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Sure Start Fleetwood, Wyre

Local Evaluation Report Parents' Survey

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1. Executive Summary

- In adherence to national Sure Start guidance research staff from the Learning and Literacy Research Unit (LLRU) based at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) collected baseline data via a parent survey on behalf of Sure Start Fleetwood. This information will be used to inform programme development and future practice.
- All parents/guardians with Sure Start aged children were contacted in the Fleetwood area by letter informing them of the survey and inviting their participation via a face-to-face interview.
- Responses were received from 94 parents/guardians and a wealth of information about knowledge, attitudes and usage of childcare services, including education, social, health and other childcare services was collected.
- Although responses received from 94 parents/guardians were mainly positive, certain issues and concerns were raised by parents/guardians. Recommendations are provided suggesting possible changes that could be made by Sure Start Fleetwood to add value to existing services.
- The results of this survey also provide detailed baseline information allowing for comparison in the future.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background and Objectives

Sure Start Fleetwood is a fourth wave programme. Research staff from the Learning and Literacy Research Unit (LLRU) based at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) collected baseline data via a parent survey on behalf of Sure Start Fleetwood. This was in adherence to national Sure Start guidance to find out the views, experiences and needs of parents/guardians with regard to service provision and use. The main aims of the survey were as follows:

- To determine the services used by parents/guardians in the Fleetwood area and find out what they think of current service provision, including education, social, health and other childcare services.
- To determine, in part, whether Sure Start Fleetwood is reaching parents/guardians, their children and the wider community and providing services that they are interested in using.
- To assess local service need and highlight possible changes that could be made by Sure Start Fleetwood to add value to existing services.
- To provide detailed baseline information allowing for comparison in the future (for example, measurement of progression and improvement of service provision).

2.2 Method of evaluation

Every parent and guardian in the local area with children aged under 4 were contacted by letter, informing them of the survey and asking if they would like to take part. An incentive was offered to the first 100 to take part in a face-to-face interview. The interview was based on a questionnaire that was designed to gather quantitative and qualitative information, to gain an understanding of parents/guardians' experiences of local services, and whether parents/guardians and their children have access to the services that they need. It included questions on family details, different service use and views about different aspects of those services, such as the location and cost of different services. Parents/guardians were also asked to indicate which services they would use if they were available nearby and were given the opportunity to make any comments about the childcare services in the Fleetwood area.

Although the vast majority of individuals were interviewed via a face-to-face interview initial response rates were limited. In an attempt to increase the cohort number those parents/guardians who did not respond to the initial letters were contacted again by letter offering participation via a telephone interview or by a postal questionnaire. Different methods of participation were offered to ensure that some parents/guardians, who may find participation by face-to-face interviews difficult, (for example, those in full-time employment) could be included. A small number of respondents completed postal questionnaires and telephone interviews towards the end of data collection.

94 parents/guardians with children under 4 in the Fleetwood area completed the questionnaire. Data collection took place between 13 October 2003 and 8 December 2003.

3. Family Profiles

3.1 Ethnic Group

Q1a To which ethnic group do you belong?

The vast majority of the participating parents/guardians in the Fleetwood area with children under 4 are British with 3.2 per cent describing themselves as Indian and 1.1 per cent describing themselves as Pakistani (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number and percentage of respondents in each ethnic group

Ethnic Group	Frequency of resident population in ethnic groups	Percentage of resident population in ethnic groups
White British	90	95.7
Indian	3	3.2
Pakistani	1	1.1

Although the percentage of respondents describing themselves as White British (95.7 per cent) is more than that seen at a national level (89.6 per cent), it represents a lower proportion than that found in the Wyre district to which Fleetwood belongs (98.8). The percentage of residents describing themselves as Indian (3.2 per cent) is higher than that of the wider district (0.2 per cent) and of England as a whole (2.1 per cent). It can also be seen that the proportion of respondents describing themselves as Pakistani (1.1 per cent) is higher than the proportion of residents in Wyre as a whole (0.1 per cent), but less than that of England (2.1 per cent). This information suggests that Fleetwood is not an ethnically diverse community, with only three different ethnic groups being represented (see Table 2).

Table 2. Percentage of respondents in each ethnic group in Fleetwood, in comparison to the percentage of resident population in the same ethnic groups in Wyre and England (Census, 2001)

Ethnic Group	Percentage of resident population in ethnic groups:		
	Fleetwood	Wyre	England
White British	95.7	98.8	89.6
Indian	3.2	0.2	2.1
Pakistani	1.1	0.1	1.4
Other Ethnic Groups	-	1.3	6.7

3.2 Age of respondents

Q1b To which age category do you belong?

The majority of parents/guardians were aged between 22 and 40, with nearly half of all parents/guardians completing a questionnaire aged between 22 and 30 (46), and a further 35 parents/guardians aged between 31 and 40.

Table 3. Number and percentage of parents/guardians in each different age group

Age group of parents/guardians	Frequency of parents/guardians	Percentage of parents/guardians
18 to 21	9	9.6
22 to 30	46	48.9
31 to 40	35	37.2
41 to 50	3	3.2
51 and over	1	1.1
Total	94	100.0

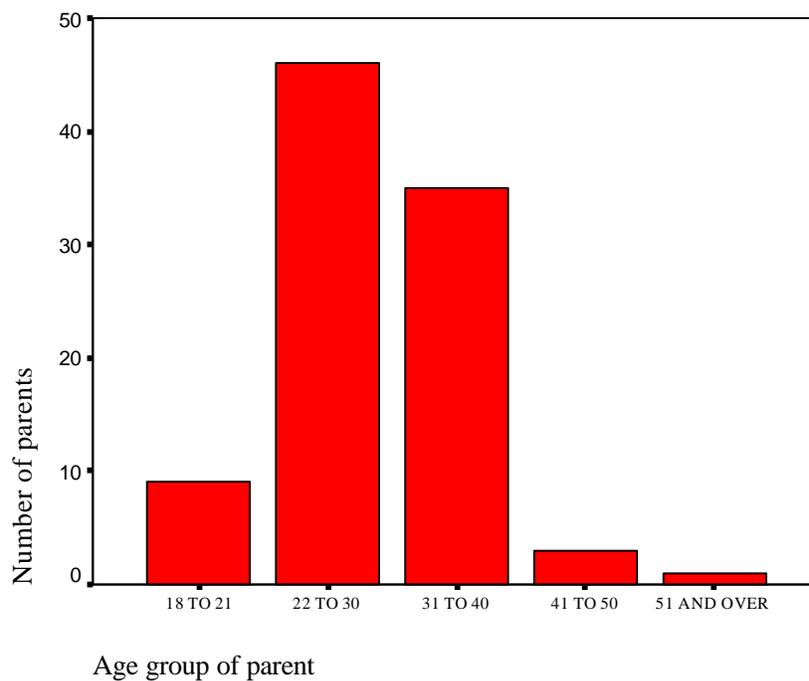


Figure 1. Number of parents/guardians in each age group

3.3 Number of children

Q1c How many children do you have altogether?

The 94 parents/guardians completing the survey had a total of 208 children. Three mothers were pregnant at the time of data collection. 29.8 per cent had one child, 39.4 per cent had two children, 17.0 per cent had three children and 10.6 per cent had four children. There was only one parent/guardian with five children, one with six children and one with seven children. The numbers of children per parent/guardian responding averaged at 2.2 children (mean).

Table 4. Number and percentage of parents/guardians/guardian with 0-7 children

Number of children	Frequency of parents/guardians	Percentage of parents/guardians
1	28	29.8
2	37	39.4
3	16	17.0
4	10	10.6
5	1	1.1
6	1	1.1
7	1	1.1
Total	94	100.0

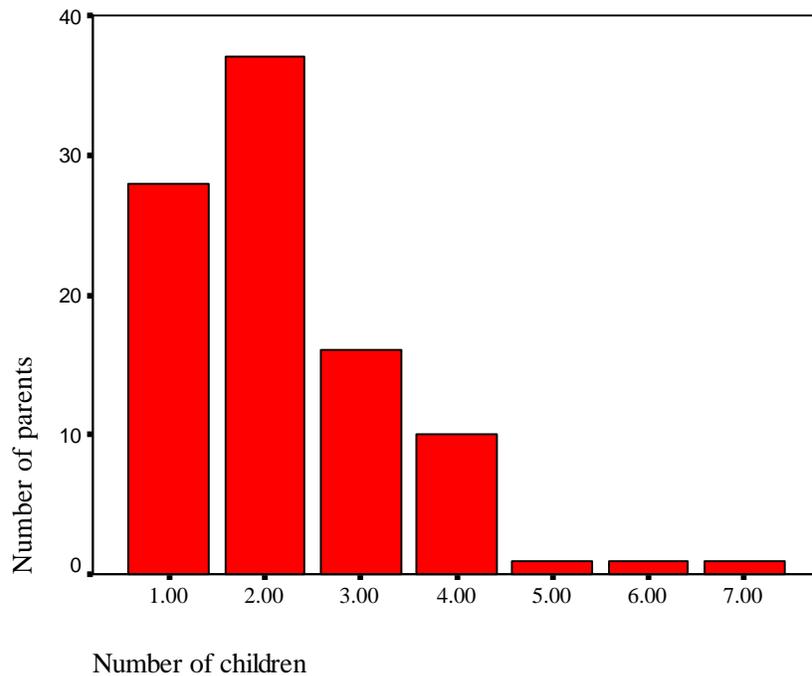


Figure 2. Number of parents/guardians with 0 to 7 children

3.4 Age and gender of children

Q1d How old are your children? Are they boys or girls?

Parents/guardians indicated the ages of their children. 41.3 per cent of children were over 4 years of age and 58.6 per cent of children were under 4 years of age.

Table 5. Number and percentage of children in each age category

Age of child	Number of children	Percentage of children
Under 1	33	15.9
Over 1 but under 2	25	12.0
Over 2 but under 3	34	16.3
Over 3 but under 4	30	14.4
Over 4	86	41.3
Total	208	100.0

47.6 per cent of children were male and 52.4 per cent were female.

3.5 Relationship of respondent to child

Q1e What is your relationship to the children who are under 4 years?

93 respondents indicated their relationship to the children under 4 years and one did not. The majority of responses came from the mothers of the children.

