

# London childcare providers survey 2009

## Main narrative responses

The main quantitative results of the survey are available in the *London childcare providers network project* section of the Daycare Trust website. Below are the main narrative responses.

### Q1. What kind of childcare provider are you?

**Other:**

"Voluntary crèche", "Crèche at church on Sunday", "Crèche volunteer", "Parent helper in school nursery(voluntary)", "Playgroup", "Pre-school playgroup", "Crèche - 4 hours a day", "Maintained nursery school", "We run a family drop in for under 5's with a parent or carer", "Children's centre", "Adventure Play, Portage support".

### Q4. Which provider network are you a member of, if any?

**Other:**

"Voluntary network: Bluebell Childminding Network", "Early years Network Tower Hamlets, National Children's Bureau & Playgroup Network", "Lewisham Network Childminder", "Lambeth Childminding Association", "Local childminding association, Netmums", "Croydon Childminding Association", "Croydon Childminders Association (CCMA)", "Montessori Association", "1st Place Children & Parents' Centre", "Early education, National Children's Bureau", "Enfield PVI", "Montessori", "Federation of Small Businesses", "London Play".

**Have none:** "We have no official co-coordinator and have been left to just get on with it."

### Q5. What are the top 5 issues currently facing you as a provider (please tick up to 5)

**Other:**

**Threat of eviction from premises:**

"Threatened eviction from premises / legal dispute over our lease", "Threat of being evicted".

**Inadequate Training:**

"Quality of staff training", "Training", "Staff training".

**Filling spaces/vacancies:**

"Finding suitable families", "The impact losing a child from the setting has on the business", "Finding customers", "Filling my vacant spaces".

**Needing more spaces:**

"Not enough places to meet the demand. Maintaining and improving quality is the most important issue but it is not a problem."

**Fee Payments/Parents' difficulty to pay:**

"Difficulty receiving payments due from parents", "Ensuring timely payment of fees", "The need for some help for families on low incomes so their children can access childcare providing a provision that children

from all classes and sections of society can attend, at present the children mainly come from affluent and professional families because they can afford the fees, surely this is not the aim of the sure start programme", "'Affordable childcare' is a joke when we have to pass these costs on to parents who are already struggling to pay their monthly fees with little financial help from the government."

**Funding/Financial difficulty:**

Funding-the parents are on low income, with large families and our funding has been badly cut, with more demands being made on us.", "Funding/grants that childminders are able to use for outdoor play or IT projects. Nothing out there!", "Funding", "We are always trying to improve the quality of our group, working with parents/carers of the setting including their children, it is very expensive for the group to have policies, any information translated into different languages and it is also very expensive to hire translators, which we have in the past, this is one of my main concerns, that we are not working closely enough with ESL users do to the expense not down to us trying. we are a very inclusive group, but depending on the need of the child it would be great if we had within our budget more money for extra staff to support SEN children who may need extra support, we do have an SEN worker, but sometimes one worker is not enough, all staff find this very hard.", "Need to take on one more child, to manage financially, but have one with SEN (& one other toddler) and cant physically transport 3 in buggies." "I am really struggling with bills due to the current recession.", "Juggling the budget to cover the high costs of H&S training renewals and managing the deficit from having to subsidise the day care" "The sustainability for a voluntary sector daycare setting providing childcare for a local authority children centre, the ability to be financially viable recruiting staff at level 3 or above", "The cost of staying registered/membership fees for NCMA & other insurance costs (I'm struggling to pay!)", "Losing income due to parent's unemployment".

**Paperwork and forms:**

"Completing SEF form", "Keeping up to date with observations etc finding time especially as parents aren't keen for written records", "Amount of time outside of childminding hours that I have to use in keeping 'business running' and planning, providing reviews, etc", "Increased paperwork and the cost of implementing new directives, new training requirements et al, from the Government and the local EYDP."

**Support for childminders and other important workers:**

"I no longer have a development worker and is therefore difficult to go on courses and do other things without one", "My Local Authority is not supporting childminders.", "Childminders having to work on statutory bank holidays or don't get paid."

**Q6. Any comments relating to the question above (the top 5 issues currently facing you as a provider)?**

**Inequality to childminders/problems facing childminders (e.g. holidays, wages, lack of grants, smaller support network compared to nurseries or larger settings):**

"Why are they/you treating childminders the same as other childcare settings? They offer a totally different sort of care but inspected the same."

"Parents choose childminders to have a relaxed, informal extended family generally therefore in my experience are not keen on all the extra written work we have to do. They are happy for verbal updates and feel this should be enough unless of course there is a cause for concern. They neither wish to nor are able to pay an increased rate which would adequately cover hours spent on paperwork. They also realise the impact that after hours paperwork has on childminders families, which can be detrimental to their family life. Parents in my experience do not appreciate that childminders have to meet all these standards and feel that they should be consulted as to their feelings on the level/quality of childcare they receive."

"We are always hearing from the local preschool that they can apply for funding for many different projects but as childminders there seems to be no grants or funding available for our children. I have looked and have also contacted the local authority but come up against a dead end every time."

"As a childminder, my issues are different to those faced by any other setting. As a new childminder, my issues are different to those already established so I feel that this question is not really aimed at me."

"I will appreciate any information on what help or assistance that is available to childminders."

"There is a support scheme in my borough which only supports childminders who live in certain parts, completely ignoring those of us who do not live in the 'right area' and leaving us to fend for ourselves."

"I used to offer the free nursery entitlement in my setting, but since my Local Authority stopped the child minding network, accredited childminders are not receiving any support."

"I think free 2 year old places are good but it will have huge impact on childminders, unless we all study to become accredited and that means a lot more time, paperwork to our already full days, unlike nurseries etc we are only one person."

"Not being taken seriously/ being treated as a fellow professional by primary schools, nursery staff. Don't get the same benefit when trying to order material from websites such as Department for Children, Schools and Families."

"I think it is unfair for NCMA contract to require childminders to make themselves available to work on bank holidays if not they should not charge fees for the day. Nurseries don't work and they charge. Parents don't have to go to work and they get paid so why should childminders be different. We work longer hours with less pay as it is. Something needs to be done about this. Thank you."

**Problems with EYFS/too much paperwork (predominantly for childminders):**

"I do not agree with childminders having to use the EYFS and am thinking of resigning. Parents generally do not like it either. I think it will result in a shortage of childminders in the long run."

"I do not feel the EYFS should be compulsory for childminders, they do not have the facilities or resources of nurseries or schools."

"I am finding EYFS cannot be done when I am childminding, so paperwork etc has to be done in my own family time, which is getting too much."

"Trying to find time to do the new qualifications, EYFS etc in the evenings or weekends on top of all the required paper work eats into any private time you have."

"Implementation of adherence to EYFS is taking my attention from where it is most needed, childcare provision."

"EYFS paperwork too demanding and unrealistic."

"Being registered for more children than usual I find it quite difficult to keep up with the EYFS."

"My costs are rising and because I don't want to look after hoards of children and only provide care for two families it is beginning to become impractical for me to continue, especially as one child begins Reception in September and my income will decrease again! also the amount of time spent in paperwork necessary to look after children in the home environment is increased but we cannot pass that onto parents."

"There is too much paper work involved for Childminders when implementing the EYFS as we work alone."

"My biggest problem is observations. I know how to do them I just find it hard to get time to sit quietly and observe the children and write them out."

"The paperwork required for the EYFS detracts from the childcare."

"EYFS-ridiculous for childminders. Pay does not match what is required. After children go home, we have to do paperwork. Not worth it."

"EYFS put a lot of pressure on childminders to provide children with disability and multicultural toys which some age groups aren't interested in playing with. Also, keeping individual developmental profiles updated and accurate is time consuming and difficult."

"Since the EYFS came in my paperwork has more than doubled and I find I am behind on my observations, assessments and planning evidencing."

"EYFS causes a lot of extra written work, taking extra time outside work hours. Not much interest in vacancies at present."

"I feel that an increasing amount of stress is being put on childminders due to the increase of paper work etc due to changes e.g. EYFS."

"2.5 hours free entitlement for 2 & 3 year olds should be extended to childminders delivering the EYFS"

"Lot of extra work involved for the EYFS."

"It seems that the amount of paper work has taken over from the real goal of playing and interacting with the children. The new self assessment form is ridiculous, when OFSTED only take into account what they see on the day, which from our experience consists of a visit of approx 3 hours."

"I think childminders are expected to do too much paperwork now. Childminders cover several different jobs that nurseries and other facilities have separate staff to deal with. e.g. childminders have to be cleaners, cooks, administrators whereas a nursery has separate people to do the different jobs."

**Lack of business:**

"My setting is feeling the impact of the recession as a lot of our families have been made redundant. Another factor is the local school has increased their provision for under 5's."

"The recession has dropped the number of children currently registered with me down from 9 to 0"

"Main issue is lack of business!"

"A number of government funded day care settings which offer such low prices childminders cannot compete and therefore lose business to them."

"With the implementation of Breakfast clubs, better afterschool clubs and full extended daycare attached to schools I am finding it increasing hard to fill my places."

"With local nurseries increasing places available I have lost high proportions of my places to those nurseries."

"Advertising and filling any vacancies."

"My issue in my area is that I do not get children to look after, even though other childminders are fully booked."

**Funding/Financial problems:**

"I am losing a family of two due to the father being self employed and not much work about, so they can no longer afford to pay me."

"Being a maintained school, the day care staffing is dictated by local authority therefore costs outweigh income generated."

"The main issues are sustainability and being able to pay staff what they deserve."

"Especially reaching out people in the community who are in poverty, while maintaining the sustainability of the setting."

"Should Sure Start only be providing drop-ins for low income families, depression and mental health issues, overcrowding and poor housing all have enormous impact on children and their families, children mixing with children from more affluent families has a huge impact on their behavior, language development and raising expectations develops cross-class friendships etc, this has been particularly evident in this nursery where we have had a couple of teenage parents on Care to Learn grants, but we need to be able to provide further opportunities for children whose parents are struggling to exist and never ever going to be able to justify paying enormous childcare costs."

