid_II1}

GRID ROW:
1. I am able to think about what I may do in the future
2. I have undertaken voluntary work
3. I have been able to work or look for work
4. I have been able to increase the number of hours I work
5. I have been able to study or improve work-related skills
6. I have been able to care for other family members
7. I have had more time to look after myself
8. I have been feeling less stressed
9. I have been feeling happier

GRID COLUMN:
1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

Demographics

{ASK ALL}
DemInt
This last section asks about you and your household. We use this information to help us better understand survey results. Please remember your survey responses are **completely confidential**, but you can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

{ASK ALL}
Gender
[SINGLE CODE]
Are you a…?

1. Man (including trans man)
2. Woman (including trans woman)
3. Other
4. Prefer not to say

{ASK ALL}
Age
What was your age on your last birthday?
[16...90]

{ASK ALL}
HhldTyp
[SINGLE CODE]
Which of the following best describes your household (by household we mean the people who have this accommodation as their only or main residence)?

1. Single parent/carer household
2. Two parent/carer household
3. Other
4. Prefer not to say

{ASK ALL}
EmpStat
Please tell us about the employment status of all parents or carers in the household.

{#G_Grid_II1}

GRID ROW:

1. Full-time employment
2. Part-time employment
3. Self-employed
4. Unemployed and looking for work
5. Unemployed and not looking for work
6. Student
7. Retired
8. Other
9. Prefer not to say

GRID COLUMNS:

1. You
2. Your partner

{ASK IF any parent/carer is employed, empstat GRID COLUMN = 1 AND GRID ROW = 1,2,3}
HrsWk
How many hours do **you** normally work in a week – including any paid or unpaid overtime?

[0…97]
SHOW REF

SOFTCHECK: If response > 45, “This is an unusually high number of hours to work in a normal week. Please check and amend if necessary.”

{ASK ALL}
HhldInc
[SINGLE CODE]
What is your **total** household income per year before tax? Include any benefits you or your partner receive.

1. Less than £16,000 (up to £1,332 per month)
2. £16,000 to £29,999 (between £1,333 and £2,499 per month)
3. £30,000 to £44,999 (between £2,500 and £3,749 per month)
4. £45,000 to £59,999 (between £3,750 and £4,999 per month)
5. £60,000 and over (£5,000 per month or over)
6. Prefer not to say

{ASK ALL}
LA
[SINGLE CODE]
Which Local Authority area do you live in?

1. Aberdeen City
2. Aberdeenshire
3. Angus
4. Argyll & Bute
5. Clackmannanshire
6. Dumfries & Galloway
7. Dundee City
8. East Ayrshire
9. East Dunbartonshire
10. East Lothian
11. East Renfrewshire
12. Edinburgh City
13. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles)
14. Falkirk
15. Fife
16. Glasgow City
17. Highland
18. Inverclyde
19. Midlothian
20. Moray
21. North Ayrshire

22. North Lanarkshire
23. Orkney Islands
24. Perth & Kinross
25. Renfrewshire
26. Scottish Borders
27. Shetland Islands
28. South Ayrshire
29. South Lanarkshire
30. Stirling
31. West Dunbartonshire
32. West Lothian
33. Unsure

{ASK ALL}
postcode
Please write in your postcode below. This will only be used to help us look at how views change across the country, we will not pass your details to anyone else.

STRING[10]
SHOW REF

{ASK ALL}
EthnCat
[SINGLE CODE]
Which of these groups do you consider yourself to belong to?

1. White
2. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
3. Asian, Scottish Asian or British Asian
4. African, Scottish African or British African
5. Caribbean or Black
6. Other ethnic group
7. Prefer not to say

{ASK IF EthnCat = 1}
EthnWh
[SINGLE CODE]
And which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

1. Scottish
2. Other British
3. Irish
4. Polish
5. Gypsy/traveller
6. Roma
7. Showman/Showwoman
8. Other white ethnic group (please specify)

{ASK IF EthnCat = 2}
EthnMx
What is your ethnic group? Please write in.

STRING [0…100]

{ASK IF EthnCat=3}
EthnAs
[SINGLE CODE]
And which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

1. Pakistani, Scottish Pakistani or British Pakistani
2. Indian, Scottish Indian or British Indian
3. Bangladeshi, Scottish Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi
4. Chinese, Scottish Chinese or British Chinese
5. Other (please specify)

{ASK IF EthnCat=4}
EthnAf
What is your ethnic group? Please write in (for example, Nigerian, Somali)

STRING [0…100]

{ASK IF EthnCat=5}
EthnCB
What is your ethnic group? Please write in (for example, Scottish Caribbean, Black Scottish)

STRING [0…100]

{ASK IF EthnCat=6}
EthnOth
[SINGLE CODE]
And which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

1. Arab, Scottish Arab or British Arab
2. Other (please write in, for example, Sikh, Jewish)

{ASK ALL}
ESL
[SINGLE CODE]
Is English an additional language for any parent or carer in the household?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Prefer not to say

{ASK ALL}
Disab
[SINGLE CODE]
Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

1. Yes

2. No
3. Don’t know
4. Prefer not to say

{ASK IF has a disability, Disab = 1}
DisabAct
[SINGLE CODE]
Does your condition or illness reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

1. Yes, a lot
2. Yes, a little
3. Not at all
4. Prefer not to say

{ASK ALL}
Recont
[SINGLE CODE]
We are inviting some people who have completed the survey to take part in a one-to-one interview with a member of the ScotCen research team. We’d like to hear more about your experiences of early learning and childcare.

<b>Everyone who completes an interview will receive a voucher to thank them for taking part.<b>

Would you be interested in hearing more information about the interview and how you can be involved?

1. Yes
2. No

{ASK IF Recont = 1}
Recontint
We would like to speak to people who have had a range of experiences. This means that we may not be able to talk to everyone who is interested in speaking to us. If you're chosen to take part in the one-to-one interview, we'll send you more information to help you decide whether you'd like to take part.

{ASK ALL}
DRAWENT
[SINGLE CODE]
Everyone taking part in the survey has a chance to be entered into a prize draw to win one of EIGHT £100 prizes.

Please tick below to confirm that you wish to be included in the prize draw.

1. Yes, I would like to enter the prize draw
2. No, I would not like to enter the prize draw

{ASK IF DRAWENT = 1 and/or Recont=1}
RECONTDEETS
[MULTIRESPONSE OPEN TEXT - RECONTPHN1 AND RECONTPHN2 ARE NUMERIC, BETWEEN 9 AND 11 DIGITS]

Please enter your contact details (first name, surname, email address, telephone number(s))

RECONTFNAME	First name:	
RECONTSNAME	Surname:	
RECONTEMAIL	Email address:	
RECONTPHN1	Phone number 1:	
RECONTPHN2	Phone number 2:	**This can be left blank.**

{ASK ALL}
Feedback
Is there anything you would like to say about the Scottish Government's expansion of funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours a year?

Please write in the box below:
STRING [0…500]

{ASK ALL}
Thank
Thank you for taking part in this research survey. This research was commissioned by the Scottish Government.

If you have chosen to be entered into the prize draw we will be in contact with the 8 winners of this by the end of July 2025.

Please now press the Next button to register your responses.