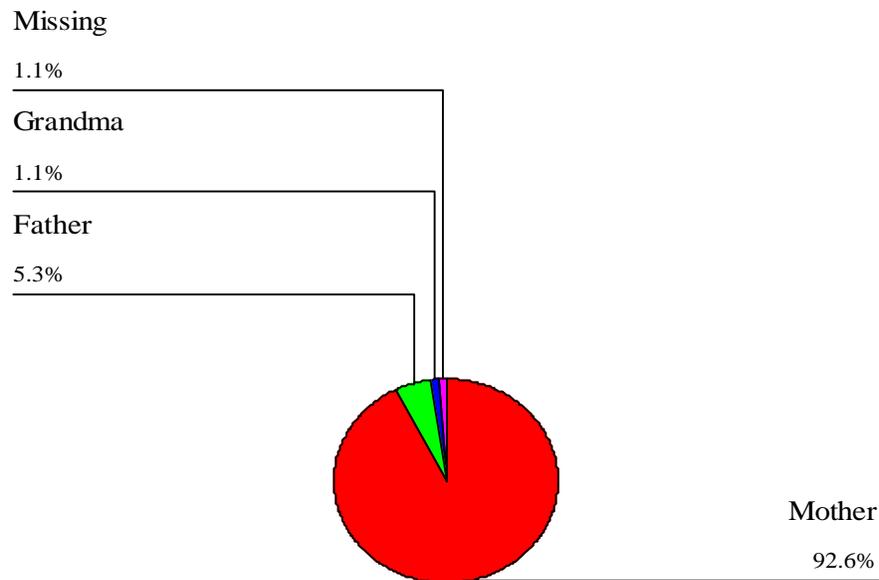


Figure 3. Relationship of respondent to child

4. Childcare services for children under 4

4.1 Nursery Education

Q2a Where do you take your child/ren under 4 and leave them for nursery education?

88 respondents indicated whether their child/ren under 4 receive nursery education or not. 6 respondents did not provide such information. 47.7 per cent of respondents who did answer this question said that their child/ren under 4 receive no form of nursery education.

Table 6. Number and percentage of children receiving different types of nursery education

Where child receives nursery education	Number of children	Percentage of children
Toddler Groups	4	4.5
Nursery Class (in primary school)	12	13.6
Playgroup/pre-school	28	31.8
Nowhere	42	47.7
Other	2	2.3
Total	88	100.0

Parents/guardians who responded 'other' were asked to specify the nursery education received by their child. One respondent indicated that a 'child minder' is responsible for their child under 4's nursery education and another indicated that 'family' provide nursery education.

4.2 Parent and child activities

Q2b Where do you go with your child/ren under 4 and stay with them?

90 respondents responded to this question (4 did not). 37 (41.1 per cent) of those who did respond to this question indicated that they do not go anywhere with their child/ren under 4 and stay with them. 53 (58.9 per cent) parents/guardians responded that they take their child/ren under 4 to at least one activity where they stay with them. 25 parents/guardians take their child/ren under 4 to a further activity where they stay with them. Another 5 parents/guardians take their child/ren under 4 to a third activity where they stay with them. Table 7 indicates where parents/guardians go with their child/ren under 4 and stay with them.

Table 7. Places that parents/guardians go and stay with their children

Activity	Number of parents attending with their children
Drop in/Toddler Group	13
Family Centre	3
Creepy Crawlies	25
Post-natal Group	4
Mum and Baby Swimming	2
Other	39

32 respondents said that they take their child/ren under 4 and stay with them to activities that were not mentioned in the list provided on the questionnaire (indicated as 'other'). Table 8 shows where else parents/guardians take their child/ren under 4 and stay with them.

Table 8. Other places that parents/guardians go and stay with their children (as indicated by the respondent)

Activity	Number of parents attending with their children
Activity Centres	1
Family Planning	1
Library	3
Milton Community Centre	1
Milton Street- Mother and Toddler Group	1
Milton Street Crèche	1
St. Wulston's- Mother and Toddler Group	1
St. Nicholas' Play Group	1
Privately organised mother and baby session	1
Salvation Army	1
Sharkeys- Freeport	12
Tumble Tots	2
Wacky Warehouse	1
Sure Start Groups	5
Fleetwood Leisure Centre	1
Swimming	6

4.3 Borrowing of books and/or toys

Q2c Do you borrow books and/or toys for your child under 4? If yes, where do you go to borrow the books and/or toys?

One respondent did not respond to this question. Out of those who did respond, 30 (32.3 per cent) indicated that they borrow books and/or toys for their children under 4; whilst 63 respondents (67.7 per cent) said they do not.

Out of the 30 respondents that indicated they borrow books and/or toys for their children under 4, 27 (90 per cent) of those borrowed them from the library. 3 respondents (10 per cent) indicated that they borrowed books and/or toys for their children from other sources: 1 from a child development centre and 2 from libraries at schools and nurseries.

4.4 Playing Outside

Q2d Do your children under 4 play outside? If yes, where do they play?

93 parents/guardians responded to this question (one did not). 77.4 per cent (72) of parents who did reply to this question indicated that their child/ren under 4 play outside and 22.6 (21) per cent indicated that their under 4 year olds do not play outside.

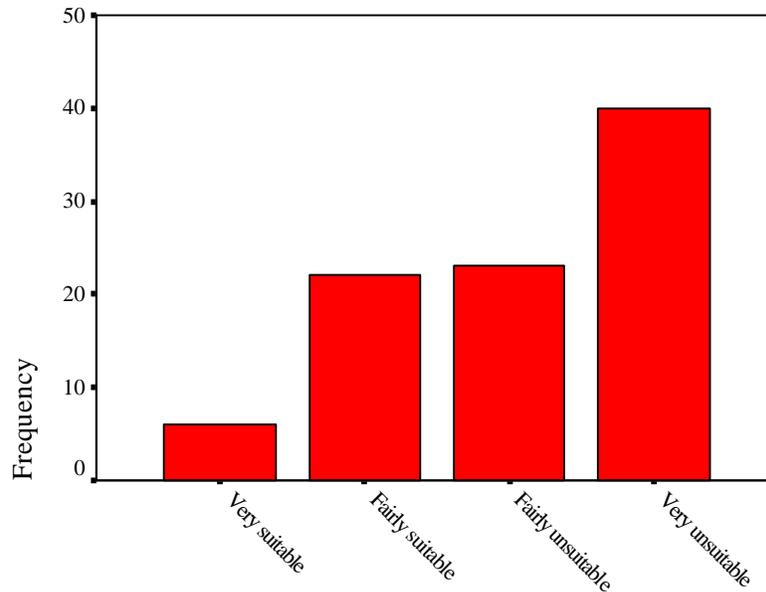
Table 9. Outside play areas used by children under 4 as indicated by respondents

Places where child/ren under 4 plays	Number of parents indicating where their child/ren under 4 plays
Garden/Yard	58
Family's gardens	3
Park	27
Playground	14
Street/Estate	10
Beach	9
Promenade/Town Centre	1

4.5 Suitability of outside play areas

Q2e How suitable are the outside play areas for your child in the area?

91 respondents rated the suitability of the outside play areas in the area as shown in Figure 4. The majority of respondents find the outside play areas 'very unsuitable' for their child/ren under 4. 6 respondents (6.6 per cent) rated the outside play areas as 'very suitable', 22 (24.2 per cent) rated them as 'fairly suitable', 23 (25.3 per cent) rated them as 'fairly unsuitable' and 40 respondents (44.0 per cent) rated them as 'very unsuitable'. A total of 69.3 per cent of respondents feel that the outside play areas are unsuitable for children under 4.



How suitable are the outside play spaces

Figure 4. Rating of suitability of outside play areas

4.6 Comments about the suitability of outside play areas

With respect to the general suitability of outside play areas for under 4 year olds, parents and guardians expressed concerns about the state of repair and level of cleanliness of the local parks and play areas. Some of the comments made were as follows:

- The park fence is broken and there is graffiti and broken glass everywhere.
- The park is rough, there is broken glass everywhere.
- The park has broken glass in it and the rides are vandalised.
- The outside play areas are unsafe- there is glass everywhere and children cannot walk anywhere.
- The parks are not in good standard, they are not well maintained and there is dog mess.

Some respondents also commented on the number of teenagers dominating parks, expressing that they feel intimidated in play areas. Some parents/guardians expressed a need for space and facilities to entertain older children. Selections of those comments are as follows:

- There is a new park at Milton Street but the older children are intimidating, went to paddling pool at the beach but other children became abusive.
- Older children have trashed and broken bottles by the seaside.
- There is broken glass on The Mount and it is vandalised and there are youths hanging around.

- Catering for older children- there are no seesaws. The park was set on fire and smashed up.
- There is nothing for older children to do. Need a youth centre because there are too many older kids hanging around.
- There are no parks that are suitable for older ones.

In addition to this, a concern was raised by some parents/guardians about the level of drug use in the local play areas and a lack of security to combat this problem. Some individuals expressed anxiety about their children coming into contact with left over needles.

- Outside play areas should be locked at night and looked after more. Child fell down slide nearly onto needle.
- The parks are dirty and drug users are there.
- There are drugs in the area, e.g. syringes in park and phone boxes. I found a needle on the doorstep.
- There are syringes, glass and condoms in the park.
- Fear of needles in Fleetwood Park.

Other respondents commented on the general lack of suitable play areas for young children. A few examples of these comments are as follows:

- Don't know of any nice areas- they are all rough and not suitable.
- There aren't any suitable play areas.
- There should be more parks and play areas.
- There is nowhere to play.
- Need a clean, safe outdoor play area.
- Need more safe, clean and inviting parks for young children with lighting.
- There are only a few parks and not really for their age.
- Could do with more things for younger children- okay for the four-year old.
- Play areas are unsafe and for older children.
- There are more play areas for older children (Milton Street).
- Need play areas for toddlers, it's a nightmare in Fleetwood, I have to take my child to Stanley Park.
- The park is not even suitable for older children and I cannot let the children play in the street because of cars and other children. It is not a nice area.
- Why is the survey only for children under 4? Because my other daughter is nearly 6 and she, as many others, would also benefit from other finance...there is nowhere for my 6 year old to go out and play that is safe and clean.
- Parks should have a warden.
- Need CCTV on parks and more maintenance.

4.7 Reasons indicated for:

- Child/ren under 4 not receiving nursery education
- Non attendance to activities where the parents/guardians can stay with their child/ren under 4
- Parents/guardians not borrowing books and/or toys for their child/ren under 4

Q2f If you have answered NO to any of the above questions, please look at the Yellow Card A and indicate as many reasons as apply.

Parents/guardians were asked to specify reasons for not using certain services (see above). Some respondents indicated more than one reason for not using certain services, and some did not specify any reason.

Table 10. Number of respondents giving different reasons for not using services

Specified Reason	Number of respondents indicating each reason
I haven't felt the need	37
I don't know about the services	18
I can't afford to pay for them	8
I don't speak English well enough	-
I don't feel safe leaving the house	2
My child is too young	29
I have too many children to get out	5
My child has disabilities which makes it difficult to get around	1
The services do not fit my children's routine	6
I tried the service but they were not good enough, e.g. cliquey, people smoked, not supervised.	5
Other	11

5 respondents indicated further what they meant by 'other' (6 respondents did not):

- Services are all too far away.
- Distance.
- Child's father does not want them using services.
- There is nothing around here worth going to.
- There is nothing suitable for the age of my children.

4.8 Employment and education/training

Q3a Do you or your partner work?

52.1 per cent (49) of respondents responded that they do work, whilst 46.8 per cent (44) indicated that they do not. One respondent did not indicate whether they work or not.

