Childcare Survey – Public Consultation

The activity ran from 22nd June – 20th July 2026
Responses to this survey: **408**

Are you responding as:

Option	Total	Percent*
Are you a parent/legal guardian with one or more children aged between 0 -11?		
Yes I am	396	97%
No I am not	8	2%
Not answered	4	1%

May we publish your response?		
Yes you may publish my response anonymously	324	79%
No please do not publish my response	84	21%

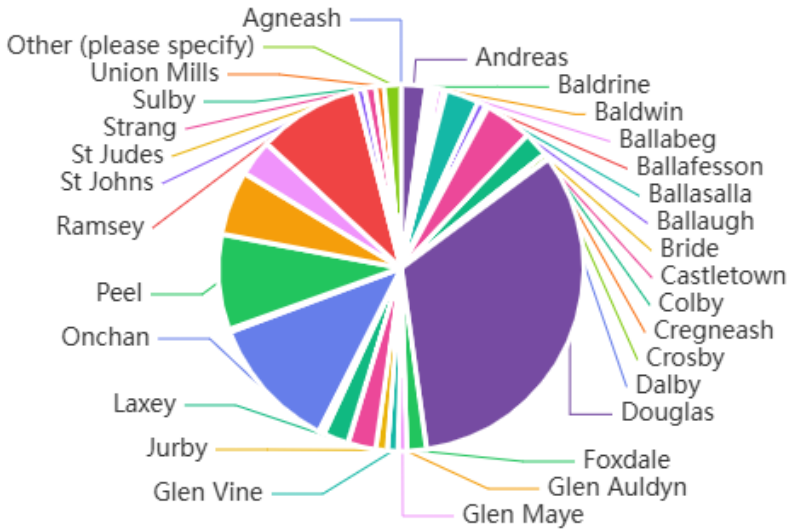
***All percentages have been rounded for readability**

CONFIDENTIAL

Section 1: About you

Question 1:

Which area of the Isle of Man do you live in?



Location	Number of responses
Andreas	9
Baldrine	2
Baldwin	2
Ballabeg	2
Ballafesson	1
Ballasalla	12
Ballaugh	3
Bride	1
Castletown	17
Colby	9
Crosby	2
Douglas	133
Foxdale	7
Glen Maye	3
Glen Vine	4
Jurby	4
Kirk Michael	10
Laxey	9
Maughold	1
Newtown	1
Onchan	48
Patrick	1
Peel	34
Port Erin	23
Port St Mary	13
Ramsey	37

CONFIDENTIAL

St Johns	3
Strang	4
Union Mills	3
Other	6
Not Answered	4

If 'Other' was selected please specify the area you live in below:
Of the **7** comments to this part of the question

- 3 stated Lonan
- 2 didn't specify
- 1 stated Derbyhaven
- 1 stated Richmond Hill

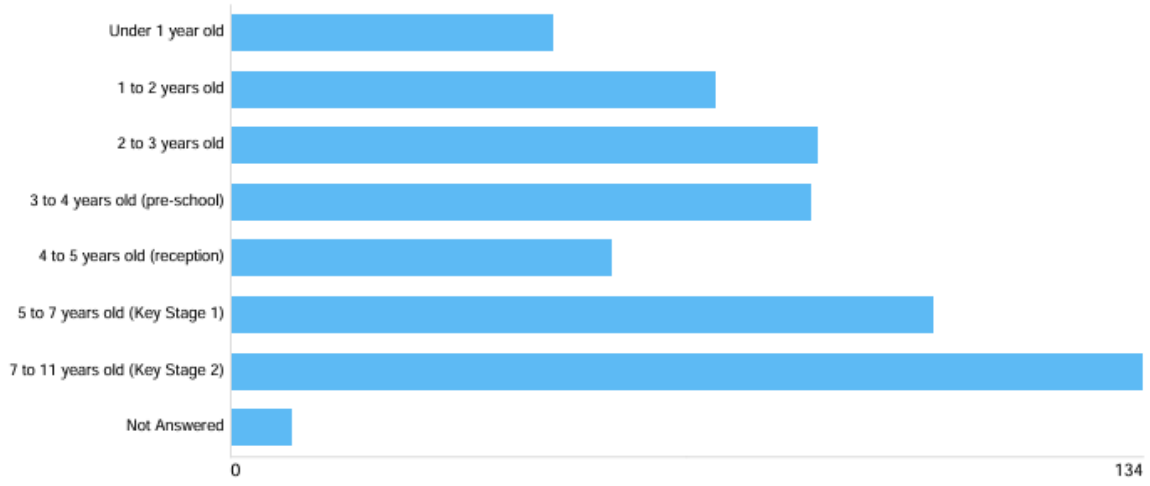
Question 2:

Number of children aged between 0 and 11:

Number of Children	Total Responses
0	1
1	200
2	168
3	25
6	1
Not Answered	13

Question 3:

Which age groups do your children fall into? Respondents could select more than one option where they had more than one child.

