



Clyde Gateway Childminding Project – Survey Report

Background

A partnership led by Clyde Gateway with the Scottish Childminding Association, Children in Scotland (primarily the CHANGE project) and Jobs & Business Glasgow was established in 2018 to work collaboratively with families to increase childminding provision for 0–12-year-olds with a specific focus on 5-12-year age group and 0–2-year-olds.

A survey is a core part of the first phase will explore why, of all aspects of childcare, there is a specific gap in childminding. By discussing these findings with local families, we will consider supply and demand for provision and identify additional supports that can be put in place to sustain childminding in areas of deprivation like Clyde Gateway. This phase will also raise awareness of childminding as a potential career and help to identify individuals who would like to become childminders.

The survey aimed to gain a sense of people's general awareness of Childminding in the Clyde Gateway area¹. Currently, there is a distinct lack of Childminding in the Glasgow City Council part of this area, so it is unknown how relevant it is locally when it comes to considering both childcare options and potential career choices. In carrying out this piece of research the aim was to capture a snapshot of potential interest in accessing Childminding for those who require childcare. Further to this it was of interest to find out what reasons might lay behind any scepticism or ambivalence towards

¹ This includes parts of Glasgow City Council and South Lanarkshire Council.

Childminding, for any people who expressed these opinions. Respondents were also offered the opportunity to receive more information and potentially access support and training if they expressed an interest in becoming a registered Childminder.

Those respondents who supplied contact details will be contacted in due course and will be invited along to information evenings, offered ongoing support and access to relevant training.

Summary of methodology

When designing the methodology for this research it was decided that a short survey would be the most relevant method to use. Project partners are very aware of research fatigue in the area and wanted people to feel like they could contribute their views and have their voice heard without feeling under pressure or having to commit too much of their time. These reasons, along with a limited time period for data collection, led partners to limit the survey to five short questions, with the intention of making these as simple and straightforward as possible. The questions were:

1. *Which area do you live in?*
2. *Do you know what Childminders do?*
3. *Do you use/need childcare?*
4. *Would you use a registered Childminder if there was one locally?*
 - a. *If you answered no – why would you not consider using a registered Childminder?*
5. *Would you consider becoming a registered Childminder if you had access to ongoing support and relevant training?*

Fields were provided for those interested in becoming a registered Childminder to share their name, telephone number and email address in order to receive more information at a future date.

A space was also offered for people to add any further comments or questions relating to Childminding, childcare or the survey in general.

Distribution of survey

Partners agreed that it was of paramount importance to make this survey as accessible as possible for all members of the community. This led to both hardcopy and online versions of the survey being produced and distributed in a number of ways.

Survey dissemination included:

1. *Electronic distribution of survey*
2. *Hardcopy distribution of survey*
3. *In person support to complete at existing groups*
4. *Targeting individuals not attending groups*

Electronic distribution of survey

The online survey data was collected using the Survey Monkey website. A customised link was created to direct people to the survey and was extensively shared via Social Media and email. We approached a number of partner organisations, community leaders, local schools and nurseries that helped share the online survey via various social media platforms, online forums and email networks.

Hardcopy distribution

A hardcopy of the survey was produced and distributed to local libraries, community centres, organisations, schools and nurseries. At some of these locations where a staff member could not be present, a sealed post box was provided for people to post their response. These boxes were collected at a later date.

Support to complete

Staff members attended a number of existing groups to ask people if they'd like to complete the survey and support them to do so in person. This was very beneficial, as some people required support and a number of respondents had questions about Childminding, prompted by the survey questions. 20 services asked for hardcopies to be delivered to their service and of the 20, 9 services requested on-site support to assist people with completion. Time was spent with all these services discussing the aim of the survey, the level of involvement of the service and building relationships with staff.

Due to the limited time for data collection it was not possible to attend all of the sessions or groups intended. However, thanks to positive relationships with session leads at different groups, many of our community partners offered to support respondents to complete the survey in the absence of a CHANGE or SCMA team member.

