

SUMMARY REPORT OF RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION

# **Delivering Social Change Through Childcare**

A Ten Year Strategy for Affordable and Integrated Childcare

May 2018

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## Section 1

### Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an analysis of the responses to the consultation on *'Delivering Social Change through Childcare - A Ten Year Strategy for Affordable and Integrated Childcare'* undertaken from July to November 2015.

### Background to the Strategy

- 1.2 The first phase of the Childcare Strategy was launched by the Executive in September 2013. The first phase aimed to address the most pressing childcare needs identified through survey research and during an earlier consultation exercise involving parents, children and childcare stakeholders. The key issues identified at that time included affordability of childcare, a need for more low cost school age childcare places, childcare and support for children with a disability/ additional needs, better and more accessible information on available childcare services, assistance with childcare costs and better training provision for childcare staff. To begin to address these needs, 15 Key First Actions were developed and implemented.
- 1.3 Since the launch of the first phase of the Strategy, work with the childcare sector and with stakeholders has been undertaken to further develop the Ten Year Childcare Strategy using a co-design process. Stakeholder engagement was essential in enabling progress to be reviewed, needs updated and next steps identified. The draft Executive Childcare Strategy - *Delivering Social Change through Childcare - A Ten Year Strategy for Affordable and Integrated Childcare* was published for consultation in July 2015.

### Consultation and engagement in 2015

- 1.4 In July 2015 consultees were invited to respond to the draft Strategy via the completion of an online questionnaire, by formal written response, or by attending one of a number of regional consultation events held in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry,

Newry, Armagh, Omagh and Ballymena. A follow up stakeholder consultation event was held in March 2016 in Belfast.

- 1.5 Consultation events were also arranged for children and young people, and parents which were facilitated by PlayBoard NI and Parenting NI, respectively.

### **Next steps**

- 1.6 This report will inform the preparation of the final Strategy document and accompanying action plan for Executive approval.



## Section 2

### Consultation responses

2.1 This section provides details of the number of consultation responses received by respondent type.

### Number of responses by respondent type

2.2 Respondents to the questionnaire could either respond to an on-line questionnaire or complete a printed/PDF version. The questionnaire provided respondents with the opportunity to indicate whether or not they agreed with the vision and the extent to which they agreed with the aims, objectives and interventions. Respondents to the questionnaires were also invited to comment on each of the questions asked. Those respondents who submitted a written response were free to comment on any aspect of the Strategy.

2.3 Of those who responded to the consultation, 132 respondents completed the online questionnaire (90 individuals and 42 organisations) and 180 responded in the form of a written response (122 individuals and 58 organisations). Of the 180 written submissions received, 113 were identical letters from parents associated with one day nursery. A small number of respondents (3) submitted both a written and online response. A summary of the quantitative responses from the questionnaires is set out in Appendix 1.

2.4 The table below shows the breakdown of responses by respondent type.

	Respondent type	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Questionnaires	Individuals	90	29%
	Organisations	42	13%
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>42%</b>
Written responses	Individuals	122 (including 113 identical letters)	39% (36% related to the identical letters)
	Organisations	58	19%
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>312</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 2.5 In addition to responses to the questionnaire and the written feedback, additional consultation was undertaken with children and young people, parents, stakeholders and the public. The feedback from these events is summarised in section 6.

### **Quantitative and qualitative data**

- 2.6 The questionnaire contained both quantitative and qualitative question types. The quantitative data collated from the responses to each question has been presented throughout this report in table format<sup>1</sup>. As respondents were not required to answer every question, the number of respondents who did not answer each question is set out below each table. In some cases, the figures will not total 100%, due to roundings within the tables.

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<sup>1</sup> Where appropriate, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.





## Section 3

### Overview of responses to the consultation

3.1 This section provides an overview of the responses to the consultation. The qualitative analysis summarises the comments respondents made in the questionnaires and written submissions. Section 4 provides a detailed analysis of the responses to the questionnaire in relation to the vision, aims and objectives. Section 5 provides an analysis of the responses in relation to the interventions. Section 6 provides a summary of feedback from the consultation events and focus groups.

### Overview of responses to the vision

3.2 The majority of respondents to the questionnaire (94%) strongly agreed/agreed with the vision of the Strategy. Some respondents however suggested that the vision should be clearer and more concise and that greater clarity is needed about how the vision will be implemented, delivered and resourced.

### Overview of responses to the aims

3.3 The following table lists the aims in rank order based on the percentage of questionnaire respondents who strongly agreed/agreed with each aim.

Rank order of the aims based on the percentage of respondents who strongly agreed/agreed			
Rank	Aims	Number of respondents	Percentage of responses (strongly agree/agree)
1	Child Development Aim	115	97%
2	Parental Employment Aim	110	92%

3.4 The majority of respondents to the questionnaire strongly agreed/agreed with the aims of the Strategy (97% for the Child Development Aim and 92% for the Parental Employment Aim). A number of respondents suggested that the

achievement of both aims relied on the provision of high quality childcare. Some respondents suggested that the Child Development Aim should rank higher in importance than the Parental Employment Aim. Respondents also suggested that the Child Development Aim is especially relevant for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in helping reduce inequalities during early childhood development and improve the life chances of disadvantaged children. Other respondents suggested that the Strategy is too focused on working parents and their children. Some respondents commented that the Parental Employment Aim should be expanded to recognise that childcare could promote employment indirectly by helping parents to avail of learning and development opportunities.

### Overview of responses to the objectives

3.5 The following table lists the responses to the objectives in rank order based on the percentage of questionnaire respondents who strongly agreed/agreed with each objective.

Rank order of the objectives based on the percentage of respondents who strongly agreed/agreed			
Rank	Objective	Number of respondents	Percentage of responses (strongly agree/agree)
1	Quality Objective	111	98%
2	Availability Objective	110	97%
3	Informed Parental Choice Objective	109	97%
4	Affordability Objective	107	96%
5	Diversity Objective	106	95%
6	An Integrated Approach Objective	105	94%
7	Sustainability Objective	84	75%

3.6 The majority of respondents to the questionnaire supported the objectives in the Strategy, with over 94% of respondents strongly agreeing/agreeing with six of the seven objectives. By contrast, only 75% of respondents strongly agreed/



agreed with the sustainability objective considering it to be in conflict with the affordability and quality objectives. It was suggested that charging affordable fees may cause issues with a setting's sustainability; however, charging higher fees may affect affordability for parents. Similarly, respondents indicated that high quality childcare provision is reliant on suitably trained staff, however, investing in staff development and the retention of good quality staff added to the cost of running a setting at the expense of sustainability. Some respondents suggested that flexibility should be included as an objective. Further detail of the responses to each of the objectives is provided in section 4.

### Overview of responses to the interventions

3.7 The following table lists the responses to the interventions in rank order based on the percentage of questionnaire respondents who strongly agreed/agreed with each intervention.

Rank order of the interventions based on the percentage of respondents who strongly agreed/agreed				
Rank	Intervention		Number of respondents	Percentage of responses (strongly agree/agree)
1	Intervention xvi:	Support a training programme to improve and enhance skills across the workforce	82	94%
2	Intervention xi:	Childcare for children with a disability	85	92%
3	Intervention xx:	Promotion of registered childcare	77	90%
4	Intervention iii:	Supporting childcare for the 0-4s	81	89%
5	Intervention vi:	Supporting community-based childcare providers	81	89%
6	Intervention xxi:	Regulation and inspection	75	88%

7	Intervention xii:	Flexible childcare	79	86%
8	Intervention xvii:	Work with other programmes to ensure good quality training of unemployed people as a pathway to work in childcare	73	86%
9	Intervention xv:	Improvements to information	73	85%
10	Intervention i:	School Age Childcare Grant Scheme	78	83%
11	Intervention x:	Transport services supportive of rural childcare provision	76	83%
12	Intervention xxii:	Review options for statutory responsibility	68	83%
13	Intervention ix:	Rural childminding services model	75	82%
14	Intervention xviii:	Seek to align and promote existing initiatives to encourage greater diversity in the workforce - with particular reference to males and individuals from ethnic minority communities	71	81%
15	Intervention viii:	Capital fund for childcare	72	80%
16	Intervention ii:	Meeting the needs of 12-14 year olds	70	75%
17	Intervention xiv:	Childcare places for low income families	67	73%
18	Intervention xix:	Childcare Stakeholders' Panel	58	68%
19	Intervention v:	Supporting private firms to provide childcare	60	64%
20	Intervention xiii:	Public sector franchises	58	63%
21	Intervention iv:	Supporting private sector childcare providers	57	63%
22	Intervention vii:	Supporting cross-border childcare services	55	60%



3.8 Interventions ranked 1 to 15 generated the most support, with 80% or more of respondents indicating that they strongly agreed/agreed with the interventions. Interventions ranked 16 to 22 generated support from between 60% and 75% of respondents. Further detail of the responses to each of the interventions is provided in section 5.