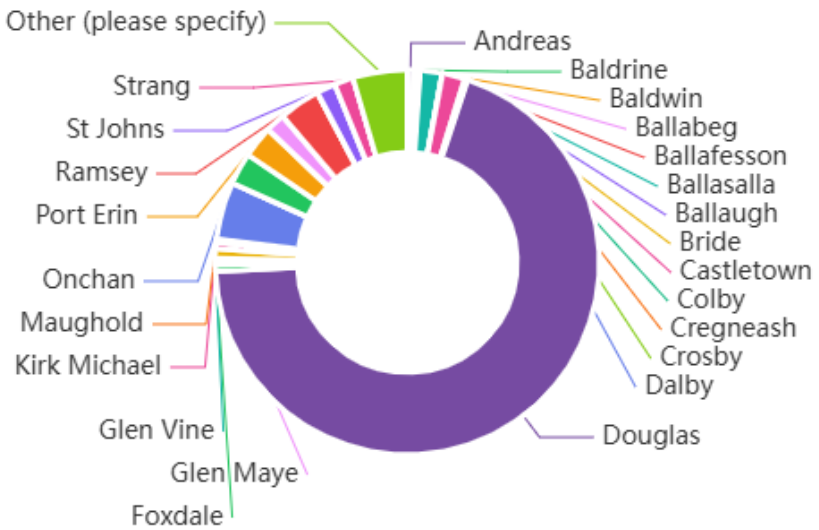


CONFIDENTIAL

Option	Total	Percent
Under 1 year old	47	11.52%
1 to 2 years old	71	17.40%
2 to 3 years old	86	21.08%
3 to 4 years old (pre-school)	85	20.83%
4 to 5 years old (reception)	56	13.73%
5 to 7 years old (Key Stage 1)	103	25.25%
7 to 11 years old (Key Stage 2)	134	32.84%
Not Answered	9	2.21%

Question 4:

Which area of the Isle of Man do you work or study in?



Location	Number of responses
Andreas	2
Baldwin	1
Ballabeg	1
Ballasalla	7
Castletown	7
Colby	1
Douglas	258
Foxdale	2
Glen Maye	1
Glen Vine	1
Jurby	3
Kirk Michael	2
Maughold	1
Onchan	18
Peel	10
Port Erin	10
Port St Mary	6
Ramsey	13
St Johns	6
Strang	6
Other	17
Not Answered	35

CONFIDENTIAL

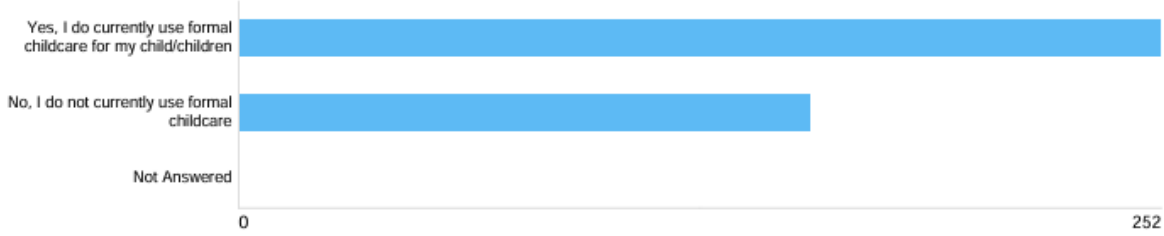
If 'Other' was selected please specify below:
Of the **51** comments to this part of the question

- 8 responded as being on Maternity Leave
- 7 responded as having caring responsibilities
- 6 Responded as stay at home parent

Section 2: Formal Childcare

Question 5:

Do you currently use formal childcare for any of your children?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, I do currently use formal childcare for my child/children	252	61.76%
No, I do not currently use formal childcare	156	38.24%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 6:

Please tell us how many of your children attend each type of formal childcare listed below:

	1 child	2 children	3 children	4+ children
Nursery playgroup / pre school	170 6(1%)	13 (3%)	2	0
Childminder	50 (12%)	8 (2%)	0	0
Nanny/Au Pair	2	2	0	0
Breakfast Club	11 (3%)	6 (1%)	0	0
After school club	23 (6%)	6 (1%)	0	0
Other	20	5	1	0

***All percentages have been rounded for readability**

If 'Other' was selected please specify below:
Of the **33** comments to this part of the question

- Some confusion between formal and informal childcare so the responses to other were not valid.

The most commonly used formal childcare setting was nursery/playgroup/pre-school, with 185 respondents indicating that one or more of their children attended this type of provision

CONFIDENTIAL

Question 7:

When does your child or children attend formal childcare setting? (Select all that apply)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning Session	24 (6%)	23 (6%)	22 (5%)	26 (6%)	23 (6%)
Afternoon Session	5 (1%)	7 (2%)	5 (1%)	8 (2%)	6 (1%)
All day session (up to 6 hours)	36 (9%)	39 (9%)	36 (9%)	32 (8%)	26 (6%)
All day session (up to 7 hours)	98 (24%)	111 (27%)	92 (23%)	100 (25%)	80 (20%)
Breakfast Club	18 (4%)	16 (4%)	17 (4%)	15 (4%)	17 (4%)
After school club	25 (6%)	23 (6%)	22 (5%)	24 (6%)	22 (5%)
Not answered	227 (56%)	213 (52%)	235 (58%)	228 (56%)	257 (63%)

***All percentages have been rounded for readability**

Formal childcare is most commonly used for all-day sessions of up to 7 hours, particularly from Monday to Thursday, with Tuesday receiving the highest number of responses. All-day sessions of up to 6 hours were used less frequently, while morning and afternoon sessions had comparatively low levels of use. Breakfast club and after-school club attendance was also relatively limited across the week. A high proportion of respondents did not answer this question, suggesting that many did not use formal childcare or that the question was not applicable to their circumstances

Question 9:

Where is your child or children's childcare provider located? If you have more than one child please tell us how many children use childcare in each area.