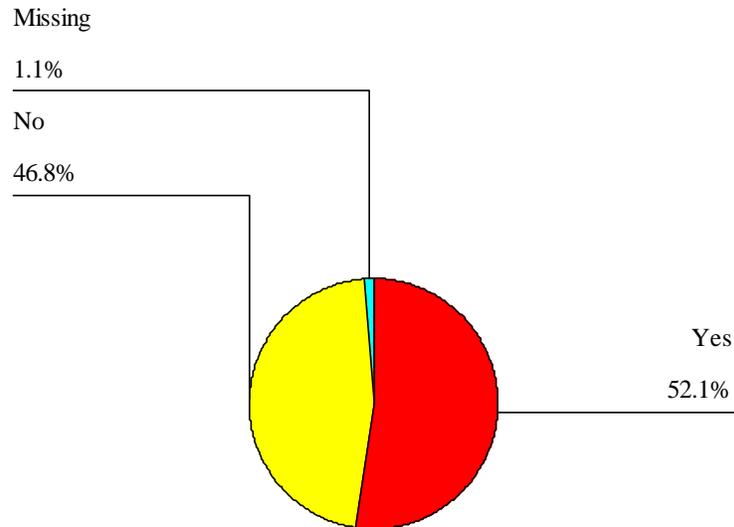


Figure 5. Employment levels of respondents

66.0 per cent (62) of respondents indicated that their partner works, whilst 16.0 per cent (15) indicated that their partner does not work. Seventeen respondents did not reply to this question about whether their partner works or not. In some cases this was because they did not have a partner and in other cases respondents simply did not respond.

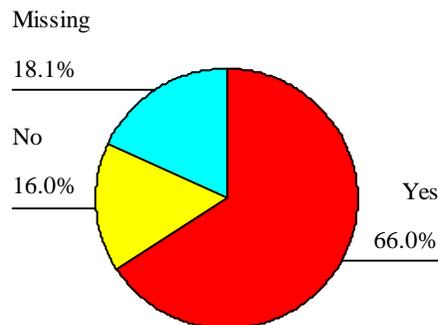


Figure 6. Levels of employment of respondent's partner

Do you or your partner go to any kind of education or training?

Whilst 78.7 per cent (74) of respondents said that they are not taking part in any training or education, 20.2 per cent (19) indicated that they are. One respondent did not indicate whether they are undertaking any education or training.

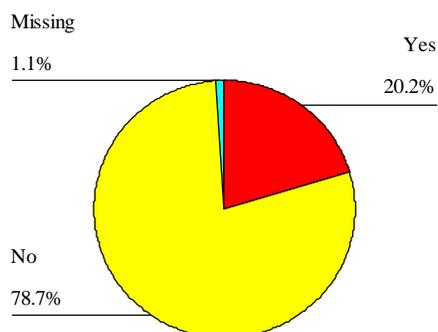


Figure 7. Percentage of respondents undertaking education or training

3.2 per cent (3) of respondents indicated that their partner is undertaking education or training, whilst 78.7 per cent (74) indicated that their partner is not. Seventeen respondents did not reply to this question. In some cases this was because they did not have a partner and in other cases respondents simply did not respond.

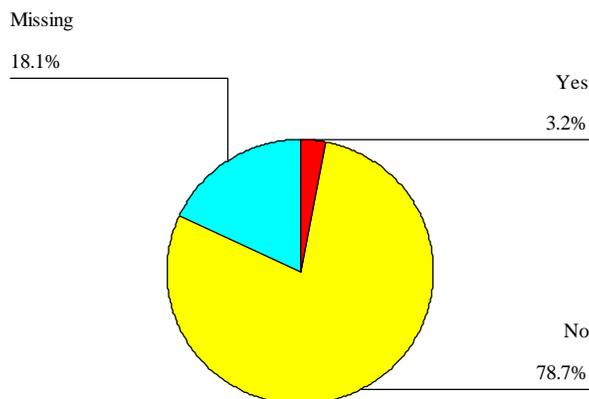


Figure 8. Percentage of respondent's partners undertaking education or training

4.9 Childcare whilst working or in education/training

If YES to either, where do you get childcare in order to do these things?

64 parents/guardians indicated where they get childcare in order to go out to work or undertake education or training. Some of the respondents (17) indicated that they use more than one type of childcare, in order so they can go out to work or education/training. As shown in Table 11 parents/guardians rely most upon relatives, with nurseries being the next most used type of childcare.

Table 11. Types of childcare used whilst in employment or education

Type of childcare	Number of respondents using each service
Friends or neighbours	2
Nursery	21
Pre-school playgroup	2
Childminder	5
Relatives	38

Other types of childcare used whilst parents/guardians are at work or in education/training include the following:

- Sure Start crèche (3)
- After School Club (1)
- College provide nursery (1)

One parent indicated that they work from home in order to look after the children. Many parents indicated that they look after their children themselves, by sharing the childcare between them, with one parent looking after the children whilst the other works and vice versa.

4.10 Services used now and in the past

Q3b Which of the following services have you ever used for any of your children now or in the past?

Table 12 shows the services used by parent/guardians at the time of interview. 65 respondents indicated that they are using at least one of the listed services or indicated a service not listed. 28 parents/guardians are using at least 2 different services, 8 are using at least 3 different services and 1 respondent is using 5 different services altogether. Creepy crawlies is the most used service, followed by Toddle Inn Day Nursery and Fleetwood Library (story time).

Table 12. Number of parents using different services at time of interview

Name of Service	Number of parents/guardians using the service
Alphabet House Day Nursery	5
Toddle Inn Day Nursery	10
Fleetwood Charles Saer Nursery	-
Fleetwood Chaucer Nursery	3
Flakefleet Nursery	6
St Wulston's Nursery	7
St Edmund's Nursery	-
Rossall Prep School	-
Busy Bee's Playgroup	5
Larkholme Pre-school	1
St Mary's Playgroup	1
The Anchorage toddler group	2
Tea Toast and Toddlers Sure Start Fleetwood	4
Creepy Crawlies	23
Crèche Facilities Sure Start Fleetwood	9
St Wulston's Green Hut- parent and toddler group	1
Sparklers- parent and toddler group	4
Anchorage toy library	-
Fleetwood Library- story time	10
Chatsworth Library- story time	-

Some parents/guardians offered information about other services they were currently using that were not in the provided list. Table 13 shows these services. It is important to note that as some respondents did not specify services used outside of the list, it is not a true reflection of the use of that service. For example, when parents/guardians were asked earlier in the questionnaire to specify where they took their children and stayed with them, 12 respondents said that they went to Sharkeys, Freeport, with their children, however when asked which of the listed services were used and some offered information about further services used only 4 said that they used Sharkeys.

Table 13. Number of parents/guardians using different services not in the provided list

Name of Service	Number of parents/guardians using the service
Baby Massage and Breast Feeding Support at Fleetwood Hospital	1
Beanstalks Nursery	1
Bright Sparks- formerly St Nicholas's	1
Christian Centre, Blackpool	1
Fleetwood Library	3
Milton Street Jigsaw Club/Toddler group	1
Robins Nursery- Garstang	1
Sacred Heart Pre-school	1
Sharkeys, Freeport	4

Table 14 shows the services used by parent/guardians in the past. 58 respondents indicated that they had used at least one of the listed services in the past or indicated a service not listed. 30 parents/guardians had used at least 2 different services in the past, 13 had used at least 3 different services, 3 indicated at least 4 different services they had used in the past, 2 respondents indicated use of 5 different services in the past and 1 indicated use of 6 altogether. Creepy crawlies was again the most used service by parents/guardians in the past, followed by Fleetwood Library (story time) and Alphabet House Day Nursery.

Table 14. Number of parents using different services in the past

Name of Service	Number of parents/guardians using the service in the past
Alphabet House Day Nursery	8
Toddle Inn Day Nursery	6
Fleetwood Charles Saer Nursery	2
Fleetwood Chaucer Nursery	7
Flakefleet Nursery	5
St Wulston's Nursery	5
Rossall Prep School	1
Busy Bee's Playgroup	5
Larkholme Pre-school	2
St Mary's Playgroup	2
The Anchorage toddler group	6
Tea Toast and Toddlers Sure Start Fleetwood	3
Creepy Crawlies	15
Crèche Facilities Sure Start Fleetwood	4
St Wulston's Green Hut- parent and toddler group	2
Sparklers- parent and toddler group	3
Anchorage toy library	2
Fleetwood Library- story time	10
Chatsworth Library- story time	3

Some parents/guardians offered information about other services they had used in the past that were not in the provided list. Table 15 shows these services.

Table 15. Number of parents/guardians that used other services in the past

Name of Service	Number of parents/guardians using the service
Nutkins Nursery	1
Bright Sparks	1
St Nicholas's Church Hall Nursery	1
St Nicholas's Church- Mother and Baby Group	1
St Nicholas's Play Group	1
Mersey Road Mother and Toddler group	1
Mersey Road Nursery	1
Twin/Triplet club at Anchorage Centre	1
Anchorage Library	1
Sure Start- general facilities	1
Fleetwood Library	1

4.11 Location of services

Q3c In general, how convenient are the locations of the services you use?

88 parents/guardians rated how convenient they find the locations of services in general. Figure 9 shows that the majority of parents find the locations of services very convenient, with 81.9 per cent (72 respondents) reporting that services are either 'very convenient' or 'fairly convenient', whilst only 18.2 per cent (16 respondents) reported that they find service location 'fairly inconvenient' or 'very inconvenient'.

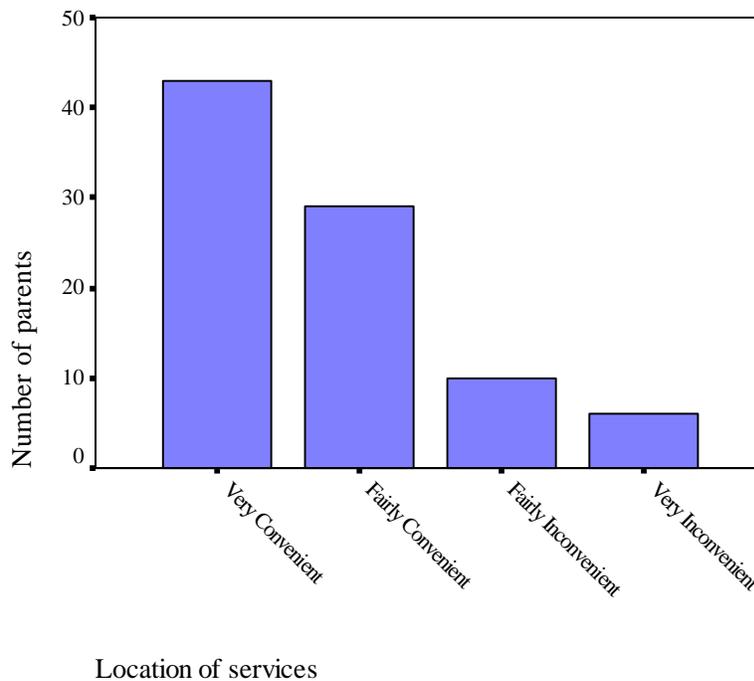


Figure 9. Ratings of service location

In some cases, parents/guardians commented upon the location of services. Some described the length of time taken to reach services, with some parents/guardians talking of a 40-minute walk whilst others described a 10-minute walk. Others explained how, because they had a car, the locations of services were 'all in driving distance' and thus rated the convenience of service location as higher than if they had been without a car. One respondent explained that people in council areas are too far from services and another described how childcare services are in 'concentrated areas' and should be spread out more.