"The current level of free entitlement does not meet the overheads of the Nursery and I am very concerned about the implications of further free entitlement for 2 year olds."

"SEN funding is ended and we have few children who has speech & language also behavior needs to address and work need to be done on them."

"Student parent receiving childcare not paying on time."

**Implementing new policies:**

"The main issue facing us is the huge amount of change - new priorities, schemes, bids to put in, etc. Also as a maintained school which is also a childcare provider and a children's centre we have 3 SEFs to fill in which is very difficult for us. Looking forward we are very concerned about the impact of the

forthcoming single funding formula which may make it very difficult for maintained nursery schools to continue to function - because our costs are high with qualified teachers and nursery nurses (though NB our outcomes are very good and we are highly cost-effective)."

"Lot of new policies to implement, which, in themselves, are in danger of becoming counter-productive and affecting the real essence and joy of the work we do."

"Why when it is working well do people keep needing to change things."

"Responding to (government & local authority) policy changes is always necessary but it would be less of a factor if those responsible decided what the policy was going to be and how it was going to work and what the legal and practical implications were before trying to introduce it - and, therefore, having to introduce a policy that is half baked."

#### **Training:**

"There has just not been enough training, and the goalposts keep moving."

"Training is a BIG problem. What other profession has to pay for its own training and has to do the training in its own time? Childminders need paid time off for training."

"Being able to attend courses, however no crèche made available, so cannot afford to take days off."

"Quality Staff has proved an issue at our new setting."

#### **OFSTED inspections and lack of support from local authorities:**

"I have my OFSTED inspection tomorrow and am so nervous I've been ill all day. The system is undermining and stacked against me, it's depressing."

"OFSTED: a childminder should have more than one thing wrong to drop a level down. unless really serious. if you don't let them into your locked away bedroom, you get satisfactory instead of good? a home is in use - they complain if the doormat has dust? does not make sense. too many other examples."

"Very Late information from local authority on level of funding makes it extremely difficult to plan ahead financially."

"Would like local authority to be in a position to supplement shortfall."

"The local authority is trying to set up a childminding network to enable childminders to once again claim for funded sessions. However as it was supposed to start in March 09 and there is still no sign of it, it is something which can't be offered still. They have also not commented on what the funding is for the free entitlements."

"Very little communication from local agencies."

"I need help with meeting OFSTED guidelines which seem to class me as a nursery school, I do not have access to the same funding, so cannot offer free places for 2yr olds! Or afford staff or training."

#### **Obtaining Government Grants:**

"Flexibility within the free entitlement is a key issue. How to do this to meet everyone's needs, sustain the provision and provide the correct levels of staffing are the key issues."

"Grant funding is woefully too low and seems set to get worse with the flexibility requirements that are set to come in. The government cites an independent report, which was not statistically representative, in addition to stating itself that firm conclusions should not be drawn. Most providers seem to have a misconception about charging top ups, believing them to be allowed and authorities within London are turning a blind eye, unless parents specifically complain. Given this and the increasing difficulty of recruiting and retaining competent L3 qualified staff and ensuring they are up to speed with the EYFS is compounding difficulties, increasing costs and the administration required to operate. For small nurseries (we have a 31 place nursery) this is resulting in serious questions of closure. Local Authorities, the DCSF and the government are not listening."

"Children not being able to access the nursery education grant until the term after their 3rd birthday but can access school nursery so long as they are three."

"Childcare Tax Credit should go directly to nursery rather than parents. As some use the money without making payment to their childcare providers."

"Main problem centres around implementing the flexible free places - funding does not cover the cost of offering fee entitlement."

"The current level of free entitlement does not meet the overheads of the Nursery and I am very concerned about the implications of further free entitlement for 2 year olds."

"Whilst grateful for the capital grant offer, am concerned about the long term sustainability of NEG grants"

"Access to government funding (i.e. Capital Grant) is difficult to access."

"The government gave CAP funding to parents and ended it thus causing some to give up half way through their course!"

"We need a co-coordinator and feel that we have been abandoned to a certain extent. I go to Walthamstow to a drop in as we now do not have one in Chingford."

"The impact of NQ EYPS how can someone with little or no experience be allowed to work in a busy nursery without the basics skills it is not going to work."

"I don't know whether many of the issues above apply to me as a childminder (e.g. the free 2 year old offer)."

"is it ok to help a mother who is lost their job and still want to bring the child to go and look for a job"

"How I apply for free childcare places?"

"I have never heard of this the emergency package where is this advertised?"

"Parents wanting to use me as a drop in service and not wanting to pay for time off or contract hours."

"After school clubs are meant to be fun for the children, now they are getting education based."

"Main question is how are we going to get someone with a degree to work for the kind of money we can offer by 2015."

**Q7. What impact has the recession had on you, if any? (e.g. occupancy rates, sessional demand, turnover of children, owed fees, workforce, etc**

**Occupancy Rates/filling vacancies (some decreasing as parents cannot afford fees and others increasing as parents must go back to work):**

**Increase:**

"We've increased our occupancy."

"Increased occupancy."

"There is an increase in the amount of phone calls asking if I have spaces available."

"More enquiries regarding child care, as parents have to return to work."

"I feel more people need to try and find work, so will need to find child care."

"I've had more phone calls from parents looking for part time care as they've had to go back to work in some capacity."

"We have seen an upturn in bookings in the last few months but we also have many parents who are unsure about their financial future and, as such, we are concerned about our future viability."

"Far more demand for places with Mums returning to work."

"We are currently seeing a high demand of children in need of childcare within the local Community, and our intake of children is increasing."

**Decrease:**

"Drop in occupancy rate."

"Occupancy is difficult, cannot reach the most needed the most disadvantage cannot afford fees"

"Occupancy rates as poorer parents have less to fall back on and the nursery [place has to stop."

"Maintaining occupancy,"

"Shortage of work."

Occupancy Rates, Parents/Carers reducing hours."

"Occupancy levels have been hit hard."  
"Not as many phone calls wanting childminder."  
"Occupancy rates have been an issue with some families needing to cut the number of sessions that their child/children attend."  
"Lost a child as parent has cut down working hours."  
"Fewer parents looking for childcare."  
"Parents not needing a place as they are redundant."  
"Yes it has, I have lost 40% occupancy."  
"Lost mindees, struggling to cover bills!"  
"Reduced demand?"  
"As a childminder the recession has an impact on my business as the occupancy rates since last year has been very very low. It has been hard to fill my vacancy since last year. Some parents are not sure if they want to go back to work or when they want to go back. They feel our fees are very high, even though they don't seem to understand we as childminder are going through the recession and have to raise our fees too."  
"Less demand for childcare."  
"Difficulty in filling vacancies."  
"No work, and anyone who does enquire can't get help for my fees but still can't afford my care."  
"I haven't had an enquiry for childcare for six months."  
"Not filling my spaces when children leave to go to school. Having to go out to work till things pick up and struggling to fit this around my daughter."  
"Vacancies have not been filled due to prospective parents saying too fees too expensive."  
"There have been no enquiries for childcare and have had vacancies for ages."  
"I am now receiving far fewer enquiries. This has decreased from on average 5 a week to 1 every 3 weeks, although I currently have no vacancies."  
"The demand went down and I've been working for no profit for the last 2 months."  
"less people needing childcare, or wanting to pay local hourly rates."  
"Not sure. vacancies can take time to fill in, but could be because of the days and hours people want."  
"Harder to fill places/more mums becoming childminders/schools offering before and after care at clubs."  
"I left work in December to start work as a childminder. I have found a number of people who came to look at my setting and then contacted me to let me know that a relative was going to look after their children for the foreseeable future."  
"Not a lot of parents looking for childminders."  
"It is not easy to fill the vacancies."  
"Numbers are generally declining."  
"There is also not much demand at the moment."  
"Children leaving, low demand of parent asking for vacancies."  
"Lack of parents looking to place children."  
"Not as easy to find clients."  
"Vacant places."  
"I have lost two school children due to parents not being able to pay for the child care and since then have found it extremely hard to fill my places as the number of calls has been low. many parents prefer to stay at home as it is cheaper than working and paying for childcare."  
"Losing children to nurseries, children's centre nurseries, parental redundancies, the recession and general parental cost cutting. It also appears that some local recently qualified childminders have been reducing their fees considerably to get work, which has impacted on experienced childminders like myself being unable to compete on price. And my local borough is STILL recruiting new childminders!"  
"Lost 1 child as parent lost their job due to office move too far away."  
"Lost another child as mother not working after baby. Now she is elsewhere and placed her son with non

childminder friend after school."

"Parents cutting session."

"Occupancy rates are low."

"Occupancy has dropped slightly, some parents paying weekly."

"More difficult to fill in the vacancies."

"2 nurseries are fully occupied but one other only just breaking even."

"I cannot fill all of my vacancies as a childminder."

"Numbers are down due to recession."

"I cannot find work as a childminder."

"Currently have 2 spaces coming up & presently unable to fill them."

"Lower occupancy concerns over sustainability."

"Numbers have declined due to inability or unwillingness of parents to pay in the current economic climate. We are not able to offer free or highly subsidised places due to our own funding shortage."

"As at the time of writing my setting will have NIL occupancy because children are either going to be looked after by relatives (grandparents) or parents are losing their jobs. It is very hard to replace lost children and so I have had to take a part time job to compensate, all the while advertising."

"A short drop in numbers Sept 08 to Feb 09 but only slightly more than expected."

"Fewer families are using our Nursery for one day to two day a week placements so that a parent can have time to themselves or have someone to one time with a younger sibling as they now view this as a luxury. But our full time places have filled up faster as parents are returning to full time work."

"Not knowing security of children."

"Sessional demand."

"Parents are looking at other childcare options to alleviate costs."