	1 child	2 children	3 children	4+ children
Same area as home	119 (29%)	28 (7%)	2	1
Near a place of work	60 (15%)	9 (2%)	1	1
Near a place of a relative	16 (4%)	5 (1%)	0	0
Different area	45 (11%)	10 (2%)	1	0

***All percentages have been rounded for readability**

CONFIDENTIAL

Please specify location of your child/children's childcare provider:

Of the **112** comments to this part of the question

- 41 responded Douglas
- 17 responded Onchan
- 6 responded Ballasalla
- 5 responded Peel
- 5 responded Ramsey
- 5 responded Union Mills
- 4 responded Castletown
- Other areas included Braddan, Foxdale, Glen Maye, Lezayre, Port Erin, Kirk Michael, Laxey, Santon, St Johns, Sulby

Responses to Question 9 indicate that most children using formal childcare attend provision in the same area as their home, with 119 respondents identifying this for one child and 28 for two children. A smaller proportion reported using childcare near their place of work, while fewer relied on provision near a relative or in a different area. Where respondents specified the location of their childcare provider, Douglas was the most frequently mentioned area, followed by Onchan, with smaller numbers across Ballasalla, Peel, Ramsey, Union Mills, Castletown and other locations.

Question 10:

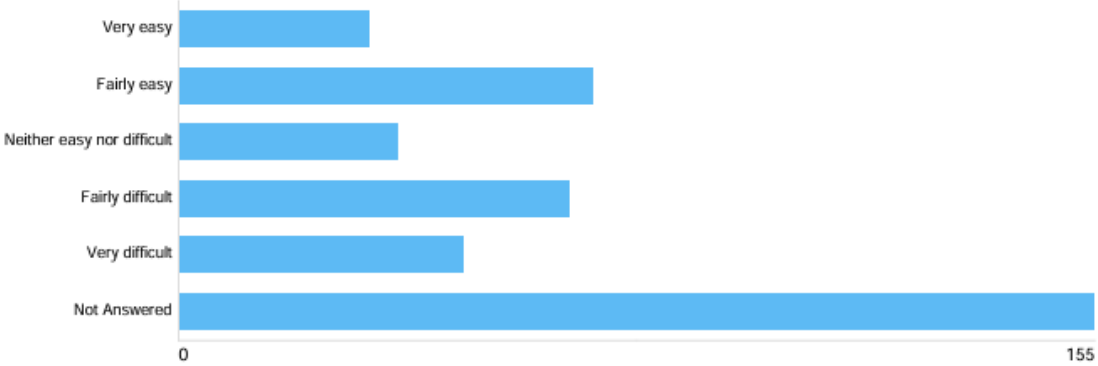
Is the current location of your child or children's formal childcare provider ideal?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, it is ideal	201	49.26%
No, it is not ideal	51	12.50%
Not Answered	156	38.24%

Question 11:

How easy or difficult was it to find a suitable childcare place for your child or children?



Option	Total	Percent
Very easy	32	7.84%
Fairly easy	70	17.16%
Neither easy nor difficult	37	9.07%
Fairly difficult	66	16.18%
Very difficult	48	11.76%
Not Answered	155	37.99%

Question 12:

Have you ever needed formal childcare that you could not access?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, I have	133	32.60%
No, I have not	121	29.66%
Not Answered	154	37.75%

Question 14:

If you could not access formal childcare when you needed, which of the following were the main reasons why? (Select all that apply)



Option	Total	Percent
No places available	64	15.69%
Waiting list too long	48	11.76%
Not available at the times needed	58	14.22%
Not available in my area	41	10.05%
Too expensive	78	19.12%
Not suitable for my child's additional needs	10	2.45%
Transport difficulties	10	2.45%
I could not find clear information	9	2.21%
Other (please specify)	19	4.66%
Not Answered	251	61.52%

Comments box - Specifying the reason why they couldn't access childcare they needed

There were **29** responses to this part of the question.

If 'Other' was selected please specify below:

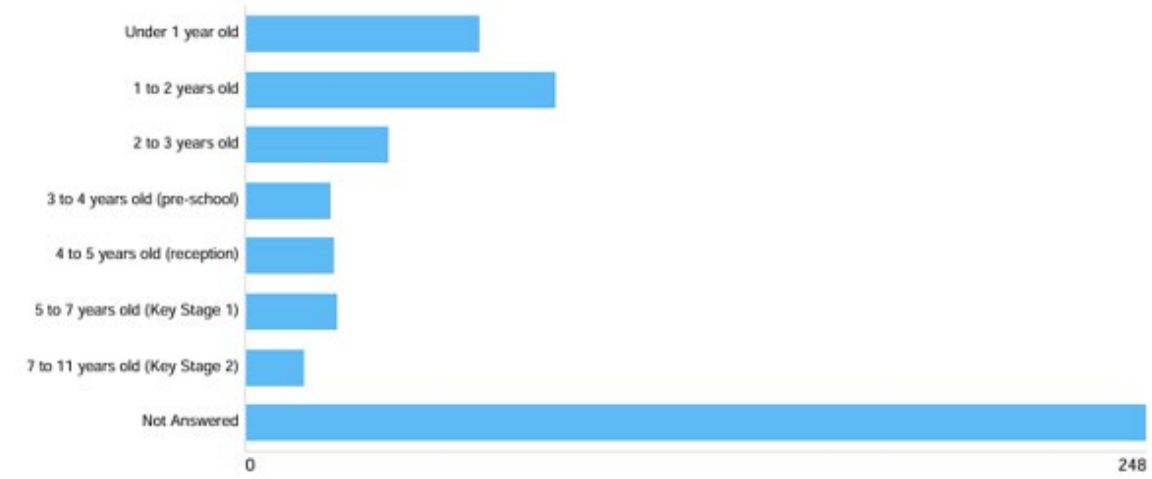
Of the **29** comments to this part of the question

- 6 responded lack of under 2 provision areas specified were South and North
- 2 responded there was no term time only provision

CONFI

Question 15:

Which age groups were affected when you couldn't access the formal childcare you needed?