Reaching individuals not attending groups

A number of responses were also gathered from individuals outside of existing groups and services. In terms of the online engagement, the survey was promoted to social media users based on their geographic location within the Clyde Gateway area using Facebook's targeted advertising options. It is

expected that a number of people completed this at home, some of whom do not regularly access local groups or services in person. Some requests for information were received through the CHANGE Facebook account and these individuals were directed to the survey.

Staff also spent one full day gathering responses in person with members of the public at The Forge Shopping Centre in Parkhead. This enabled us to engage with people who potentially do not attend organised groups and gather their thoughts and opinions of Childminding.

Response

In terms of distribution and response numbers the original aim was to distribute 1,500 surveys and collect 300 completed returns. Having started data collection later than anticipated, we **distributed 962** copies of the survey and gathered 255 completed responses. However, we consider online reach to be far higher, as the total number of views of the Facebook adverts in the Clyde Gateway area was 14,661.

The following list provides a breakdown of how those survey copies were distributed:

Venue	Distributed	Returned
<i>Green Trees Nursery</i>	50	4
<i>Café Stork</i>	20	18
<i>Bridgeton Community Learning Campus P&T Drama</i>	30	21
<i>PEEK Play café</i>	10	4
<i>BFLC Parents Night</i>	6	6
<i>Forge Stand</i>	130	19
<i>Whiterose Community Hall</i>	10	9
<i>Bridgeton Library</i>	50	2
<i>Dennistoun Library</i>	50	19
<i>Church House</i>	10	8
<i>Number 8</i>	33	23
<i>Parkhead Library</i>	50	20
<i>Connect 2</i>	40	7
<i>Thenu Housing Association</i>	30	0
<i>Glasgow Women's Library</i>	12	0
<i>St Paul's Primary School</i>	10	0
<i>Calton Heritage Learning Centre</i>	10	5
Total (hardcopy)	551	165
Total (online)	411	90
Overall total	962	255

A number of additional community partners, secondary schools, primary schools and nurseries were also approached; but they did not all have the capacity to help distribute the survey. This was understandable given the relatively short window in which data was being collected. The limited time frame also meant that a lot of potential partners were contacted via email. Ideally, building in time to meet potential research partners in person in order to discuss what we are doing and why we are doing it may have helped to generate a higher response rate. This was evidently the case with partners we did manage to meet and spend time explaining the background and project aims and objectives to. In these circumstances the response rate was considerably higher.

411 surveys were distributed via Facebook advert with 90 responses received on Survey Monkey. Some of the responses on Survey Monkey may have come from the link to the survey being emailed out to contacts by various members of the project group.

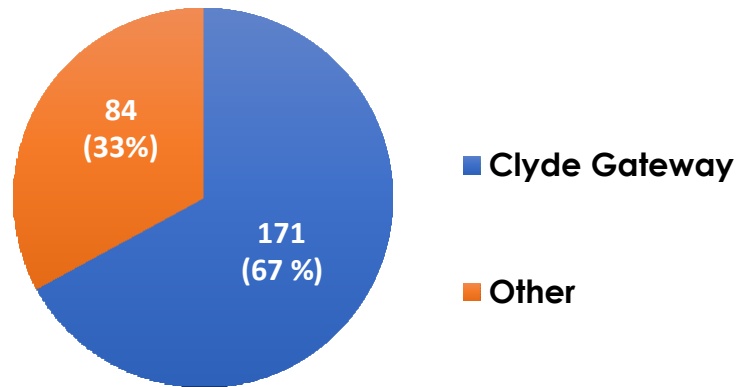
411 correlates to the number of people who have actively engaged with the survey posts (i.e. clicked for more info or on the survey itself) on the CHANGE Project's Facebook posts alone. The total number of people reached (i.e. number of times posts were viewed) by Facebook adverts promoting the online survey in the Clyde Gateway area was 14,661.

Given that a number of community members, organisations, schools and nurseries have also shared the link to the online survey via their own social media channels and email networks, we can reasonably assume that in reality both numbers would be a lot higher in terms of 'online distributions'.

Summary of responses

The information below is a summary of the responses to the 5 survey questions.