### **General comments made in responses which were not specific to individual questions**

3.9 Some comments were offered generally either in response to a specific question or as additional comments. A summary of some of the key issues raised in those responses is as follows:

- queries in relation to numerical targets - some questioned how the estimated childcare places required for each intervention had been calculated, specifically how the places would be allocated and what eligibility and selection criteria would be used.
- requests for more detail on how the vision, aims and each of the interventions would be implemented and the level of funding allocated to each intervention.
- the need for the Strategy to be supported by adequate resources to ensure full implementation.
- the Strategy should aim to create a childcare place for every child that needs one, rather than focussing on a specified number of additional childcare places for particular interventions.
- the Strategy would not achieve the aims and objectives in isolation; it should reflect and align to other relevant policies as well as recent and future changes in the welfare system. A number of respondents cited changes to the 'Living Wage', as well as changes to the welfare system that could impact on the ability of families to pay for childcare.
- the Strategy should be clearly aligned with the Executive's overarching policies on equality and poverty, particularly the Child Poverty Strategy.

- the Strategy should be contextualised within the International Human Rights legislation, particularly the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Some respondents suggested that the UNCRC should be directly referenced in the vision. Others highlighted duties in relation to Irish medium.
- some respondents queried the term 'childcare', suggesting it is outdated and 'Care and Early Childhood Development' or 'Early Childhood Education and Care' were suggested as alternatives.
- respondents stressed the need for appropriate monitoring arrangements to be put in place to assess the performance of the interventions.
- the proposed additional childcare places are not needed, as the provision of childcare places in Northern Ireland is already adequate to meet demand. Some respondents noted that providers often reported vacancies, not waiting lists.
- provision for 3 to 4 year olds should be increased to 30 hours similar to the recent increase in entitlement in England.

### **Overview of responses to the direct consultation with children and young people, parents, stakeholders and the public**

- 3.10 The main issues raised during the consultation event with children and young people is the need for more outdoor space and equipment appropriate to their needs. They also wanted high quality childcare provision that is welcoming to all children irrespective of their background and affordable for their parents.
- 3.11 The main issues raised by parents related to the availability of affordable childcare provision, the perceived lack of appropriate childcare services and the need for greater support for working parents not just from government but from employers. They also suggested that there is a potential conflict between the sustainability, affordability and quality objectives.



- 3.12 Attendees at the stakeholder workshop felt that sustainability and affordability were opposing concepts that could not be reconciled, and that affordable childcare is an issue for many families not just those on low income. Some suggested that rather than the Strategy focussing on school age childcare, more should be offered for the 0 to 4 age group, with the possible introduction of a scheme similar to the Pre-School Education Programme (PSEP) under which childcare places would be funded by government. It was suggested that more use should be made of the school estate, that an additional 15 hours of free childcare for working parents of children aged 3 to 4 should be introduced here and that there should be a ring-fenced budget to deliver the Strategy.
- 3.13 Some of the issues raised at the public events included the need for more flexible and responsive childcare, a greater emphasis on play, a greater use of the schools estate in rural areas, and more information should be made available about local childcare provision and the financial support available to parents.

### **Campaign letter comments**

- 3.14 An identical letter was received from 113 parents who used a particular day nursery. The main issues raised included: the need for more investment to support parents, families and childcare providers; the introduction of 30 hours free childcare similar to the new childcare offer in England; the need for a resourced training and professional development strategy for those working with young children; a level playing field for early childhood providers around access to funding, fee support, inspection, regulation and access to family support services; the need for increased and enhanced services for families which explains the financial support available to them; and an Early Education and Care Act for Northern Ireland to make the financing, supervision and coordination of education and care services a legal requirement.

### **Key themes from the consultation**

#### **Vision and Aims**

- 3.15 Overall, most respondents were supportive of the vision and aims. It was suggested however, that the vision should be more concise with greater clarity needed in terms of how the vision and aims would be achieved.

## Objectives

3.16 While the majority of respondents were supportive of the objectives, there was less support for the sustainability objective, with some respondents concerned that it was in conflict with the affordability and quality objectives. It was suggested that sustainability might not be a realistic objective for some childcare settings e.g. those serving areas of greatest need and that it would present a major challenge for rural settings as well as settings providing services for children with additional needs or a disability. It was also suggested that flexibility should be included as an objective.

## Interventions

3.17 Interventions were generally supported, particularly those relating to:

- improving the quality of childcare provision, improving and enhancing skills across the sector and encouraging registered childcare provision and greater diversity in the childcare workforce. While it was acknowledged that regulation and inspection were important to ensure the delivery of high quality childcare, there was some concern about the capacity of Health and Social Care Trusts to regulate and inspect an increased number of settings.
- provision of capital funding to expand childcare premises and childcare support for children with special needs.
- supporting the School Age Childcare Grant Scheme and childcare for children aged 0 to 4, more flexible childcare, as well as community based childcare providers, however not necessarily using the current funding model as the basis for any new grant scheme.
- support for childcare in rural areas, whilst highlighting that transport is a particular issue in rural areas.
- the need for more timely and up-to-date information about childcare provision and availability, as well as the financial assistance available to families.





- 3.18 There was less support for the interventions relating to:
- meeting the childcare needs of 12-14 year olds.
  - making childcare available for children from low income families.
  - establishing a Childcare Stakeholder's Panel.
  - supporting private firms to provide childcare.
  - public sector franchises and privately managed provision.
  - supporting private sector childcare providers.
  - supporting cross-border childcare services.

### Key Issues

- 3.19 Generally, respondents supported the vision, aims and objectives but wanted more detail on budget and timetable, and more detail on the actions required to deliver social change through childcare. There was some concern that the sustainability objective potentially undermined the affordability and quality objectives. There was consensus that adequate resources should be made available for the Strategy, including capital funding, to ensure that actions could be fully implemented.
- 3.20 Respondents highlighted the lack of detail in relation to the estimated number of childcare places required. Some respondents wanted a commitment to creating a childcare place for every child that needs one rather than focussing on a specified number of additional childcare places to be created for particular interventions.
- 3.21 Some respondents were critical of the current Bright Start Grant Scheme, stating that several types of setting were particularly disadvantaged by the Bright Start model including those operating in disadvantaged areas, rural areas, and those meeting the childcare needs of children with a disability.
- 3.22 There were some concerns regarding grant aiding private sector providers and supporting private firms to provide childcare onsite. Initiatives focusing on

supporting childcare in rural areas, for pre-school children and children with a disability were broadly welcomed.

- 3.23 Some respondents wanted to see closer alignment with a range of Executive strategies and frameworks including the overarching policies on gender equality and poverty. Some respondents also wanted commitments similar to those in England and Wales for free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds to be introduced in Northern Ireland, and some highlighted the need for dedicated resources and legislation for childcare.



## Section 4

### Summary of responses to the vision, aims and objectives

- 4.1 This section sets out in more detail the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the responses to the questions in relation to the vision, aims and objectives.