Some respondents talked of a lack of services in the area, resulting in them travelling to services out of the area. Some of those comments were as follows:

- There is nothing in the centre of town
- There are no full time vacancies in Fleetwood
- There is no available childminder locally so have to travel far

Three parents/guardians commented upon the location of Sure Start Fleetwood:

- Sure Start is quite close
- Sure Start could be nearer
- Although Sure Start is a 15-20 minute walk it is too far in winter

Two parents/guardians also said that The Anchorage Centre is ‘on the other side of town’ and ‘a bus ride away’. In addition to this, one mother commented upon the location of Alphabet House Nursery and expressed concern about it being on a busy main road.

4.12 Cost of services

Q3d In general, how reasonable is the cost of the services you use?

85 parents/guardians rated how reasonable they find the cost of services in general. Figure 10 shows that the vast majority of parents find the cost of services reasonable, with 87.1 per cent (74 respondents) reporting that services are either ‘very reasonable’ or ‘fairly reasonable’ in price, whilst only 13.0 per cent (11 respondents) reported that they find the cost of services ‘fairly unreasonable’ or ‘very unreasonable’.

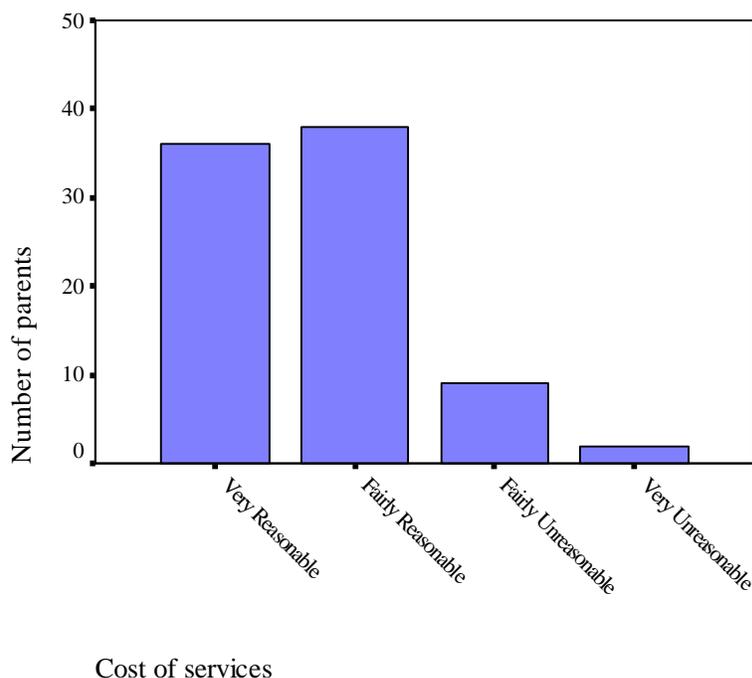


Figure 10. Ratings of cost of services

Parents/guardians were given the opportunity to comment upon the cost of services and a range of comments were received. Some described how they have found that most services are now free or of little charge. Others explained that they find the services expensive:

- Ten pounds per session is too expensive and there are no discounts.
- Private nursery too expensive.
- Did consider nursery but it was too expensive.
- Services are all really expensive, there should be cheaper options.
- Costs too much for full time day care, but would like to return to work.
- If childcare was cheaper I would go back to work during the day. As it is I have to work in the evenings when my husband can look after the children. This is very tiring and unsocial and does not help my relationship with my husband.

A point was raised about having to pay for full time places when only working part time because of session times and work hours clashes. A few respondents explained how they find that vouchers and children’s tax credit provides valuable financial support.

4.13 Opening times of services

Q3e In general, how suitable are the opening times of the services you use?

84 parents/guardians rated how suitable they find the opening times of services in general. Figure 11 shows that the vast majority of parents find the opening times of services suitable, with 88.1 per cent (74 respondents) reporting that services have either ‘very suitable’ or ‘fairly suitable’ opening times, with only 11.9 per cent (10 respondents) reporting that they find the opening times of services ‘fairly unsuitable’ or ‘very unsuitable’.

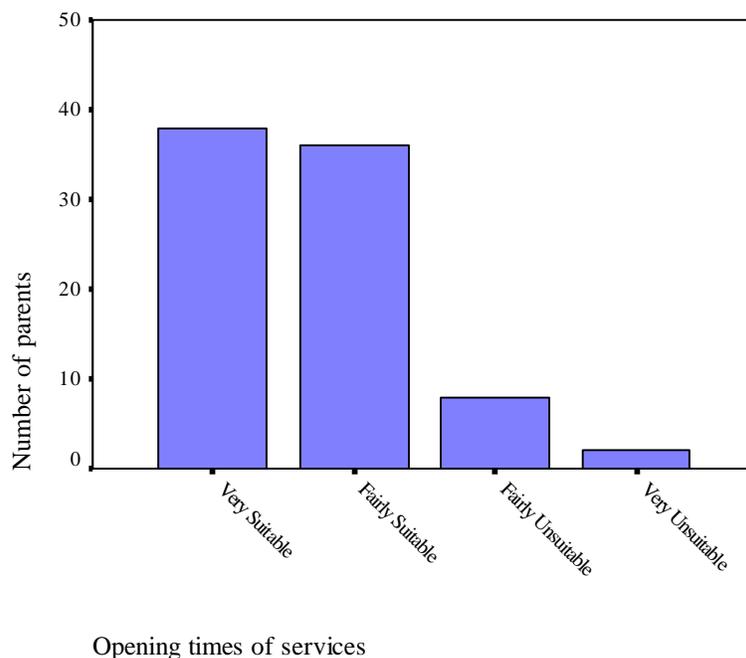


Figure 11. Ratings of opening times of services

Many parents/guardians commented that they experience clashes between opening times of child care services and work hours, leading to them having to leave work early, not work at all or resulting in their children 'missing out'.

Some parents/guardians expressed a need for services to be provided later in the day, as an alternative or in addition to morning sessions. Some of the comments were as follows:

- By the time I have got two children ready we have missed the morning sessions. They should be open later.
- Most opening hours are in the morning, we need afternoon sessions.
- There should be more afternoon groups.
- The nursery is full in the afternoon, but afternoon sessions would be more suitable.

Comments were also made about opening times of services/sessions not being long enough. In addition to this, parents/guardians expressed varying needs for more services to be available at different times. Some said they required more services to be available during the week, others specified a need for services over the weekend, whilst others described a lack of services during holiday periods.

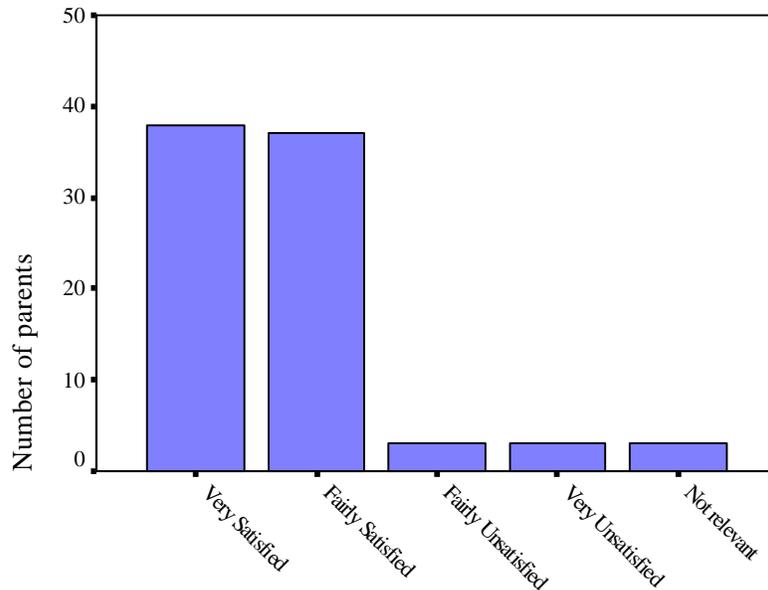
Two parents/guardians commented upon the opening times of Sure Start Fleetwood:

- Sure Start is very good
- Tea and Toast at Sure Start is very early (10am)

4.14 Opportunities for learning in services

Q3f In general, how satisfied are you with the opportunities for your child to learn in the services you use?

84 parents/guardians rated how satisfied they are with the opportunities for their children to learn in the services that they use. Figure 12 shows that the vast majority of parents/guardians find the opportunities for their children to learn in the services they use satisfactory, with 89.2 per cent (75 respondents) reporting that services are either 'very satisfactory' or 'fairly satisfactory', with only 7.2 per cent (6 respondents) reporting that they find the opportunities for their child to learn in the services they use 'fairly unsatisfactory' or 'very unsatisfactory'. 3.6 per cent (3) of parents/guardians felt that this question was not applicable to them as their child is too young.



Opportunities for children to learn in services

Figure 12. Ratings of learning opportunities in services

Many comments emphasised the satisfaction of parents/guardians with the opportunities for their children to learn in the services they use. A selection of those comments are as follows:

- I was provided a booklet of information about the learning activities when my child first attended Toddle Inn.
- I am very satisfied with what my little girl benefits from Busy Bee's; it is a very good pre-school.
- My child has been moved up classes and learning a lot.
- There is a different room for each age group.
- My child learns quickly through play.

Two parents/guardians commented upon the learning opportunities at Sure Start Fleetwood:

- My child learns more at Sure Start.
- Sure Start was good for learning opportunities when I used it in the past.

A small number of comments were also made by parents/guardians as to the lack of learning opportunities for their young children, with some services being for play only.

4.15 Opportunities for playing in services

Q3g In general, how satisfied are you with the opportunities for your child to play in the services you use?

85 parents/guardians rated how satisfied they are with the opportunities for their children to play in the services that they use. Figure 13 shows that the vast majority of parents/guardians find the opportunities for their children to play in the services they use satisfactory, with 96.4 per cent (82 respondents) reporting that services are either 'very satisfactory' or 'fairly satisfactory'. 2.4 per cent (2 respondents) reported that they find the opportunities for their child to play in the services they use 'fairly unsatisfactory' and only 1.2 per cent (1 respondent) reported that playing opportunities are 'very unsatisfactory'.