"A small number of parents have gone part-time or lost their job."

"Some families have reduced sessions and removed their child because of job loss."

"Variable to reduction of full time day care due parents losing jobs, parents moving out of London"

"Parents losing jobs – childcare no longer needed."

"Gap in care due to parent being made redundant, but eager not to lose me as their childminder. Luckily I was able to leave their place open free of charge, which took 2 months until they found work."

"Children leaving my setting because their parents losing their jobs."

"Parents being laid off/made redundant."

"Children leaving due to job loss and hardship."

"Potential reduction in income, as parents facing redundancy."

"I have had a contract signed and due to start but the dad got made redundant the day before the baby was due to start in my setting."

"2 children have left as mother was made redundant. I have been on my local list for 6 weeks now and have not had 1 enquiry."

"So far I have lost one child through her mother being made redundant."

"Parents are trying to cut costs by using family members for childcare during school holidays. This has had a dire impact on my income."

"Having to work more flexibly to fit in with parents losing jobs and freelancing etc.."

"We currently have parents' who have been put on a 4 day week, been made redundant or currently wait to hear from their employer on job losses. We feel that we are soon to be experiencing a turnover of children as these parents will be forced to terminate their contract and we will have to advertise their spaces."

"Redundancies."

"Less work for parents means less need for childcare."

"Two parents have lost their jobs resulting in one parent having to give me notice."

"Children leaving, due to parents ceasing employment. Parents being unable to find new employment."

Few applications for places."

"One of the parents I childmind for is under threat of redundancy, which would result in her no longer needing the place should that happen."

"Parents have lost their jobs so longer need childcare."

**Reduction in hours (fewer sessions, increase in part time):**

"More children leaving at 2 for nursery."

"Reduced days, therefore reduced income"

"Not sure as I've only just been registered but it took a couple of months to find a permanent child and none of them are full time."

"More part time then full time places."

"More and more children attend ONLY for the free entitlement hours."

"Yes, most parents prefer to do part-time, ask family member to help or give up work all together.

Therefore at present I only have 1 part time I'm not earning enough to cover my expenses. I am considering give up and consider another profession."

"Parents have reduced hours or withdrawn child from setting due to job loss."

"Parents taking up free nursery places in local schools due to lack of funds. Parents choosing fewer sessions for their children."

Parents looking for shorter hours which become more expensive (per hour rates), downward spiral."

"If parents are made redundant, then they cut childcare hours or leave altogether."

"Have lost one child as mother was made redundant and another child's hours have reduced."

"Full timers, going part time (childminding) less vacancy enquires. Has not really affected extended school as yet."

"Some parents have stopped their job or are now doing only part time and consequently they stop bringing their children."

"Relatively little most parents are professional's a couple of parents have cut their days but generally it is easy to fill the gaps I have more demand than places particularly for babies".

"I have had to take on another short-term role as my husband has had his hours drastically reduced.

Considering stopping childminding and returning to an office based role to earn more money."

"I think more grandparents are being used for childcare. Parents also tend to work part time so most of my children are part time placements."

"Children reducing hours and children leaving."

"Parents having to reduce children's hours at nursery as can't afford it."

"Parents/Carers reducing hours for their children."

"Some children who were paying for childcare have either cut their days or left."

"Parents are cutting down on number of days they need childcare or considering giving up work all together to look after children. Secondly childcare fees had to be kept low in order to compete as the lowest price is most important factor for parents now when looking for childminding place."

"More part-time places."

**Owed Fees:**

"Owed fees." (x 12)

"Parents are unable or avoid to make payment in time.(owed fees & Sessional demand)", "Fees owed coupled with reduction of funding at the same time", "Chasing money", "Amount of fees owed is rising"

"owed fees, turnover of children", "Owed fees due to job loss, no holiday pay.", "Owed fees and loss of children needing care.", "Very little except concerns about parents leaving owing fees. Some rise in rents.", "Parents/Carers falling behind with fee payments", "Minor owed fees has become frequent"

**Rising costs and rising fees:**

"Around 20% increase in running costs that includes provision of meals and utility bills in the past year."  
"It's difficult to put rates up much for current children and everything else has increased so sometimes running at a loss."  
"Retainer fees sometimes waived or reduced."  
"general rises in food, bills etc."  
"new parents want to pay a lower fee."  
"Managing costs."  
"Keeping debt of parents to a minimum."  
"Can't afford organic food, swapped to own brands and basics. Power bills up a lot, considering raising my hourly rate."  
"Knowing that some people are finding it hard. The fuel bills."  
"My expenses are going up but due to the recession I feel I can't put my fees up."  
"People not wanting to pay the rates."  
"Risk of parents losing jobs, but no real impact."  
"Parents/guardians are finding it difficult to pay the fees."  
"Rising costs of all materials, lighting, heating, food, etc."  
"Parents are wanting childminders at a low rate e.g. £5/hour."  
"Childminders are being asked by families to reduce fees as more and more redundancies are occurring in the work force."  
"More money to be spent on equipment and food and less money from parents."  
"The cost of everything has gone up from food to gas and it is difficult to increase fees."  
"A worry about putting up fees."  
"Rising costs of food and resources."  
"I cannot increase my fees to fall in line with any inflation as parents cannot afford to pay any more""  
"Have increased my fees."  
parents having difficult to pay the fees."  
"Rising rents."  
"It has always been a struggle to fund our services, the recession is making it even harder to raise the amounts we need for our core service, we are clinging on rather than being able to develop"  
"Owe fees, staff salary rates rise, and rent soon to come, electricity & gas rises, food rises and parent loss of job."  
"Increase of things like food, petrol, utilities bills - all of these things are increasing, but in the economic climate childminders cannot increase their fees. This leads to a lot of us just about breaking even.""  
rent and bills increase."  
'Rising rent."  
"Have to watch what I charge as parents can't afford to pay a high rate but I can't afford to charge to low."

#### **Turnover of children:**

"Turnover of children." (x 12)  
"We have experienced turnover of children. However our occupancy has remained virtually unchanged."  
"Turnover of children, due to parents suffering redundancies, or parents having to cut-back and utilising family members as care providers."  
"Reduced turnover of children."

#### **Workforce:**

"Not many staff responding to recruitment advertising", "EYPS staff unless already have basic skills has a very significant detrimental effect on the children in our care."

**Some reported no current impacts from the recession at present:**

"Referrals from Local Authority for the provision has become tighter with children receiving less support."

**Q8 - If rising rent is an issue for you, who is your landlord?**

**Comments (in addition to ticked landlords):**

**Own property/own home:**

"I use my own home and the council tax and other bills keep going up.", "I work from home.", "Own my house", "What about people struggling to pay mortgages that have risen?", "As a childminder I work from home - all my household bills have gone up."

**Rising Rent:**

"Our rent went up last year from £65.00 to £120.00 per week."

"£30 +"

"£15 PW"

"An extra £5 per hour."

"Not sure yet I only had a visit one week rates rises already."

"Rising rates are a problem. We pay £22,000 a year for this."

"£25.00 monthly."

"Rent has been held for this year but knowing it will increase next year may cause financial difficulties."

"£150pcm"

"9% per annum."

"Council tax 3%"

"Our concerns are about the local Business Rates, which increase according to the type and size of the property which we own rather than about our profitability."

"Our rent is already extremely high, but not due to rise yet."

**'Other' landlord:**

"Social landlord - housing association."

"Housing association."

"Private Housing company."

"Nursery is part of Foundation."

"None as funded by Brent council this is a new building and does not have rent issues."

"Scouts"

"We have 4 landlords - one property is in Local Authority premises and they have recently raised our rent."

**Q 9. If staffing is an issue for you, which of the following are causing you the most concern?**

**Other:**

**Funding Training and fitting it in around work:**

"Would like my assistant to also become a registered childminder."

"I always seem to be on a course."

"Long waiting list for childminder training."

"Funding training."

"My own training and what best to train next that would be of any value in the long term."

"It is important that staff have the opportunity to continually develop their skills and knowledge through training but it is difficult as a nursery manager to always find good cover staff at a reasonable rate"

"Lack of qualified (level 3) people applying for positions."

"EYPS proves somewhat too complicated logistically."

**Paying Staff/Wages:**

"Statutory sector offering more pay."

"Can't afford to pay what staff deserve."

"Need crèche workers - too expensive."

"Funding cuts have meant no staff pay increase for third year in a row."

"Training is not an issue, three staff are taking BA hon's degrees but providing pay increases is an issue, I try to provide other incentives to encourage staff to develop their skills but it is not enough these staff are giving up so much of their own time to gain knowledge to provide a higher quality provision for the children, and I feel guilty that I am not able to increase their pay, they will all have to leave as they gain their degrees if they want to earn money in line with local authority pay."

"Minimum wage rates are increasing every year."

**Contracts:**

"Fairness to contract assistant when hours change from week to week."

"Extended short am/pm hours does not suit to many."

"Sessional contracts can be difficult."

**Q10. If sustainability is an issue for you, what is putting most financial strain on your service?**

**Other:**

**General increase of costs:**

"All costs are too high."

"Also rising cost of living. As I provide food and activities for children, keeping costs down is often a struggle."

"Providing affordable child care to an area of deprivation."

**Competing with other childcare facilities:**

"Not getting the children."

"Children centres."

"Competing against other childminders in my area for placements."

"Before and after school clubs."

"Pressure to get the children in as soon as possible. So we don't lose money."

"It seems that schools are receiving the greater part of available local authority/government funding making it very difficult for small voluntary/community groups to continue."

**Funding: (Working Tax Credit/education funding)**

"Although on low income, most parents cannot get Working tax Credit, since they lose out on their rent rebate. I feel this is the single aspect that could be changed would have a positive impact on us"

"No sustainability funding for low income families, I have a child whose mother is teenager, she has dropped out of her course because she just wasn't happy with the course now she has no funding, I cannot turn the child away he's been with us for almost two years not but there is no funding available to pay the fees therefore I am losing about 1,000 per month by allowing this child in for free."