### Vision

- 4.2 The Vision outlined in the draft consultation document is that, by 2025:

*Every child, parent and family will have access to affordable, integrated, quality childcare. Through childcare, we will support the transformation of our society, promoting both equality and social inclusion. We will use childcare as a stepping stone to lifelong achievement, from formal education into adult life. Through childcare, we will instil lifelong respect for diversity. By making affordable childcare services more widely available, we will enable all parents, but especially mothers, to join the workforce. In this way, childcare will contribute to greater gender equality. Finally, by developing local childcare services, we will create childcare jobs and develop the skills of people working in the childcare sector.*

## Question 1

### Vision

Respondents were asked: *Do you agree with the vision of the Childcare Strategy?*

### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaires

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Yes	118	94%
No	7	6%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>125*</b>	<b>100%</b>

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*\*7 (5%) of 132 respondents did not answer the question*



## Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- the vision could be clearer and more concise with greater clarity on implementation, delivery and resources.
- the word 'flexible' should be included in the vision to reflect the needs of parents with different working hours or shift patterns.
- access to high quality childcare that is affordable for families is key to the implementation and success of the Strategy.
- there was some concern about the reference to affordability in the vision, with some respondents unclear how achievable this would be.
- a well trained and highly skilled workforce is essential for the delivery of high quality childcare, in order to develop the workforce a suitable and accessible training and qualification system must be in place.
- to provide responsive childcare for children with additional needs and children from an ethnic-minority group, training is important in terms of helping to achieve diversity in settings as set out in the vision.
- children should be at the centre of the Strategy and the Strategy should aim to meet the needs of children, parents and families.
- the Strategy appears focused on the children of working parents only and as the Childcare Strategy aims to improve child developmental outcomes, it needs to provide a service for all children, regardless of the employment status of their parents.

## Questions 2 and 3

### Aims

The Strategy set out the following aims:

- **Child Development:** To give all our children the best start in life, preparing them for lifelong wellbeing and achievement, thereby creating the basis for a better, more prosperous future.
- **Parental Employment:** To enable parents to join the workforce thereby enhancing prosperity, and to improve gender equality by enabling mothers to join the workforce, return to work, remain in work, work the hours they want and progress in their careers.

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the aims were appropriate for the Childcare Strategy. The majority of respondents were supportive of the aims of the Strategy in both the quantitative and qualitative responses. Some respondents suggested that the aims were ambitious and that appropriate funding of the Strategy and delivery of high quality childcare would be necessary to achieve both aims. Some respondents also wanted to see more detail on how the Strategy would achieve these aims.



## Question 2

### Child Development Aim

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the Child Development Aim is appropriate for the Childcare Strategy?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	115	97%
Disagree / strongly disagree	2	2%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	2%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>119*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- high quality childcare promotes and supports child development and the quality of settings and their promotion of child development could encourage parents to use childcare services to enable them to enter or remain in employment.
- the Child Development Aim is especially relevant for children from disadvantaged backgrounds as it could help reduce inequalities during early development and improve the life chances of children.

\*13 (10%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- a highly skilled workforce is crucial to ensure that the Child Development Aim can be achieved in childcare settings. Successful delivery requires adequately trained and qualified childcare and play workers to provide the quality of care and development required.
- child development should not be considered solely as preparation for school, to be measured in terms of school performance or school readiness. Development should be recognised as improving social skills, linguistic development and emotional intelligence.





## Question 3

### Parental Employment Aim

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the Parental Employment Aim is appropriate for the Childcare Strategy?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	110	92%
Disagree / strongly disagree	3	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	6	5%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>119*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- current levels of affordability and flexibility of childcare can present barriers for parents wanting to remain in the workforce or seeking new employment or training opportunities.
- parents should be better supported as the primary carers for their children to provide a healthy and positive home environment.
- financial support for parents is an issue leading to some parents returning to work prematurely due to financial pressures.

\*13 (10%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- the best place for children may be at home with their parents rather than in childcare.
- whilst welcoming the Parental Employment Aim, issues were raised in relation to the particular challenges faced by some women with children when seeking employment and some suggested the Strategy should include a specific commitment to promoting gender equality.
- childcare can indirectly promote employment by helping parents to access learning and development opportunities thereby improving their employability.



## Questions 4 to 10

### Objectives

The Strategy proposed the following seven objectives for childcare:

- **Availability:** Childcare services that are available to all children, regardless of where they live, their needs or circumstances, with a registered and appropriate childcare place for every child that requires one.
- **Affordability:** Childcare services that are affordable, no longer taking a disproportionate share of average household incomes.
- **Sustainability:** Childcare settings that aim to become sustainable; able, eventually, to cover their costs from the fees they charge.
- **Diversity:** Childcare settings that foster lifelong respect for diversity, thereby laying the foundations for a more tolerant and inclusive future.
- **Quality:** Childcare services that are of high quality, meeting or bettering the current Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12' and with all staff and managers trained to the appropriate level.
- **Informed Parental Choice:** Detailed and up-to-date information on the childcare sector that is readily available to parents, allowing them to make informed choices regarding the childcare services they use.
- **An Integrated Approach:** Childcare services that are integrated with, and complementary to, educational and youth services.

The majority of respondents in both the quantitative and qualitative responses supported the objectives of the Strategy. However, lower numbers of respondents strongly agreed/agreed (75%) with the sustainability objective compared to the other objectives (generally over 94% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed with the other six objectives). Some respondents suggested that there is a conflict between the sustainability objective and the affordability, availability and quality objectives.

## Question 4

### Availability Objective

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the 'Availability' objective is appropriate to the delivery of the Childcare Strategy?*

### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	110	97%
Disagree / strongly disagree	2	2%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	1%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>113*</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- rather than numerical targets there should be a registered and appropriate childcare place for every child that needs one.
- provision should be flexible with regard to opening and closing times and days of service to meet the needs of parents with alternative working patterns. Some queried if flexibility is sufficiently important to be an objective in its own right.

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\*19 (14%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



- provision should be assessed and planned at a local level to ensure parental needs are met and childcare is responsive to changes in demand.
- it is important to have good quality, accessible and affordable childcare, especially for children with additional needs or a disability and the children of parents with a disability.
- the needs of parents and children from a newcomer or ethnic minority background could be better served by the local childcare sector through, for example, cultural competence training including language support.
- there is a need for continued availability and accessibility of childcare services for all in society, particularly those in disadvantaged areas.
- childcare services must be adequately resourced.
- childcare is not just for working parents.

## Question 5

### Affordability Objective

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the 'Affordability' objective is appropriate to the delivery of the Childcare Strategy?*

### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	107	96%
Disagree / strongly disagree	3	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	2%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>112*</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- childcare services should be accessible to all families that require them and achieved by making the services more affordable through, for example, subsidies to parents or subsidies to providers.
- ongoing changes to welfare benefits may not make childcare more affordable for some families. Any scheme introduced to improve affordability should be universal and not limited to low income families.

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\*20 (15%) of 132 respondents did not answer the question



- many parents found paying for childcare services a challenge; some respondents suggested that some parents are currently priced out of the childcare market.
- the affordability and sustainability objectives are in conflict with one another. The sustainability objective envisages childcare settings eventually being able to cover their costs from the fees charged. However, if childcare services are required to cover all of their costs, they could then struggle to charge an affordable fee.
- there is a potential conflict between the sustainability objective and the affordability, availability and quality objectives, as highly skilled and trained staff cost more, and therefore settings are more likely to charge higher fees that impact on the affordability of places and longer term sustainability.
- developments such as the 'Living Wage' could make services less affordable particularly in a context where settings are expected to become sustainable.
- the cost of childcare can frequently mean that it is not always cost effective for both parents in a household to work as the cost of childcare can take up most or all of the second salary.

## Question 6

### Sustainability Objective

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the 'Sustainability' objective is appropriate to the delivery of the Childcare Strategy?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	84	75%
Disagree / strongly disagree	12	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	16	14%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>112*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- sustainability is not achievable within the current economic climate for providers who serve rural and disadvantaged areas, and where many families are on low incomes and/or in receipt of benefits.
- there is a conflict between the sustainability objective and the affordability, availability and quality objectives, with the continuous drive towards sustainability potentially resulting in unaffordable and unavailable childcare.

