

## Middlewich

Future demand for early years childcare places and out of school childcare places will in all probability be met by existing provision over the five years - moving toward 2027. However, this sufficiency situation will require monitoring. Existing providers may need to prepare for an increase in demand.

## Summary Conclusion

Theme	Status	Supporting Evidence												
Is there an estimated additional forthcoming demand – up to 2027 – for 0-4 years early years childcare places in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area?	Yes	Local Authority calculations indicate that 5 new early years childcare places for 0-4 years would be required to maintain the 2022 sufficiency ratio.												
Is there an estimated additional forthcoming demand – up to 2027 – for 0-4 years out of school childcare places in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area?	Yes	Local Authority calculations indicate that 3 new out of school childcare places (including actual school-based) for 5-11 year olds would be required to maintain the 2022 sufficiency ratio.												
Are there any childcare providers with an evident intention (in summer 2022) to expand located in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area?	No	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Type of Provider</th> <th>Percentage of providers with intention to increase capacity...</th> <th>Combined number of additional places...</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Early Years Childcare Provider/Setting</td> <td>0</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Out of School Childcare Provider</td> <td>0</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Registered Childminder</td> <td>0</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Type of Provider	Percentage of providers with intention to increase capacity...	Combined number of additional places...	Early Years Childcare Provider/Setting	0	n/a	Out of School Childcare Provider	0	n/a	Registered Childminder	0	n/a
Type of Provider	Percentage of providers with intention to increase capacity...	Combined number of additional places...												
Early Years Childcare Provider/Setting	0	n/a												
Out of School Childcare Provider	0	n/a												
Registered Childminder	0	n/a												
In terms of occupancy, what is there a greater incidence of? a) Waiting Lists b) Vacancies among childcare providers located in the Planning Area in 2022?	Waiting Lists/ Vacancies	<b>100% of all relevant providers stated that they had seen a waiting increase in size since summer 2021</b> None of the relevant providers stated that they had seen a waiting list decrease in size since summer 2021												
Is sustainability of existing childcare providers a risk factor in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area as of summer 2022. (with 'risk' being denoted as greater than 30% of childcare providers stating they had sustainability concerns in summer 2022).	Yes	33% of early years childcare providers/settings situated in the <b>Middlewich</b> Schools Planning Area stated that they were experiencing <b>ongoing</b> sustainability issues as a result of COVID-19 – and repeated themes were:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Occupancy challenges</li> <li>2. Subsequent income generation concerns</li> <li>3. Incidence of parents (still) working from home</li> </ol>												
Are there any evident plans by the Local Authority to develop new school places in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area – as of summer 2022?	Yes	For Middlewich Primary School (resource provision) to expand by 5 places, which will be offered to children with a primary need of Hearing Impairment across reception, KS1 and KS2 who have an EHCP.												

The **Middlewich Schools Planning Area** is located in the central west area of the Cheshire East locality.

There are two new housing developments planned for construction and eventual occupation up to 2027, which will yield approximately 270 new dwellings within the Middlewich locality.

Source: Cheshire East Council 2022

**Table 1 - resident number of children/young people and the potential additional population up to 2027 created by new housing developments** Source: Office of National Statistics 2021

Relevant School Planning Area wards =	Number of resident children/young people in Schools Planning Area in 2020	The ONS 2021 forecast percentage increase in cohort population by 2027	Potential future additional population by 2027 for Schools Planning Area - by school cohort - when the new forthcoming 270 dwellings are factored-in – aligned to Cheshire East Council new yield formulas: For 0-4 years = 13 children per 100 dwelling For 5-11 years = 19 children per 100 dwelling For 12-18 years = 15 children per 100 dwelling		Estimated population at 2027 (ONS forecast + yield from new dwellings)	Population increase / decrease 2020 to 2027
0-2 years	442	No change	For: 0-4 years	+35	792	+12 (+1.5%)
3-4 years	338	-6.9%				
<b>Total 0-4 years</b>	<b>780</b>					
5-7 years	491	-5.8%	For: 5-11 years	+51	1,220	+23 (+1.9%)
8-11 years	706	No change				
<b>Total 5-11 years</b>	<b>1,197</b>					
12-18 years	1,066	+5%	For: 12-18 years	+40	1,159	+93 (+8.7%)
<b>Total 0-18 years</b>	<b>3,043</b>	<0.5%	+126		3,171	128 (+4.2%)

## Supply and Provision dynamics

### Providers located in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area

The following **early years childcare settings/providers** are located in the Schools Planning Area

- Early Learners Nursery (Middlewich) Limited
- Kids Planet Day Nurseries Limited
- Tommy Thumbs Pre-School
- Peter Pan Pre-School