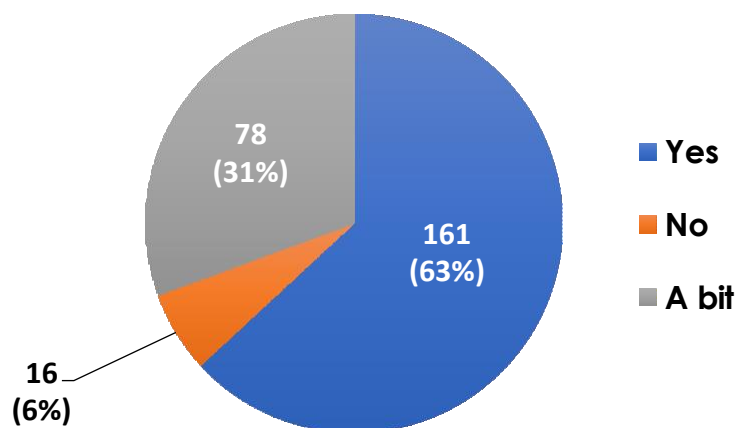
1. Which area do you live in?



Graph 1: response to question 1 – where do you live?

67% of respondents indicated to us that they lived within the Clyde Gateway area. A large proportion of those who said they live in other areas reside in surrounding communities, close to the Clyde Gateway boundary.

2. Do you know what Childminders do?



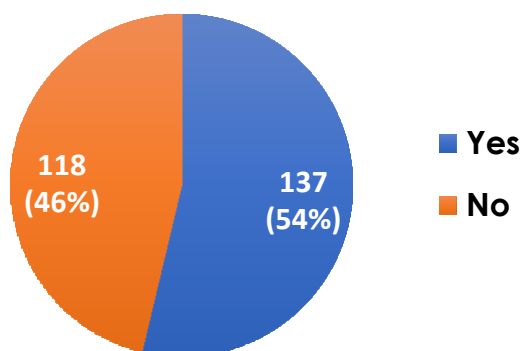
Graph 2: response to question 2- do you know what childminders do?

Most people who responded to the survey, 63%, said that they do know what Childminders do. Interestingly, 31% stated that they had some awareness of what Childminders do but weren't entirely sure. 6% of respondents said that

they did not know what Childminders do.

In meeting with people face-to-face this was quite common feedback – that people had heard of Childminding before – but had never properly looked into it and didn't have a great awareness of what it entailed to access or be a Childminder.

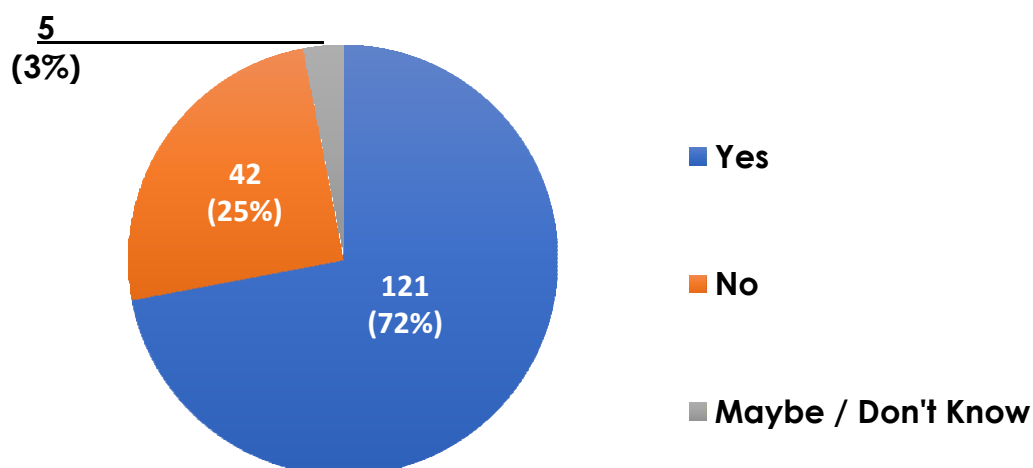
3. *Do you use/need childcare?*



Graph 3: response to question 3 – do you use or need childcare?