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\*20 (15%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question





- full sustainability may not be achievable for childcare settings servicing areas of greatest need and in rural areas, as well as settings providing childcare services for children with additional support needs or a disability.
- childcare settings expected to achieve sustainability could be at risk of becoming unaffordable for the most disadvantaged families including those families on low incomes and/or in receipt of benefits.
- maintaining a commitment to sustainability could weaken the Strategy's potential to tackle poverty.
- the lack of affordable childcare in areas of disadvantage could continue to be a major barrier to women's participation in work, education and training; the Childcare Strategy must recognise this and include funding streams where sustainability is not a requirement.
- the requirements for sustainability within a specific period is particularly challenging for newly established childcare providers.

## Question 7

### Diversity Objective

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the 'Diversity' objective is appropriate to the delivery of the Childcare Strategy?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	106	95%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	4	4%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>111*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- this objective could help build a more inclusive society in Northern Ireland.
- the location of a setting may impact on its ability to attract families and children from diverse backgrounds.

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\*21 (16%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



## Question 8

### Quality Objective

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the 'Quality' objective is appropriate to the delivery of the Childcare Strategy?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	111	98%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	1%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>113*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- to ensure high quality childcare provision, the workforce should be upskilled and there should be a commitment to pay childcare workers at a rate commensurate with their qualifications. In this context, some respondents thought that workforce development is sufficiently important to merit being an objective in its own right.

\*19 (14%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- concern about the current Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12' and suggestions that a review of the Minimum Standards should be taken forward in the context of the Strategy. Others suggested that the Minimum Standards provide assurance of a consistent level of quality in the delivery of childcare services and a consistent regional approach to registration and inspection.
- the requirements to register childcare service providers should be clearer and a consistent standardised approach to inspection and quality ratings for settings should be introduced.
- the five Health and Social Care Trusts should be adequately resourced to carry out inspections.



## Question 9

### Informed Parental Choice Objective

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the 'Informed Parental Choice' objective is appropriate to the delivery of the Childcare Strategy?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	109	97%
Disagree / strongly disagree	2	2%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	1%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>112*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- to help parents make informed choices, more information is required about available childcare services in a local area, including more detailed information on each setting.
- a system should be put in place to inform parents of the quality of each setting, possibly by making the relevant inspection reports available.
- parents require better information on the support they can avail of when choosing childcare, particularly the financial assistance available to help them meet or offset some of the costs of childcare.

\*20 (15%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

## Question 10

### An Integrated Approach Objective

Respondents were asked: *Please tell us to what extent you agree that the 'Integrated' objective is appropriate to the delivery of the Childcare Strategy?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	105	94%
Disagree / strongly disagree	0	0%
Neither agree nor disagree	7	6%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>112*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- enhanced cross-departmental working is required to deliver the Childcare Strategy. Some respondents wanted to see a government objective to ensure that the Childcare Strategy linked to other initiatives and strategies with a focus on children and their parents and to ensure that all relevant budgets were used strategically towards a common purpose.

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\*20 (15%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



- more use could be made of school buses to transport children to and from childcare settings, highlighting the particular needs of rural areas. Transport was highlighted as a concern for parents who used childcare services during school holidays; some asked if school buses could address this.
- concern about proposals to provide childcare on the schools estate and the potentially negative impact on diversity, due to the schools system largely comprising controlled and maintained schools.
- government departments need to work together to ensure mutual awareness of their respective roles in delivering the Strategy. It was also suggested that there could be greater coordination between schools regarding the start and end of the school day and school holidays.
- a need for a focus on gender equality in the Strategy, reflecting the aims of the Gender Equality Strategy. Several respondents suggested that the Strategy should include a gender equality objective.
- the establishment of a lead government department for childcare and a statutory duty for all Departments to cooperate on all childcare issues.
- the identification of a lead department for childcare policy with some recommending that this responsibility should transfer to the Department for Communities.
- others referred to the transfer of lead policy responsibility for the Childcare Strategy to the Department of Education, some considering it an opportunity for a joined up approach to the provision of childcare and early education, with wraparound childcare supporting pre-school education and complementing formal learning, although some raised issues about the focus on formal education.

## Question 11

### Further objectives for consideration in the Strategy

Respondents were asked: *Are there any further objectives which you think should be considered for inclusion in a Childcare Strategy that are not included here?*

### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- a 'flexible' objective should be included to ensure childcare caters for: parents working outside 'normal' 9-5 hours; those on zero hour contracts; shift workers whose work patterns change each week; and people who have long commutes to work and need childcare at times that facilitates this.
- the inclusion of a staff development objective focussed on creating a professional and well trained workforce that earn fair wages. This should also concentrate on making professional and relevant qualifications widely available.
- there should be an objective which specifically aims to ensure appropriate provision for children with additional needs.
- there should be an objective which specifies that the Strategy should be delivered through a cross-departmental approach, including joined up budgets and linking with other strategies aimed at supporting children and families.
- there should be an objective that reflects the importance of play for children and helps to develop quality play space both indoors and outdoors in childcare settings.





## Section 5

### Summary of responses to the Interventions

5.1 This section sets out in more detail the quantitative and qualitative responses regarding the questions asked on the individual interventions.

#### Summary of responses to the interventions

5.2 The Strategy outlined 22 proposed interventions. These were grouped under the following themes:

Theme		Interventions
Theme 1	Supporting increased childcare provision	i to xiv
Theme 2	Improving childcare services	xv to xix
Theme 3	Joined up childcare	xx
Theme 4	Changing the childcare context	xxi to xxii

5.3 A number of respondents were concerned that the Strategy included proposals that were still at the consideration stage and would need further development. Some had expected to see fully worked out, timetabled and costed actions. A frequent question raised by respondents was how the overall target of childcare places had been arrived at and how the individual estimates of childcare places for each of the 22 interventions had been calculated.

5.4 Appendix 1 provides a summary table showing the responses to the quantitative questions in the questionnaire.

## Question 12

### Theme 1 - Intervention i - School Age Childcare Grant Scheme

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention i - School Age Childcare Grant Scheme?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	78	83%
Disagree / strongly disagree	5	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	11	12%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>94*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- concern that the level of financial support offered under the current Bright Start School Age Childcare Grant Scheme disadvantages particular settings incurring higher costs, in particular; settings operating in disadvantaged areas where the fee income is low and the shortfall between income and costs correspondingly high; settings operating in rural areas where costs are often higher due to transport costs; and settings that meet the childcare needs of children with a disability.

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\*38 (29%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



- need to ensure that working families are not disadvantaged through this intervention, places should be available to all children regardless of background or parental income and childcare places should not be targeted solely on low income families.
- concern at the potential for displacement or duplication of existing services, with some respondents suggesting that this grant scheme should aim to maximise the capacity of existing providers before funding any new provision. It was suggested that additional funding should be targeted towards childminders to help them to provide more school age childcare places.
- the proposed intervention is a positive development for schools as they could use the additional support to develop wraparound care on the schools estate.
- there is potential for confusion between this intervention and the Department of Education Extended Schools Programme. It was suggested that, instead of expanding Bright Start, the Extended Schools Programme could be delivered on a bigger scale using Childcare Strategy funding. By contrast, it was suggested that extended schools provision does not constitute a form of childcare, as schools offering less than 2 hours provision do not have to adhere to the Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12' which all registered childcare providers must meet.
- clarity is required about whether conventional private sector settings will be eligible to apply for funding, as only social economy providers have been eligible for Bright Start assistance.
- the resource implications for those tasked with registration and monitoring of new childcare places will need to be considered.
- in order to address the needs of children with a disability, respondents wanted to see investment in: capital expenditure (for premises modifications and the purchase of equipment); staff development; higher adult to child ratios; and transport.