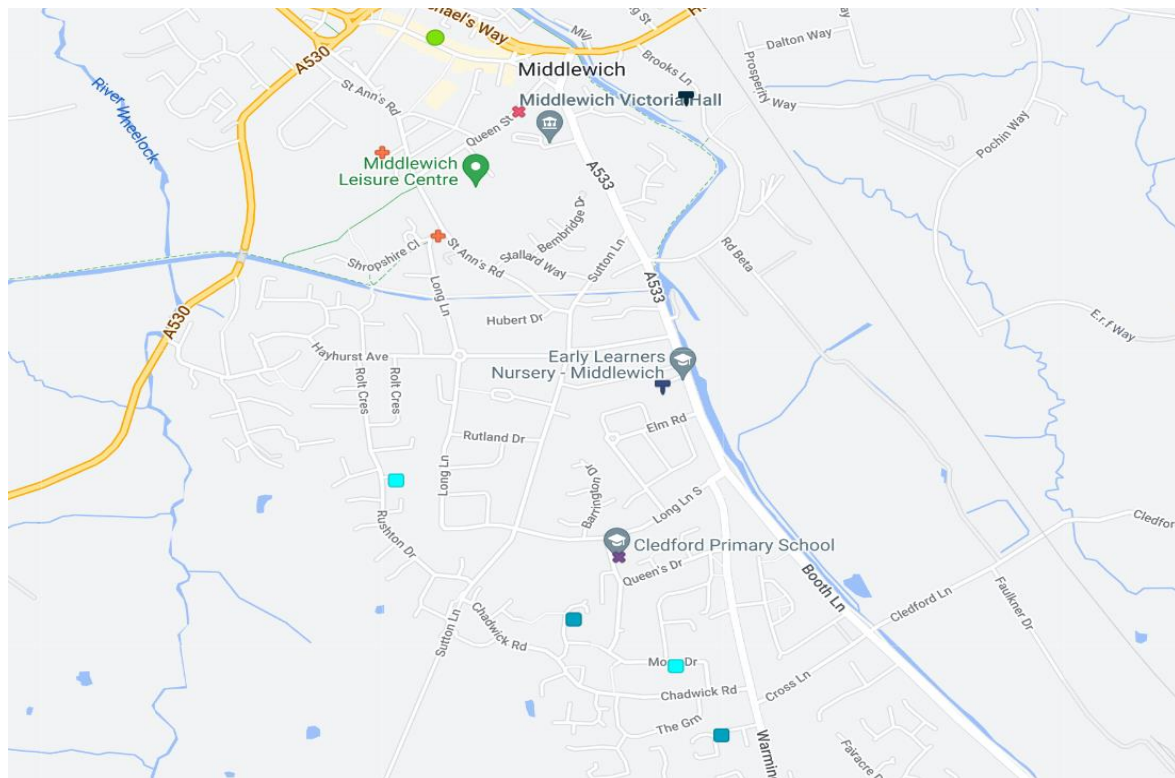
These four providers account for a combined total of 297 registered places.

There are two school-based **out of school childcare providers** located in the Schools Planning Area providing a combined total of 150 (before school) places:

- St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Middlewich) Breakfast Club
- Middlewich Primary School Breakfast Club

Six **registered childminders** are resident in the Schools Planning Area and they are accounting for a combined total of 53 registered places.

Image A below indicates the location and relative size of forthcoming new housing developments in relation to the current provision of early years and childcare situated in this geographical area



Key – childcare types and size / approved and under construction new housing developments and size

Academy Nursery		0-20 places		Denotes development	Development Size	Denotes development	Development Size
Day Nursery		21-30 places			0-99 new dwellings		200-499 new dwellings
Maintained or Independent School		31-40 places			100-199 new dwellings		500 new dwellings +
Out of School Club		41-50 places					
Pre-School Playgroup		51-75 places					
State Funded Nursery		76-100 places					
Childminder		101-200 places					
		0-5 places					
		6-10 places					
		11-15 places					

Feedback from a summer 2022 consultation with early years and childcare providers that are situated in the Schools Planning Area is outlined below on pages 4-10.

## Occupancy Dynamics in summer 2022

Table 2 - the incidence of: (a) waiting lists and (b) vacant places at Middlewich Schools Planning Area-based providers in summer 2022

Type of Provider	Percentage stating they had a waiting list in summer 2022	Percentage stating they had vacant places in summer 2022
Early Years Childcare Provider/Setting	0	67%
Out of School Childcare Provider <sup>1</sup> <i>see below</i>	n/a	n/a
Registered Childminder	17%	17%

- 0 of all relevant providers stated that they had seen a waiting list decrease in size since summer 2021
- 100% of all relevant providers stated that they had seen a waiting increase in size since summer 2021
- For Middlewich Schools Planning Area-based early years childcare providers/settings, the age group that accounted for the highest incidence of vacant places was 1 years

Ultimately, aligned to the period: May 2021 – May 2022:

- 22% of Middlewich Schools Planning Area-based childcare providers stated: Our occupancy has *decreased*
- 22% of Middlewich Schools Planning Area-based childcare providers also stated: Our occupancy has *increased*

## Fees

Table 3 - average fees charged by Middlewich Schools Planning Area-based childcare providers

Type of Provider	Average hourly fee	Average sessional fee
Early Years Childcare Provider/Setting	£5.25	
Out of School Childcare Provider		n/a
Registered Childminder	£5.00	

<sup>1</sup> The two out of school providers located in the SPA are all non-registered and school-based.

