

GROWING UP IN SCOTLAND

ANALYSIS OF SOME OF THE DATA FROM THE AGE 4 BC2 BETWEEN-SWEEP SURVEY

Background

Data was collected from main carers of Birth Cohort Two (BC2) between February 2014 and February 2015 in a self-completion questionnaire, that was sent out to coincide with the cohort child's fourth birthday.

The key focus of this questionnaire was use and experience of childcare, particularly statutory, funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). BC2 were the first group of children to be entitled to 600 hours of funded ELC in their pre-school year so there was an interest in exploring if and how this was being used. The entitlement increased from 475 hours to 600 hours a year approximately half-way through the data collection period and so the timing of the survey also presented an opportunity to explore if and how satisfaction with ELC changed in the period immediately after the entitlement increased.

Over 3,000 parents responded to the questionnaire. Response rates were lower from main carers who were living in more deprived SIMD areas and were in lower income groups. To adjust for this, non-response weights were applied to the data to ensure findings were representative of the socio-economic profile of the full GUS cohort.

As yet, not all of the data from this survey has been analysed. The key findings and the data from what has been analysed are presented below.

Findings

Almost all (98%) main carers were making use of their funded ELC entitlement.

Table 1: Up-take of pre-school nursery at age 4

| Is child currently attending a pre-school nursery place? | All respondents | Sample | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | | Pre Policy Change | Post Policy Change |
| Yes | 97.7% | 96.9% | 98.7% |
| No | 2.3% | 3.1% | 1.3% |
| Total | N= 3210 | N=1815 | N=1395 |

Satisfaction with funded ELC was very high. Almost all of the respondents who answered the question ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall standard of pre-school provision by provider?’ stated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall standard of funded pre-school provision that their child was receiving: 72% were very satisfied; 25% were satisfied; 2% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; and 1% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

The extension of funded ELC provision from 475 to 600 hours part-way through the data collection period did not result in any change in overall satisfaction in the 6 months following the expansion. The proportion of main carers who expressed each level of satisfaction remained static before and after the expansion.

Table 2: Satisfaction with the overall standard of pre-school provision

| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall standard of pre-school provision by provider? | All respondents | Sample | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | | Pre Policy Change | Post Policy Change |
| Very satisfied | 72.0% | 72.1% | 71.9% |
| Satisfied | 24.9% | 24.8% | 24.9% |
| Neither | 2.0% | 2.1% | 1.9% |
| Dissatisfied | 0.9% | 0.6% | 1.2% |
| Very dissatisfied | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0% |
| Don't know/didn't want to answer. | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.1% |
| Total | N= 3068 | N=1727 | N=1341 |
| N/A* | 171 | 107 | 64 |

* ‘Not applicable’ cases are those who were either not routed to this question because they were not using ELC (75 cases) or who gave up completing the survey before they got to this question (96 cases).

To measure parental perceptions of flexibility in funded ELC provision, GUS asked main carers if they would like to make any changes to the number of hours and days their child received his/her funded pre-school provision. Overall 23% of main carers who were using their ELC entitlement said that they would like to make a change to this.

After the entitlement increased there was a statistically significant decline in the proportion of main carers who expressed a desire for change: 26% had expressed an interest in change to hours/days when the entitlement was 475 hours but this dropped to 18% after the entitlement increase to 600 hours.

Table 3: Proportion of main carers who stated that they would like to make changes the number of hours and days their child received his/her funded pre-school provision

| Possible Changes | Sample | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | All respondents | Pre Policy Change | Post Policy Change |
| Would you like to make any changes ...? | | | |
| Yes | 22.6% | 26.4% | 17.7% |
| No | 76.5% | 72.7% | 81.4% |
| Don't Know | 0.9% | 0.9% | 1.0% |
| Total | N= 3075 | N=1728 | N=1347 |
| N/A* | 163 | 105 | 58 |

* 'Not applicable' cases are those who were either not routed to this question because they were not using ELC (75 cases) or who gave up completing the survey before they got to this question (88 cases).

Of those who expressed an interest in change after the increase in statutory entitlement: 87% expressed an interest in longer sessions of 3 hours or more; 46% in drop off before 8.30am on weekdays; 22% in pick up after 6pm on weekdays; 10% in sessions on Saturdays; and 7% in sessions on Sundays¹. The table below shows the proportion of all parents who expressed a desire for change before and after the increase in statutory entitlement (figures are expressed here as a proportion of all parents who responded to the GUS survey, rather than as a proportion of those who expressed a desire for change).

Table 4: Proportion of main carers who expressed an interest in various changes to hours/days of funded ELC

| Possible Changes | Sample | | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| | All respondents | | Pre Policy Change | | Post Policy Change | |
| | As a % of those who expressed a desire for change | As a % of those who responded | As a % of those who expressed a desire for change | As a % of those who responded | As a % of those who expressed a desire for change | As a % of those who responded |
| Use short sessions of less than 3 hours every day | | | | | | |
| Yes | 6.20% | 1.40% | 6.30% | 1.68% | 6.00% | 1.04% |
| No | 92.50% | 20.88% | 92.30% | 24.36% | 93.00% | 16.48% |
| Don't Know | 1.20% | 0.26% | 1.30% | 0.35% | 1.00% | 0.15% |
| N/A | | 77.46% | | 73.61% | | 82.33% |
| Use longer sessions of three hours or more | | | | | | |
| Yes | 89.20% | 20.13% | 90.40% | 23.84% | 87.00% | 15.37% |
| No | 9.90% | 2.24% | 8.50% | 2.26% | 12.60% | 2.23% |
| Don't Know | 0.90% | 0.20% | 1.10% | 0.29% | 0.40% | 0.07% |
| N/A | | 77.43% | | 73.61% | | 82.33% |

¹ Percentages do not total 100 because respondents were able to express a desire for more than one type of change.

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Drop off child before 8:30am on weekdays | | | | | | |
| Yes | 42.40% | 9.56% | 40.80% | 10.76% | 45.60% | 8.09% |
| No | 56.20% | 12.69% | 57.80% | 15.22% | 53.20% | 9.42% |
| Don't Know | 1.40% | 0.29% | 1.50% | 0.41% | 1.20% | 0.22% |
| N/A | | 77.46% | | 73.61% | | 82.27% |
| Pick up child after 6pm on weekdays | | | | | | |
| Yes | 17.60% | 3.97% | 15.20% | 4.00% | 22.10% | 3.93% |
| No | 81.50% | 18.41% | 83.60% | 22.06% | 77.50% | 13.72% |
| Don't Know | 0.90% | 0.20% | 1.10% | 0.29% | 0.40% | 0.07% |
| N/A | | 77.43% | | 73.65% | | 82.27% |
| Use on Saturdays | | | | | | |
| Yes | 9.50% | 2.15% | 9.10% | 2.37% | 10.30% | 1.85% |
| No | 89.10% | 20.10% | 89.10% | 23.51% | 89.00% | 15.73% |
| Don't Know | 1.40% | 0.33% | 1.80% | 0.46% | 0.70% | 0.15% |
| N/A | | 77.43% | | 73.65% | | 82.27% |
| Use on Sundays | | | | | | |
| Yes | 6.20% | 1.40% | 6.00% | 1.56% | 6.80% | 1.19% |
| No | 92.30% | 20.85% | 92.20% | 24.32% | 92.50% | 16.39% |
| Don't Know | 1.40% | 0.33% | 1.80% | 0.46% | 0.70% | 0.15% |
| N/A | | 77.43% | 1359 | 73.65% | | 82.27% |
| Totals | N=694 | N=3075 | N=456 | N=1727 | N=238 | N=1348 |