- any provision created through this intervention should be age appropriate. To help ensure this, there should be promotion by government of the Playwork qualification and greater financial support to enable more childcare practitioners to achieve it.
- concern that the Women's Centre Childcare Fund was due to end suggesting that an alternative funding stream should continue to support the most disadvantaged families.
- settings operating in areas of need, in rural areas and those meeting the needs of children with a disability are particularly disadvantaged by the current Bright Start funding model.



## Question 13

### Theme 1 - Intervention ii - Meeting the needs of 12-14 year olds

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention ii - Meeting the needs of 12-14 year olds?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	70	75%
Disagree / strongly disagree	3	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	20	22%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>93*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- childcare for 12 to 14 year olds is an area where further research and scoping is needed, including consultation with parents and young people.
- age 11 and 12 is a time of transition for young people and any childcare provided should be age appropriate with suggestions that staff with a play work qualification rather than staff with a childcare qualification may be best placed to deliver an appropriate service. Some respondents suggested that this type of provision might be explored by the Department of Education funded Youth Service.

\*39 (30%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- there is a need to target services for children with additional needs in this age group.
- The Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12' applies to children up to the age of 12 and, consequently, settings are registered to provide care for children up to this age. Some respondents advised that there could be logistical challenges associated with providing care for this age group such as staffing ratios.



## Question 14

### Theme 1 - Intervention iii - Supporting childcare for the 0-4s

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention iii - Supporting childcare for the 0-4s?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	81	89%
Disagree / strongly disagree	2	2%
Neither agree nor disagree	8	9%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>91*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- the number of places available for this age group is not the issue, it is the cost of places that makes childcare unaffordable for many parents. It was suggested that support should be for all families, not just low income families.

\*41 (31%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- high quality childcare for all children in this age group contributes to children's learning, development and school readiness. Some respondents suggested that high quality childcare is particularly necessary in areas of deprivation as it can assist families to move out of poverty by enabling parental employment and giving children a better start in life.
- there is a need for more funded pre-school childcare places for children age 0 to 4. Some suggested that more private providers should be allowed to offer these places, whilst others suggested that more schools should be supported to offer childcare places.
- specialist childcare for children with additional needs is required as it could help with earlier diagnosis and identification of needs by professionals.
- the most appropriate place for a child of this age is at home with their parents rather than in childcare. If parents need childcare for pre-school children, some suggested that childminders should provide this service in a home-based setting.





## Question 15

### Theme 1 - Intervention iv - Supporting private sector childcare providers

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention iv - Supporting private sector childcare providers?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	57	63%
Disagree / strongly disagree	12	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	24%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>91*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- the target number of places for this intervention is twice the corresponding target for Intervention vi, which aims to support community-based providers. Some respondents interpreted this intervention as indicating a higher priority for private childcare providers.
- services for children with additional needs would not be provided through this intervention as the relatively high cost of providing this type of service might deter commercial private sector providers.

\*41 (31%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- private childminders might be overlooked by this intervention in favour of centre-based private providers since centre-based providers are better placed to contribute to the target of 1,500 places. Some respondents commented that the availability of childcare places in private settings is often not the issue, it is the affordability of places that causes a problem for parents, and therefore there should be a focus on making these places more affordable.
- it would be better to target funding at social economy childcare providers, as places in these settings are usually more affordable for parents.
- extended childminding, where two individuals work together in a childminding setting, might work well in rural areas.
- qualifications and relevant training for staff in private settings should be supported by government which could in turn help lower running costs making services more affordable for families.
- the proposed assistance through this intervention might ensure the survival of settings facing tight margins as the 'Living Wage' may add to the costs of providing childcare.



## Question 16

### Theme 1 - Intervention v - Supporting private firms to provide childcare

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention v - Supporting private firms to provide childcare?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	60	64%
Disagree / strongly disagree	14	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	20	21%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>94*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- it is not clear how the target of 1,500 places has been determined and how this contrasts with the corresponding target in Intervention vi (750) for supporting community-based childcare providers. Some respondents perceived this as indicating that private providers were prioritised over community providers.
- commercial considerations of private firms could outweigh their ability to provide high quality childcare.

\*38 (29%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- existing high quality providers could work with private firms to deliver onsite childcare services on the private firm's behalf.
- the feasibility of this type of provision to provide a service for children with additional needs.
- this service might be detrimental to communities if children are being cared for at their parents' place of work rather than in their own community, alongside children from the local area /neighbourhood or with school friends. Some highlighted the potential for this intervention to displace current childcare providers.
- this intervention had the potential to reduce travel costs and travel time for parents and could potentially address the childcare needs of those working unconventional hours.



## Question 17

### Theme 1 - Intervention vi - Supporting community-based childcare providers

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention vi - Supporting community-based childcare providers?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	81	89%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	9	10%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>91*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- community-based providers are often the lowest cost option for parents and therefore some suggested that this sector should be responsible for creating the majority of childcare places and resourced accordingly.
- many community providers are already meeting the Strategy's objectives including providing childcare for children with additional needs and maintaining childcare services and childcare employment in disadvantaged areas. Some highlighted that community-based providers had led the provision of childcare services for newcomer families.
- this intervention could be used to help existing community-based providers to expand or help prospective community-based providers to become established.

\*41 (31%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

## Question 18

### Theme 1 - Intervention vii - Supporting cross-border childcare services

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention vii - Supporting cross-border childcare services?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	55	60%
Disagree / strongly disagree	6	7%
Neither agree nor disagree	31	34%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- this intervention appeared conditional on EU funding being secured. Some respondents proposed that support from both governments would be essential to ensure the success of this intervention.
- there could be potential currency/exchange rate problems in relation to this intervention.

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\*40 (30%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



- there could be potential problems if people normally resident in Northern Ireland are unable to access financial support for the cost of childcare if they choose a childcare setting based in the Republic of Ireland.
- the short-term nature of EU funding was noted as well as the impact this may have on sustainability.
- different legal standards/registration requirements for childcare provision in the two jurisdictions would need to be considered.
- the proposed intervention could provide an opportunity for families in rural communities to secure locally based childcare services.

## Question 19

### Theme 1 - Intervention viii - Capital fund for childcare

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention viii - Capital fund for childcare?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	72	80%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	17	19%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>90*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- there should be a focus on enhancing the quality of current childcare settings and on helping to address some issues providers have meeting the Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12', rather than being available solely to enable settings to expand and offer more places. It was also suggested that this intervention should be open to providers who want to upgrade their service in order to support children with additional needs.

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\*42 (32%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question





- assistance should be provided in the form of loans rather than grants, as this would incentivise settings to use the investment prudently. However, some respondents preferred grants to loans given the challenges associated with cash flow and repayments. A small number of respondents felt that social economy/community-based providers should take priority if capital support becomes available.
- any significant expansion in childcare services would require capital investment.

## Question 20

### Theme 1 - Intervention ix - Rural childminding services model

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention ix - Rural childminding services model?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	75	82%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	15	16%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>91*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- the Strategy needs to focus more on the needs of rural providers. Some respondents noted that many rural providers incur increased costs due to the need to pay for transport services.
- the current level of support offered under the Grant Scheme, with its maximum award equivalent to 25% of running costs, is insufficient for rural providers.

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\*41 (31%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



- this could help address issues such as hours of provision, cost, flexibility, transport, and providers' access to training and qualifications.
- this could address perceived disparities in levels of provision between urban and rural areas.
- in developing the Strategy, account should be taken of the recent evaluation of the Rural Childcare Programme.

## Question 21

### Theme 1 - Intervention x - Transport services supportive of rural childcare provision

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention x - Transport services supportive of rural childcare provision?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	76	83%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	15	16%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- transport is an important issue for many parents in rural areas and better transport would improve rural families' access to childcare provision, enable more parents to avail of local childcare services and help settings to become more sustainable.

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\*40 (30%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



- more use should be made of the current transport provided by the Education Authority. Some highlighted that school buses could not pick-up or drop off children at their childcare setting with the result that parents needed to arrange transport themselves.
- there should be transport available to support children with additional needs.