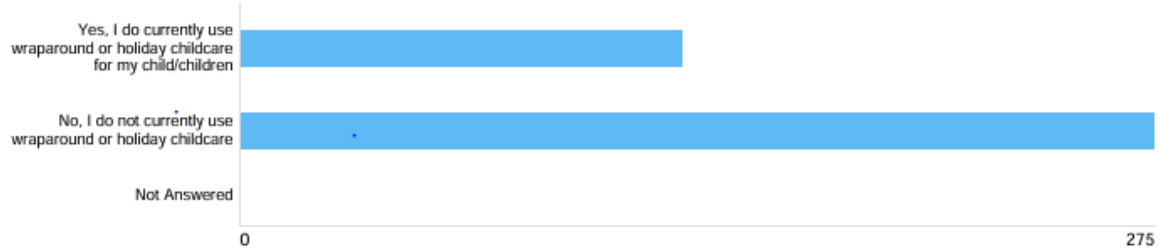


Option	Total	Percent
Under 1 year old	64	15.69%
1 to 2 years old	85	20.83%
2 to 3 years old	39	9.56%
3 to 4 years old (pre-school)	23	5.64%
4 to 5 years old (reception)	24	5.88%
5 to 7 years old (Key Stage 1)	25	6.13%
7 to 11 years old (Key Stage 2)	16	3.92%
Not Answered	248	60.78%

Section3: Wraparound and Holiday Childcare

Question 16:

Do you currently use wraparound or holiday childcare for any of your children?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, I do currently use wraparound or holiday childcare for my child/children	133	32.60%
No, I do not currently use wraparound or holiday childcare	275	67.40%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 17:

Please tell us how many of your children attend each type of wraparound childcare listed below:

	1 child	2 children	3 children	4+ children
Breakfast Club (at school or a childcare provider)	14 (3%)	6 (1%)	0	0
After school club	26 (6%)	6 (1%)	0	0
School holiday club	68 (17%)	26 (6%)	1	0
Childminder	16 (4%)	8 (2%)	0	0
Family / Friends	42 (10%)	40 (10%)	1	0
Not required	5 (1%)	0	1	0

***All percentages have been rounded for readability**

Responses to Question 17 show that school holiday clubs are the most commonly used form of wraparound childcare, with 68 respondents indicating use for one child and 26 for two children. Family and friends are also regularly relied upon, particularly where respondents have one or two children. After-school clubs and breakfast clubs were used by a smaller number of respondents, while childminders were used less frequently for wraparound care. Overall, the results suggest that school holiday club provision and informal support from family and friends play an important role in meeting wraparound childcare needs.

Question 18:

Is the wraparound childcare sufficient to meet your needs?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, it is sufficient	30	7.35%
Yes, it is partially sufficient	49	12.01%
No, it is not sufficient	47	11.52%
Not applicable	4	0.98%
Not Answered	278	68.14%

Comments box - Why wraparound childcare is insufficient

There were **45** responses to this part of the question.

If 'No' Please provide your reasons below:

CONFIDENTIAL

Of the **45** comments to this part of the question

- 18 respondents said wraparound childcare was too expensive.
- 12 said family members can only provide limited support.
- 9 said holiday club places are limited and often become full.
- 5 said it is difficult to find provision that can accommodate children with AEN.
- 4 said they had reduced their working hours due to childcare difficulties.
- 4 said wraparound care is limited by its opening hours.

Question 19:

Have you ever needed wraparound childcare that you could not access?

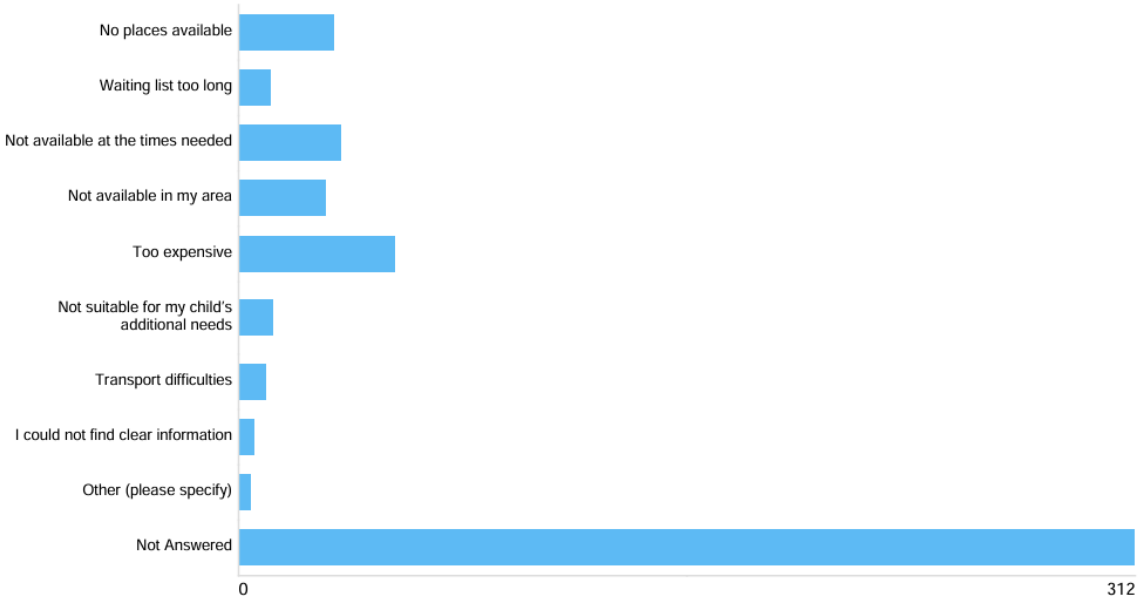


Option	Total	Percent
Yes, I have	83	20.34%
No, I have not	47	11.52%
Not Answered	278	68.14%

