



Early Learning and Childcare Parent Survey Support Options

To support your statutory duty to consult with parents and carers on the delivery of early learning and childcare (ELC), we offer a range of options for designing, distributing, and managing your ELC parent survey.

These options align with the [Statutory Guidance on the Delivery of Early Learning and Childcare](#) under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Section 50), which sets out the requirement for local authorities to consult parents at least once every two years. In line with the guidance, local authorities must also have regard to the views expressed in these consultations and publish a plan setting out how they intend to make ELC available in their area. Our survey is structured to support this statutory duty and can be tailored to capture insights that inform planning, flexibility, accessibility, and satisfaction with ELC services.

We offer **three flexible support options**, allowing you to choose the level of involvement and support that best suits your capacity and priorities.

A full list of standardised questions in the survey and the rationale behind them can be found in Appendix 1.

TEMPLATE Early Learning and Child Consultation 2025

All councils look to consult with people are representative of parents and carers of children under school age in their area about how they should make early learning and childcare available. This consultation must be carried out at least once every 2 years.

This survey aims to gather the views of parents/carers on how best we can offer high quality, flexible Early Learning and Childcare.
This public consultation will be open for a seven week period from **Tuesday 22nd April 2025 to Friday 13th June 2025**.

The survey will take around **10 minutes** to complete. There is no identifying information requested. If you would like to discuss a personal situation or share identifying details, please reach out to us via email instead at earlyyearsenuities@cnc-slar.gov.uk

The resulting data will be collated by partner agency, The Improvement Service, and the analysis shared securely with XXXXX

By completing this survey, you agree to the collection and sharing of your anonymous responses as outlined above.

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

* Required

All about you and your family

1. What is your postcode? *

Enter your answer

2. Please provide the age of your child(ren) under 12 years

Option 1: Self-Service

We provide an editable ELC parent survey template in Microsoft Forms with questions designed to reflect the aims outlined in statutory guidance.

Responsibilities:

- Improvement Service: Provide the editable template.
- Local authority: Customise, issue, and manage the survey and all collected data.

Data Protection:

- The local authority is the sole Data Controller and Processor.
- No data is shared with the Improvement Service.

Option 2: Co-Design

We will work together with the local authority to tailor the standard ELC survey through a consultation meeting. We will adapt the question template to meet your specific needs, and you will manage the distribution and collection of results.

Responsibilities:

- Improvement Service: Customise the survey on your behalf.
- Local authority: Issue and manage the survey and all collected data.

Data Protection:

- The local authority is the sole Data Controller and Processor.
- No data is shared with the Improvement Service.

Option 3: Full Delivery

We take care of adapting the content, analysing the results and providing you with a final report. This includes an initial consultation meeting to discuss local priorities and requirements. Based on this, we will adapt our standard survey to better reflect your context before you distribute. We are then responsible for collecting responses and delivering a final report.

Responsibilities:

- Improvement Service: Manage survey activity and deliver results.
- Local authority: Issue survey.

Data Protection:

- The Improvement Service is the Data Processor.
- The local authority is the Data Controller.

Data Handling Information

All survey responses will be fully anonymous, and no personal or identifiable data will be collected at any stage. This approach significantly reduces risk and simplifies compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Because the data is anonymous a formal Data Processing Agreement (DPA) is not required, and the local authority remains the Data Controller in all cases. All data will remain fully anonymous and will be stored securely.

The Improvement Service may retain anonymised response data from the surveys to contribute to future national-level analysis and reporting on parent views and experiences in ELC. This helps build a broader understanding of trends and informs policy and planning across Scotland. This would only be applicable to option 3: full delivery.

No local authority will be identified in any future reports without express consent.

Survey Distribution

For all support options, the local authority must be the party that distributes the survey link for completion.

The survey is created in Microsoft Forms, and the link will be hosted by either the local authority (options 1 and 2) or the Improvement Service (option 3). A custom QR code can also be generated that links directly to the survey. This is particularly useful for printing posters or flyers for displaying in local settings for visibility.