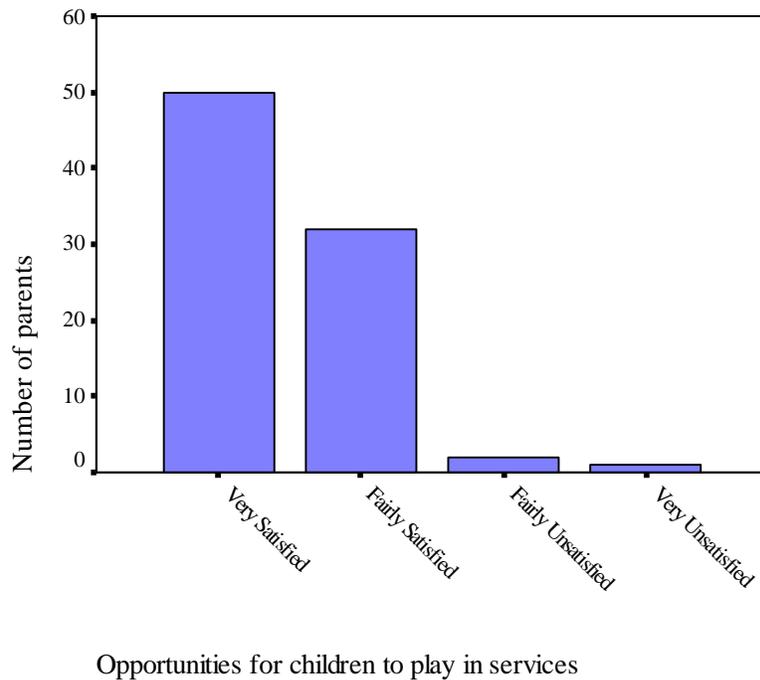


Figure 13. Ratings of play opportunities in services

Comments were generally positive, with parents/guardians reporting how well their child/ren play and the enjoyment experienced through playing.

4.16 Friendliness of services

In general, how friendly and welcoming do you find the services you use?

85 parents/guardians rated how friendly and welcoming they find services they use. Figure 14 shows that the vast majority of parents/guardians find the services they use friendly, with 98.9 per cent (84 respondents) reporting that services are either 'very friendly and welcoming' or 'fairly friendly and welcoming', with only 1.2 per cent (1 respondents) reporting that they find services 'fairly unfriendly and unwelcoming'. No respondents reported to finding services 'very unfriendly and unwelcoming'.

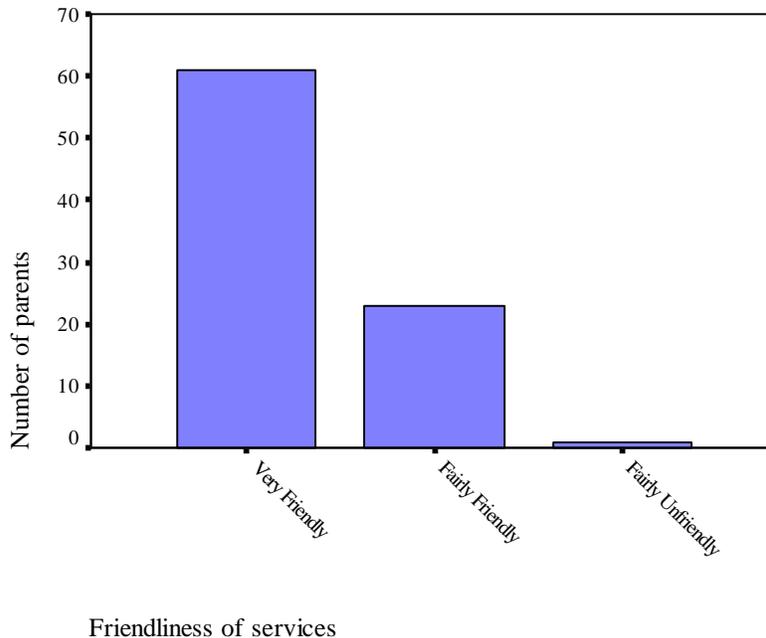


Figure 14. Ratings of friendliness in services

Comments were again generally positive, with parents/guardians praising different professionals. Two respondents did comment that they find services cliquey and uncomfortable to use.

4.17 State of repair and level of cleanliness of services

Q3i How good or bad do you find the state of repair and level of cleanliness of the buildings you use for your child?

87 parents/guardians rated how good or bad they find the state of repair and level of cleanliness of the buildings they use for their children. Figure 15 shows that the vast

majority of parents/guardians find the services in a good condition, with 93.1 per cent (81 respondents) reporting that the state of repair and level of cleanliness of services is either 'very good' or 'fairly good', with only 6.9 per cent (6 respondents) reporting that they find the condition and cleanliness of services 'fairly bad' or 'very bad'.

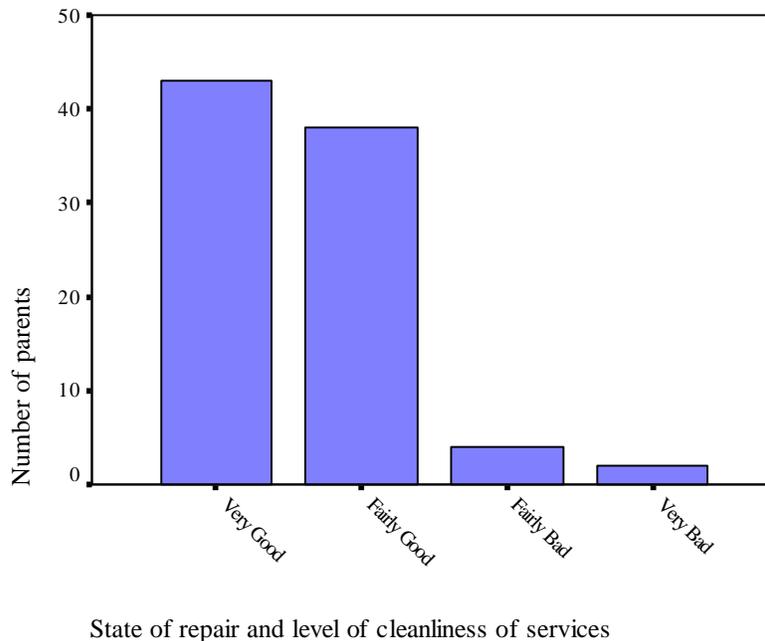


Figure 15. Ratings of state of repair and cleanliness in services

Although some parents/guardians praised some of the services for a good state of repair and level of cleanliness (for example, Sure Start and The Anchorage Centre), many parents/guardians described dirty, old toys and play areas in certain services, such as Creepy Crawlies, Mersey Road nursery, St Wulston's nursery and the local swimming baths.

5. Health Services

5.1 Registration with a GP service

Q4a Are you registered with a GP/doctor?

98.9 per cent of respondents (93) said that they are registered with a GP/doctor, with 1.1 per cent (1 respondent) responding that they are not registered with a GP/doctor.

5.2 Location of GP service

Q4b Is the GP/Doctor/Health Centre within pram-pushing distance?

81.9 per cent of respondents (77) indicated that the GP/Doctor/Health Centre is within pram-pushing distance, whereas 18.1 per cent (17) said that it is not. Judgments about what distance was a 'walking distance' varied greatly between parents/guardians.

5.3 Toys and Books in GP/Doctor's waiting areas

Q4c Are there any toys or books for child/ren to use in the GP waiting area?

84.0 percent of respondents (79) reported that there are books and toys in the waiting areas of GP services, whilst 16.0 per cent (15) said there are no books or toys for their child/ren to use in the GP waiting area. Some parents/guardians commented that although there are toys and books they are either in a poor condition or in short supply.

5.4 Support and advice sought when child is ill

Q4d Who are you most likely to ask for advice if you child under 4 is ill?

93 respondents indicated who they would ask for advice if their child under 4 is ill (1 did not). Some parents/guardians wanted to specify more than one person for whom they would approach if their child is ill, whereas others indicated who they are *most* likely to ask for advice. It was felt by various parents/guardians that the severity and/or type of the illness would influence who they would ask for advice. Table 16 illustrates parents/guardians responses. 44 respondents indicated a second source of advice for when their child is ill, 13 specified three people they would seek advice from when their child is ill, and only 1 individual indicated 4 sources of advice.

Table 16. Number of parents/guardians reporting use of each source of advice when their child under 4 is ill

Source of advice	Number of parents indicating who they would approach for advice
GP/Doctor	64
Health Visitor	39
Hospital	-
NHS Direct	16
Family	27
Friends or Neighbours	3
Pharmacy	1

5.5 Support and advice sought when child is not sleeping/eating

Q4e Who are you most likely to ask for advice if you child under 4 is not sleeping or eating or has other behavioural difficulties?

90 respondents indicated who they would ask for advice if their child under 4 is not sleeping or eating (4 did not). Again, some parents/guardians wanted to specify more than one person for whom they would approach if their child is not sleeping, whereas others indicated who they are *most* likely to ask for advice. 27 respondents indicated a second source of advice for when their child is not sleeping or eating and 7 specified three people they would seek advice from when their child is not sleeping or eating. Table 17 illustrates parents/guardians responses.

Table 17. Number of parents/guardians reporting use of each source of advice when their child under 4 is not sleeping or eating

Source of advice	Number of parents indicating who they would approach for advice
Community Support Worker	3
GP/Doctor	21
Family	22
Health Visitor	59
Friends	9
Hospital Out Patients	-
Other	10

10 parents/guardians indicated sources of advice that were not in the provided list. One person said they did not know who they would ask, 3 others said that they would use their own initiative and knowledge and another said they would seek information in self-help books. Other specified sources of advice were as follows:

- Fleetwood Health Centre (1)
- Midwife (1)
- NHS Direct (1)
- Sure Start Fleetwood (1)

5.6 Special Tests

Q4f Do you have to take your child under 4 anywhere for special tests or treatment?

Q4g If Yes, what kind of special health service do you use for you child under 4?

Q4h Where do you get this special health service for your child under 4?

91 parents/guardians responded to this question (3 did not). 16.5 per cent of respondents (15) indicated that their child/ren under 4 have special tests of some kind. Table 18 shows the kind of special health service used by parents/guardians. Some parents use more than one special health service for their child under 4. 3 parents/guardians use two different special health services and 1 respondent uses five different special health services for their child under 4.

Table 18. Type of special health services used by parents/guardians

Type of special health service	Number of parents/guardians using each service
Speech and Language Therapy	6
Psychotherapy	-
Hospital Consultant	7
Child Psychology	1
Dietician	1
Physiotherapist	2
Occupational Therapist	1
Eye Specialist	2
Audiologist	1
Specialist	1

Parents/guardians were also asked to specify where they received the special health service. Table 19 illustrates their responses. The majority of parents/guardians receive the special health service at the hospital.

Table 19. Where parents/guardians receive the special health service

Place where special health service received	Number of parents/guardians receiving special health service
GP practice	1
Hospital	13
Child Development Centre	1

5.7 Dental Care

Q4i Where do you get your child under 4's teeth seen to?