Question 20:

If you couldn't access wraparound childcare when you needed, which of the following were the main reasons why? (Select all that apply)

CONFIDENTIAL

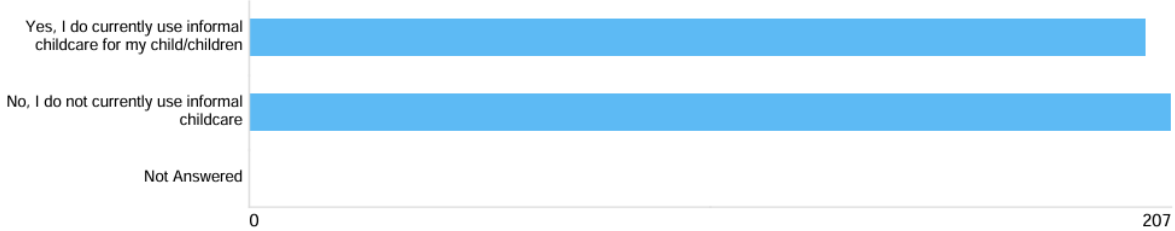


Option	Total	Percent
No places available	33	8.09%
Waiting list too long	11	2.70%
Not available at the times needed	35	8.58%
Not available in my area	30	7.35%
Too expensive	54	13.24%
Not suitable for my child's additional needs	12	2.94%
Transport difficulties	9	2.21%
I could not find clear information	5	1.23%
Other (please specify)	4	0.98%
Not Answered	312	76.47%

Section 4: Informal Childcare

Question 21:

Do you currently use informal childcare for any of your children?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, I do currently use informal childcare for my child/children	201	49.26%
No, I do not currently use informal childcare	207	50.74%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 22:

When does your child or children attend informal childcare?

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning Session	10 (2%)	8 (2%)	9 (2%)	9 (2%)	15 (4%)
Afternoon Session	14 (3%)	11 (3%)	15 (4%)	17 (4%)	11 (3%)
All day session (up to 6 hours)	9 (2%)	10 (2%)	9 (2%)	7 (2%)	8 (2%)
All day session (up to 7 hours)	30 (7%)	27 (7%)	34 (8%)	29 (7%)	39 (10%)
Breakfast Club	11 (3%)	10 (2%)	9 (2%)	10 (2%)	7 (2%)
After school club	26 (6%)	29 (7%)	29 (7%)	32 (8%)	24 (6%)
Not answered	318 (78%)	325 (80%)	319 (78%)	314 (77%)	313 (77%)

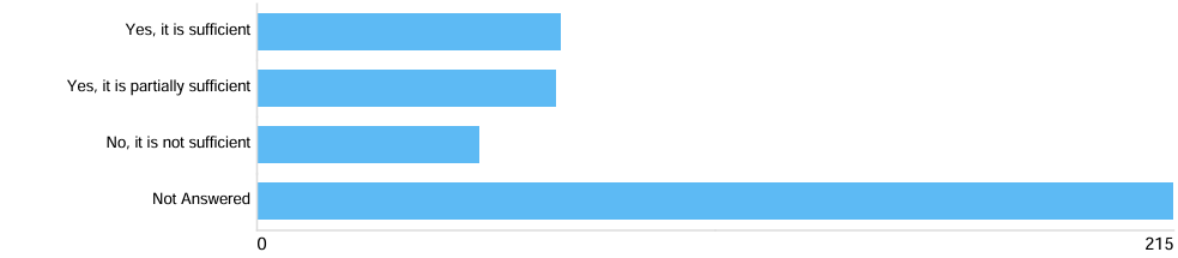
***All percentages have been rounded for readability**

Responses to Question 22 show that most respondents did not provide an answer, suggesting that informal childcare was not used by many families or that the question was not applicable. Where informal childcare was used, all-day sessions of up to 7 hours were the most common, particularly on Friday, followed by after-school care across the week. Morning, afternoon, all-day sessions of up to 6 hours, and breakfast club use were reported less frequently. Overall, the results suggest that informal childcare is used by a smaller proportion of respondents and is most commonly relied upon for longer daytime sessions and after-school support.

Question 23:

Is informal childcare sufficient to meet your needs?

CONFIDENTIAL



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, it is sufficient	71	17.40%
Yes, it is partially sufficient	70	17.16%
No, it is not sufficient	52	12.75%
Not Answered	215	52.70%

If 'No, it is not sufficient', please explain below:

There were **51** responses to this part of the question.

