



Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Delivery Progress Report

September 2022



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Key Messages

- This data collection provides an update on the status of ELC delivery in September 2022.
- Data returned by local authorities indicates that 93,902 children were accessing funded ELC as of the first week of September 2022.
- Of these, 91,465 children (97%) were accessing more than 600 hours, and 83,237 children (89%) were accessing 1140 hours funded ELC.
- There has been a year-on-year increase in numbers of 2- to 5-year-old children reported to be accessing funded ELC (3% increase).
- Amongst eligible 2-year-olds, there are continued year-on-year increases both in the number of children accessing funded ELC, and in the proportion of children accessing the full 1140 hours.
- The local authority ELC workforce has increased by 8,540 FTE since academic year 2016/17, though there has been a slight overall reduction of 305 FTE since April 2022.
- Funded providers in the private and voluntary sectors and childminders provide 31% of all funded provision.
- As of August 2022, there were 911 projects in the capital programme, 90% of which are now complete.

Background and Context

The duty on local authorities to secure 1140 hours funded ELC for all eligible children has been in effect since 1st August 2021.

To provide information on the implementation of this commitment, the Improvement Service (IS) and Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) collect and analyse data on the progress of the delivery of the expansion programmes across local authorities.

The objective of this data collection is to understand the status of the ELC sector across the country regarding uptake, workforce and capacity as of the first week in September 2022.

This report aims to summarise the status of the sector at the beginning of September 2022 as reported by local authorities, comparing this to their reported position from the previous academic year.

Objectives, Methodology and Assumptions

To collect the data, all 32 Scottish local authorities were issued with an online form and guidance containing instructions for completion.

Each collection requests the status of delivery in a reference week. For this collection, the reference week was that commencing on 29th August 2022.

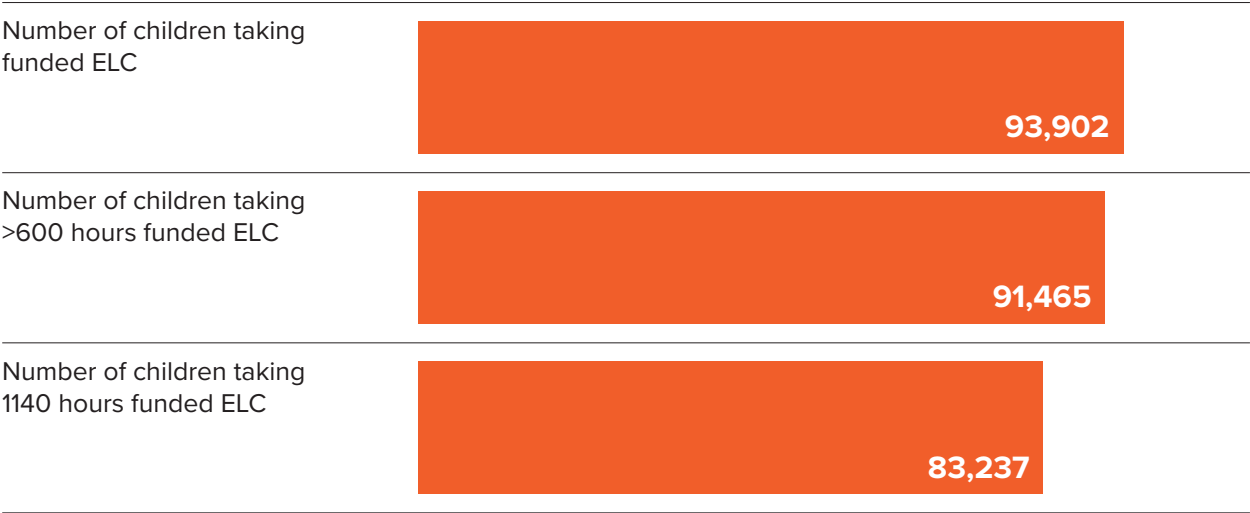
Scottish Futures Trust collect ELC infrastructure data on a regular basis from local authorities. An extract of the executive summary from Scottish Futures Trust's Infrastructure Progress Report is included here.

Although the Improvement Service and Scottish Futures Trust have liaised with individual local authorities in seeking to ensure consistency of data returns, they have not undertaken an audit of the data, systems and processes used to capture the data within the 32 local authorities. The data submitted by local authorities is, therefore, presented in good faith without having been audited by the Improvement Service or Scottish Futures Trust.