"I do not take education funding as I don't know why I should run at a loss."

"Cut of grant."

"No top up fees allowed will have major impact on service."

"The single funding formula will have a devastating effect on the school budget."

"There is no help for childminders, just the initial start up."

"Budget does not reflect cost of delivering core offer."

"Paying for the diploma."

**Rent/Setting:**

"If we have to move premises we will not currently be able to afford rent elsewhere with current funding level."

"Problems continuing to stay in setting."

"Negative influence of shared site / Academy development."

**EYFS taking up too much time:**

"OFSTED. Not worth it to do school pick ups less than 2 hours cause I have to do same paperwork, take pictures, and cover all areas of EYFS. I need to buy a camera and seems like a computer too for the job. ridiculous. I constantly have to print invoices for Learning Centre."

**Lack of quality staff:**

"Lack of core staff having to pay for agency cover"; "Retaining staff, maintaining quality."

**Q11. If implementing the free entitlement is an issue for you, what aspect of this is proving the most challenging?**

**Other:**

**Unaware of this:**

"I do not know about the 2 yr old offer", "What is this?", "What is a level funding"; "I do not understand the free 2-year-old offer", "Haven't come across this but hardly got any information on this for parents who wanting to seek this option."

**Top up fee:**

"Not being able to charge a top up fee."

"The level of funding does not cover our costs so we have to charge parents a top up."

**Covering costs/getting paid:**

"Will the entitlement reflect my true costs?"

"The flexible entitlement means parents ask for hours i.e. 11.00- 2.00 during staff lunch breaks, when children are sleeping and staff are at minimum for staff ratios, the funding is not enough to enable a voluntary sector nursery to recruit additional staff. staff to allow us to take children at times which do not fit in with the routines of the setting. Also the length of time children are in the setting takes up places of fee paying parents whose money provides the service free nursery education will never help us to become sustainable and provide a service for working parents. There just isn't enough money to cover all of the costs."

"Increase to 15hrs, £2 per session loss of our income."

"Learning Centre (if that is part of it), will not pay me for bank holidays, or when mothers don't attend their class including not attending because child is sick. they pay at least 28 days in arrears. I am always calling them for my money. Won't pay half term, Christmas etc. either. They make the rules."

"Being paid by my local authority."

"Increasing hours to 15 per week will cause staffing challenges and consistency issues. Teachers are on different pay & conditions and may not work 5 additional hours a week."

"I don't offer places to people who want to claim free entitlement."

"Many are already on subsidised fees."

"Places cannot meet current demand."

"No childminder in our borough is accredited."

"The convoluted implementation by local authority."

"Pilot scheme - wait to see outcome."

"Wording to suit local authority."

## **Q12. List the key themes/activities your borough should focus on in the next three years**

### **Training and development:**

"Training" (x8), "More training for childminders", "Training (which is already pretty good in our borough!);  
"Training, GLF etc", "EYPS is it really working."

### **Timing of training:**

"Training in the evenings", "More flexible times for further training opportunities", "More training at better times to suit so I don't have to take a day unpaid to go on course. Maybe more weekends or evenings."

"Improve training, sometimes there is a course you may want to do and is only available on 1 day, not enough of the courses are at the weekend, most are weekdays when we would lose money as cannot work", "More evening/weekend training opportunities for childminders.", "Offer more training days for each course".

### **Content of training:**

"More varied training opportunities."

"Developing quality in the setting."

"Training, cpd for childminders."

"Adequate training and varied training as seems to be the same old courses."

"Better quality training."

"Training and development to go with the capital funding for outdoor play."

"Developing after school care."

"Employing a co-coordinator so we have local support."

"More support for childminders, more training and help with filling vacancies."

"Help to bring all childcare providers up to NVQ3 standards."

"Better organisation of training - we are 'financially penalised' if we fail to turn up for booked training even though we have not had it confirmed by the borough - but we do not get compensated if we do turn up but the training session has been cancelled at the last minute!"

"Continued training (excellent at moment)."

"Sector related courses."

"Better council training to give staff a greater understanding of the importance of their role."

"Professional development opportunities for low status staff."

"How to support staff with higher qualifications becoming Early Years Professionals and equalising the pay instead of just getting the teachers to become EYPS. In my experience the childcare staff are much more qualified to be working with young children. Much of the teachers' activities are totally inappropriate for the personal, social and emotional development of very young children."

"Training support"

"Training and development on key person approach, ensuring children have a high-quality experience in nursery."

"More training in the implementation of EYFS, better guidelines on what we actually need to be doing, and ensuring that this is carried out, and not 3 years down the line, when we do not meet inspection standards."

"More help and training with the EYFS and also more help with OFSTED inspections."

"Management support to help deal with HR issues etc."

"The childminder's compulsory course (ICP) should be at a more advanced level and include a good introduction to EYFS and especially observation and planning. Local authority and Ofsted could work more closely e.g. my OFSTED inspector disagreed with some of the advice my local authority support team had given me."

"Staff training - all staff accessing free NVQ3 qualification."

"Support in planning and effective evaluation."

"Intensive trainings about special educational needs and inclusion."

"Support with NVQ & EYFS training for staff."

"Training on Child protection above level one for all childcare workers."

**Funding of training:**

"CAP programme extension. funding for ESOL with crèche."

"Free qualification courses ."

"Access to free training."

"Increased funding for further training."

"Free childminding like CAP. Also impartial advice/training at childcare setting from external body."

"Give more funds so we can complete our further qualification in childcare."

"Being paid for training which Ofsted encourage but which has to be undertaken in our own (unpaid) time."

**Access to training:**

"In-house training for staff."

"Availability of in-house trainers to deliver training to all staff at INSET training days at low-cost or free of charge."

"I do know a lot of people who work in the child care sector, I think that all group's need more staff, the staff in our group do not stop, we give a very good service to all of our users, but the pressure it very hard at times."

"Easier access and more variety of child care courses."

"Childcare places for childminders own children when on compulsory course, such as First Aid, Health and Hygiene ETC."

"Increase training opportunities and level them to qualifications already held. Allow all staff not just managers to access top quality training, i.e. Tina Bruce, Floella Benjamin. Conferences held on a Saturday so whole teams can attend."

"Relevant and accessible training for staff."

"Greater supply of training."

"Training opportunities, visit to other providers."

"Improved crèche facilities to insure childminders take up of training opportunities."

**Lack of availability for funding/controlling costs:**

"Easier availability of funding for private nurseries."

"To not reduce the funding that they used to allocate."

"Rents, funding to help sustainability."

"Ensuring children's centres receive continued funding."

"Sustainability of children centres."

"Options and financial support for working parents with childcare issues."

"Recognize that playgroups have an important role within the community and stop diverting funding into children's centres because parents want choice."

"Grant opportunities for individual settings needs - rather than following limited criteria."

"Get funding information out to providers on time and in time for us to act professionally and plan our financial year / staffing levels etc."

"Increase the supply cover funding."

"Provide funding for support nurseries with new equipments and refurbishment."

"Funding for small voluntary/community groups."

"Possible funding for childminders to help with resources for EYFS."

"Funding for local authorities to provide SEN for childminders own children."

"Sustainability grants, start-up grants (Lewisham make none, only try and persuade you not to become a

childminder), training."

"Allow all childcare settings access to funding/grants."

"Making sure that if there are grants available they are for everyone!! Merton childminders have been given £2500 for 3yrs while Sutton have nothing!! lots more toys and equipment impresses parents!!"

"Give funding to the childminders for 2 year olds."

"Grants."

"Lifting the level of free entitlement to a realistic rate and continuing the Sure Start Training for Nursery Nurses/Assistants."

"Initiatives to help sustainability of childcare e.g. council grants to keep fees to a minimum for those who are in relative poverty, to up for parents on low income to access quality childcare."

"Ensure parity for funding with maintained and voluntary sector."

"Sort out the loss of funding for things like the excellent mentor scheme, which just disappeared."

"Support financially and other, the toddler groups that have remained open such as St. Antony's kids world in spite of closure of Early Start Forest Gate."

"Yearly grants for childminders e.g. to improve their facilities/outdoor play/storage/toys etc."

"Funded places."

"Funding for children's centres. Funding for childminding development workers."

"Funding further educational studies within childcare."

"Rent."

"Funding/grants."

"Funding for Childminder Stay and Play sessions throughout the year."

"Funding for low income children."

"Funding to ensure continuity and quality."

"Supporting financially."

"My borough should reconsider funding for training such as pediatric 1st aid."

"Increase in funding."

"More funds made easily to access to the setting especially private."

"Because money is a big issue and the parents all enquire as soon as they start when the funding will begin. Bring the funding in to start at 2 Years."

"Increased funding for free entitlement."

"Funding Quality & Qualification."

"Maintained and private sector should be funded on a level playing field if we are expected to offer free nursery education."

"Subsidy of day care costs for settings obliged to follow LEA personnel costs. Ensuring that subsidies for parent's daycare are given directly to settings as some parents are bad debtors even when their costs are subsidized by initiative for low earners, back to work and training schemes."

"Sustainability while the maintained sector changes its method of funding."

"Pay scales relevant to all new expectations on staff."

"Costing, contract of service, plans for redevelopment."

"Increasing funding to support free entitlement."

"Getting government funding for childcare places. make tax credits payable direct to the childcare provider."

"Improving the way funding is accessed, being transparent generally."

"Training at affordable amounts for staff or hopefully free. Training available at the evenings and weekends when you don't need to try and arrange cover. Provide support and guidance to providers."

"Reducing rates bill for nurseries."

"Real cost of places. How to provide a flexible and affordable service."

"Increase the availability of free preschool places to 3 year olds in the borough (particularly some areas which seem to miss out on nurseries places attached to schools)- most nurseries require a top up fee to

be paid - this is not what the government legislation entitles 3 year olds to!"

