



Education: Early Years



Mull & Iona

Argyll and Bute Council's Early Years team recently carried out a survey to seek views on the effectiveness of our provision and delivery of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in the Mull & Iona area.

The survey was open to anyone with a requirement for ELC in the Mull & Iona area, and was open for six weeks, from 16 May – 27 June 2025.

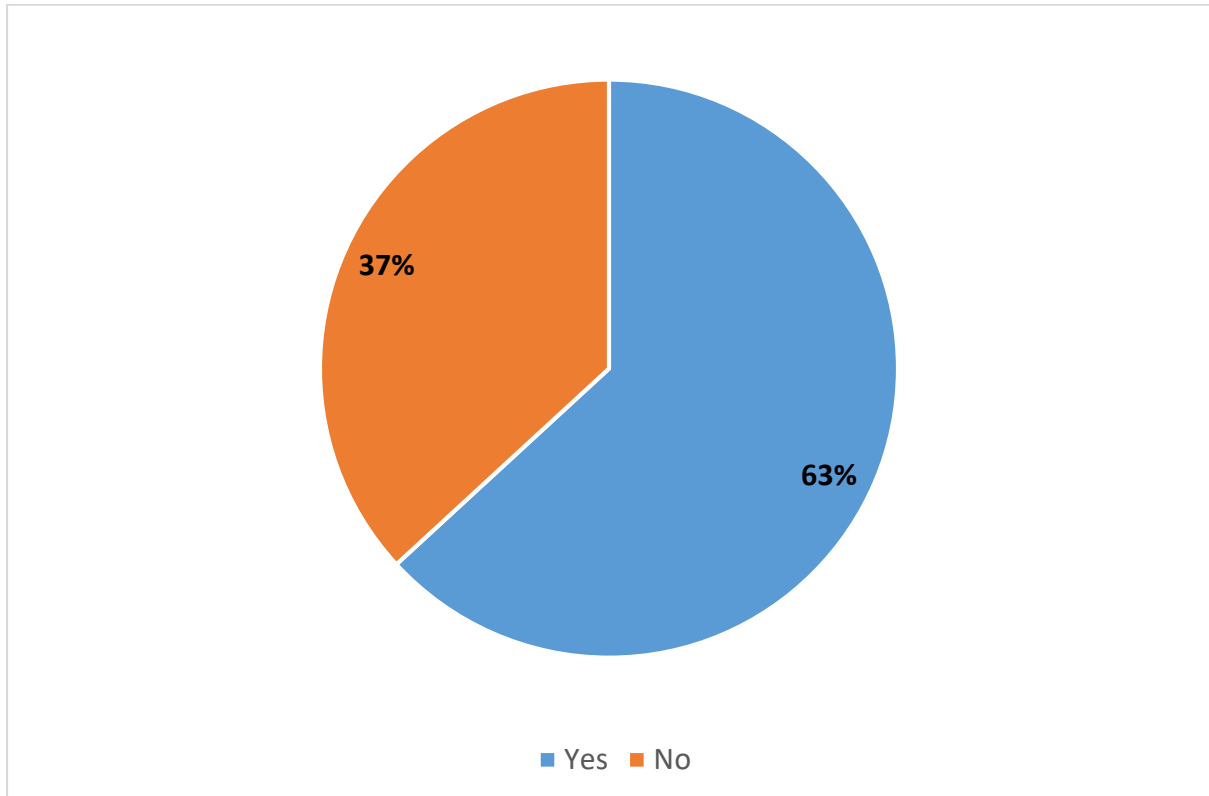
Mull & Iona has 5 funded ELC Providers (these are all local authority settings).

19 responses were received.