Data Analysis: uptake

Total uptake (2- to 5-year-old)

Figure 1: Number of children (2-5-years-old) accessing levels of funded ELC



The number of children reported to be receiving funded ELC in September 2022 was 93,902. Of these, 97% (91,465 children) were reported to be accessing more than 600 funded hours, and 89% (83,237 children) were reported to be accessing 1140 funded hours (Figure 1).

The total number of children eligible for funded ELC increases throughout the academic year as more children turn 3-years-old. As such, the number of children accessing funded ELC is necessarily lower in this session (September 2022) than was noted in the last Delivery Progress Report (April 2022).

For a comparison point, we instead look back to the collection that took place in August 2021. In doing so, it can be seen that at a national level, there has been a year-on-on increase in numbers of 2- to 5-year-old children reported to be accessing funded ELC of 3% (increasing from 90,890 in 2021 to 93,902 in September 2022).

There has been no change since April 2022 in the proportion of children receiving more than 600 hours (97%) however the proportion of children accessing 1140 hours has increased from 87% to 89%).

It should be noted that while this measurement reflects the number of children accessing different levels of provision, this measurement does not directly reflect the hours that are available. In early August 2021 all local authorities confirmed by correspondence that they were able to offer a place to all eligible children who applied for funded ELC up to 1140 hours. 100% uptake of the full 1140 hours was not expected at any point through the expansion.

As in all previous delivery progress reports there is variability between local authorities. Some local authorities report that all children in receipt of funded ELC are accessing 1140 hours, while others report lower uptake of the full offer.

3- to 5-year-old uptake of funded ELC

Figure 2: Number of children (3-5-years-old) accessing levels of funded ELC



The number of 3 to 5-year-olds reported to be receiving funded ELC in September 2022 was 87,714 children. Of these, 98% (85,639 children) were reported to be accessing more than 600 funded hours, and 89% (78,081 children) were reported to be accessing 1140 funded hours (Figure 2).

There has been a year-on-year increase in the numbers of 3- to 5-year-old children accessing funded ELC by 3% (up from 84,936 in 2021).

There was variation across local authorities in the proportion of 3- to 5-year-old children reported to be taking up the expanded hours of funded ELC.

Data Analysis: uptake

2-year-old uptake of funded ELC

Figure 3: Number of children (2-year-olds) accessing levels of funded ELC



The number of 2-year-olds reported to be receiving funded ELC in September 2022 was 6,188 children. Of these, 94% (5,826 children) were reported to be accessing more than 600 funded hours, and 83% (5,156 children) were reported to be accessing 1140 funded hours (Figure 3).

The proportion of children accessing expanded hours of funded ELC expanded (both categories of over 600 and the full 1140) remain lower for the 2-year-old population than for the 3- to 5-year-old population. However, these proportions have been increasing throughout the academic year since the statutory duty came into effect, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Change in proportion of 2-year-olds in receipt of funded ELC who are accessing expanded hours over academic year 2021-22

	Aug 2021	Jan 2021	Apr 2022	Sept 2022
Proportion of 2-year-olds in receipt of funded ELC who are accessing more than 600 funded hours	90%	91%	93%	94%
Proportion of 2-year-olds in receipt of funded ELC who are accessing 1140 funded hours	72%	78%	80%	83%

There has also been a year-on-year increase in the number of 2-year-old children accessing funded ELC by 4% (up from 5,954 in 2021).

There was variation across local authorities in the proportion of 2-year-old children reported to be taking up the expanded hours.

Provision in Local Authority, Private Partner and Childminder Settings

The graph below shows the reported proportion of uptake split by provider types in September 2022. To ensure that the data collection is not too burdensome, local authorities report on how many children access most of their provision in each setting type (rather than the number of hours being accessed in each type). Consequently, the statistics quoted do not account for blended models.