## Hours

Table 4 - average opening and closing times for childcare providers located in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area

Type of Provider	Average opening/start time	Average close/finish time
Early Years Childcare Provider/Setting	07:39	17:00
After School Club	n/a	n/a
Registered Childminder	07:32	17:53

## Demand

Table 5 presents:

- (a) an indication of the existing level of sufficiency in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area-based aligned to the three types of formal childcare provision: 1/ early years childcare settings; 2/ registered childminders and; 3/ out of school childcare providers.
- (b) an indication about the extent to which forthcoming new housing developments (see Table 1) will alter the sufficiency landscape once all planned developments and new houses are constructed and occupied.

Table 5 - assessment of how new housing developments will change numbers of resident children and potential demand for childcare

Age Cohort	Existing number of childcare places in the Schools Planning Area in summer 2022		Population of cohort wards in locality in 2022	Childcare places available per child	Estimated population 2027	Estimated demand for places 2027
0-4 years	Number of places with: (a) Early years childcare providers	297	780	For early years childcare providers = 0.38	792	301 (+4)
	(b) Registered childminders	53		For registered childminders = 0.068		54 (+1)
	<b>Total Reg. Supply</b>	<b>350</b>				<b>355 (+5)</b>
5-11 years	Number of places with: (a) Out of school childcare providers (inc. actual school-based)	150	1,197	For out of school childcare providers = 0.125	1,220	152 (+2)
	(b) Registered childminders	53		For registered childminders = 0.044		54 (+1)
	<b>Total Reg. Supply</b>	<b>203</b>				<b>206 (+3)</b>

Table 5 indicates that 8 new childcare places may be required by 2027:

- 5 new early years childcare places for 0-4 years would be required to maintain the 2022 sufficiency ratio.
- 3 new out of school childcare places for 5-11 year olds would be required to maintain the 2022 sufficiency ratio.

It can be noted that the childcare providers located in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area did not have, in summer 2022, an intention to develop new provision in the forthcoming two years.

## Funded Childcare

Table 6 - Dynamics of provision in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area in summer 2022 as outlined by *responding* settings/childminders

Type of Responding Provider	Number of free entitlement for 2 year olds offered in Schools Planning Area	Evident number of vacant places in summer 2022	Number of universal 15 hours free entitlement for 3&4 year olds offered in Planning Area	Evident number of vacant place in summer 2022	Number of 30 hours childcare offer places for 3&4 year olds offered in Planning Area	Evident number of vacant place in summer 2022
Early Years Childcare Provider/Settings	51	6	57	7	108	7
Registered Childminders	7	1	7	2	11	2

Table 7 - assessments of how much higher or lower each type of relevant provider envisaged the demand for 15 hours free entitlement for 3&4 year old places would be, in summer 2023

Type of Provider	% stating significantly higher	% stating higher – but not significantly	% stating About the Same	% stating lower – but not significantly	% stating significantly lower	% stating Don't Know
Early Years Childcare Provider/Settings	0	33%	67%	0	0	0
Registered Childminders	0	50%	33%	0	17%	0

Table 8 - assessments of how much higher or lower each type of relevant provider envisaged the demand for free entitlement for 2 year old places would be, in summer 2023

Type of Provider	% stating significantly higher	% stating higher – but not significantly	% stating About the Same	% stating lower – but not significantly	% stating significantly lower	% stating Don't Know
Early Years Childcare Provider/Settings	0	0	100%	0	0	0
Registered Childminders	0	17%	67%	0	17%	0

Table 9 - assessments of how much higher or lower each type of relevant provider envisaged the demand for 30 hours childcare places would be, in summer 2023

Type of Provider	% stating significantly higher	% stating higher – but not significantly	% stating About the Same	% stating lower – but not significantly	% stating significantly lower	% stating Don't Know
Early Years Childcare Provider/Settings	0	33%	67%	0	0	0
Registered Childminders	0	33%	50%	0	17%	0

## Workforce, Recruitment and Retention

Table 10 - fundamental workforce details among setting-based providers in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area in summer 2022