## Question 22

### Theme 1 - Intervention xi - Childcare for children with a disability

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xi - Childcare for children with a disability?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	85	92%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	6	7%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- there should be a greater focus on the needs of children with a disability. The Strategy should reflect the wider needs of children with a disability and set out clear interventions to address those needs.
- it would be helpful to evaluate the previous initiatives relating to childcare for children with a disability completed under the first phase of the Strategy.

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\*40 (30%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



- children with additional needs should have equality of access to childcare. The integration and inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream settings would be beneficial for children and their families, as well as promoting respect and diversity amongst all children cared for in the setting.
- a number of areas were identified that required additional funding in order to ensure high quality provision for children with special needs, including staff development; capital investment; and financial support to cover higher staff ratios.
- there could be more opportunities for childminders and home-based child carers if funding is available to enable them to access specialist training.
- the lack of specialist care for children with a disability in rural areas is an issue.

## Question 23

### Theme 1 - Intervention xii - Flexible childcare

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xii - Flexible childcare?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	79	86%
Disagree / strongly disagree	3	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	10	11%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- support the intervention particularly for parents who work shifts or unconventional hours, although some concern was expressed about how this might work in practice with staff contracts, the Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12' and the costs associated with providing such a service.
- a mapping exercise at local area level would be useful to help determine the actual levels of demand/need for this type of service.

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\*40 (30%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question





## Question 24

### Theme 1 - Intervention xiii - Public sector franchises

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xiii - Public sector franchises?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	58	63%
Disagree / strongly disagree	3	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	31	34%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- the current public sector infrastructure may not be suitable for childcare provision; some suggested that making existing public sector buildings suitable for childcare provision would require considerable investment.

\*40 (30%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- a number of respondents were concerned about displacement as the creation of new provision on the public sector estate could lead to parents moving their children out of the settings they currently use, thereby adversely affecting the viability of other providers. Mapping at local area level should be undertaken to assess the need for additional provision.
- any settings established or supported under this intervention should demonstrate that the needs of the children attending are the priority and that rooms/buildings are fit for purpose, as opposed to potentially being seen as a form of revenue generation.



## Question 25

### Theme 1 - Intervention xiv - Childcare places for low income families

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xiv - Childcare places for low income families?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	67	73%
Disagree / strongly disagree	7	8%
Neither agree nor disagree	18	20%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- support the intervention as a means of ensuring that children from low income families have access to the same high quality childcare opportunities as more affluent families.
- for disadvantaged families childcare can have important developmental benefits.
- concerned about limiting the intervention to low income families with some suggesting that it should be universal, similar to the DE funded Pre-School Education Programme.

\*40 (30%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- establishing eligibility may be difficult for some families whose employment status changes regularly.
- many middle income families become worse off after paying for childcare as they do not receive financial assistance from government sources and it is these families that often require help with childcare costs rather than low income families who may already be entitled to government support.
- many families who have children with additional needs are on low incomes as they may have given up work to care for their children; improving provision for these families would be welcomed.



## Question 26

### Theme 2 - Intervention xv- Improvements to information

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xv- Improvements to information?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	73	85%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	12	14%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>86*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- timely and up-to-date information about settings and available financial assistance to parents and providers is essential to the ongoing sustainability of the sector.
- better promotion of information about providers/available places as many people do not know this information is available or where to access it, some highlighted the lack of information about childcare in rural areas.

\*46 (35%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- information on childcare services should be made available in a range of languages and formats (Braille, large print, audio).
- inspection reports on childcare settings should be published online.



## Question 27

### Theme 2 - Intervention xvi - The Childcare Strategy will support a training programme to improve and enhance skills across the workforce

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xvi - The Childcare Strategy will support a training programme to improve and enhance skills across the workforce?*

Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	82	94%
Disagree / strongly disagree	0	0%
Neither agree nor disagree	5	6%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>87*</b>	<b>100%</b>

Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- there should be a workforce development plan for the childcare sector to ensure that staff have the opportunity to become highly skilled and maintain high quality provision.

\*45 (34%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- appropriate resources should be put in place to enable training to be delivered; training should be available to all childcare providers, both childminders and centre-based staff.
- a workforce transformation fund should be created, open to all childcare providers, both childminders and centre-based staff. Some respondents welcomed a commitment to workforce development, not only because they regarded training as beneficial but because it would enhance the status of childcare workers, build the confidence of the childcare workforce and make childcare a more attractive career option.
- arranging cover for staff members to attend training is often difficult.
- Access NI checks should be portable with a substitution system introduced to enable staff to move between providers and cover other staff on days when they are required to attend training.
- workforce development requires a qualifications framework. The European Commission's 'Competence Requirements on Early Childhood Education and Care' was suggested as a potential framework.
- the Childcare Partnerships' Regional Training and Workforce Development Group should be utilised to inform the workforce development agenda.





## Question 28

### Theme 2 - Intervention xvii - The Strategy will work with other programmes to ensure good quality training of unemployed people as a pathway to work in childcare

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xvii - The Strategy will work with other programmes to ensure good quality training of unemployed people as a pathway to work in childcare?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	73	86%
Disagree / strongly disagree	4	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	8	9%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>85*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- there is a perception that the childcare workforce is not valued or recognised as professional. Some suggested that this intervention supported this perception as it implied that anyone could work in childcare as a 'pathway' into employment, rather than choosing it as a career.

\*47 (36%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- there is a need to improve the perception of childcare as a career and promote its role in child development.
- there is still a need for entry requirements to courses/programmes in targeting prospective childcare trainees.



## Question 29

### **Theme 2 - Intervention xviii - It will seek to align and promote existing initiatives to encourage greater diversity in the workforce - with particular reference to males and individuals from ethnic minority communities**

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xviii - It will seek to align and promote existing initiatives to encourage greater diversity in the workforce - with particular reference to males and individuals from ethnic minority communities?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	71	81%
Disagree / strongly disagree	4	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	13	15%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>88*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- greater diversity would be beneficial for the sector. Some suggested that low pay is one reason why men are not attracted to becoming childcare workers and if this issue could be addressed, more men could be encouraged to work in the childcare sector.
- language is a potential barrier to people whose first language is not English joining the childcare workforce.

\*44 (33%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

## Question 30

### Theme 2 - Intervention xix - Childcare Stakeholders' Panel

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xix - Childcare Stakeholders' Panel?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	58	68%
Disagree / strongly disagree	4	5%
Neither agree nor disagree	23	27%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>85*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- more information is needed about the proposed panel, specifically its membership, Terms of Reference, and the accountability and reporting arrangements.
- a range of potential stakeholders were suggested by some respondents for inclusion in the membership of the group including: rural childcare stakeholders; childcare providers from all sectors; parents; education sector representatives; frontline staff; training providers and community/voluntary organisations.

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\*47 (36%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question



## Question 31

### Theme 3 - Intervention xx - Promotion of registered childcare

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xx - Promotion of registered childcare?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	77	90%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	8	9%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>86*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- the issue of unregistered childcare needs to be addressed. A number of suggestions were offered, such as: working with unregistered providers to help them become registered; ensuring that current regulations are enforced and financial penalties imposed on those who fail to comply; promoting the benefits of registered childcare in relation to the quality and standard of care; raising awareness of the potential risks associated with using unregistered provision; and making registered places more affordable for parents.

\*46 (35%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- some suggested that the Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12' were inappropriate for school age childcare providers and particularly difficult for childminders to adhere to, and that flexibility was needed.
- there is a need to distinguish between unregistered childcare and informal childcare, which is provided by family members.



## Question 32

### Theme 4 - Intervention xxi - Regulation and inspection

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xxi - Regulation and inspection?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	75	88%
Disagree / strongly disagree	1	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	9	11%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>85*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- the proposed intervention is important to ensure the delivery of high quality childcare. However, some were concerned about the capacity of the Health and Social Care Trusts to regulate and inspect additional settings and the corresponding increase in workload. Some respondents suggested using Early Years specialists to carry out inspections rather than social workers.