If no, it is not sufficient please explain:

Of the **51** comments to this part of the question

- 29 responses explained they were reliant of family and friends
- The respondents explained that reliance on grandparents wasn't sufficient due to age and ill health

Question 24:

Please share any further comments below

Of the **73** comments to this part of the question

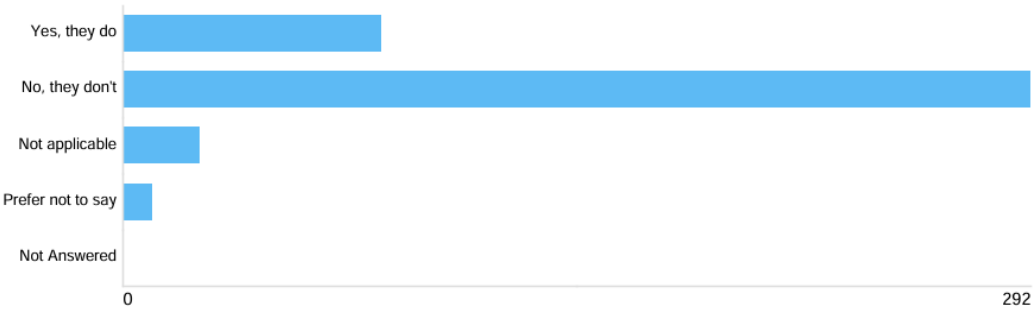
- 28 respondents said they rely on family and friends.
- 25 said formal childcare is costly.
- 6 said breakfast and after-school clubs are needed.
- 10 said there is limited availability of formal childcare.
- 5 said it is difficult to balance school and work commitments.
- 4 said holiday and wraparound provision should be increased for children with AEN.
- 3 said Government should support families to stay at home with young children.

Section 5: Additional needs

Question 25:

Does your child have any additional needs that affect the childcare arrangements your family requires?

CONFIDENTIAL



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, they do	83	20.34%
No, they don't	292	71.57%
Not applicable	24	5.88%
Prefer not to say	9	2.21%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 26:

Has your child's additional needs or disability made it harder to find suitable childcare?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, it has made it harder	77	18.87%
No, it hasn't made it harder	9	2.21%
Prefer not to say	3	0.74%
Not Answered	319	78.19%

Comments box - Why additional needs or disabilities make finding suitable childcare harder

There were **61** responses to this part of the question.

If 'Yes', please explain why:

Of the **61** comments to this part of the question

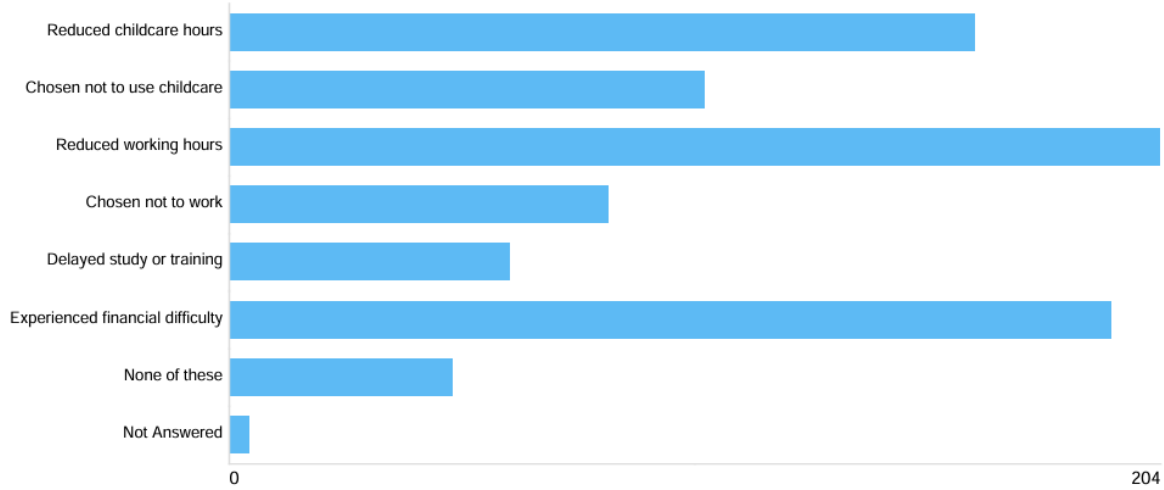
- 45 responders stated lack of suitable providers
- 39 stated that there was a lack of understanding, awareness, staff and resources
- Health reasons and long waiting lists were also reasons provided.

Respondents consistently described a shortage of suitable, inclusive childcare for children with additional needs or disabilities. The dominant barriers were insufficient staff capacity, limited specialist training, and an inability to provide one-to-one, behavioural, communication, sensory or medical support. Gaps were especially acute in holiday, after-school and wraparound care; some families reported being turned away or losing places after disclosing their child's needs. The consequences included reliance on relatives, reduced working hours or giving up work, financial pressure and significant family stress. A smaller number reported finding supportive provision, but often only after repeated refusals or with compromises such as distance or limited hours.

Section 6: Affordability and Financial Support

Question 27:

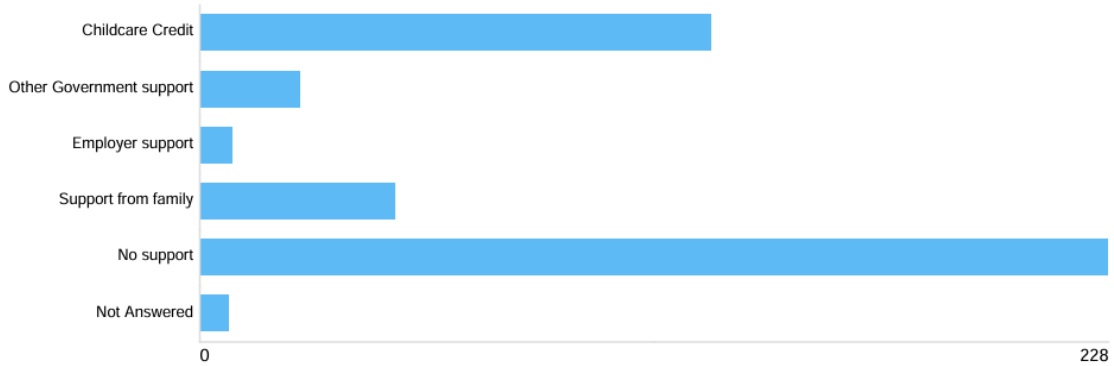
Have you done any of the following because of childcare costs? (Select all that apply)