Type of Provider	Average number of staff employed at settings in the Middlewich Planning Area	Percentage of settings stating that they had staff leave in the past 12 months	Percentage of settings stating that they were currently experiencing problems with recruitment and/or retention	Percentage of settings stating that they had training needs or gaps
Early Years Childcare Provider/Setting	28	100%	67%	0

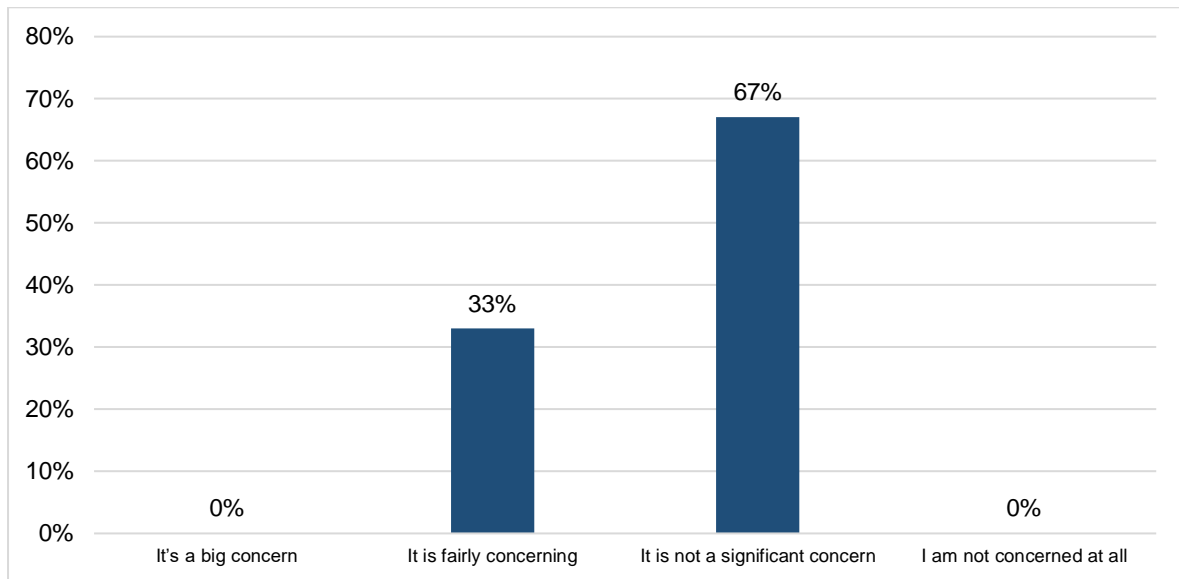
Repeated stated reasons for staff leaving settings *included*:

- Staff deciding to work in a different sector
- Retired

Stated posts/positions that evidently were aligned to recruitment or retention challenges/difficulties *included*:

- Qualified to Level 3
- Qualified Teacher

Image B - level of concern that setting-based childcare providers had about the theme of workforce recruitment and retention, including for the forthcoming period: summer 2022 – summer 2023



## Sustainability

33% of early years childcare providers/settings situated in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area stated that they were experiencing **ongoing** sustainability issues as a result of COVID-19 – and the sole repeated theme was: recruitment of staff creating sustainability challenges. 67% of registered childminders situated in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area stated that they were experiencing ongoing sustainability issues as a result of COVID-19 – and repeated themes were:

1. Occupancy challenges
2. Subsequent income generation concerns
3. Incidence of parents (still) working from home

Image C - how parents/families were continuing to feel in terms of their child(ren) (re)attending childcare, according to Middlewich Schools Planning Area-based childcare providers