Figure 4: Uptake of funded ELC split by provider type

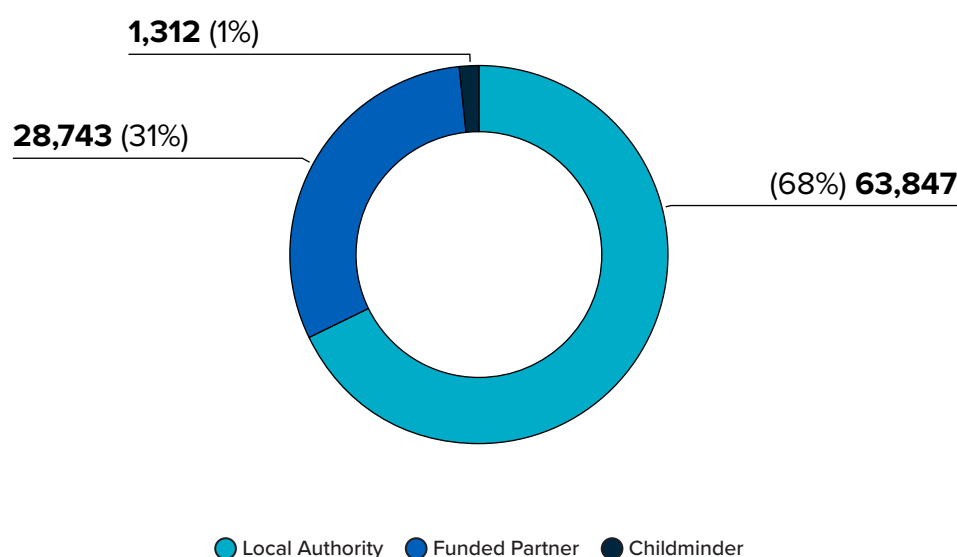


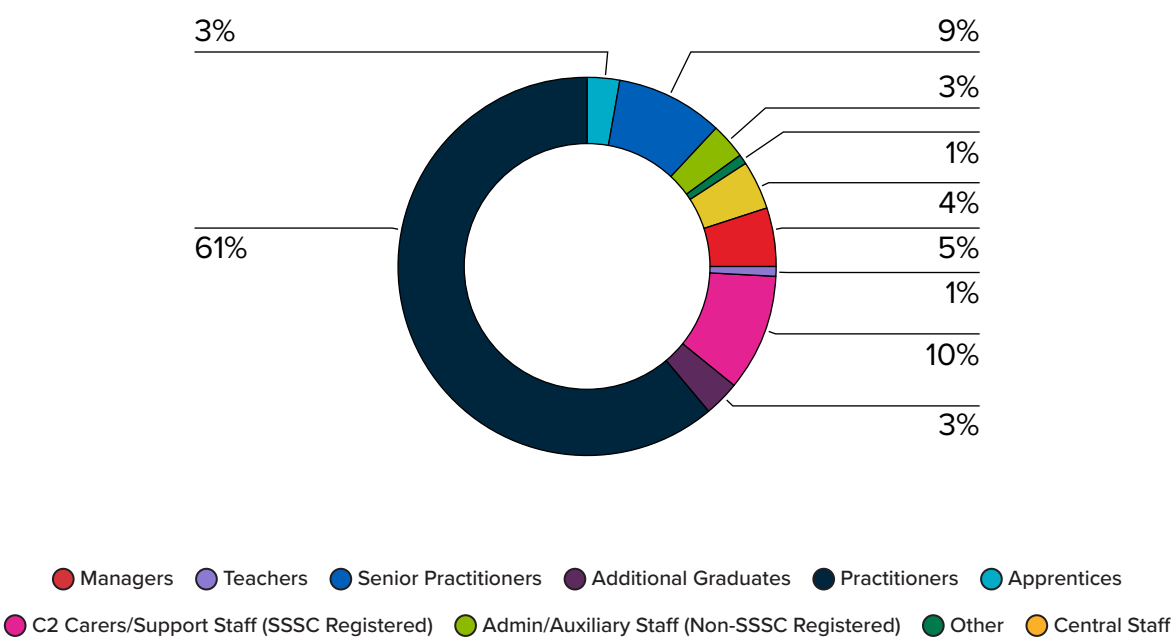
Figure 4 shows that for September 2022, 31% of provision was being accessed in funded partners, compared to 68% in local authority settings, with the remainder being accessed with childminders. These proportions remained relatively static throughout the 2021-22 academic year.

Of all children who are accessing the majority of their hours with funded providers, 84% are accessing 1140 hours, compared with 91% in local authority settings.