Just over half, 54%, of people stated that they currently use or need childcare. From looking at these responses in context to the other answers and comments, it seems to be the case that some people might have answered 'No' to this question, when in fact they do access informal childcare, but don't consider it to be so – for example family members looking after children on a regular basis. Therefore, the number of people who use or need childcare is likely higher than 54%.

4. *Would you use a registered Childminder if there was one locally?*



Graph 4: response to question 4 – would you use a childminder if there was one locally?

Of the 168 people who answered this question (it was optional, as not all respondents currently use/need childcare, but may do in future) almost three quarters, 72%, indicated that they would use a registered Childminder if there was one available locally. A quarter of respondents said that they would not and 3% said they might use a Childminder but weren't entirely sure. These people tended to say that it would depend on the circumstances at the time.

Reasons why people might not consider Childminding locally:

We asked those who replied 'No' why they would not consider using a registered Childminder. Two of the most consistent replies included parents preferring the idea of nursery and concerns about the cost/affordability of Childminding.

Those who stated a preference for a nursery place for their children said that they felt as though nursery would provide better preparation for school. Some people mentioned the structure and routine of nursery, which indicates that they felt as though Childminding would lack this. Some parents also highlighted the social aspect of nursery as something they value highly, stating that their child would interact with more children their own age, whereas in a Childminder's care there may be children with widely varying ages. Some people also stated that being at a Childminder wouldn't be social enough. Generally, these responses demonstrate that some parents think nursery is better for their child's development. Some respondents also highlighted that they felt nursery would be a safer environment for their child, as there are generally more adults around.

Those who highlighted cost as an issue were unsure exactly how much Childminding would cost but had a general feeling that it wouldn't be affordable for them. In terms of finances some people also seemed unaware that they could access financial support to contribute towards Childminding.

Other reasons why people would not consider Childminding as a childcare option included having specific needs, such as a child with a disability, meaning there was a perception that Childminding wouldn't suit. Some respondents revealed a general mistrust or suspicion of people who they did not know looking after their child in their home. Others were interested in the concept but remained generally unsure – stating that they felt as though they

didn't know enough about it and wouldn't know where to start in identifying or accessing a Childminder.

Comments from respondents:

"Am unsure of what is involved in what they do compared with nurseries. High cost is an issue."

"Have used one in past for eldest. Had to give up childminding with youngest due to costs - couldn't afford to pay to pick up from nursery so went for full-time nursery place."

"Want my child to be in a group setting. Lots of children, lots of adults = safer."

"Just build more local authority nurseries, that's what parents trust and want."

"Not a fan as it is in a home. May have their own children. Nursery is better, more space, socialise better. Develop all the skills in nursery."

"I like nursery as the children are similar ages. My experience is childminders do babies up to 10 years old. Also, childminders often have their own children in the group."

"There are not enough council nursery places for under 3-year-olds although there is such a high demand. I would prefer nursery because they learn to be part of a big group and learn to get to know different carers. A childminder is similar with being at home with mum and dad and I want my children to have a new experience."

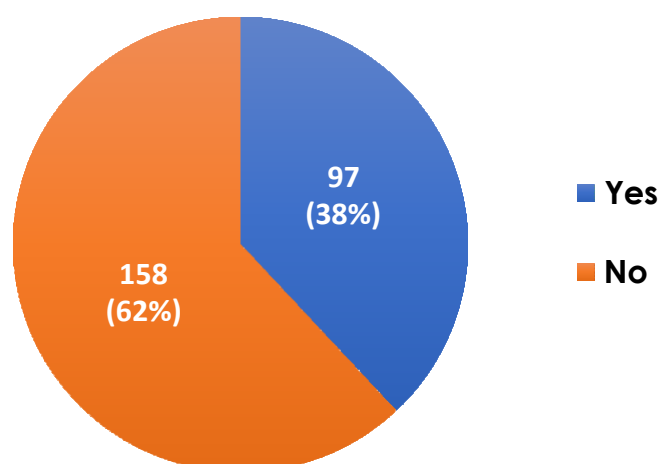
"I find its safer at nursery when there are other workers around and there are policies and supervision in place. Also, there are more children for kids to play with."