**Communication, Information and Awareness:**

"To include childminders in all areas of decision making. And to integrate with all centres."

"More face to face contact in childcare settings to support groups."

"level of communication with settings."

"A day Area/borough educational celebration that involves all settings in the borough where information can be given to."

"Raising the level of funding."

"Subsidies salaries for childcare practitioners."

"Ensuring information is passed onto all and not just to their children's centre."

"Improvement to funding info."

"Providing information in plain English without using jargon and abbreviations."

"Raise awareness to claiming family/childcare tax credits."

"Clearer communications with providers."

"Enlist the help of local schools to meet with childminders once a month to discuss the children in childminders care going into nursery at local school."

"Networking between childminders. Financial incentives for childminders with higher qualifications."

"Facilities/venues for childminders to meet. There are quite a few of these in my borough, but not within walking distance."

"Reinstating childminding networks."

"Interagency work."

"Facilitation of networked provision between other relevant services."

"Inter borough working, partnership with parents and gaining a 'GOOD' or above OFSTED grade within the new."

"Visit childminders, communicate more, have training at a time we can attend."

"Ensuring all child carers, especially childminders working alone have the most up to date information available. Changes, particularly in law should be sent out as soon as they come in."

"Ensuring Childminders have access to information freely available to schools re: early years education"

"Improve on sharing information and working in partnership within childcare sector."

"Offering parents information related to the local childcare provider."

"Supporting local, regional and national practitioners' networking."

"Local childminding network."

"Setting up a Childminding Network. Support childminders who want to offer the free nursery entitlement in their setting."

**EYFS and paperwork:**

"De-complicating the paperwork. "

"EYFS" (x6)."

"Partnership working for the EYFS."

"EYFS inspection practice/training for inspections."

"More courses on EYFS to make sure correctly in place."

"EYFS training options for PVI's."

"EYFS Training / Implementation."

"Ensure that all are aware of the EYFS and are aware of its implications."

"Support childminder EYF so they can all get the 3/4 grant .not just those in the net work as all childminder have to do the EYF one."

"Implementing the EYFS to a high standard, easily understood by childcare providers. involving parents making it easy for them to understand."

"EYFS paperwork for childminders, making it easier as our main aim is to look after the children not complete paperwork."

"Look to sustain childminding! Too many experienced childminders will drop out of the profession due to sustainability issues and problems with increased paperwork due to properly implementing EYFS"

"EYFS & Ofsted inspections."

"Support to implement EYFS."

"For me it is increase in the time childminders are allowed at children's centres and providing more examples of good practice at implementing the EYFS."

"Help with EYFS."

"Material grants to implement EYFS."

"Activities around EYFS."

"Simplify the admin."

"Less bureaucracy."

"Ensuring that administration and documentation is not created for the sake of it."

"Examine the effect of EYPS (staff retention and pay) on the voluntary sector."

"Moderation of EYFS."

### **Variety and extension of activities and groups:**

"Me myself and I."

"Growing."

"Healthy eating and living."

"Improve the children's centres."

"Childcare weeks."

"More drop in centres."

"Multi-language parents and toddler groups."

"More playgroups."

"More local primary school places for local children."

"Sustainability for daycare settings."

"More space in children centres."

### **Outdoor play:**

"Help with updating PVI outdoor areas."

"Improved outdoor play." (x3)

"Access to clubs and activity centres for kids, especially outdoor venues for outdoor play and exploration"

"better swings - the new toddler swing park isn't suitable for toddlers! having an area that is dog (dog-poo) free...bring back the fence at Goose Green!"

"More/Better play facilities in local area."

"Outdoor play - improve local parks i.e. Lampton & Inwood, Bedfont Lakes country park, Hounslow Heath and Urban farm facilities to gain knowledge of the local community/world. (Learning & Development), safe toilets and refreshments. (Safe & Healthy well being) Parents/carers would like local days out that are affordable for child 0-16 and the venue is also suitable in cold wet weather (enabling environments)."

"Outside activities."

"Improve parks and amenities in the area."

"Improving parks and play areas."

"Playgroups, safe and well equipped playgrounds, library resources."

"The borough should provide more open play area for children."

### **Holiday activities:**

"Activities for children during the school holidays."

"More activities in half term."

"Children Centres open in school holidays for childminders with over fives. (Positive Relationships/Unique Child)."

**Out of school/extended services:**

"More indoor play areas."

"Family activities/fun days where childcare sector is represented e.g. promoting toy/book libraries etc"

"stranger danger, road safety and safe cycling."

"0-5 very well catered for, not sure about teenagers, would feel they would benefit from own youth clubs etc."

"More stay and play groups sessions for childminders."

"Playgroups, music sessions, gym/activity sessions which are not around school pick up times."

"More activities/groups for childminders to attend with the children they look after."

"I would like to see more extended school offers for those that are seeking extended childcare."

"More for after school children to do."

"More free activities for the under 5's."

"More play groups etc."

"Extended schools."

"Age 8 to 16 projects."

"More breakfast clubs and smaller afterschool clubs for younger nursery children."

"Bring back Early Start Activities. Children's centre good but I enjoyed Early Start activities more, and they were at convenient times. E.g. Growing project; Toddler groups; Music and Movement etc. Have Childminding Networks more than once a week - the current day and time is not convenient for me, and there is no other day to attend."

"Multi-cultural activities for all families, more cheap summer holiday activities for all children, more after school activities, youth clubs for older children, more support for childminders, create more children centres, more primary schools."

**Support for parents:**

"Supporting parents in poverty to access affordable childcare e.g. extension and improvement of education grant, more realistic CAP funding, and employee training and support packages"

"Child poverty and supporting the agenda."

"More support for parents who wish to return to work, but are not yet in employment - it is very difficult to look for a job or get training if you do not have childcare, but you can only get childcare if you have the money to pay for it."

"Support for Parents and child care providers."

"Helping parents get back to work."

"support parents that do not want to come of Benefit to go back to work."

"Supporting parents returning to work."

"Support for parents returning to work."

"Stop schools telling parents the children have to access the school nursery if they want a place in the school."

**Support for providers:**

"Support with OFSTED requirements."

"Support childminders."

"Offer to pay home-based childcarers direct for identified at-risk children."

"Help with the amount of paperwork required with being a child minder."

"I feel as a self-employed person, I am vulnerable if sick and have no workplace pension to pay into. I would like the local Borough/Government to look into this for all Registered Childminders."

"Sort out the parents who lost out when the CAP scheme ended."  
"Supporting childminders more closely."  
"Outreach/satellite provision."  
"More childminding support groups."  
"Supporting children with disabilities and special educational needs."  
"Support for childminders in terms of paperwork needed, courses required and implementing the EYFS, especially providing either the required courses and/or evening courses (weekday is impossible and Saturday is inconvenient when a lot of us have families too)."  
"To support childcare settings in the implementation of change and to consider which areas of change are really necessary, and which are more in danger of dampening people's enthusiasm. Perhaps local authorities could be instrumental in reporting back on this to central government and in warding off more knee-jerk reaction legislation, which is often not adequately thought through."  
"Training, working in partnership with local authority, more support re OFSTED inspections."  
"They should be providing the support that is needed which a lot of other boroughs have but not ours."  
"Help promote childminding more and be more fair in government funded schemes. After all childminders are self employed workers which enable parents to go out to work. If there is no business then we all lose our jobs."  
"Support from Development officer."  
"Informal meetings and drop ins for childminders looking for advice and support."  
"Supporting the settings with guidance as to additional funding for resources, equipment opportunities"  
"Support programs, advertising/awareness."  
"Community programme - liaising with and supporting to find out needs."  
"Support for parents."  
"Support local church run toddler groups who help us daily look after our children. buy toys pay staff. they have bigger premises than the new day centres built by local councils. Some of the groups are run better than them too."  
"Provide support for childminders at suitable times. Also fund for attending courses."  
"More support and awareness of the challenges of PVI - we are in business to make a profit and not to be seen as mules."  
"Social Enterprise."  
"Schemes."  
"Supporting Quality practice."  
"Support with vetting & barring."  
"Provide policy support to nurseries."  
"Providing qualified practice support (and monitoring) across all childcare types (childminders receive same support as group daycare etc) i.e. access to EYP's or Early years advisors."  
"Better systems to help parents find good childcare."  
"Equal opportunities related to staff and recruitment."

#### **Help for childminders, including Advertising/Marketing/Publicising of Childminders:**

"Childminders need more support and contact with local authority workers."  
"More advertising for childminding services. Too much emphasis is on maintaining full nursery places in children's centres, leaving a lot of childminders out of work."  
"Publicising the importance of childminders in providing care to very young children."  
"Raise profile of childminders with schools in particular. Head teachers need to see us as professionals too!!"  
"More advertising for childminders."  
"Promotion of childminders in a positive way."  
"Advertising."

"Offer our services to local employers."  
"Marketing for Childminder service."  
"Raising the profile / professionalism of childcarers / childminders."  
"Inclusion of childminders in policy development."  
"Focus on everyone not just nurseries. They should provide development workers for childminders in all areas, not just the selected."  
"Leave childminders to do the job they are employed to do and stop interfering. Focus on the nurseries/children centres etc."  
"Focus on children over 3 years and please leave the under three's for childminders. Since SureStart centres have opened up we have lost some children to them due to their policies."  
"Educating other multi-agency workers on the value/professionalism of childminders."  
"More childminders."  
"Make available equipment for registered childminders."  
"Treat childminders as professionals and allow free entitlement to be passed on."  
"More provision for borrowing toys that ARE NOT shared with Daycare settings and schools, so to give optimum choice (especially in school holidays). More childminding networks to help locate and keep clients."