Local authorities reported that, as of September 2022, 1,158 childminders were in partnership to deliver funded hours. This is a decrease of 6 from the figures reported in April 2022.

Local Authority ELC Workforce

Figure 5: Local authority ELC workforce split by job type



As of September 2022, local authorities across Scotland reported an ELC workforce of 18,116 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) across Scotland. Figure 5 shows the split of job types in ELC nationally as of September 2022. By far the largest section of the ELC workforce are Practitioners, comprising of 11,295 FTE (61%).

When compared to the total local authority ELC workforce in academic year 2016/17, there has been an increase of 8,540 FTE. This is an increase of 89% from 9,576 FTE in academic year 2016/17.

Since April 2022, there has been a decrease of 305 FTE. The biggest decrease since April 2022 has been seen amongst Practitioners (-341 FTE), this has been balanced by increases seen in other job types, primarily Additional Graduates (+176 FTE).

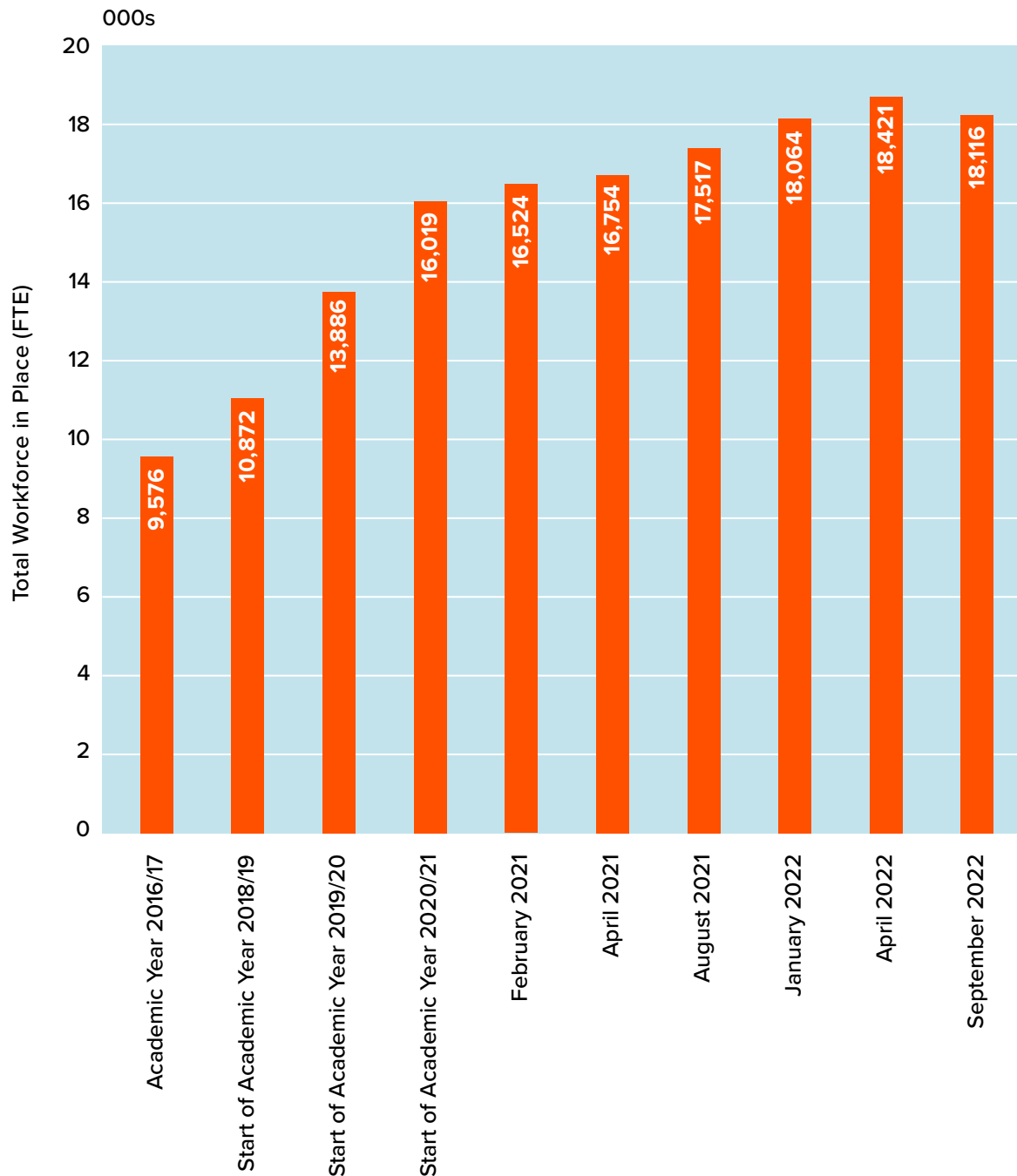
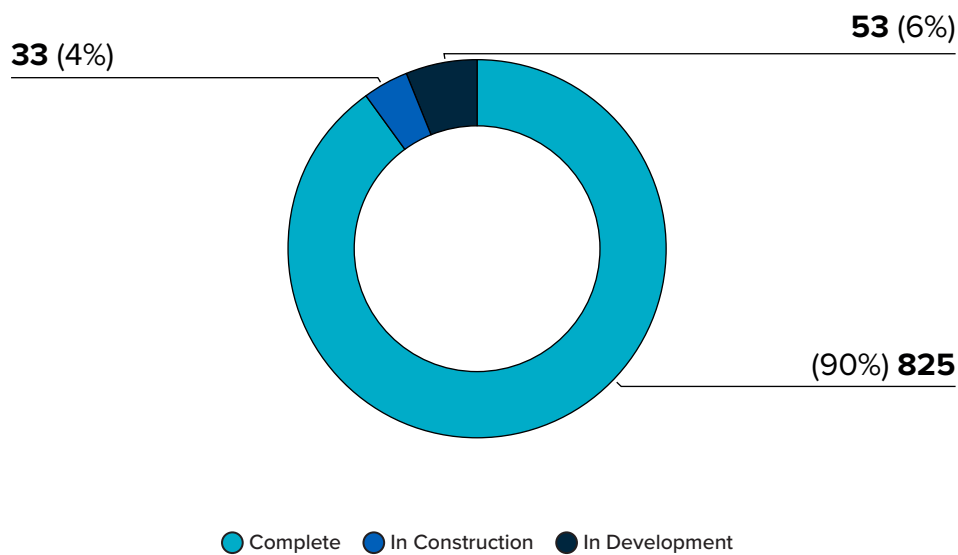
Figure 6: Total local authority workforce (FTE) in place since beginning of expansion