While our core support offer is based on using Microsoft Forms, we recognise that some local authorities may prefer or be required to use their own consultation tools. In these cases, we can still work with you to develop the survey content, ensuring the questions align with the statutory guidance and capture the insights needed to inform your planning.

Next Steps

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss your preferred option.

Summarised Options

Option	What's Included	Customised By	Issued By	Analysed By	Data Responsibility
1. Self-service	We provide a template. You edit, issue, and collect responses.	Local authority	Local authority	Local authority	LA is Data Controller & Processor
2. Co-design	We meet to adapt the survey. You issue and collect responses.	Improvement Service	Local authority	Local authority	LA is Data Controller & Processor
3. Full delivery	We consult, tailor, and analyse responses. You issue.	Improvement Service	Local authority	Improvement Service	LA is Data Controller, IS acts as Data Processor

Appendix 1

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
Section 1: All about you and your family					
1	What is your postcode? Please provide only the first 4 digits e.g. DD3 2	Yes	Free text box		Identifies geographical patterns across responses. Reduces risk of identification while still allowing geographical analysis.
2	Please provide the age of your child(ren) under 12 years (select ages for up to 6 children)	No	Multi choice	• 6+ years old • 3-5 years old • 2 years old • Under 2 years old	Identifies the age groups of children whose parents are represented in the survey.
3	Are you completing this survey as a parent/carer who:	Yes	Single choice	• Will access early learning and childcare provision in the future • Currently accesses early learning and childcare provision • Previously accessed early learning and childcare provision • Other	To ensure that the consultation is representative and inclusive and engages a wide range of parents. Future users will skip to Section 4 Current users will skip to Section 3 Previous users will continue to Section 2 Other – will forward to Section 5
Section 2: Previously accessed early learning and childcare					
4	Please let us know which academic year(s) you accessed early learning and childcare	No	Multi choice	• 2023/24 • 2022/23 • 2021/22 • 2020/21 • 2019/20 • 2018/19 • 2017/18 • Earlier	To analyse views by timeframe and understand how service experiences may have changed.

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
5	Which type of early learning and childcare services did you use? (select all that apply)	No	Multi choice	• Childminder • Council nursery • Private nursery • Not applicable	To understand the mix of provision used and ensure views are captured across provider types.
6	Did your child attend a funded ELC place as a two-year-old? <i>(Please note, not everyone would be entitled to funded hours for their two year old, there are additional eligibility criteria that families would have to meet)</i>	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Don't know	
7	Did you use all your early learning and childcare funded hours for your eligible two year old? <i>Note: Between 2014 and 2021, eligible children were able to access 600 hours funded early learning and childcare. Since August 2021, this has risen to 1,140 hours</i>	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Don't know • Not applicable	

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
8	Was there a reason that you didn't use all your early learning and childcare funded hours when your child was 2?	No	Multi choice	• I feel my child is too young to be in full time early learning and childcare • I prefer to spend more time with my child at home • My child wouldn't like to be away from me • Provision on offer didn't meet the additional support needs of my child • I didn't know how to access my full entitlement • I wasn't able to secure a suitable place	
9	What were the main reasons for using your funded early learning and childcare hours for your child aged 3-5?	No	Multi choice	• To give my child new experiences and opportunities • To give my child access to a wider range of toys, books and resources • To support positive behaviour with my child • To help get my child ready for school • To allow me or my partner to work or look for work • To allow me or my partner to study or complete training	To understand the motivations for using ELC and how it supports family and child outcomes.
10	Did you use all your funded early learning and childcare hours for your child aged 3-5?	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Don't know • Not Applicable	To determine full vs partial use of entitlement. If answer is 'Yes, or not applicable' the survey skips to question 10

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
11	Was there a reason that you didn't use all of your funded early learning and childcare hours for your child aged 3-5?	No	Multi choice	• I feel my child is too young to be in full time early learning and childcare • I prefer to spend more time with my child at home • My child wouldn't like to be away from me • Provision on offer didn't meet the additional support needs of my child • I didn't know how to access my full entitlement • I wasn't able to secure a suitable place	To understand barriers to full uptake.
12	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	No	Likert scale	• I was able to access my preferred early learning and childcare provider/nursery • I was able to secure attendance on days and at times that suit my needs • I am happy with the quality of the early learning and childcare service I use	To measure satisfaction and accessibility of ELC provision previously used.
Section 3: Currently accessing early learning and childcare					
13	Which type of early learning and childcare services do you use for early learning and childcare funded hours? (select all that apply)	No	Multi choice	• Childminder • Council nursery • Private nursery • Not applicable	To understand the mix of provision used and ensure views are captured across provider types.