\*47 (36%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

- specific guidance is required in relation to childcare provided on the schools estate. Some suggested a common approach to inspection for schools providing childcare, combining current health and education requirements into a single system for registration and inspection.
- there is inconsistency across Health and Social Care Trusts regarding inspections and the Strategy should explore ways of ensuring greater consistency. Some respondents suggested that childcare providers might benefit from training in the Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12'.





## Question 33

### Theme 4 - Intervention xxii - Review options for statutory responsibility

Respondents were asked: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with Intervention xxii - Review options for statutory responsibility?*

#### Quantitative analysis of responses to the questionnaire

The breakdown of responses to this question is as follows:

	Nos.	%
Strongly agree / agree	68	83%
Disagree / strongly disagree	3	4%
Neither agree nor disagree	11	13%
<b>Total respondents who answered the question</b>	<b>82*</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Qualitative analysis of overall responses

Respondents made the following comments:

- childcare should be the responsibility of one government department.
- responsibility for childcare should be devolved to local councils or to the Childcare Partnerships. Some favoured the creation of a new statutory body with responsibility for childcare.
- there is a need for the introduction of a statutory requirement to provide childcare services and to match childcare services to the needs of local parents and children.
- the Strategy should take account of the new council structures and links to community planning.

\*50 (38%) of 132 respondents did not answer this question

## Section 6

### Summary of specific consultation with children and young people, parents, stakeholders and the public

#### Consultation events

- 6.1 Consultation events were held across Northern Ireland on the draft Childcare Strategy. Separate consultation events were arranged for children and young people, for parents, and a stakeholder workshop.

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#### **Consultation with children and young people**

- 6.2 The consultation with children and young people was convened by PlayBoard and was made up of three strands:
- A child-friendly paper-based questionnaire was completed in a group setting;
  - A consultation event comprising a number of focus groups that aimed to gain insight into the perceptions of children and young people about their direct experiences of childcare provision; and
  - A focus group comprising PlayBoard's Young Researchers.
- 6.3 PlayBoard, in cooperation with a number of organisations that work with children aged 4-12 invited children to take part in the consultation event. The event was held in W5 in October 2015, with approximately 60 children (37 girls and 23 boys) participating. The main issues raised at the event are outlined below:



### Adequate outdoor space, general toys and equipment

- Children wanted to see more outdoor space, outdoor equipment, toys and resources appropriate to the needs of the children who attended the setting in question.

### Quality of provision

- Children defined good childcare services as those that enabled them to play, make friends and be entertained and stimulated. The need for adequate physical space and sympathetic, supportive staff was highlighted.

### Affordability for parents

- Children were generally aware of the cost of childcare and how it impacted on their family income. There was also awareness of the hours many parents were required to work and how this necessitated increased use of childcare.

### Workforce

- Children generally found childcare staff to be kind, supportive, helpful people they could talk to. Many children were aware that childcare staff were low paid and believed that they should be paid more.

### Diversity, inclusion and access

- The ability to develop friendships and play with others was identified as one of the main benefits of attending school aged childcare provision for children. Children generally regarded it as important that all children, from all backgrounds, could avail of the same childcare services. Children were welcoming of all groups and suggested ways in which childcare settings could be made more accessible for children with disabilities. The children also suggested that settings could be made more welcoming of children from a diversity of backgrounds through the provision of books in various, relevant languages and language classes for all children.

## Transitions from P7 - the 12-14 age group

- Older children, about to transfer to post-primary education, were often concerned at having to leave their childcare setting. Some thought that there should be a youth-type service in post-primary schools, one that enabled leisure time or study. Many favoured the development of a buddying or mentoring scheme whereby older children mentored younger children.
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## Consultation with parents

- 6.4 Parenting NI facilitated consultations with parents which ran in October 2015 and consisted of three focus groups and an online survey. Twenty-eight participants attended the focus groups across three sites, while an online survey attracted 189 responses.
- 6.5 Overall, parents across both the focus groups and the online survey supported the draft Strategy, its vision, aims, objectives and interventions. The concerns which were raised related to:
- The affordability of quality childcare;
  - A perceived lack of appropriate childcare services (particularly for BME and rural communities, and parents of children with additional needs/ disabilities); and
  - The need for greater support for working parents and middle earners, not just from government but from employers.
- 6.6 Parents generally felt that the draft Strategy could not achieve its aims and objectives in isolation. It was suggested that it needed to work alongside other policies, in particular those relating to tax credits, benefits, flexible working, shared parental leave etc. in order to achieve its overall vision and aims.



- 6.7 Most of the parents who responded to the survey supported the vision and aims of the draft Strategy.
- 6.8 Most parents agreed with the objectives of the draft Strategy. Only the sustainability objective drew any significant disagreement, the criticism being that this objective was in apparent conflict with the affordability and quality objectives.
- 6.9 The majority of parents surveyed were in agreement with the proposed interventions. However, several interventions did prompt disagreement. For example, only 53% of participants agreed with intervention xiv, which proposed government funded childcare places for low income families. Most parents who disagreed with this intervention felt that low income families should not be offered low/no fee places by childcare providers. Some parents felt that it is middle income families that were most affected by childcare issues and were therefore most in need of this type of financial support.
- 6.10 Interventions xx and xxi (promotion of registered childcare and regulation and inspection) also attracted some disagreement mainly because a sizeable minority of the parents who responded (around 25%) said that unregistered childcare could be beneficial as, in some areas, it is the only childcare option or the only affordable childcare option.

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### Stakeholder workshop

- 6.11 The draft Strategy had been developed via extensive stakeholder engagement beginning in June 2014. This included a series of one to one meetings with childcare stakeholders and two workshop events in late 2014. Regular engagement with stakeholders continued into 2015, notably with the Child Poverty Alliance, the Early Years Strategic Alliance and the All Party Group on Children and Young People. A final stakeholder workshop was organised in March 2016 in Belfast to share preliminary consultation findings and invite stakeholder comment. Attendees were asked to consider the following themes in a workshop format:
- Can we reconcile sustainability with affordability, quality and delivering social change?

- Can grant funding alone deliver affordable, quality places in the numbers we need?
- How should we resource the Childcare Strategy?

### Can we reconcile sustainability with affordability, quality and delivering social change?

- Many of the attendees felt that sustainability and affordability were opposing concepts that could not be reconciled. They felt that this is particularly true in the local context of low wages and high childcare costs, especially in areas of disadvantage.
- Some felt that, as funding given to organisations via the Bright Start School Age Childcare Grant Scheme is, in part, about delivering social change and targeting socially disadvantaged communities, trying to achieve sustainability was logically flawed.
- Some suggested that tackling child poverty should be the principal focus of the Strategy, not sustainability.
- Several participants advised that childcare affordability is an issue for many families, not just those with low incomes.
- Some noted that the development of childcare services would necessitate initial investment in, for example, training, during which time sustainability would not be possible.
- Others suggested that sustainability would not be achievable under the Bright Start School Age Childcare Grant Scheme as the levels of grant available were not enough.
- Sustainability has not generally been achievable to date and certain issues which will continue to make it unachievable include the introduction of the Living Wage and changes to tax credits.



### Can grant funding alone deliver affordable, quality places in the numbers we need?

- Some questioned the need for a focus on school age childcare in the Strategy to date on the grounds that the provision of extended schools had helped to meet the need for this type of service.
- It was suggested that the Strategy should offer more for the 0-4 age group as it is childcare for this group that is expensive for parents.
- Several participants commented on the need for a childcare scheme similar to the Pre-School Education Programme (PSEP) under which childcare places would be purchased by the government on behalf of parents. The PSEP was suggested as a model that might be adopted for providing and delivering childcare services.
- Some suggested that the proposed additional places are not needed and that the provision of childcare places in Northern Ireland is already adequate to meet demand. It was noted that providers often reported vacancies, not waiting lists.
- It was suggested that registration of additional childcare places would take a long lead-in time to achieve and would need more funding.
- Some participants noted that it can be resource intensive to apply and manage grants and that grant funding typically creates a period of uncertainty since grants are time bound. Grants were considered as good for testing or piloting new approaches rather than as a long term option.