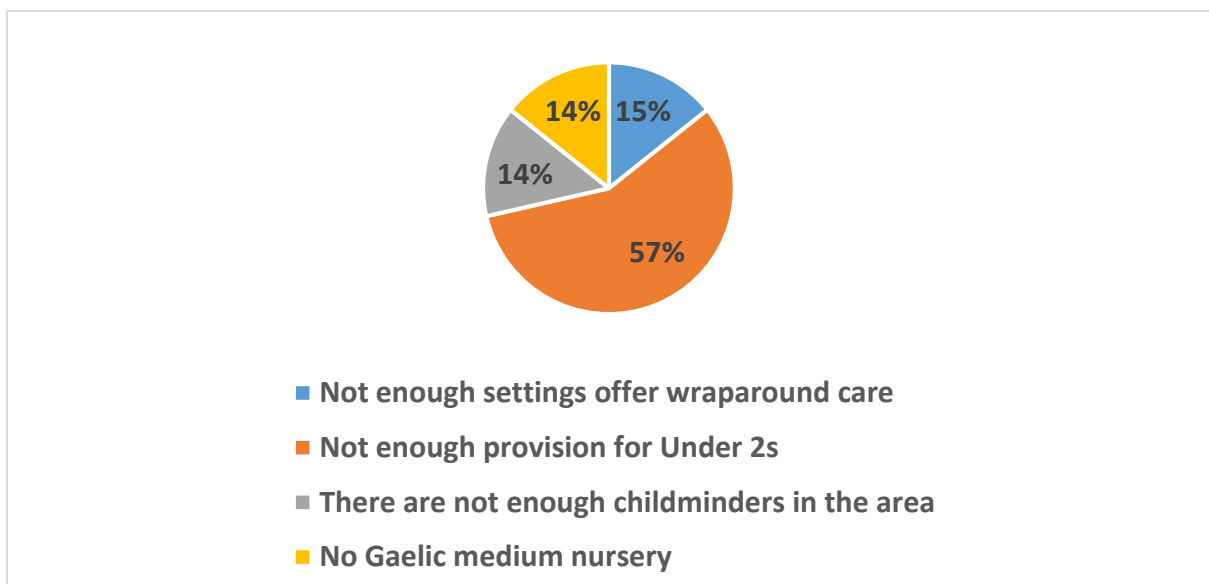
Thank you to everyone who took time to complete the survey and provide comments.

We asked: Are you happy with the choice of ELC settings available on Mull & Iona? (ie Local Authority settings, Partner Nursery and Partner Childminder settings)

You said: 63% are happy with choice of ELC settings available.

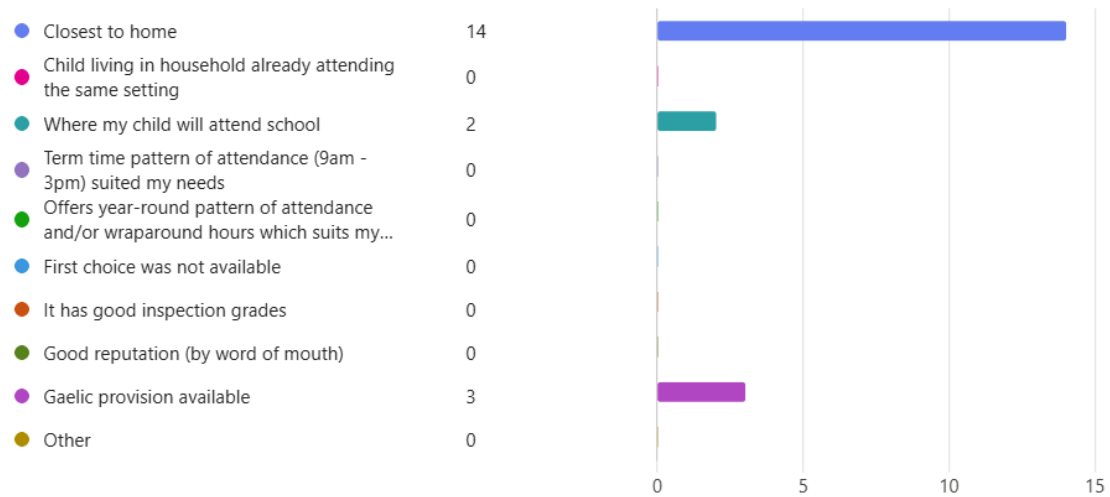


Those who expressed unhappiness were asked to say why:



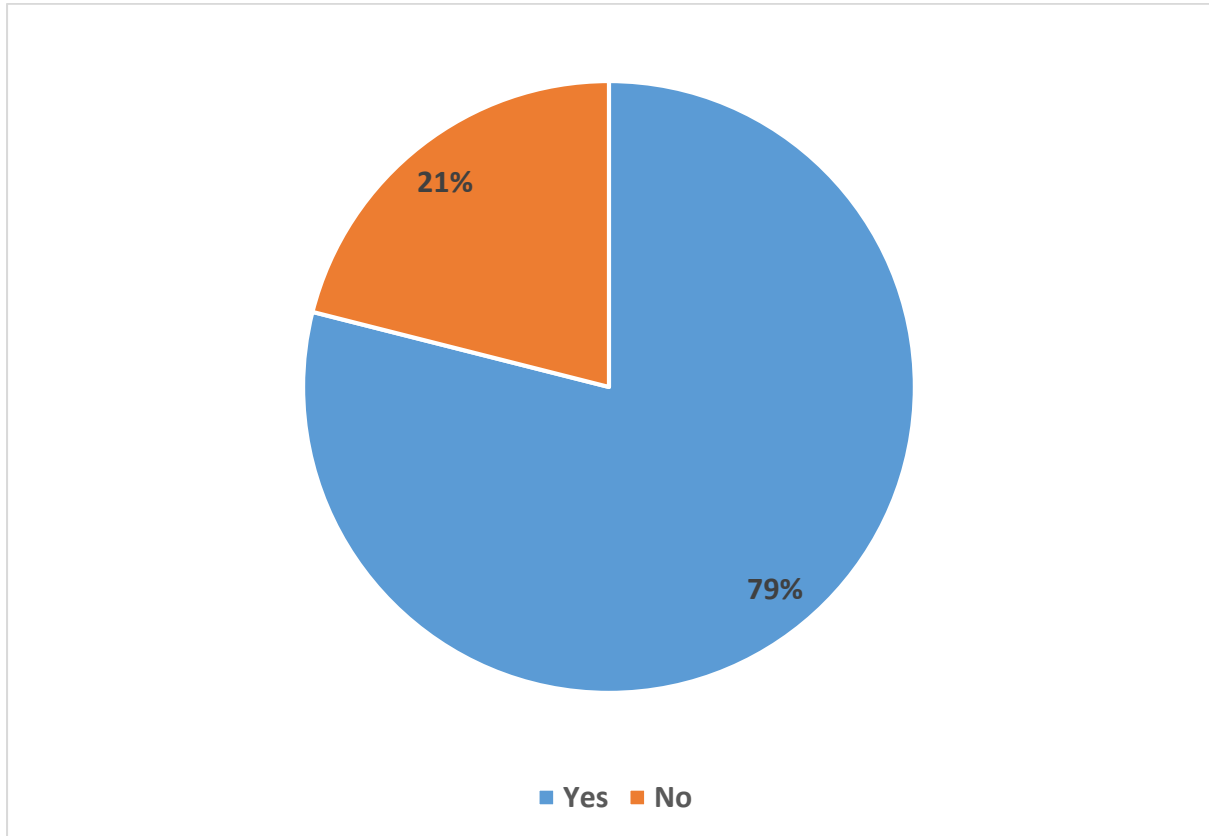
We asked: Why did you choose to register your child at your chosen ELC setting (with the option to select as many options as you liked)?

You said: The top reason was “closest to home”



We asked: Does the pattern of attendance on offer meet your needs? Pattern of attendance is the number of weeks your child attends their ELC setting and the number of hours offered per day/week, e.g. 38 weeks, 6 hours per day.

You said: 79% of respondents said that the pattern of attendance on offer meets their needs.