Option	Total	Percent
Reduced childcare hours	163	39.95%
Chosen not to use childcare	104	25.49%
Reduced working hours	204	50.00%
Chosen not to work	83	20.34%
Delayed study or training	61	14.95%
Experienced financial difficulty	193	47.30%
None of these	49	12.01%
Not Answered	4	0.98%

Question 28:

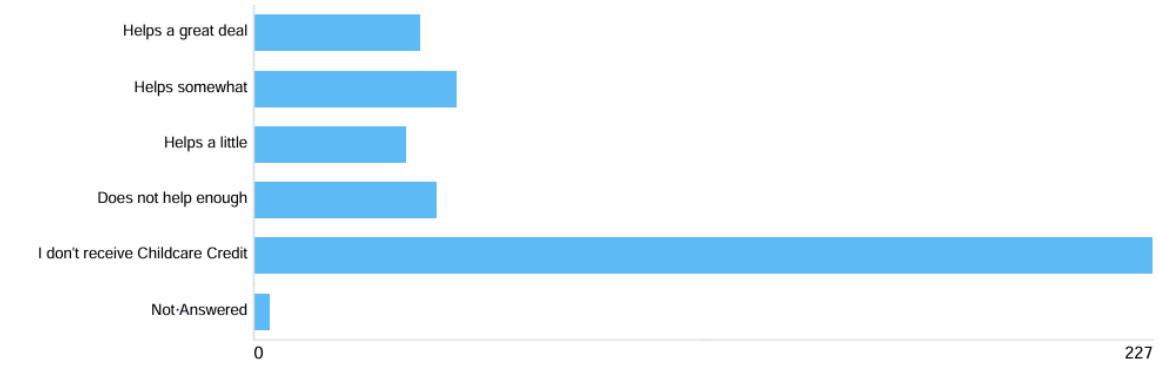
What financial support do you currently receive towards childcare costs?



Option	Total	Percent
Childcare Credit	128	31.37%
Other Government support	25	6.13%
Employer support	8	1.96%
Support from family	49	12.01%
No support	228	55.88%
Not Answered	7	1.72%

Question 29

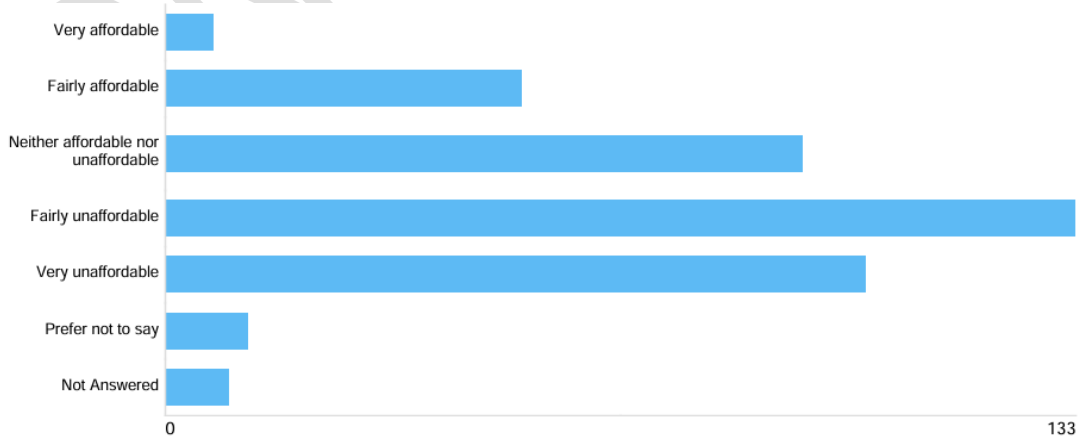
To what extent does the Childcare Credit help you to afford formal childcare for your children?



Option	Total	Percent
Helps a great deal	42	10.29%
Helps somewhat	51	12.50%
Helps a little	38	9.31%
Does not help enough	46	11.27%
I don't receive Childcare Credit	227	55.64%
Not Answered	4	0.98%

Question 30:

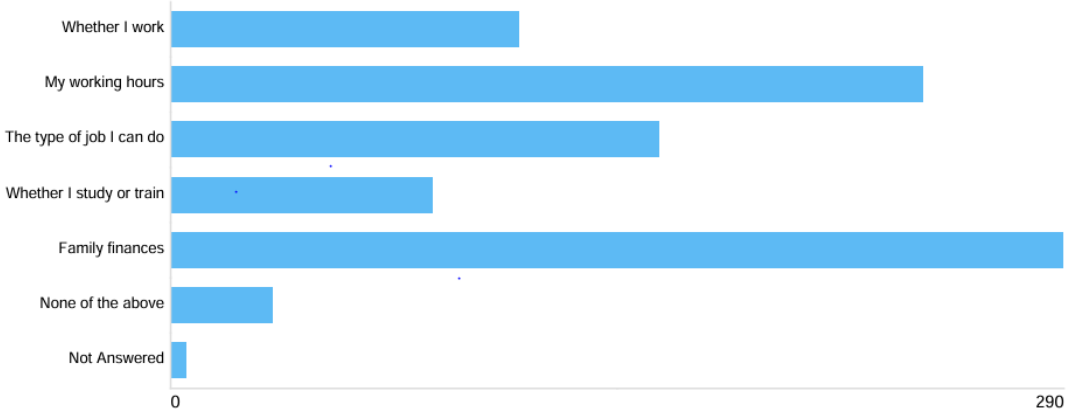
How affordable is childcare for your family?