**OFSTED and policy matters:**

"OFSTED." (x 2)  
"Stop trying to micro manage education and leave it to the professionals & the regulatory body viz. Ofsted. Keep 'PC' and politics out of education."  
"1 ensure that parents do not lose their rent rebate if they claim WTC."  
"Pay inequalities, teachers with no responsibilities on 42k being managed by Nursery Managers on 25k or less."  
"A true partnership. For the 2008/2009 financial year, The London Borough of Ealing spent all of the Access and Inclusion Grant on their own children's centres, ignoring the PVI entirely, when the majority was to be spent on PVI settings."  
"Providing a consistent approach with other local boroughs as to what constitutes best practice."  
"Supporting SEN/EAL in the PVIP sector."  
"Poverty Agenda."  
"Many more play groups at sensible times. e.g.: we have a childminders group on a wed morning which is fab, the rest of the time it's from 1-4, when my children are asleep. more morning sessions please!"  
"childminder parking bays outside our houses as we often have 6 children to load up. Parking in my street and the nearby streets is atrocious!"  
"Family matters."  
"A key theme is community childcare. We have tried to do so, myself and 2 other childminders but it has not been easy to get accommodation."  
"Promote sessional care as well as daycare."  
"Options for good childcare in light of reduced nursery provision."  
"Also recognising the significance Pre-school have, including pay scales for the voluntary sector."  
"Promote the benefits of 'pre-school' and nursery: not just 'school nursery'."

### **Q13. What helps you link with other providers and share best practice, at a borough level?**

**Other:**

#### **Training/Enrolled course:**

"Training courses - stay and play sessions at children's centres."

"Training on how to run a small business."

"Meeting during training events."

"Informally at training sessions."

"My dhc course is helping me."

"Network training and base coordinators helping with suggestions and providing with good activities."

#### **I/we do not have any links:**

"Our network is useless. We have very little support.", "We have none at the moment.", "None."

"I think this area is very weak.", "Islington does not have a mentor system anymore.", "Don't know how to link in with the borough.", "As yet only the training is available to childminders none of the others.", "Only the first option is available to me so far as I know.", "Haven't found anything yet.", "I don't link in with any other providers other than the local childminders.", "There is little support for after school clubs.", "No links have been established.", "As a childminder I can't think of any available to me!"

#### **Drop in sessions:**

"Childminder drop in sessions, development co-coordinator, networking with other childminders.",

"Childminder drop ins.", "Childminder drop in sessions.", "Childminder groups.", "Going to play groups.",

"Playgroups and pop-ins, give us a chance to swap ideas."

#### **Information from other colleagues (childminders):**

"I have to seek out contacts and create meeting for myself, nothing is provided.", "Meeting up with other childminders for a coffee and a chat.", "Myself and few other childminders are meeting up once in a while to try and set up a network amongst ourselves.", "Info from other childminders.", "Registered childminders in the borough.", "Working with my children's school/networking with them.", "Joint managers and teachers meetings and termly managers conferences."

#### **Childminding Association:**

"NCMA network.", "I get most my info from the NCMA meetings and from my local children's centre.",

"Children's centre.", "Development workers."

### **Q14. Is there anything else you would like to add, on how to help providers link more with each other, and engage with policy-making?"**

#### **Communicating, networking and sharing**

- **Website or e-mail forum to enable the exchange of information and ideas. This would mean that information could be obtained without leaving the setting, and accessible at any time.**
- **Meetings to be arranged at times when childminders can attend. Childminders in a home setting cannot leave to attend a group meeting or workshop. Alternative days or evening and weekend sessions.**
- **The need for local connections**
- **Provision of a crèche or childcare at meetings and training**

"An email forum where we can exchange information/ideas without the need of leaving the premises""

"Stay & Play sessions run by childminders for all parents and carers."

"More network meetings for groups, on a regular basis."  
"Geography and distance of travel."  
"Time of meetings."  
"More opportunities for providers in similar situations to come together, discuss relevant issues and ways of helping each other (communication)."  
"Attending training and meeting with sister settings - organised by our employers."  
"As we are a very small authority others emailing us with information really makes a difference."  
"The different sectors only seem to mix at training courses. Most nurseries work in daytime and can afford to release a person for events. A lone practitioner cannot do so and is somewhat isolated as a result."  
"The only chance I have to link with other providers is only if one of my children are going to nursery or another setting so I can liaise with them. Also by working part time at playgroup."  
"More local childminding groups."  
"Childminders need to be included in discussions at all levels, and their unique status recognised - they generally work alone, in their own homes."  
"Adequately provided for."  
"Childminders have a lot to offer. I find that going to different events/places puts me in a good place to provide information to my parents about the community events /services on offer."  
"Local childminder networking groups."  
"Meetings and training."  
"Workshops that are more central in the borough and in evenings and weekends."  
"Childminding can be very lonely and the training is very bitty and inconsistent so you don't build friendships as you don't do all the courses together."  
"Ignore Borough provision, make your own Network."  
"Regular meeting with other providers."  
"Networks at convenient times. It runs only once a week, I have one child coming to me at 9:10 and another at 11:00, so I cannot attend. We need other days."  
"we need a childminders network locally apart from meeting informally at playgroups/ in passing."  
"As a new childminder I have felt quite isolated in Enfield in regards to help and support. I am aware of the childminding support team but it seems very much down to me to contact them if I require any help. I would have thought they should play a more active role in support of newly registered childminders."  
"Providers should communicate more with each other, be more sociable and share experiences."  
"Representatives from each sector (childminders, nursery, teachers/managers, social care, childcare tutors, for example) should meet occasionally to share ideas and work out problems."  
"More childminder drop in sessions during the day."  
"Listen to local parents/carers who attend meetings as unpaid representatives requirement, we tend to be the last to be invited and heard."  
"Have regular meetings and minutes distributed to all."  
"Have more meeting places throughout the borough in the day ht."  
"I would like to see a half yearly childminding list of all childminders in my local borough, so we will know names and address then we would be able to contact each other. At this moment I do not know of any other childminders in my area."  
"Financial support for managers who cover staff ratio's so they can at least get out of the setting to visit settings and to attend meetings. I am very interested in policy-making but find it difficult to get out of the setting because to remain viable I have to be manager, leader, trainer, mentor, cook, cleaner, staff cover as well as accountant."  
"Childminding Network provided by Local Authority."  
"Our Local Authority need to value childminder's hard work and dedication to children's learning."

"Very difficult to help childminders to link with other providers due to our isolated working conditions and difficulties in arranging cover to attend meetings or training outside of normal working hours."

"Holding workshops so that we are sharing practice."

"We work in a large borough so it has been split into regional clusters so smaller groups get together regularly as well as forums for the whole borough."

"A local authority forum website for PVI providers to enable us to communicate and share information."

"The Children's Centres are beginning to improve links between childminders and other providers but there is still in my view a long way to go. It may be useful for policy makers to involve a range of grassroots providers - childminders included - at the early stages thereby giving a sense of ownership/ understanding."

"Split providers into smaller group divide them into 4 areas/patches across the borough by doing this each area would have a worker to concentrate on helping and supporting each provider to link more with each other."

"We have a PVIP group, which has had a great success, the opportunity to manage our own training and having funding to organise network meetings would be very useful."

"I am waiting for my Ofsted inspection and cannot join the Childminder Network unless I gain a 'good' marking. I am a volunteer at the local nursery which helps me to gain EYFS ideas and gain experience working with 3-4 yrs. I also enjoy attending the children's centre which gives me contact with parents & childminders & the staff."

"To work more in a secure network team with more private successful provider to enhance the quality and take part in the areas as above."

"Need to have more training sessions that qualify for training grant. Only a handful of the training workshops qualify for this. As childminders we have to re-arrange cover and childcare to enable us to do the training sessions."

"All links help, however the information being provided needs to be the same e.g. Pared observations by some early years consultants or all? Mark making or numeracy as priority?"

"Area Conferences that include all child care services."

"Crèche facilities at training."

"Provide childcare for childminders to attend conference during the day."

"Provide a crèche if you want me to come along to a meeting, as I have my own toddler to care for."

"Policy makers should ask the parents and providers what they want from child care."

- **Too much paperwork. Especially for childminders as they do not have the same support and team as large settings.**
- **Better and increased training on the EYFS.**

"You can provide very good child care and your children are happy and their parents but the paper work has become too much."

"Training on what actual policies are needed and help writing them."

"Perhaps nursery schools could run sessions on EYFS for childminders as we have to implement EYFS the same as nurseries but don't have a whole team of people to back us up and are not trained in the same way."

"schools should be more helpful to childminders by allowing them to advertise on the notice board or newsletter."

- **Do not feel that links between providers is necessary or that current links are sufficient.**

"I think most of the child minders I know focus on providing a good service to their clients. they work within the policies set rather than trying to influence them."

"I only really feel the need to link with providers that I have a need to link with, i.e. the school that I take the children or a nursery that a child in my care might attend."

"Very happy with the current flow."

"Although we all work to the EYFS, I think that childminders and larger settings have to manage their businesses in very different ways and the issues we face are not the same. Informal links with other childminders are helpful but not anything that involves yet more paperwork/qualifications (e.g. Networks). Not sure links with other types of setting are helpful."

"I think the opportunities are there to engage if you want."

- **Policy changes**

"More childminders to be employed within local authorities (most early years staff seem to come from nursery settings)."

"health visitors/CCO visit the childminder."

"Have a blank proforma for policies so that each centre could make their own."

"OFSTED should offer standard policy documents relating to confidentiality, behaviour management, equal opportunities and admissions."

"I am hoping to become an EYP. I would like to use my training to help childminders. Perhaps more EYPS could be used like that."

"Policy makers need to listen to the private sector, we cannot pay commercial business rates for rent and rates and compete with maintained and charitable sectors whilst still on meager funding. It will only affect long term sustainability and quality."

"Childminding is very competitive at the moment - with the known childminders taking the cream of the crop."

"Proper business management."

"Childminders need more recognition from other educational sectors."

## **15. Please describe a success story that you have had.**

- **Increasing occupancy and improving settings with hard work.**
- **Improving OFSTED rating or achieving a high OFSTED rating.**

"We advertised borough wide and in 3 months increased occupancy figures from 60% to over 80%."