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
14	Is your child currently attending a funded ELC place as a two-year-old? <i>(Please note, not everyone would be entitled to funded hours for their two year old, there are additional eligibility criteria that families would have to meet)</i>	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Don't know	NEED TO ADD BRANCHING HERE – IF THEY SAY NO SKIP TO QUESTION FOR 3 YEAR OLDS
15	Do you use all your early learning and childcare funded hours for your eligible two year old? <i>Note: Between 2014 and 2021, eligible children were able to access 600 hours funded early learning and childcare. Since August 2021, this has risen to 1,140 hours</i>	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Don't know • Not applicable	IF YES SELECTED THEN BRACH LOGIC TO SKIP
16	What is the main reason you are not using all of your early learning and childcare funded hours for your eligible 2 year old?	No	Multi choice	• I feel my child is too young to be in full time early learning and childcare • I prefer to spend more time with my child at home • My child wouldn't like to be away from me • Provision on offer didn't meet the additional support needs of my child • I didn't know how to access my full entitlement • I wasn't able to secure a suitable place	

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
17	What are the main reasons for using your funded early learning and childcare hours for your child who is aged 3-5? <i>Choose up to three</i>	No	Multi choice	- To give my child new experiences and opportunities - To give my child access to a wider range of toys, books and resources - To support positive behaviour with my child - To help get my child ready for school - To allow me or my partner to work or look for work - To allow me or my partner to study or complete training	To understand the motivations for using ELC and how it supports family and child outcomes.
18	Do you use all your early learning and childcare funded hours for your child aged 3-5? <i>Note: Since August 2021, eligible children are able to access 1,140 hours funded early learning and childcare.</i>	No	Single choice	- Yes - No - Don't know - Not Applicable	To explore uptake of funded entitlement.
19	What is the main reason you are not using all of your funded early learning and childcare hours for your child aged 3-5?	No	Single choice	- I feel my child is too young to be in full time early learning and childcare - I prefer to spend more time with my child at home - My child wouldn't like to be away from me - Provision on offer didn't meet the additional support needs of my child - I didn't know how to access my full entitlement - I wasn't able to secure a suitable place	To understand barriers to full uptake.

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
20	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	No	Likert scale	• I was able to access my preferred early learning and childcare provider/nursery • I was able to secure attendance on days and at times that suit my needs • I am happy with the quality of the early learning and childcare service I use	To measure satisfaction and accessibility.
Section 4: Future use of early learning and childcare					
21	Do you plan to use funded early learning and childcare in the future?	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Maybe	To project future demand and identify those not planning to use the service. If answer is No, skips to question 19
22	Do you expect to use all your early learning and childcare funded hours for your child when they are two years old (if eligible)? <i>Note: Not everyone would be entitled to funded hours for their two year old, there are additional eligibility criteria that families would have to meet. Since August 2021, eligible children are able to access 1,140 hours funded early learning and childcare. This includes all 3- and 4-year-olds and some 2-year-olds</i>			• Yes • No • Maybe	

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
23	What would be the main reason you might not use all your early learning and childcare funded hours for your eligible 2 year old?			• I feel my child is too young to be in full time early learning and childcare • I prefer to spend more time with my child at home • My child wouldn't like to be away from me • Provision on offer didn't meet the additional support needs of my child • I didn't know how to access my full entitlement • I wasn't able to secure a suitable place	
24	What would be the main reasons for using funded early learning and childcare hours for your 3-5 year old?	No	Multi choice	• To give my child new experiences and opportunities • To give my child access to a wider range of toys, books and resources • To support positive behaviour with my child • To help get my child ready for school • To allow me or my partner to work or look for work • To allow me or my partner to study or complete training	To understand the motivations for using ELC and how it supports family and child outcomes.
25	Do you expect to use your full entitlement of 1,140 hours per year of funded early learning and childcare for your 3-5 year old?	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Maybe	To determine full vs partial use of entitlement and support service planning. If answer is 'Yes' the survey skips to question 20.