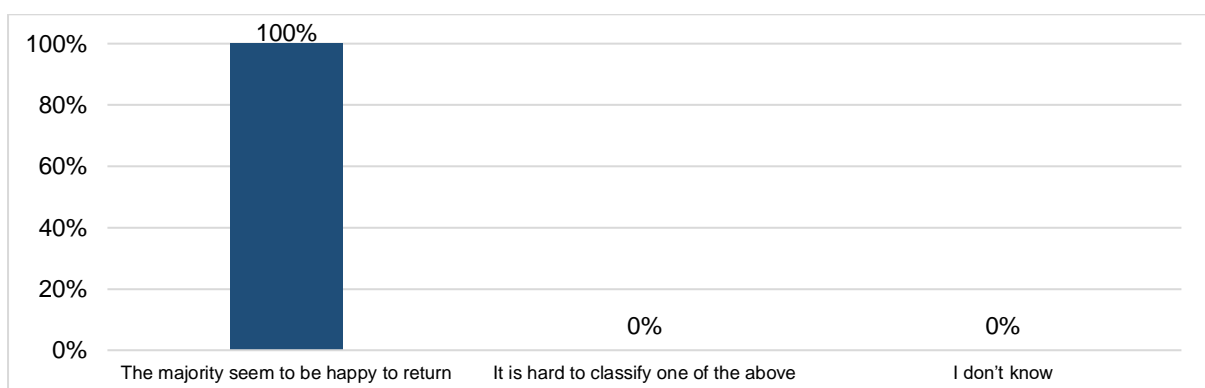
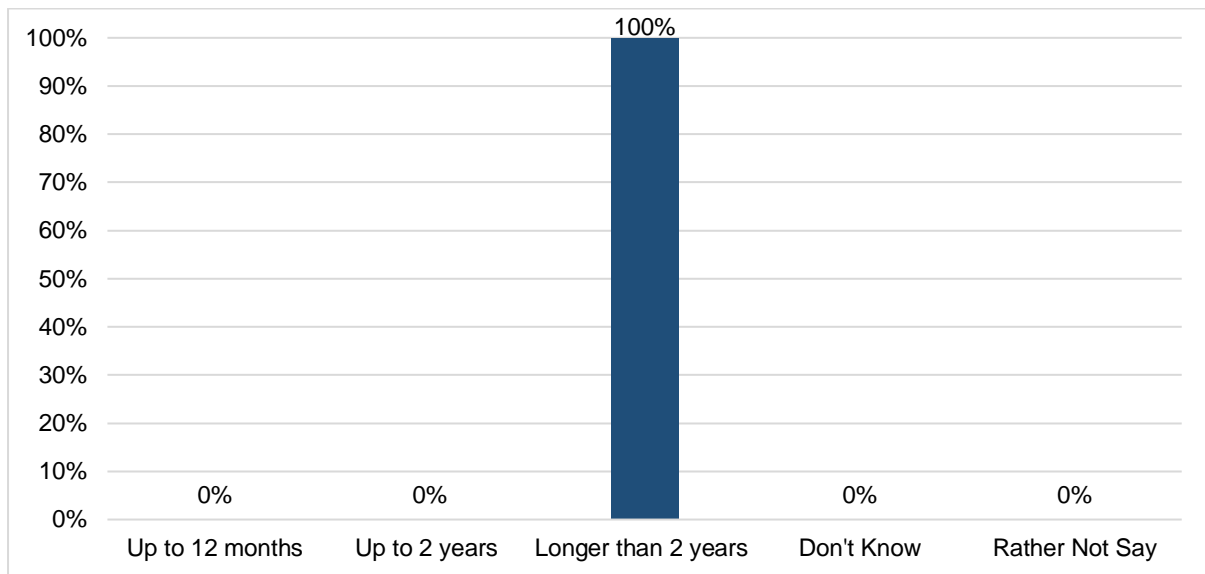




Image D - length of time childcare providers stated that they expected to be providing childcare for



## SEND

100% of setting-based early years childcare providers stated that they had at least one team member with a SEND-themed qualification. Repeated examples of qualifications stated were:

- A trained SENCO
- Staff member(s) with Autism training/qualification

Image E - Numbers of enquiries that responding childcare providers stated that they received in each calendar year from a carer of a child with SEND