"Since setting up we have had lots of interest in our setting and have built a good reputation."

"myself I managed to get this group OFSTED passed to a good level when, the last manager left, I had no staff and we were over drawn at the bank. I have managed to fund raise a lot of money in the past improving many areas of building for all of our users, I am very pleased about this, the building was in a terrible state, the toilets were completely re decorated, this is very important to me I work in the middle of a very needy estate in London, I wanted all of our users to come into a lovely clean safe and happy environment, not an old run down building. I have had a lot of success but all of it has been an upward struggle."

"We have had positive feedback that our learning environment has greatly improved from our LEA Early Years Adviser and that we are now heading to achieve 'good' compared to our 'satisfactory' at present"

"Transition to new site with minimal impact on the children's well-being."

"Graded outstanding in 07/08 with very little input from outside agencies, but they want to take all the credit!"

"Got 'Outstanding' from OFSTED, March 2008."

"Since implementing the EYFS last September I achieved an outstanding in my OFSTED in March this year. Only the second person in the borough to do so."

"Wandsworth Borough has been fantastic with help and support in setting up a business and integrating it into the local area."

"I have been graded as outstanding due to sheer hard work."

"Gaining Outstanding status in my last OFSTED report."

"Being judged outstanding after childminding for only 6 months."

"A lady that obtain an outstanding grade during OFSTED Inspection in Waltham Forest Borough."

"Gaining an outstanding grade at my first Ofsted Inspection."

"I have successfully changed my career to become a childminder and have set up my business according to EYFS and OFSTED. My first grading was a good and I aim to get an outstanding on the next. I have completed an NVQ Level 2 and received a certificate for excellent work. I'll soon start level 3 and then commence the Foundation degree."

"My childminding mentor provided me with suggestions and advice e.g. on implementing EYFS observations/recording and in my recent first Ofsted inspection I received an overall grade of Good."

"I have an 'Outstanding' in my childminding practice in 2007/8 and was named Inclusive Childminder of the year in 2006."

"Network has been supported in all areas, mentally and financially by LBWF & NCMA to help network and members grow and achieved accredited status with many of members gaining Outstanding Ofsted inspections. Also, we transformed our venue garden which was a wasteland and turned it into a wonderful sensory garden. All our own hard work and the children's work most of which are made from recyclable materials."

"Setting only open for since January 2007: Developing and retaining staff, keeping children and families for the past two years, the word of mouth demand for places from the local community. Parents building networks."

"Winning several business awards and also achieving Outstanding across all areas of our OFSTED inspection."

"Improved Ofsted inspection results - from satisfactory to good. Worked hard to make improvements."

"The business opened in March 2005 with one or two children on the register and we now have 100 children on the register, with the older age groups completely full and very few places in the younger age groups."

"My personal success story is as a single parent I became a registered childminder in 1999. As I built up my business I have been able to get a mortgage and buy my own house. I have had great opportunities through training to gain several qualifications and through my voluntary work in childminding I have expanded my knowledge of all childcare aspects. As my business is so successful now I am able to work a 4 day week and I now do assessing of childminders and nursery workers on a Friday."

"I was a mentor for a childminder. We are now good friends. She has worked as my assistant. She got Good all round at her Inspection recently."

"After 30 months of opening my nursery, we are full to bursting. I have wonderful staff, who embrace quality for all, children, parents and their own CPD."

"We have just received outstanding status in one of my nurseries."

"I have not had a success story apart from running my own childminding business for nearly 3 1/2 years which allows me to work locally and be at home with my sons."

"We have been successful in obtaining a grant from our local authority to erect awnings which has improved and extended our classrooms outside."

"We have recently had our visit from Ofsted and the outcome was a 'good', this was a great outcome for the centre, staff, children and families. We are now looking for ways to improve even more."

"Great that the EYFS had given us funding to revamp area's within the setting."

"Expanded our provision this year with an Investment into our outdoor provision."

"Our networking group had a planning meeting just before one of the ladies had her OFSTED inspection and that contributed positively to the result of the inspection."

"We have not needed to advertise all our children have come through personal recommendations."

"Implementing a new recording system called 'Learning Journeys'- linking children's planning directly with their achievements."

"EYP working success in our setting."

- **Obtaining good and enthusiastic staff.**
- **Qualified staff and practitioners**

"Setting have two EYPS."

"Outreach worker that reflect the ethnic group we are targeting."

"Watching childminders support each other whilst looking after children from families attending family learning courses."

"recruitment of key staff and effective induction."

"All our FT staff are now qualified to at least level 3 and PT staff are undertaking qualifications. We have 6 degree-level practitioners (including our 3 trained teachers). We have generate a huge amount of enthusiasm for further development and training amongst members of the team."

"Following the takeover of our setting the moral of staff has increased, additional support and guidance has been very positive thus reflecting on a welcoming ethos throughout the users and staff."

"I have decided to have two jobs - childminder and playgroup assistant. This keeps me up-to-date with other childcare settings, gives me more experience and training."

"I've attended a Schema training and I'm now able to share my knowledge with other parents."

"I have worked full time since registering and owe this to fellow childminders support

"completing the diploma in home based childcare (after being a childminder for over 20 years)"

"Lambeth is recruiting more childcare practitioners to work in the Children Centre."

"Sign language course helped child engage in setting and become a happier, competent learner."

"I have received funds for further studies and completing my degree course in Early Childhood Studies."

"Passing my Cache Level 3 Diploma in Home based Childcare and the positive impact it has had in running/ organising my setting."

"Being a childminder gave me the opportunity to study Foundation degree in Early Years childcare and education. however, I am planning to complete my degree next year at Roehampton University and achieve the EYPS."

"Being funded by the LT to become a graduate leader in my setting to work alongside teachers and children to achieve a high reward in the EYFS teaching/ introducing to the children new activities e.g. phonics outside story etc."

"There are always other issues that make financing and operating a business difficult, but positive attitudes and working in partnership really help to motivate me, my PVIP group has also been a huge help. I have also (hopefully) successfully completed my Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies over the past two years and will be embarking on my BA (Hons) in September this year!"

### **Children's and carers achievements where children need extra help.**

"Child joined with severe development delays. Area SENCO thought it was possibly autism. With tremendous input of the staff, the child came out of his shell and now talks and communicates with others and his development has improved."

"Working with autistic children and getting their recognition."

"Realising that a child in my care had a medical ailment, and against the advice of his doctors insisted that mum got a second opinion. He was later fitted with grommets after having tonsils and adenoids out."

"We were concerned about one of our children's hearing and monitored and observed this regularly. No one else seemed concerned including his preschool, so we decided to approach the parents and talk it through with them. They took the child to the hospital for tests and it was confirmed that they needed

treatment. The parents thanked us for our observations on their child."

"I was asked 3 years ago whether I would take on board a child 3 month premature, who needed more attention and a high level of care. I was a bit unsure at the beginning but now the child is very well developed and caught up with the others. She is a very clever little girl who will go to nursery in September."

"I had concerns regarding a child's development. I used my SENCO knowledge and he is now having physiotherapy to help his physical development."

"We have been able to provide a free place for a 9 year old boy who is in remission from cancer whose family are living on benefits. His aggressive therapies have meant that he has experienced so much muscle wastage that he has had to use a wheelchair. Previously his only play outside school was on computer. Through his outdoor play with us his muscles are improving he has made friends and has discovered a love for exploring in the woods (Hampstead and High gate). We will be taking him on a 5 day out of bounds residential trip in July."

"Enjoyed working with a young girl that had difficulty in communicating and interacting with others of her age group. Gave her the extra time, explain things to her and with time begin to understand how and why we do things. she has now settle both at home as well as school."

"A success story is that of looking after a premature baby born at 5 months. He could hardly contain himself when his mum registered him at 6 months. With tender loving care, working in partnership with his mum and dad, relating to other agencies and GP's, this baby's rapid growth was astounding."

"We have been able to meet the needs of 5 children with SEN and support them with a smooth transition to school - I feel without this the transition may not have been so successful for both the child and the family."

"Working with children with special educational needs and in partnership with parents to enable a child to progress to the best of his ability."

"Have developed excellent links with local school and managed a transfer of a child with SEN that has developed very well for child and parent."

#### **Taking initiative for improvements:**

"We have a fairly large number of fathers who drop and collect their children, through initiatives linked with the children's centre we encouraged them to partake at a boroughs 'friendly' football match. Since partaking the fathers have grown in confidence when in the nursery environment which has helped in the uptake of participation at other nursery events."

#### **Encouraging and integrating children who do not speak English or not as a first language:**

"Encouraging an Albanian child who only spoke in her mother tongue and watching her become fluent in English within a few months. Sharing her achievements as she became a happy and sociable individual."

"As a childminder I was caring for children from the social service. I gave lots of support and care to these two children and mum, speaking the language mum understood as she was not speaking English fully. After they moved to another borough I was asked to help with another family at the family centre who needed more moral and emotional support which has helped them in all areas."

"As a childminder, had a mindee who did not speak much English, during her time with me of 6 months, she picked up words and spoke a lot more than she did when she started, I felt like I made a success in my work by teaching her English."

"I have also successfully taught a Chinese 3 year old to speak English on a high level."

#### **Happy children and happy parents supporting each other:**

"I have been building up the centre, by doing a lot of outreaching and to families. carers with children under 5 years to help with their need."

"Lots of examples of working with parents to support home and nursery levels."

"We have been successfully running our playgroup in this community for over 40 years. We still have a long waiting list and we believe that we play a really important role within our community which is in a poor area and is ethnically very diverse."

"Working in a happy playgroup for 30 years where children always come back and visit."

"As a new setting we are in the process of developing the provision, creating a warm and inviting environment for the children and their families. Building an effective, supportive and hard working staff team has also been a priority which has proved to be quite positive."

"All the parents and children I have worked with have been incredibly happy with the service I have provided and I keep in touch with them all regularly."