"Cannot afford childcare, so when returning to work will need to rely on family and friends watching my daughter."

"Seems really difficult to find childminders unless it's word of mouth."

"If the Childminding Association can advise the childminders to have more specific structure with activities for each day for the children as I saw few childminder houses with TV turned on all the time, which is not the care most of the parents would be happy to have."

5. *Would you consider becoming a registered Childminder if you had access to on-going support and relevant training?*



Graph 5: response to question 5 – would you consider becoming a registered childminder?

Most people, 62%, stated that they did not have an interest in becoming a Childminder or gaining access to on-going support or training. Of the **97** people who said they would be interesting in becoming a registered Childminder, **79** left contact details and asked to be contacted with further information.

Comments and questions

It was clear that some people from outside the Clyde Gateway area were travelling into and access activities that take place there. This works both ways – with Clyde Gateway residents accessing activities and services in surrounding communities, where they also engaged with this survey. With respect to Childminding we could also reasonably expect that people would travel in order to access a Childminding service.

In the space provided for comments and questions some respondents said that they would like more information about Childminding and childcare generally – which will be arranged in due course.

A number of people also wrote positive comments about Childminding and the potential for having more Childminders in the local area and the benefits this would bring:

“Childcare in the East End of Glasgow is a nightmare especially for those wanting to return to work or increase hours. There is a massive demand and not enough affordable childcare. Childminders would help to tackle this problem.”

“My mum is a childminder and through watching the care the children receive with her I would use a childminder over a nursery, definitely.”

“Childminders are angels in my opinion. Would be good to encourage more people to take on this role in the community.”

“For me more varied days would be helpful as I didn't work set days so find childcare a problem as everyone works set days”

“While a childminder isn't a requirement for us at the moment it is likely a service we will require when our son begins school next year. I was unaware of the Scottish Childminding Association and will be using their services when we decide to look for a childminder.”

“I liked homely experience and my child being in a home environment.”

“Feel comfortable with the childminder I have chosen to use for when I return to work”

“I think training for younger adults would be amazing. I have an adult child and a full time job but I would have jumped at the opportunity when my child was young.”

“We use a childminder in Renfrewshire near my place of work and she's fantastic. It was the childcare solution that definitely suited my son best. If we had another child then having a childminder near the home and for school wraparound care later would be really helpful.”

“Why childcare in Parkhead nurseries is so rarely available, we are both working parents and I had to send my kid to Gorbals private nursery, now we have two kids under 3, we struggle with childcare. We are moving away for this reason.”

Some of the comments also highlighted gaps in current childcare provision – such as support for one-off circumstances where childcare may be required and more specialised Childminding:

“Would be great if there could be a childminder in the area to help with last minute appointments - doc job centres etc.”

“There is a definite need for more additional support needs child minding.”

“More childcare for children with disabilities needed.”

And questions raised:

“how do you find out if your childminder is suitable for your child’s needs?”

The variety of opinions and circumstances highlighted in the comments provided by people within the survey responses demonstrates that families require a variety of childcare options in order to find the right childcare for them and their children’s needs. Increased Childminding provision in the area would help increase the number of childcare options available locally, in line with what families in other areas of the city currently experience.

People also stated a frustration around the lack of local authority nursery places and the difficulty involved in accessing affordable local childcare generally. Some people explicitly stated that they think building more local authority nurseries and flexible childcare options to cover evenings, weekends and school holidays should be the priority. The need for more specialised childcare for children with disabilities was highlighted by some participants, suggesting that people’s experience is that current options are limited.

Many respondents demonstrated a real sense of awareness around the benefits that Childminding offers families and individual children. However equally, there are people who shared their own lack of awareness around Childminding and what Childminders do.

Appendix 1

General Data Protection Regulations

The following statement was made on the survey:

Any data you send with this survey will be stored by Children in Scotland and shared with the Scottish Childminding Association, Jobs & Business Glasgow and Clyde Gateway. You will be contacted and asked if you would like more information or to attend an information session. If you do not, then your details will be deleted from the organisation's databases.