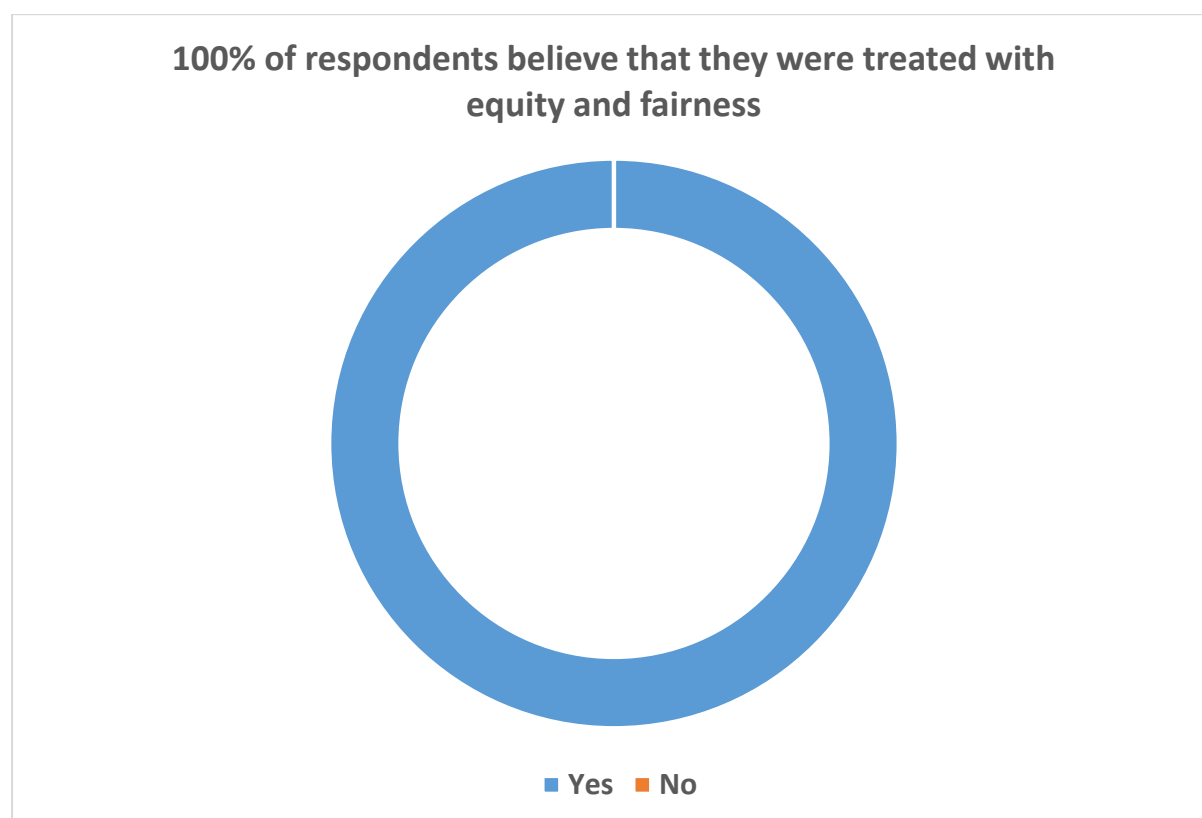


Those who expressed that the pattern of attendance did not meet their needs, were asked to comment further:

All of the respondents stated the reason was the lack of hours offered during the school holiday weeks

We asked: Do you believe you have been treated with equity and fairness in relation to the provision of ELC?

You said: 100% of respondents said that they have been treated with equity and fairness in relation to the provision of ELC.



We asked: Are there any comments you wish to add in relation to ELC in the Mull and Iona area?

You said:

"After school club 3-5pm. Option of paid care during holidays, as no childcare available during holidays"

"Staff are great at ELC. Just need more childcare options; out of school hours. Young families are leaving the island due to no childcare"

"Not enough childcare in the area. No childcare during holidays which means harder to work. ELC closes at 3pm - needing something from 8am - 6pm all year around"

"Delay in starting as an eligible 2 was very poor, but once started, the service was excellent"

"The pre5 unit is far too small for the amount of pupils it currently has"

"I couldn't be happier with the ELC. The Gaelic side was also wonderful (but my daughter switched to full time English)"

Here is a summary of the key things you said and we will endeavour to do:

You said: The setting unit is “far too small for the amount of pupils it currently has”

We will: Continue to operate all ELC Settings in accordance with Care Inspectorate registration capacity, as a legal requirement. We have never exceeded the capacity at an ELC setting.

You said: More childcare needed for out of hours and school holidays

We will: Explore opportunities for the greater provision of childcare, where possible

We will: Continue our campaign to attract Funded Childminders in the area by offering financial incentives and support to register with the Care Inspectorate

You said: Delay in starting as an eligible 2 was very poor, but once started the service was excellent.

Response: Whilst we aim to place all Eligible 2YOs within a setting as close as possible, and as soon as possible, unfortunately, this can take time, given Care Inspectorate requirements for 2 year olds and the remote and rural nature of some of our settings, in relation to planned work requirements

You said: Staff are great at the ELC / I couldn't be happier with the ELC / the service (*at the setting*) was excellent

We will: Ensure that all positive feedback is communicated to the individual settings and staff