"My last three customers have given my service a 100% rating."

"I have looked after a child from age 5 months, he is now four and will be starting school soon. He is happy and confident."

"Every day I have success story with the children I care for I just love to listen and watch as I learn so much from them and am amazed at how much they know for the age they are. One child's school report, after me having had her for 3 months, was so vastly improved that her mother put it down to the way I care and help the children in my care blossom."

"Always a privilege to take on a baby at six months, and follow through to when they start reception."

"I have found the support offered at the Peck ham Rye One o'clock club childminders group useful. The advice is helpful and the facilities excellent."

"I feel the children in my care are success stories they love coming to my setting they never want to go home and all my parents are pleased to me this is all that matters."

"I have looked after a little girl for the past 7 1/2 years. When she started with me she was extremely shy and stubborn. Within a short space of time being in my care everybody remarked what a changed little girl she had become. She began to show affection and listen. Her grandparents called me ""an angel"

"Supporting teenage parents."

"It feels good when you have help someone who is in need. All the help comes from the almighty God."

"I have a child who will be leaving me soon who spoke very rarely, could not count and new no colours age 3, he is now a 'normal' chatty forward 4 year old."

"I can give you many positive client references, even from my most difficult client."

"I love the children and they love me and love coming here. The downside is Ofsted and having to do the diploma in home based child care which will take 2 years."

"Becoming aware of my reputation at my own school and in the local community is very humbling and exciting. I always wanted to be really good at something."

"The children in my care are very happy."

"I regularly attend St. Antony's kids world, which kept open after closure of Early start Forest Gate, and this has helped greatly."

"I had a child come to me that had never been away from Mum, he had real separation issues, anyway after being in my setting for two weeks he has grown in confidence, independence and is so much happier, I never thought that he would ever settle but he did."

"I finally have a mindee!!"

"I am really enjoying being a childminder. I started 6 months ago and I look after my son and two other children of the same age. The parents recently rated my care for their children as excellent, so I feel successful."

"Helping a number of childminders with their business."

"I had a child who was finding it difficult to speak but God willing he is able to talk and express himself"

"A child showed me an injury he received at home, I followed procedures of the time, he and his family were given help. I looked after the child for another two years, while he was on at risk register, and supplied support for the family. They now are a happy family unit with 1 more child. They came to see me with the new baby and thanked me for helping by referring them to social services. They admitted they

were angry at the time, but now very grateful."

"Despite Ofsted not giving me outstanding in my inspections, my children and parents think I am outstanding and word spreads and I am never short of children. have to turn both full time babies AND lots of schoolchildren away - despite before and after school clubs:-). I love seeing my children develop and learn and turning into independent people. I think every day is a success for us:-)"

"Plenty over the years...."

"The children I look after are happy in my care which is all I can ask for."

"Our whole nursery is a success story."

"Have taken on 1st child age 3 for EYFS. Doing lots of paperwork from Bromley cma. Parents really happy."

"Seeing my first ever minded-child on a regular basis, even though he finished with me over 17 months ago and him giving me cuddles, asking about my children and wanting to come to my house to play"

"Learnt a child to read, and learnt a child to eat properly with cutlery."

"The nursery; since it opened."

"I was a mentor to a childminder and we have become friends and now help each other."

"Six of our two and three year olds entered 'Me and my family' first poem competition and will be having their work put into publication in August 2009."

"There have been many success stories involving parents in the day to day activity of the play centre and other facilities that we run i.e. training courses and job finding."

"The stay 'n play sessions providing a safe haven for parents and children and a wealth of advice and support."

"Writing project, 100 days at School. For further details please see Nursery World 23/4/09."

"We take part in a Quality Improvement/Assurance scheme which encourages reflective practice and this has taught us to look in depth at all we do."

"We created a PVIP group and from this have held joint training and shared practice and acted as one voice against the local council regarding the free funding and NEG agreement."

#### **Q16. Any other comments?**

##### **Funding**

"Funding is a real issue. Our borough have recently announced funding for only 6 months of the next financial year instead of the full year which leaves us feeling vulnerable and insecure. We are not able to plan our year or our finances. Staff have worked extremely hard to keep up morale but this sort of action from funders is hard to work with."

"We need more funding from somewhere to keep us sustainable."

"Just keep your prices competitive. Thank you."

##### **EYFS and paperwork**

"I will be sad to leave the profession but feel I have no other option as I do not want to do the work of a nursery teacher in my own home, thanks to the EYFS."

"I find the amount of paperwork and cross referencing to EYFS way too much to deal with."

"The EYFS puts an incredible time load on childminders who are already working long hours at, or below, the minimum wage. While schools give staff PPS time and lunch hours, we are lucky if we get a 2min break from 8am - 6pm and finding time to write observations, keep up with tracking, organise profile books, keep up contact books with parents is very difficult. At the end of the day, once I have waved the last child off, I turn to sort out my own young children and it is normally 8.30pm at the earliest before I can get something to eat, do my food shopping, prepare food for the next day (I am unable to cook with the current personalities and ages of children I care for and I make it a policy not to take them shopping) By this time I am too tired to start paperwork Added to that, the only times we have available for training are

Saturdays or evenings. Both these times are precious to those of us with families and difficult to arrange childcare cover for if a single parent, or partner who works away a lot. Again, schools get all this within regular working hours where childcare is already in place. If childminders are to achieve higher qualifications and expertise, we need accessible training options."

"I want to stress that EYFS implementation does not match with the job or pay of a childminder. We are expected to do the work of a teacher £30,000 job, when we may get only £5000. We are also the cook, cleaner, gardener, accountant, first aider, nappy changer and if our day with children finishes at 7, this is the beginning of the paperwork. Also quite silly that after children come from school - reception and year 1, we still have to follow the EYFS for them. Most parents don't want this service for children who attend part-time. they don't have time to sit and chat on the children's progress. Parents attending classes just want somewhere safe for a few hours, while they attend their class. they want to know that children are doing activities, but have all commented that OfSTED is taking it too far when I show them the folders. Children who come from school just want to free up. So far it only makes sense for children who stay the whole day - only 1 child out of five on my role. And it still is ridiculous in this case. Furthermore, EYFS wants us to put up posters etc. This is my home, and I will put children's pictures and craft on display, but posters of different kinds is ridiculous. People who cannot go out to work either because of lack of qualifications, or because of taking care of children at home, have made an effort to do something simple at home, but Ofsted has and is continuing to take all this away from us. Frankly I cannot understand how someone with a PhD could be so foolish as to force the EYFS on a childminder. [I have a degree - first class honours at that, in computer science. I would never enforce the EYFS on a childminder - I can do it at ease, but it does takes time, resources, finance, and childminders will never get paid for what it takes]"

"Some people who cannot afford nurseries now are looking to childminders for childcare, but we are still very undervalued and people don't realize we have the EYFS to follow too."

#### **The title 'childminder' and under appreciative and acknowledgement of childminders:**

"I really do love my job and just wish that more people would use childminders as their main form of childcare."

"Too many to mention. The name CHILDMINDER is outdated and should be changed to Professional Child Carer, PCC for short. This system is awful."

"Seems to be the case that we are all working for a great cause, but we feel we don't get the acknowledgement we deserve."

"Please value the hard work and dedication of the staff teams employed and not abuse their dedication to the job. We work longer hours and do not have the same benefits or entitlements that the maintained sector have. You only have to look at the Children's centre's to see the staffing levels employed and budgets that they have to work with."

"They cannot compare with the level of work we put in to our work."

"Other practitioner from different religions and faiths should be recognised and their efforts should be celebrated. These issues seem recently to be a barrier to be able to continue practice."

"I have gone into childminding as it was the only way I could afford to stay at home with my own children - I couldn't afford to pay for my own two to go to a childminder when I had the choice to return to work after my second round of maternity leave. Whilst I enjoy the children, it takes up so much of my time and infringes on my children's home and lives so much. I would have been better off returning to work three/four days a week and still have my house intact and not trashed by children who don't always understand the rules...."

#### **OFSTED:**

"I am due for my OFSTED inspection within the next few weeks it is hard when you do your best all year round and you are judged on just a new hour inspection."

"Ofsted expect me to have the same equipment and opportunities as Nursery schools. As a childminder in this borough I am nonexistent."

"As a newly registered childminder (Sept 2008) I've found this area very complicated - especially as there seem to be constant changes in both policy and in terms of how policy is enforced by Ofsted. I would like to see greater consistency in terms of policy and recommended good practice."

#### **Communication:**

"Most communications I receive from the local council are gobbledygook-full of jargon and terms which make little sense to me (and I have a degree in English!) I think separate communication for childminders and nurseries would be better."

"Potential childminders need to be made aware of how long it takes to become registered and what is required of them as this is often underestimated."

"The big problem is there are too many people trying to think up ways of improving education while continuing to a) miss the real way education can be improved and b) not being sufficiently well educated themselves."

"What is this 2-years free offer about?"

#### **Possible further changes and improvements**

"Registered childminders driving large vehicles should be exempt from congestion charge at least during school holidays to allow them to avail themselves of the rich variety of cultural activities available in Central London. A road tax exemption for larger vehicles would be welcome as we need to be able to drive to provide school drops."

"Rules for student mother to their childcare money to pay for services they receive."

"Free entitlement: Having cut off points and 'team after 3rd birthday' does not offer the children equality of opportunity. All literature promotes free entitlement for ALL 3 year olds. It is not."

"LEA should not be considering one September intake they are only thinking about funding for Reception teachers and not the children."

"Would like to have more mixed classes of families."

"Lambeth have to find way to retain their trained."

"The children's centre agenda is brilliant I hope a future government will not demolish it."

"Registered childminders to have a 1 day a week childminders day only in all children's centres."

#### **Positive comments**

"I would just like to say I love my job and am very happy with the support I get from my local network."

"Keep up the brilliant job. More grease to your elbows."

"Local Early Years support cannot be faulted."