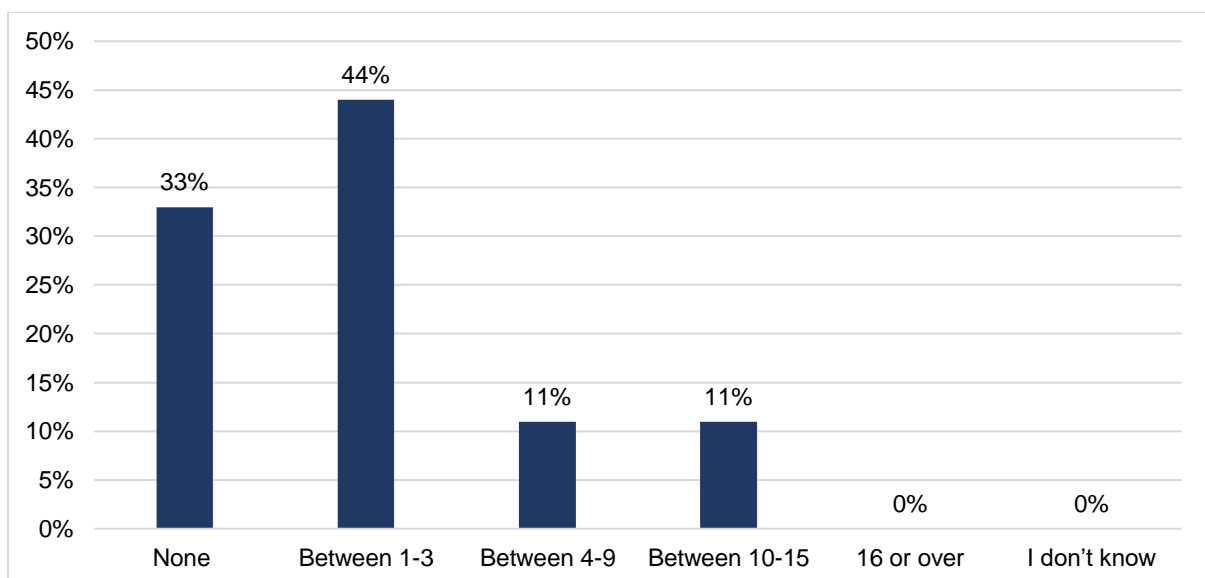
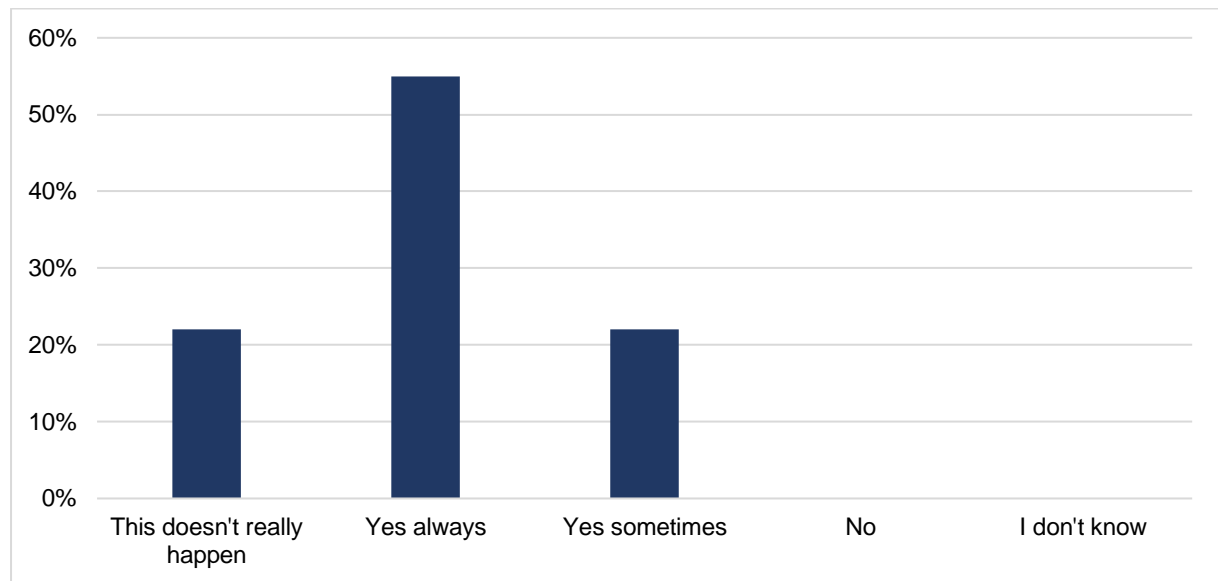


Image F - frequency with which childcare providers stated that they refer a family to another childcare provider if they cannot not take a SEND child for any reason



100% of Middlewich Schools Planning Area-based early years childcare settings/providers stated that they were still noticing some ongoing effects of COVID-19 on the development, behavior or demeanor of certain children.

Correspondingly, 50% of Middlewich Planning Area-based registered childminders stated that they were still noticing some ongoing effects of COVID-19 on the development, behavior or demeanor of certain children.

Ultimately, all setting-based (early years and out of school) childcare providers were requested to state, on a scale of 1 – 10, how **confident** they thought they were as a whole setting in supporting children/young people with SEND:

The average rating provided by early years childcare providers/setting was 9.3/10 – and thus it can be assumed that approximately 93% of early years providers are accessible to children with SEND in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area.

Additionally, the average rating provided by registered childminders was 6.7/10 – and thus it can be assumed that approximately 67% of childminders are accessible to children with SEND in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area.

### Role of Cheshire East Council

Finally, all childcare providers were invited to state the types of further and continued support that they would appreciate from the local authority. The one repeated request was: Continuation of their good training / information (courses / bulletins).

## Perspective of Parents and Carers resident in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area

### Background of respondents

8% of the respondents to the summer 2022 Cheshire East Council Childcare Parental Demand survey were resident in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area.

All responding parents and carers across all of the Schools Planning Areas were invited to state what term best described their current circumstances aligned to their **employment status**. The most frequent stated circumstance of responding parents was in full-time employment/self-employment (30 hours + per week) (46%).

All responding parents and carers responding from the Middlewich Schools Planning Area were invited to state their annual family income bracket (before tax).