90 parents/guardians responded to this question. Of these responding parents 70 per cent (63 respondents) said they take their child/ren under 4 to the dentist. Only 1.1 per cent (1 respondent) said their child/ren under 4 sees the school dentist and 1.1 per cent (1 respondent) take their child/ren under 4 to the GP practice for dental care. 3.3 per cent (3) of respondents reported that they take their child/ren under 4 to the hospital to get their teeth seen to (see Table 20).

Table 20. Number and percentage of parents/guardians taking their child/ren under 4 to different places for dental care

Place where dental care received	Frequency of parents/guardians	Percentage of parents/guardians
Dentist	63	70.0
School Dentist	1	1.1
GP practice	1	1.1
Hospital	3	3.3

24.5 per cent (22 respondents) said that they do not take their child/ren under 4 anywhere to get their teeth seen to. 7.8 per cent said this was because their child/ren under 4 is too young.

A number of respondents also expressed a need for local NHS dentist services:

- I have to travel out of the area for the dentist because the local one is private.
- I would like me and my daughter to go to the dentists, but the nearest dentist is in Cleveleys and when you have a child who is a nightmare when she goes anywhere it is hard.
- There should be more dentists, as cannot get in anywhere.

5.8 Smoking Behaviours

Q4j Do you smoke? Does your partner smoke?

92 parents/guardians responded to the first of these questions (2 did not). 77 respondents indicated whether their partner smokes or not. In some cases non-response was because respondents do not have a partner, but in other cases it was because respondents chose not to respond to the question.

35.9 per cent of those respondents (33) answering the first question indicated that they do smoke, whilst 64.1 per cent of respondents (59) indicated that they do not smoke.

44.2 per cent of respondents (34) indicated that their partners smoke, whilst 55.8 per cent (43) of partners were reported as being non-smokers.

5.9 Breastfeeding

Q4k (a) Were any of your children breastfed?

92 parents/guardians answered this question. 57.6 per cent (53) reported that their children were breastfed, whilst 42.4 per cent (39) said their children were not breastfed.

Q4k (b) Was there support for breastfeeding?

88 parents/guardians answered this question. 73.9 per cent of respondents (65) indicated that there was support for breastfeeding, whilst 25.0 per cent of respondents (22) reported that there was no support. One respondent said they did not know if they received support or not.

Many parents/guardians commented on the breast-feeding support they received. A number of parents/guardians said that the advice and support was there for them if they had needed it and that they just had to ask. Other parents/guardians reported to feeling pressured to breastfeed by professionals. In addition to this, some parents/guardians reported that they received no advice or support at all and led to them seeking advice elsewhere, from family, friends and self-help information. One parent said there is no support for mothers who are bottle feeding.

Q4k (c) Was there any advice or support for weaning?

84 parents/guardians answered this question. 57.1 per cent of respondents (48) reported that they did get advice and support for weaning, whilst 42.9 per cent of parents/guardians (36) reported that they received no support or advice. Some of the comments made were as follows:

- Advice and support was available but I didn't need it.
- I just got on with it.
- Advice and support was scarce- had to buy a book.
- There was very little advice and support and the hospital was very unhelpful.
- Would have liked more support with my second child- it was as though, because I had done it once, I would need less support the second time.
- I did it with the support of my family.
- We sorted ourselves out.

6. Satisfaction with Health Services

Parents/guardians were asked to rate different aspects of GP and hospital services. In some cases respondent's GP practices are also their Health Centres and one rating was recorded under the GP heading, whereas other respondents gave two independent ratings for GP and Health Centre. In addition to this, some respondents gave ratings for both Fleetwood Hospital and Blackpool Victoria Hospital, whereas others only gave one rating, which was, unless otherwise indicated, taken to be a rating for the local hospital of Fleetwood.

6.1 Satisfaction with location of health services

Q5a How convenient do you find the location of the health services you use?

Parents/guardians were asked to rate how convenient they find the locations of different health services. Table 21 shows the number and percentage of parents/guardians who gave different ratings of convenience of different health services. The majority of parents/guardians find the location of their GP service and/or Health Centre either 'very convenient' or 'fairly convenient'. With respect to ratings of convenience of the location of Fleetwood Hospital there was an even distribution of ratings, moving towards 'very convenient'. The majority of respondents find the location of Blackpool Hospital (58.8%) and specialist services (43.8%) 'very inconvenient'.

Table 21. Percentage (and number) of parents/guardians giving different ratings of convenience

Level of convenience	GP	Health Centre	Fleetwood Hospital	Blackpool Hospital	Specialist Services
Very convenient	59.8% (55)	52.8% (19)	34.1% (28)	-	12.5% (2)
Fairly convenient	32.6% (30)	44.4% (16)	29.3% (24)	7.8% (4)	18.8% (3)
Fairly inconvenient	7.6% (7)	2.8% (1)	15.9% (13)	31.4% (16)	25.0% (4)
Very inconvenient	-	-	18.3% (15)	58.8% (30)	43.8% (7)
Don't Know	-	-	2.4% (2)	2% (1)	-

6.2 Satisfaction with state of repair and level of cleanliness of health services

Q5b How satisfied are you with the state of repair and level of cleanliness of the health services you use?

Parents/guardians were asked to rate how satisfied they are with the condition of different health services. Table 22 shows the number and percentage of

parents/guardians who gave different ratings of satisfaction of cleanliness and state of repair of different health services. All parents/guardians rated the state of repair and level of cleanliness of their GP service and/or Health Centre either ‘very satisfactory’ or ‘fairly satisfactory’. The majority of parents/guardians rated the hospitals as either ‘very satisfactory’ or ‘fairly satisfactory’, although 14.3 % (7) said that they had been ‘very unsatisfied’ with the state of repair and level of cleanliness of Blackpool Victoria Hospital. 88.2 per cent rated that they are ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with the specialist services they use in terms of state of repair and level of cleanliness.

Table 22. Percentage (and number) of parents/guardians giving different ratings of satisfaction

Level of satisfaction	GP	Health Centre	Fleetwood Hospital	Blackpool Hospital	Specialist Services
Very satisfied	65.2% (60)	58.3% (21)	51.9% (42)	42.9% (21)	64.7% (11)
Fairly satisfied	34.8% (32)	36.1% (13)	37.0% (30)	26.5% (13)	23.5% (4)
Fairly unsatisfied	-	-	4.9% (4)	8.2% (4)	5.9% (1)
Very unsatisfied	-	-	1.2% (1)	14.3% (7)	5.9% (1)
Don't Know	-	5.6% (2)	4.9% (4)	8.2% (4)	-

6.3 Suitability of opening times of health services

Q5c How suitable are the opening times of the health services you use?

Parents/guardians were asked to rate how suitable they find the opening times of different health services. Table 23 shows the number and percentage of parents/guardians who gave different ratings of suitability of the opening times of different health services. The majority of parents/guardians rated the opening times of their GP service (89.3%) and/or Health Centre (86.1%) as either ‘very suitable’ or ‘fairly suitable’. In addition to this, the majority of parents/guardians rated the hospitals as having either ‘very suitable’ or ‘fairly suitable’ opening times, although 16.7% said that they did not know the opening times of Fleetwood Hospital and 14.6% reported to not knowing the opening times of Blackpool Victoria Hospital and thus felt unable to give a rating of suitability. All users of specialist services rated the opening hours as either ‘very suitable’ or ‘fairly suitable’.

Table 23. Percentage (and number) of parents/guardians giving different ratings of convenience

Level of suitability	GP	Health Centre	Fleetwood Hospital	Blackpool Hospital	Specialist Services
Very Suitable	57.4% (54)	50.0 % (18)	43.6% (34)	58.3% (28)	58.3% (7)
Fairly suitable	31.9% (30)	36.1% (13)	30.8% (24)	22.9% (11)	41.7% (5)
Fairly unsuitable	10.6% (10)	2.8% (1)	6.4% (5)	4.2% (2)	-
Very unsuitable	-	2.8% (1)	2.6% (2)	-	-
Don't Know	-		16.7% (13)	14.6% (7)	-

6.4 Satisfaction with the waiting times of health services

Q5d How satisfied are you with the waiting times of the health services you use?

Parents/guardians were asked to rate how satisfied they are with the waiting times of different health services. Table 24 shows the number and percentage of parents/guardians who gave different ratings of satisfaction with waiting times of different health services. Although the majority of parents/guardians rated the waiting times of their GP service (81.9%) as either 'very satisfactory' or 'fairly satisfactory', a wider spread of ratings can be seen with respect to satisfaction with waiting times of Health Centres, with 25.7 per cent of parents/guardians indicating that they are either 'fairly unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with the waiting times at their Health Centre.

In addition to this, although the majority of parents/guardians (58.7 per cent) rated that they are either 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the waiting times of Fleetwood Hospital, 17.3 per cent indicated that they are 'fairly unsatisfied' with waiting times at Fleetwood Hospital. Ratings of satisfaction about the waiting times at Blackpool Victoria Hospital are spread over the four ratings, with 42.0 per cent rating the waiting times as either 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' and 40.0 per cent rating them as either 'fairly unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied'. 17.3 per cent said that they did not have enough experience of the waiting times at Fleetwood Hospital and 18.0 per cent reported to not knowing the lengths of waiting times at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and thus felt unable to give a rating of satisfaction. Although the majority of parents/guardians rated the waiting times of their specialist services as either 'very satisfactory' or 'fairly satisfactory' (85.7 per cent), a total of 35.7 per cent reported that they are 'fairly unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with the waiting times of their specialist service, with 21.4 per cent being 'very unsatisfied' with the waiting times.

Table 24. Percentage (and number) of parents/guardians giving different ratings of satisfaction

Level of satisfaction	GP	Health Centre	Fleetwood Hospital	Blackpool Hospital	Specialist Services
Very satisfied	36.6% (34)	31.4% (11)	28.0% (21)	10.0% (5)	21.4% (3)
Fairly satisfied	45.3% (42)	34.3% (12)	30.7% (23)	32.0% (16)	64.3% (6)
Fairly unsatisfied	9.7% (9)	14.3% (5)	17.3% (13)	24.0% (12)	14.3% (2)
Very unsatisfied	8.6% (8)	11.4% (4)	6.7% (5)	16.0% (8)	21.4% (3)
Don't Know	-	8.6% (3)	17.3% (13)	18.0% (9)	-

6.5 Ratings of friendliness of health services

Q5e How friendly and welcoming do you find the health services you use?

Parents/guardians were asked to rate how friendly and welcoming they find different health services. Table 25 shows the number and percentage of parents/guardians who gave different ratings to different health services. The majority of respondents rated GP services (88.2 per cent), Health Centres (88.9 per cent) and Fleetwood Hospital (88.5 per cent) as either 'very friendly and welcoming' or 'fairly friendly and welcoming', however 11.9 per cent of respondents did report to finding their GP service either 'fairly unfriendly and unwelcoming' or 'very unfriendly and unwelcoming', in comparison to 5.6 per cent of respondents rating their Health Centre negatively and 3.9 per cent rating Fleetwood hospital in a similar way. In addition to this, although the majority of respondents rated Blackpool Victoria Hospital as either 'very friendly and welcoming' or 'fairly friendly and welcoming' (68.0 per cent), 20.0 per cent rated them as either 'fairly unfriendly and unwelcoming' or 'very unfriendly and unwelcoming', with 14.0 per cent of respondents choosing the latter. Only 6.3 per cent of parents/guardians rated their specialist service as 'fairly unfriendly and unwelcoming'.