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
26	What would be the reason you might not use all of your early learning and childcare entitlement for your 3-5 year old?	No	Multi choice	• I feel my child is too young to be in full time early learning and childcare • I prefer to spend more time with my child at home • My child wouldn't like to be away from me • Provision on offer didn't meet the additional support needs of my child • I didn't know how to access my full entitlement • I wasn't able to secure a suitable place	To understand barriers to full uptake.
Section 5: Understanding awareness					
27	How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	No	Likert scale	• I understand my entitlement to funded early learning and childcare • I know how to apply for funded early learning and childcare hours in a council nursery • I know how to apply for funded early learning and childcare hours in a private nursery, playgroup or with a childminder • I would find it helpful to purchase more hours of childcare	To assess parental awareness of how to access and apply for ELC.

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
Section 6: Types of early learning and childcare service					
28	There are a number of attendance patterns in which 1,140 hours funded early learning and childcare can be offered. Rank these options in order of your preference from most to least preferable.	No	Ranking	• Session time based in line with the current school day during term time • Afternoon sessions offered over the full year • Morning sessions offered over the full year • Two and a half days per week offered over the full year • Other	To understand preferences for delivery models and support flexible service design.
29	Why would you choose this attendance pattern?	No	Multi choice	• It best fits my work/study/training pattern • I have another child attending school • It best fits with my existing childcare arrangements • Other	To align attendance options with family routines and commitments.
30	There are a number of places in which 1,140 hours funded early learning and childcare can be accessed. Rank these options in order of your preference	No	Ranking	• Childminder • Council setting (this may include services based in primary schools and stand-alone services) • Playgroup private nursery • Mixed provision (child attending more than one place over the course of a week and funding is split between them)	To determine preferences for setting types and support planning for delivery.
31	Is there another option that would suit you and your family better?	No	Free text		To capture any alternative models that better suit families.

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
32	Would accessing all or part of your child's entitlement of funded early learning and childcare hours in another local authority area be something you might require?	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Maybe	To understand cross-boundary demand and support regional planning.
33	Currently there is no Gaelic Medium early learning and childcare provision in ****. If it were available, would this be something you would wish to access for your child?	No	Single choice	• Yes • No • Maybe	To gauge potential demand for Gaelic Medium ELC and inform planning.
Section 7: Application process					
34	How did you find out about applying for an early learning and childcare place for your child?	No	Multi choice	• Already aware from having used early learning and childcare with an older child • Family or friends • Health visitor • Local newspaper • Nursery school	To understand which communication channels are most effective.
35	How easy was it to access your child's early learning and childcare funded hours?	No	Likert	• Very easy • Quite easy • Quite difficult • Very difficult	To identify potential difficulties in the application process. If 'very easy' selected the survey skips to section 8. If 'quite easy' selected the survey skips to question 31.

Number	Question	Required	Question Type	Choices	Rationale
36	If you have not found it easy to access your child's funded early learning and childcare, please tell us about this and anything which could have supported or helped you.	No	Free text		To gather insights into system challenges and areas for improvement.
37	What information would you have liked to receive to help you with the council early learning and childcare application process?	No	Free text		To improve future guidance and communications around applying.
38	Does your child/children who are not yet eligible for funded early learning and childcare, receive childcare from any of the following people, include both childcare you pay for and childcare you don't pay for.			• My child's grandparents • Partner • Relative • Friend or neighbour • Private nursery	
Section 8: Summary comments					
39	Please note any further comments about early learning and childcare in the box below.	No	Free text		To provide space for any final feedback not covered elsewhere.



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