Table 11 - Incidence of gross household income per year (before deductions/tax)

Annual household income	Percentage of relevant responding Middlewich locality parents/carers	Most frequently stated type of formal childcare accessed during term-time
Up to £16,190	12.5%	Registered Childminder
£16,190 - £29,999	21%	Registered Childminder
£30,000 - £54,999	29%	Day Nursery
£55,000 - £99,999	8.5%	Day Nursery
£100,000 or above	2%	After School Club
I don't know	2%	After School Club
I would rather not say	4%	Out of School Childcare
Did not say	21%	Registered Childminder

### Feedback from carers of children and young people with SEND

21% of responding parents, i.e. carers, who were resident in the Middlewich Schools Planning Area stated that they were caring for/raising at least one child with SEND or a long-term illness.

The most frequent SEND type stated was Speech, Language and Communication Needs followed in frequency by Social Emotional and Mental Health.

These relevant respondents were invited to describe any particular issue(s) they have experienced as a carer of a child with SEND in accessing childcare – and the most frequent was: Staff are not appropriately trained/qualified to support children with SEND.

## Usage of Formal and Informal Childcare

Table 12 - Most frequent type(s) of formal childcare evidently accessed within the Middlewich Schools Planning Area

Schools Planning Area	Most frequent type of formal childcare evidently accessed by responding parents	Second most frequent type of formal childcare evidently accessed by responding parents	Third most frequent type of formal childcare evidently accessed by responding parents
Middlewich	After School Club (35%)	Breakfast Club (33%)	Day Nursery (30%)

The type of *informal* childcare responding parents/carers had evidently used for any of the children in their household at some point in 2022, was grandparents (50%) followed in frequency by just me and/or a partner (25%).

- 33% of responding parents from the Middlewich Schools Planning Area stated that they were: **accessing formal childcare only**
- 6.5% of responding parents from the Middlewich Schools Planning Area stated that they were: **accessing informal childcare only**
- 60.5% of responding parents from the Middlewich Schools Planning Area stated that they were: **accessing formal and informal childcare**

Table 13 - Average number of hours (relevant) responding parents stated that they were accessing formal childcare for on a typical weekday in 2022 during term-time

Schools Planning Area	Average number of hours on a typical week day formal childcare was being accessed for – by relevant parents, during term time	Most frequent number of hours on a typical week day formal childcare was being accessed for – by relevant parents, during term time
Middlewich	5 hours 45 minutes	3

Table 14 - Weekdays which responding parents were evidently most frequently accessing formal childcare during: (a) school term-times and; (b) school holiday-times

Schools Planning Area	Most frequent weekday – during term-times	Most frequent weekday – during holiday times
Middlewich	Tuesday	(also) Tuesday

Table 15 - Average monthly amounts that relevant responding parents spent on formal childcare during: (a) term-time and: (b) school holiday-times

Schools Planning Area	Average monthly expenditure on formal childcare – term-time	Average monthly expenditure on formal childcare – holiday-time
Middlewich	£226.69	£213.85

All responding parents and carers were invited to state any types of *formal* childcare that they would like to access in the near future, which they were not accessing in summer 2022?:

Table 16 - Most frequent type(s) of formal childcare envisaged for future use

Schools Planning Area	Most frequent type of formal childcare evidently envisaged will be accessed in the future	Most frequent type of formal childcare evidently envisaged will be accessed in the future	Second most frequent type of formal childcare evidently envisaged will be accessed in the future
Middlewich	After School Club	Holiday Playscheme	Breakfast Club

The three most frequent themes and assurances that such relevant parents/carers stated that they would look for if they were to consider accessing formal childcare at some point in the future were – in order of frequency:

1. For it to be close to my home
2. For it to be close to my child(ren)'s school
3. Good quality

### Funded Childcare

17% of responding Middlewich Schools Planning Area-resident, parents/carers stated that they had a child aged 2 years. 12.5% of such parents/carers subsequently stated that they were currently accessing the free entitlement for 2 year olds. One parent of a two year old who was not eligible to access the entitlement stated:

*“I think it is extremely unfair it is only given to people on benefits (who in fact spend more time at home and can look after their kids). I worked 5 years completely ‘opposite shift’s to my partner so we can juggle childcare with little or no help from family, as they don’t live close b). It took away from our ‘family time’ and bonding but it was either that or going to work to spend 70% of our earnings on childcare. If you can support people that stay at home with free childcare, why not hard working parents that really need it to go to work?”*

Additionally, 46% of responding parents/carers stated that they had a child aged 3 and/or 4 years and 32% of such parents/carers subsequently stated that they were currently accessing the universal 15 hours free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds.

54% of such parents/carers subsequently stated that they were currently accessing the

extended 30 hours childcare offer, with all of these parents/carers stating that it was either very easy to organise or fairly straightforward to organise – with two exceptions, parents that stated: it was not as easy as I would have liked.