Table 25. Percentage (and number) of parents/guardians reporting different levels of friendliness

Level of friendliness	GP	Health Centre	Fleetwood Hospital	Blackpool Hospital	Specialist Services
Very Friendly	39.8% (37)	41.7% (15)	50.0% (39)	28.0% (14)	50.0% (8)
Fairly friendly	48.4% (45)	47.2% (17)	38.5% (30)	40.0% (20)	43.8% (7)
Fairly unfriendly	9.7% (9)	2.8% (1)	2.6% (2)	6.0% (3)	6.3% (1)
Very unfriendly	2.2% (2)	2.8% (1)	1.3% (1)	14.0% (7)	-
Don't Know	-	5.6% (2)	7.7% (6)	12.0% (6)	-

6.6 Ratings of the quality of advice received from health services

Q5f How good is the quality of advice that you get from the health services you use?

Parents/guardians were asked to rate the quality of advice received from different health services. Table 26 shows the number and percentage of parents/guardians who gave different ratings of quality of advice of different health services. The majority of parents/guardians in general rated the quality of advice received from services as either 'very good' or 'fairly good', with more parents/guardians rating the quality of advice of GP services as 'fairly poor' or 'very poor' than any other health service.

Table 26. Percentage (and number) of parents/guardians reporting different ratings of the quality of advice received

Quality of Advice	GP	Health Centre	Fleetwood Hospital	Blackpool Hospital	Specialist Services
Very Good	42.6% (40)	40.0% (14)	39.2% (29)	40.8% (20)	46.7% (7)
Fairly Good	47.9% (45)	48.6% (17)	43.2% (32)	34.7% (17)	40.0% (6)
Fairly Poor	4.3% (4)	2.9% (1)	1.4% (1)	2.0% (1)	-
Very Poor	5.3% (5)	-	2.7% (2)	6.1% (3)	6.7% (1)
Don't Know	-	8.6% (3)	13.5% (10)	16.3% (8)	6.7% (1)

7. Main Support

7.1 Sources of support

Q6a Could you say who gives you most support (both practical and emotional) with your children?

A total of 94 respondents indicated who gives them most support with their children. As with other questions, some parents/guardians wanted to specify more than one person who provides them with both practical and emotional support with their children, whereas others indicated who gives them the *most* support. Table 27 illustrates parents/guardians responses. 40 respondents indicated a second source of support, 18 specified three people who provide them with the most support and 5 respondents specified four people who provide them with the most support. 3 respondents indicated five sources of support and 2 people indicated six people.

Table 27. Number of parents/guardians reporting different sources of support

Source of support	Number of parents indicating who they receive the most support from
Child's Mother/Father	57
Partner who is not child's parent	3
Own Mother	33
Own Father	12
Partner's Mother	10
Partner's Father	4
Friends	14
Health Visitor	8
No-one	3
Other	16

Parents/guardians who responded 'other' were asked to specify the support received most with their children. Their responses were as follows:

- Social Worker (1).
- All the family (1).
- Sister (2).
- Sister-in-law (1).
- I find my work colleagues very supportive (1).
- Sure Start (2).

8. Services Wanted

8.1 Services that would be used if available nearby

Q7a Which of the following services, that you do not use already, do you think you would use, if it were available nearby?

A total of 94 respondents indicated a range of services they would use if available nearby. Table 28 illustrates parents/guardians responses.

Table 28. Number of parents/guardians indicating different services they would use if available nearby

Type of service	Number of parents indicating which services they would use
<i>Advice and Information about:</i>	
Childcare services	53
Welfare benefits	26
Advice on housing issues	18
Managing children's behaviour (e.g. sleeping or eating)	47
Home visiting	28
<i>Childcare & Services</i>	
Day nursery	36
Crèche or playgroup	43
Parent and toddler group	39
Toy library	32
A safe play area	65
Loan of safety equipment	30
Mobile library	26
<i>Health</i>	
A children's dentist	49
Saturday morning GP services	56
Saturday morning family planning clinics	25
Saturday morning baby/immunisation clinics	35
Well women clinics run by women	31
Well man clinics	18
Clinics to help give up smoking	18
The same midwives to see you before and after the baby is born	46
More local services for children with special needs	27
<i>Training</i>	
Parenting	29
Child development	34
First aid	55
Healthy eating	39
<i>Any other service?</i>	14

This information can also be seen in Figure 16. Some services appear to be needed by parents/guardians in the Fleetwood area more than others. 56.4 per cent of respondents indicated they would like advice and information about childcare services and 50.0 per cent of respondents said they would like advice and information about managing children’s behaviour (for example, sleeping or eating). 69.1 per cent of respondents indicated they would use a safe play area if it were available nearby. A children’s dentist appealed to 52.1 per cent of respondents and 59.6 per cent said they would use a Saturday morning GP service if it were available in the local area. In addition to this, 58.5 per cent of respondents also said they would go to First Aid training if it were available nearby.

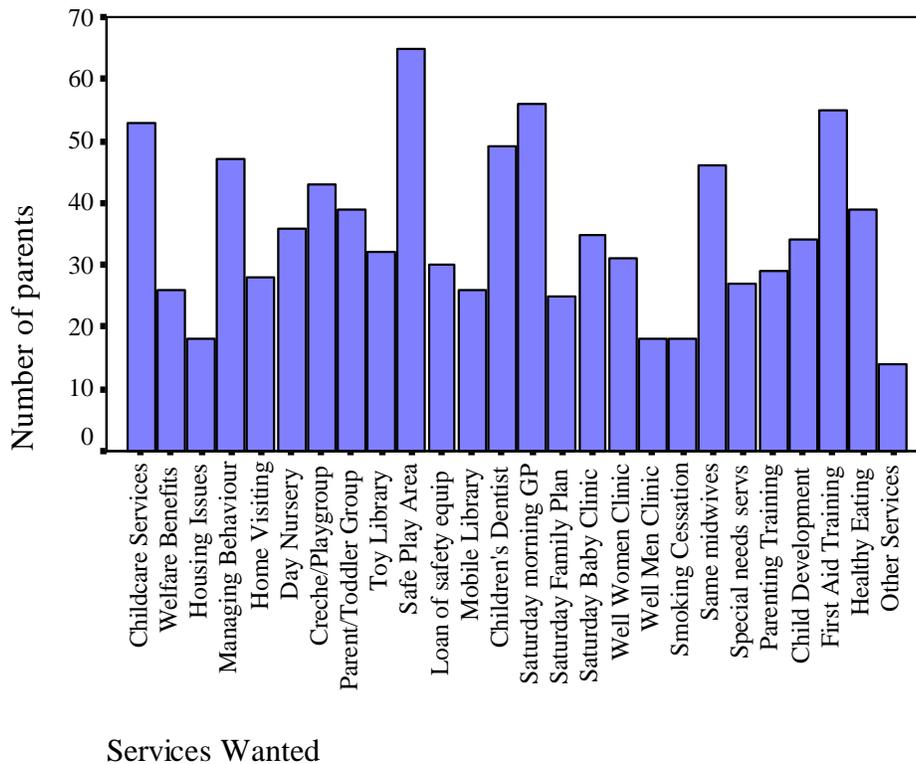


Figure 16. Number of parents indicating different services they would use if available

Parents/guardians who responded ‘any other service’ were asked to specify the services they would use if available nearby. Their responses were as follows:

- Advice and information about breastfeeding and groups (1).
- Advice and information about bottle feeding (1).
- Advice and information about babysitting (1).

- Advice and information about re-training to go back to work (1).
- After-school clubs (1).
- Accident and Emergency service at Fleetwood Hospital (1).
- Home immunisation service (1).
- More and continued contact with Health Visitor (2).
- Areas to breastfeed/feed and changing facilities in town centre (2).
- Childcare facilities whilst training (1).
- A home babysitting service, so parents can take a second job if required (1).
- Services orientated towards fathers (1).

Parents/guardians were also asked to specify any barriers preventing them from accessing services. Responses were as follows:

- As a single parent it is hard to get to places in the morning. By the time I am sorted out it is the afternoon and there are not many afternoon services (1).
- Cost of childcare services (1).
- Distance and travel limitations (2).
- Every service is for parents who stay at home and not for working parents (1).
- Work constraints (1).
- Times of shifts vary (1).
- Having six children and juggling school times and work (1).
- The health of my middle child. I cannot get into most places with a double pram (1).
- A lack of communication, information or advertising (2).

8.2 Three most important services to parents/guardians

Q7b Of the services you've mentioned, which three would be most important to you?

A total of 81 respondents chose three of the services they had indicated in the last question as the most important to them. Table 29 illustrates parents/guardians responses.

Table 29. Number of parents/guardians indicating different services they would use if available nearby

Type of service	Number of parents indicating which services they would use
<i>Advice and Information about:</i>	
Childcare services	17
Welfare benefits	4
Advice on housing issues	3
Managing children's behaviour (e.g. sleeping or eating)	18
Home visiting	5
<i>Childcare & Services</i>	
Day nursery	12
Crèche or playgroup	15
Parent and toddler group	8
Toy library	2
A safe play area	38
Loan of safety equipment	3
Mobile library	5
<i>Health</i>	
A children's dentist	15
Saturday morning GP services	21
Saturday morning family planning clinics	4
Saturday morning baby/immunisation clinics	4
Well women clinics run by women	5
Well man clinics	1
Clinics to help give up smoking	3
The same midwives to see you before and after the baby is born	8
More local services for children with special needs	4
<i>Training</i>	
Parenting	5
Child development	6
First aid	20
Healthy eating	4
<i>Any other service?</i>	5

This information can also be seen in Figure 17. When respondents indicated the three services that are most important to them the same services still appear to be needed the most. 21.0 per cent of respondents indicated they would like advice and information about childcare services and 22.2 per cent of respondents said they would like advice and information about managing children’s behaviour (for example, sleeping or eating). Nearly half of all respondents (46.9 per cent) indicated that a safe play area is most important to them. A children’s dentist is one of three most important services to 18.5 per cent of respondents and 25.9 per cent said a Saturday morning GP service is also important. 24.7 per cent of respondents also said they would go to First Aid training if it were available nearby. In addition to these services, crèches or playgroups were indicated by 18.5 per cent of respondents as one of the most important services to them.