Option	Total	Percent
Very affordable	7	1.72%
Fairly affordable	52	12.75%
Neither affordable nor unaffordable	93	22.79%
Fairly unaffordable	133	32.60%
Very unaffordable	102	25.00%
Prefer not to say	12	2.94%
Not Answered	9	2.21%

Question 31:

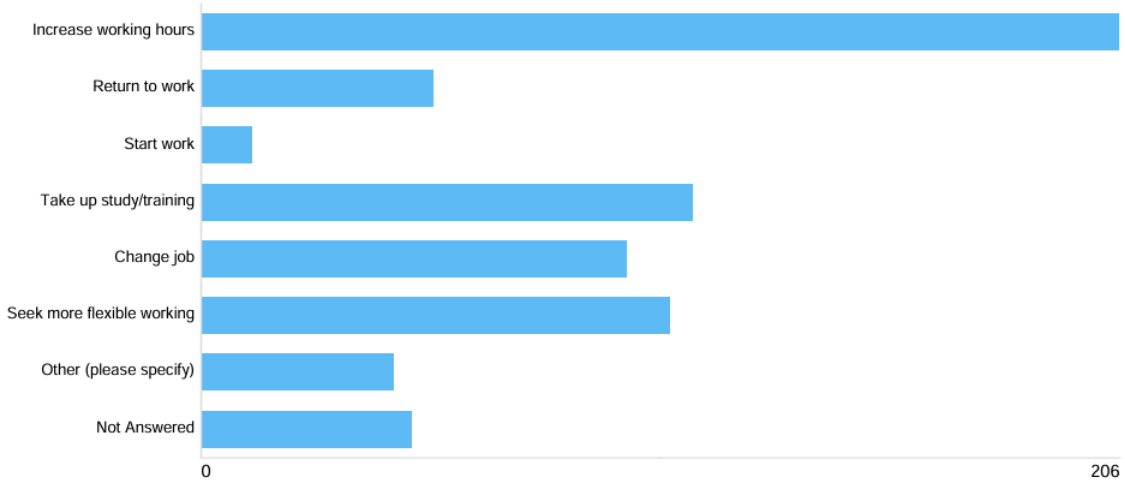
Has the cost of childcare affected any of the following?



Option	Total	Percent
Whether I work	113	27.70%
My working hours	244	59.80%
The type of job I can do	158	38.73%
Whether I study or train	85	20.83%
Family finances	290	71.08%
None of the above	33	8.09%
Not Answered	5	1.23%

Question 32:

If childcare better met your needs, which of the following would you be more likely to do?



Option	Total	Percent
Increase working hours	206	50.49%
Return to work	52	12.75%
Start work	11	2.70%
Take up study/training	110	26.96%
Change job	95	23.28%
Seek more flexible working	105	25.74%
Other (please specify)	43	10.54%
Not Answered	47	11.52%

Comments box - specifying other things that would happen if childcare better met needs

There were **61** responses to this part of the question.

If 'other' was chosen, please specify below:

Of the **61** comments to this part of the question

- Seek less flexible working
- Have more children
- Increase family savings

Question 33:

Does your employer offer any specific support to help with childcare?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes, they do offer support	52	12.75%
No, they don't offer support	280	68.63%
Not applicable	59	14.46%
Prefer not to say	9	2.21%
Not Answered	8	1.96%

Comments box - Support employer offers for childcare

There were **52** responses to this part of the question.

If 'Yes', please specify below:

Of the **52** comments to this part of the question

- 37 stated flexible working
- 3 stated discount from working at a nursery

Question 34:

Please tell us anything else about childcare on the Isle of Man that would help us understand what needs to change:

Of the **333** comments to this part of the question

Financial

- 96 respondents said childcare needs to be more affordable.
- 81 said financial support is needed for children under 2.
- 71 called for increased financial assistance.
- 47 highlighted affordability concerns, particularly for working families who do not qualify for sufficient support.
- 23 said families with multiple children face financial pressure, for example when on maternity leave while paying childcare fees for other children.
- 17 said childcare staff need more training.
- 15 said the Childcare Credit does not incentivise a return to work.
- 12 said childcare costs had influenced decisions to delay having more children.
- 11 referred to the UK offer of 30 hours' free childcare.
- 6 said regulation should be introduced for childcare cost increases.
- 4 suggested financial support for grandparents.

Providers

- 30 respondents said more childcare providers are needed for children under 2, particularly in the South and North.
- 8 said more places are needed in suitable locations and at times that meet families' needs.

Wraparound

- 36 respondents said breakfast clubs are needed.
- 27 said wraparound provision should be increased.
- 25 said after-school clubs are needed.

Holiday Clubs

- 25 respondents said financial support is needed for holiday club provision.
- 19 said holiday clubs need to be more affordable.
- 14 said holiday club hours are too short and do not fit the working day.
- 11 said more holiday club places are needed.

AEN

- 36 respondents said more formal childcare provision is needed for children with AEN.

CONFIDENTIAL

We asked The purpose of the childcare consultation by the Department of Education, Sport and Culture was to seek stakeholder and public views on their experiences of formal childcare, wraparound and holiday provision, informal childcare, affordability, additional needs, and the impact childcare arrangements can have on work, study and family life. The consultation ran for 4 weeks from 22nd June – 20th July 2026.

You said There were 408 responses to the consultation.

We did The Department thanks everyone who responded to the consultation. The findings will be considered and used to understand what is working well, evidence where there are gaps and inform change.

CONFIDENTIAL