Figure 6 shows the profile of the workforce over time, since the beginning of expansion activities in academic year 2016/17.

Scottish Futures Trust – Infrastructure Commentary

Figure 7: Current Status of Programme Split By Project Status



As of August 2022, there were 911 projects in the capital programme which will deliver c.22,000 additional spaces. 90% of all capital projects are now complete, delivering 84% of the total planned additional space. With 4% of projects currently in construction and 6% of projects in development. Figure 1 illustrates the status of the overall capital programme as of August 2022.

It is important to note that not all capital projects were required to deliver 1140 hours from August 2021. The remaining projects are linked to increased flexibility, forecast growth and longer-term learning estate development projects. These projects have robust contingency plans or transitional arrangements in place to ensure continued service delivery. SFT will continue to monitor progress of the remaining projects on the programme.

Conclusions

Local authorities successfully delivered the expansion of funded ELC in August 2021 to secure 1140 hours of funded ELC for all eligible children.

The national picture shows continued high uptake of the expanded offer, and success in resourcing the requisite capacity and workforce to support this.

As in previous delivery progress reports, some local authorities reporting higher uptake of the expanded funded hours than others.

Data returned by local authorities indicates that 93,902 children were accessing funded ELC as of the first week of September 2022, with 91,465 children (97%) accessing more than 600 hours, and 83,237 children (89%) accessing 1140 hours funded ELC.

Comparing this uptake to that seen this time last year, at a national level, there has been a year-on-year increase in numbers of 2- to 5-year-old children reported to be accessing funded ELC (3% increase).

Amongst eligible 2-year-olds, there are continued increases both in the number of children accessing funded ELC, and in the proportion of children accessing the full 1140 hours.

The local authority ELC workforce is reported to have increased by 8,540 FTE since academic year 2016/17, though this reporting period has seen the first decline in the total workforce since the beginning of the expansion, with a reduction of 305 FTE since April 2022.

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