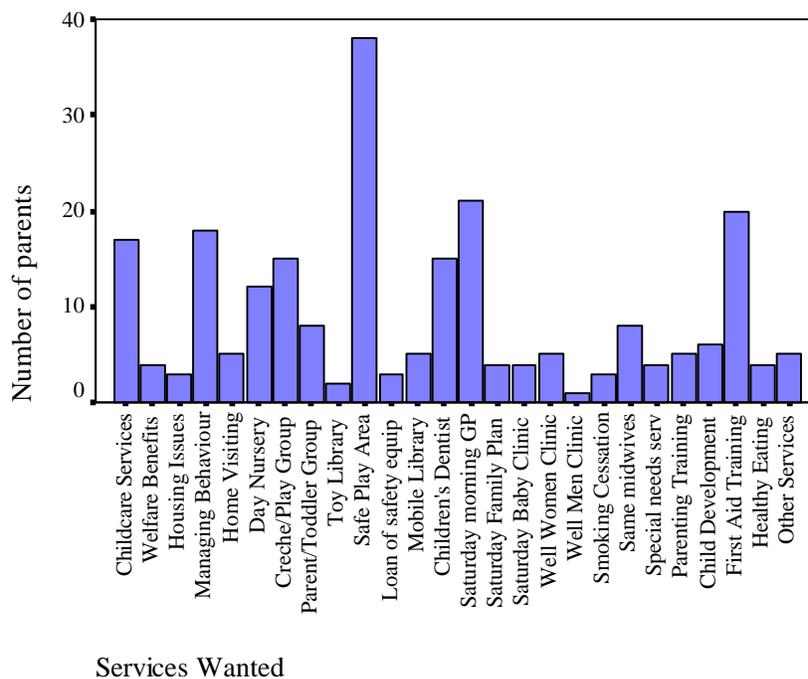


Figure 17. Number of parents indicating different services they would use if available

5 parents/guardians indicated the ‘other service’ they specified in the previous question as most important to them. Those responses are follows:

- Accident and Emergency service at Fleetwood Hospital (1).
- Home immunisation service (1).
- Areas to breastfeed/feed and changing facilities in town centre (1).
- Childcare facilities whilst training (1).
- A home babysitting service, so parents can take a second job if required (1).

9. Main Themes in General Comments

Parents/guardians were given the opportunity to make any comments about child care services in the Fleetwood area. Some main themes could be drawn from their comments.

9.1 Accident and Emergency Service

Several parents/guardians expressed concerns at a lack of emergency services for their children in the Fleetwood area. It is felt by some respondents that Fleetwood Hospital needs to provide more services for the whole community. Blackpool Victoria Hospital was explained to be the nearest accident and emergency service and for some parents/guardians, particularly those with a number of children and no transport, accessing this service can be very difficult. Some of those comments are as follows:

- There is no A and E service in Fleetwood, so you have to go to Blackpool and the ambulances are far away.
- We need an A and E in Fleetwood.
- Need an A and E service in Fleetwood. All the hospital services are in Blackpool.
- Need to take two buses to get to Blackpool Hospital, it is horrific.
- Need more services at Fleetwood Hospital, for example, a minor trauma unit or at least a better transport service to Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

One parent pointed out that there is no out-of-hours doctor and so if a child falls ill during the night they have to get a taxi to Blackpool with all their children.

In addition to this, one parent expressed a need for a maternity unit, reporting that people worry about getting to hospital in time.

9.2 Other Health Services

A number of parents/guardians expressed a wish for health visitors to visit children and their parents in the home more regularly and on a longer term basis than they currently do. A selection of those comments is as follows:

- Have to contact the health visitor. I would prefer if they made checks occasionally.
- Health visitors should visit more than twice in the home.
- Would have liked more contact from the health visitor.
- There should be more home visiting. Once the children get past three months no-one comes near.
- More support in the home needed.

Some parents/guardians also indicated that they would appreciate impartial health advice and information, for example about the MMR vaccinations.

9.3 Advertising

Another current theme in comments made by parents/guardians was that of a lack of advertising of childcare services. Several respondents said they would use more services if they knew about them. Some of those comments are as follows:

- More advice and advertising should be given to parents about available services. I would use more services if I knew about them.
- We need some sort of booklet about where childcare facilities are available.
- Services should be advertised more, for example story-time at Fleetwood Library.
- Need more advertisements, perhaps through a child information centre where you can go and find out all about the available services.
- There are a lot of play groups but they need to be advertised more. I only found out through word of mouth.
- Services should be advertised more, you don't hear about things.
- Should advertise services in the newspaper.
- There is quite a range of services but it is getting people to use them. Young mums may not know about services.
- Should provide information to lone parents who may not be able to get out and find out about services.
- Could have a befriending scheme to combat isolation and loneliness and to help first time users approach services.
- My child is nearly two now and I have received no information about childcare groups etc., until recently when I received some 'Sure Start' information.

9.4 General lack of services and service need

When given the opportunity to add any general comments many parents described a general lack of services and expressed different childcare needs. The selection of following comments reflects some of the main points made by parents:

- There should be more play groups for under 3 year olds where you can leave children.
- It is very difficult to find places for under 4 year olds where you can go with your children or leave them.
- Need services that cater for all ages, so that you can take both children to the same service.
- There is nowhere that both children can go together where you can both leave them or stay with them.
- There should be more services for younger children, there is only Freeport.
- We need more nurseries and playgrounds for under 4 year olds.
- There is a lack of nurseries, they are shutting down The Anchorage and all the nurseries are full. I only know of two good nurseries.
- There is no room in the local nurseries or only part time services.
- There is no one to look after the children during the day.

- I struggle to find anything to do with my children in Fleetwood because there is no variety of services.
- There are no mother/toddler groups.
- Need more playgroups.
- Need more choice in childcare services.
- Need an out-of-school play scheme for after school and in the holidays for school age children.

Some parents/guardians explained the problems and barriers they face in accessing different childcare services when they are trying to work and/or undertake education or training:

- I took a job in the past but had to give it up because I couldn't get a childminder.
- There are no weekend services. I am having to consider leaving my job because of a lack of services. I am a single parent so there is no one else.
- Although there are numerous services available, parents who work full time often have limited access.
- I feel more information and support should be given to families that do need to work.
- There should be more support for those in full time jobs.
- I am not impressed with the services for toddlers in Fleetwood, it's like you are penalised for wanting to work.
- I had to give up my A' Levels because the college had no crèche.

9.5 Services for Men

Two respondents expressed a lack of male-orientated services:

- I feel quite cut off from the numerous female orientated services.
- Should encourage dads to use services.

9.6 Sure Start

There were also some general comments made about Sure Start Fleetwood. Very few respondents mentioned Sure Start as a service that they use. The overall impression by the researchers was that the few parents/guardians who are aware of Sure Start expressed that they do not use the service, either because they have heard it is very busy, they do not think they are in the catchment area or that Sure Start is a Social Services facility only. Some of those comments are as follows:

- Sure Start is only applicable to certain areas and so many miss out.
- There is a play area, but it belongs to Sure Start and I don't think I'm in a Sure Start area.
- There should be more services for all children- Sure Start is only for Social Services.
- It is a shame that Sure Start is only for children under 4.

- I am pleased with what Sure Start is doing.
- Sure Start was excellent with my baby.
- I have done a lot of training with Sure Start.
- I went to a Punch and Judy show on the beach by Sure Start which was great.
- I only heard about Sure Start recently, through word of mouth, but heard it's a very good organisation.
- Have just heard about Sure Start, as I got a leaflet through the door. I would go but I've heard it is very busy and do not want my daughter crowded.

9.7 Other comments

There was a general feeling by some parents that Fleetwood 'loses out' to Blackpool. A number of parents/guardians described how they feel there is not much investment into the area and funding is always prioritised to Blackpool.

A number of parents/guardians also described Fleetwood as 'not a child-friendly area'.

10. Main Conclusions

1. The responses received through this questionnaire provide a wealth of information about the knowledge, attitudes and usage of childcare services by parents/guardians in the Fleetwood area.
2. A large percentage of respondents (47.7 per cent) indicated that their child/ren under 4 do not receive nursery education. In addition to this, 41.1 per cent of respondents do not go anywhere with their child/ren under 4 and stay with them. The majority of respondents said they had not felt the need to use services or that their child/ren are too young.
3. A specific issue of concern raised by many parents/guardians was that of a lack of suitable outside play areas, with parents expressing a need for a safe and secure space for young children to play. A total of 69.3 per cent of respondents feel that the outside play areas are 'unsuitable' or 'very unsuitable' for children under 4.
4. 52.1 per cent of respondents work and 20.2 per cent are in education/training of some kind. From general comments, it was clear that a number of parents/guardians are unable to find appropriate care for their children whilst out at work or in education/training.
5. Although the large majority of parents/guardians rated the location of services as 'very convenient' or 'fairly convenient', some parents/guardians feel that services are too far out and condensed into one area.
6. Although the large majority of parents/guardians rated the cost of services as 'very reasonable' or 'fairly reasonable' (81.9 per cent), some parents/guardians expressed in comments that they have experienced services to be very expensive.
7. The large majority of parents/guardians rated the opening times of services as 'very suitable' or 'fairly suitable' (88.1 per cent), but a number of parents commented that they feel a need for more childcare services to be available in the afternoons.
8. From general comments it was clear that the large majority of respondents are satisfied with the opportunities for their child to learn and play in the services they use for their child/ren under 4.

9. A major concern raised throughout the comments received is that parents/guardians feel there is a lack of emergency health services in Fleetwood and that when their children have an accident or become ill out of GP service hours they have to travel to Blackpool to receive medical attention.

10. Parents/guardians do not generally feel well informed about childcare services and think services are not advertised well enough. 56.4 per cent of respondents said they would like advice and information about different childcare services.

11. From comments it was clear that many parents/guardians are concerned about the general lack of childcare services.

12. General comments indicated that some parents/guardians do not feel part of the community and many do not see Fleetwood as a child friendly place.

11. Recommendations

The large number of respondents allows for confidence that the sample is representative of the true population of parents/guardians with Sure Start aged children in the Fleetwood area. The wealth of information obtained generally indicates a high level of satisfaction, but also indicates local service need and highlights possible changes that could be made by Sure Start Fleetwood to add value to existing services and improve the service provision for families. It is recommended that Sure Start Fleetwood:

- Actively advertises more often and works to raise awareness of who can benefit from the programme, resulting in families feeling well-informed about service provision.
- Considers the possibilities of expanding, enabling more parents/guardians and children to attend.
- Investigates the options for providing services for elder siblings and teenagers, for example a youth club, for whom many commented there are little opportunities for.
- Thinks about providing a safe and secure outdoor play area for young children, free of teenagers, vandalism and drug users.
- Considers the possibilities for providing/supporting more services in the afternoon, after school, over the weekend period and during vacations. This will particularly benefit parents/guardians choosing to work or train.
- Reviews service location and considers the possibilities for providing services in locations where there is little provision of services.
- Investigates the possibilities of providing/supporting an out of hours health service, where parents/guardians can bring their young children to receive medical attention at inconvenient times.
- Makes the results of this survey known to other services that were mentioned by parents/guardians and carers.
- Recognises the value and benefit of consulting with parents and families about service provision and need to inform the development of services.
- Considers how they can build on and develop a positive community feeling. General comments indicated that some parents/guardians do not feel part of the community.