### How should we resource the Childcare Strategy?

- Some suggested that, in the interest of making the best use of existing resource, more use should be made of the schools estate.
- A student loan-type scheme was suggested to help parents meet the costs of childcare.

- The tax revenues and benefit savings arising from the parental employment outcomes of childcare settings supported by the Strategy should be retained in the region to offset the cost of childcare.
  - It was suggested that an additional 15 hours of free childcare for working parents of children aged 3-4 should be introduced here.
  - The majority view was that government needed to ring-fence a budget of suitable size to deliver the Strategy.
- 

## Public consultation events

6.12 Public consultation events were held across Northern Ireland during the consultation period. These events were held in Belfast, Ballymena, Newry, Armagh, Derry/Londonderry and Omagh. These events attracted some 100 participants and were organised in workshop format. Attendees were also encouraged to complete the online questionnaire or submit a written response. Attendees were asked to provide comments under the following questions.

### What is your assessment of the vision, aims and objectives?

- The Child Development Aim was ranked as being of higher importance than the Parental Employment Aim.
- The approach and the focus on early intervention were welcomed.
- Flexibility was frequently cited as a key issue and the need for out of hours provision was highlighted.
- There is too narrow a focus on educational outcomes and a more holistic focus was suggested.
- There was a concern that there is not enough focus on the provision of childcare for children with a disability.





- It was felt that there is not enough emphasis on play.
- The support for training for childcare workers was welcomed. However consultees wanted to see more detail on how it was going to be implemented.
- Quality was considered as a key objective.

#### What is your assessment of the proposed interventions?

- Attendees welcomed diversity and wanted to see schools in rural areas using the schools estate for childcare.
- Childcare for the 12-14 age group could be integrated with youth services.
- It was queried how the interventions would be prioritised and resourced.
- There was discussion around the cost implications of Department of Health 'Minimum Standards - Childminding and Daycare for Children under age 12', support for staff progression and specialism as a pathway, rather than just management.
- The language used around the interventions was too general.
- There seemed to be no provision for childminders.
- There is a need for provision for the 0-4 age group.
- There is the potential for sectarian segregation in the rural context and more afterschool clubs and activities are needed.

#### What do you consider the main challenges for implementation will be?

- There is a need for more rural transport linked to rural schools.

- Parents needed more information on the financial supports available to them.
- Welfare Reform would have an impact on childcare provision.
- There is a concern that there will be too much of an emphasis on employment rates than child development and there could be a conflict between the two agendas of parental employment and childcare.
- Difficult to see how a ten year strategy can be rolled out without an accompanying budget.



**SUMMARY TABLES OF THE QUANTITATIVE RESPONSES IN THE QUESTIONNAIRES**

**VISION**

Do you agree with the vision?

	Yes		No		Total who answered the question	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
Vision	118	94%	7	6%	125	100%

Did not answer the question	Nos.
	7

**AIMS**

To what extent do you agree that the aims are appropriate for the Childcare Strategy?

	Strongly agree/ agree		Disagree/ strongly disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Total who answered the question	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
Child Development Aim	115	97%	2	2%	2	2%	119	100%
Parental Employment Aim	110	92%	3	3%	6	5%	119	100%

Did not answer the question	Nos.
	13
	13

**Appendix 1**

## OBJECTIVES

To what extent do you agree that the objectives are appropriate for the Childcare Strategy?

	Strongly agree/ agree		Disagree/ strongly disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Total who answered the question		Did not answer the question  Nos.
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
Availability Objective	110	97%	2	2%	1	1%	113	100%	19
Affordability Objective	107	96%	3	3%	2	2%	112	100%	20
Sustainability Objective	84	75%	12	11%	16	14%	112	100%	20
Diversity Objective	106	95%	1	1%	4	4%	111	100%	21
Quality Objective	111	98%	1	1%	1	1%	113	100%	19
Informed Parental Choice Objective	109	97%	2	2%	1	1%	112	100%	20
An Integrated Approach Objective	105	94%	0	0%	7	6%	112	100%	20

**INTERVENTIONS - THEME 1 - SUPPORTING INCREASED CHILDCARE PROVISION**

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed interventions?

	Strongly agree/ agree		Disagree/ strongly disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Total who answered the question		Did not answer the question Nos.
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
Intervention i	78	83%	5	5%	11	12%	94	100%	38
Intervention ii	70	75%	3	3%	20	22%	93	100%	39
Intervention iii	81	89%	2	2%	8	9%	91	100%	41
Intervention iv	57	63%	12	13%	22	24%	91	100%	41
Intervention v	60	64%	14	15%	20	21%	94	100%	38
Intervention vi	81	89%	1	1%	9	10%	91	100%	41
Intervention vii	55	60%	6	7%	31	34%	92	100%	40
Intervention viii	72	80%	1	1%	17	19%	90	100%	42
Intervention ix	75	82%	1	1%	15	16%	91	100%	41
Intervention x	76	83%	1	1%	15	16%	92	100%	40
Intervention xi	85	92%	1	1%	6	7%	92	100%	40
Intervention xii	79	86%	3	3%	10	11%	92	100%	40
Intervention xiii	58	63%	3	3%	31	34%	92	100%	40
Intervention xiv	67	73%	7	8%	18	20%	92	100%	40

## INTERVENTIONS - THEME 2 - IMPROVING CHILDCARE SERVICES

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed interventions?

		Strongly agree/ agree		Disagree/ strongly disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Total who answered the question		Did not answer the question Nos.
		Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
Intervention xv	Improvements to information	73	85%	1	1%	12	14%	86	100%	46
Intervention xvi	The Childcare Strategy will support a training programme to improve and enhance skills across the workforce	82	94%	0	0%	5	6%	87	100%	45
Intervention xvii	The Strategy will work with other programmes to ensure good quality training of unemployed people as a pathway to work in childcare	73	86%	4	5%	8	9%	85	100%	47
Intervention xviii	It will seek to align and promote existing initiatives to encourage greater diversity in the workforce - with particular reference to males and individuals from ethnic minority communities	71	81%	4	5%	13	15%	88	100%	44
Intervention xix	Childcare Stakeholders' Panel	58	68%	4	5%	23	27%	85	100%	47



**INTERVENTIONS - THEME 3 - JOINED UP CHILDCARE**

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed interventions?

Intervention xx	Promotion of registered childcare	Strongly agree/ agree		Disagree/ strongly disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Total who answered the question		Did not answer the question Nos.
		Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
		77	90%	1	1%	8	9%	86	100%	46

**INTERVENTIONS - THEME 4 - CHANGING THE CHILDCARE CONTEXT**

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed interventions?

Intervention xxi	Regulation and inspection	Strongly agree/ agree		Disagree/ strongly disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Total who answered the question		Did not answer the question Nos.
		Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
		75	88%	1	1%	9	11%	85	100%	47
Intervention xxii	Review options for statutory responsibility	68	83%	3	4%	11	13%	82	100%	50







Appendix 2

## LINKS TO RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

[www.education-ni.gov.uk](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk)

OFMDFM - Delivering Social Change through Childcare - A Ten Year Strategy for Affordable and Integrated Childcare (July 2015)

[www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/draft-childcare-strategy](http://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/draft-childcare-strategy)

OFMDFM - Bright Start - The NI Executive's Programme for Affordable and Integrated Childcare - A Strategic Framework and Key First Actions

[www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/bright-start-ni-executives-programme-affordable-and-integrated-childcare](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/bright-start-ni-executives-programme-affordable-and-integrated-childcare)

OFMDFM - Towards a Childcare Strategy - A Consultation Document (December 2012)

[www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/towards-childcare-strategy-consultation](http://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/towards-childcare-strategy-consultation)

OFMDFM commissioned research Childcare Research - RSM McClure Watters Research (Final report June 2014)

[www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/rsm-mcclure-watters-childcare-research](http://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/rsm-mcclure-watters-childcare-research)





SUMMARY REPORT OF RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION

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**Delivering Social Change Through Childcare**  
A Ten Year Strategy for Affordable and Integrated Childcare