### Childcare and COVID-19

All Middlewich Schools Planning Area-resident parents of pre-school aged children were invited to state whether they had any concerns about their relevant child(ren)’s early development, including their early years education, as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

(Only) 8% of relevant parents stated Yes and some elaborated:

*“My child now struggles to engage with other children and people he gets very upset very quickly”.*

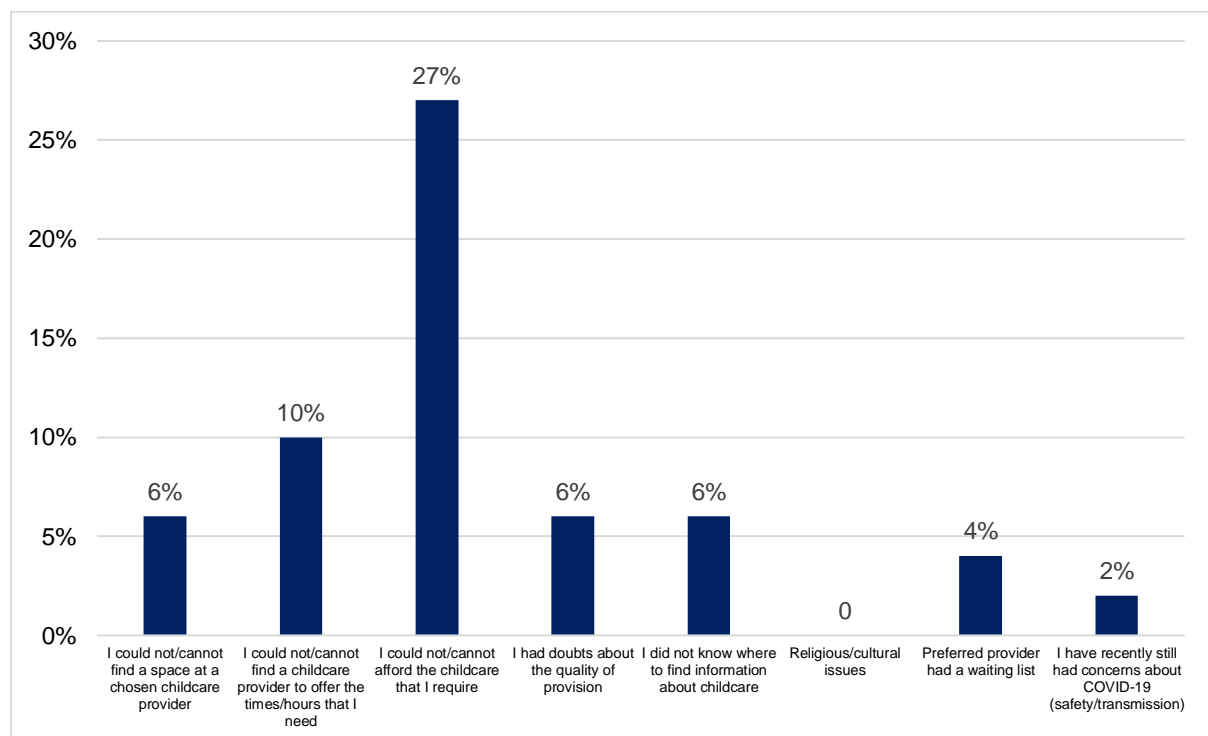
*“I have noticed that my daughter is now not mixing as well and I think she has ‘slower speech’”.*

*“I think COVID led to the separation anxiety issue that developed for me”.*

### Barriers to accessing childcare

All Middlewich Schools Planning Area-resident parents were invited to state whether – at some point in time – they had experienced specific barriers to accessing childcare:

Image H - Incidence of barriers to accessing childcare



## Childcare and Cheshire East Council

All Middlewich Schools Planning Area-resident parents were invited to state whether there was anything that Cheshire East Council should be doing in terms of supporting parents and carers with childcare, in 2022. Feedback tended to focus on the issue of affordability:

*Could they give more help to the parents who struggle to pay full time childcare in nurseries... maybe shopping vouchers to help buy pack lunches*

*If they could fund more holiday clubs. My local holiday club only runs if they can secure the numbers to make it viable and so it's not consistent and so therefore it cannot always get the numbers... as it's not guaranteed it will run until numbers received – it's a vicious circle*

*Bringing down the costs would be most helpful. I work full-time and because of childcare I work for nothing... the costs just keep increasing. The funding from the government helps but its limited... I have to use nursery for me to work.*

Finally, all parents were invited to state whether they were aware of the existence of Cheshire East Family Information Service. For those who responded to this question: 50% stated that they were – and 50% stated that they were not, or did not provide a specific response either way.