



## Education: Early Years



### Oban, Lorn & the Isles (excluding 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 Oban, Lorn & the Isles area (this consultation excluded Mull and Iona settings).

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

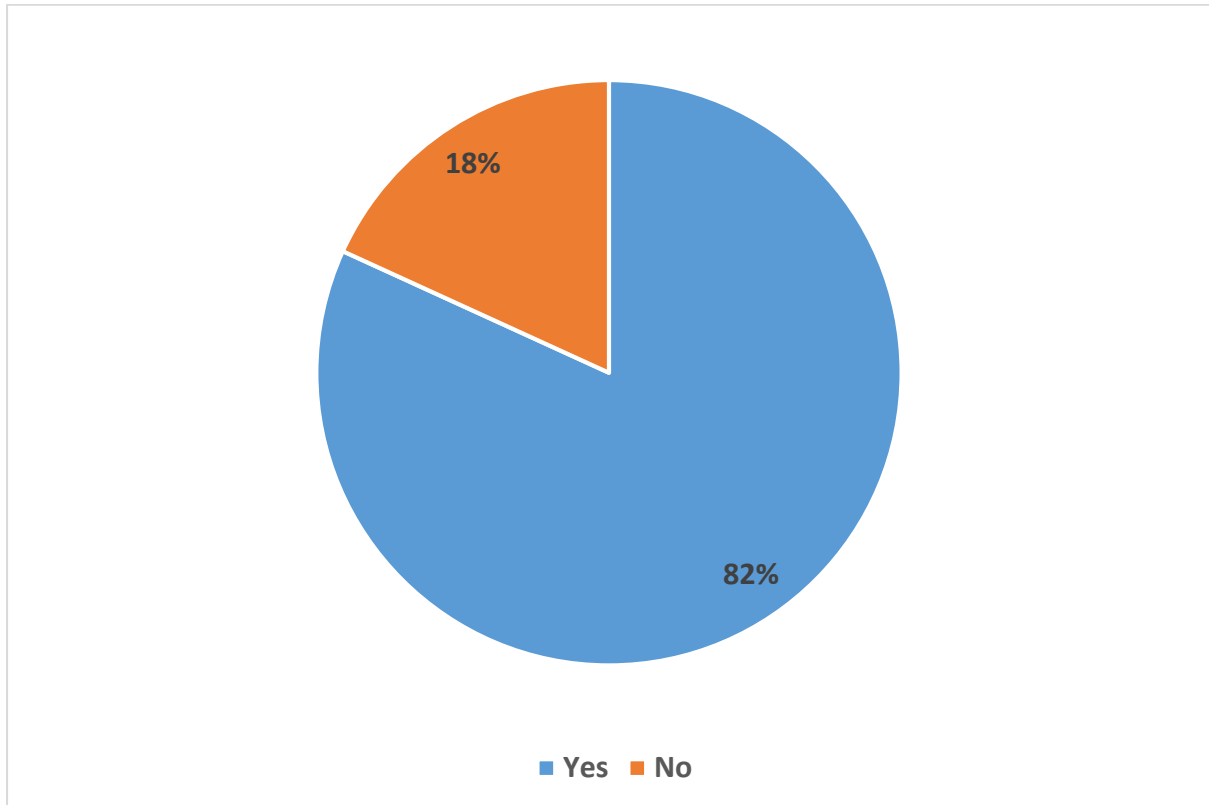
OLI (excluding Mull & Iona) has 20 funded ELC Providers (childminders, voluntary, private and local authority settings).

33 responses were made.

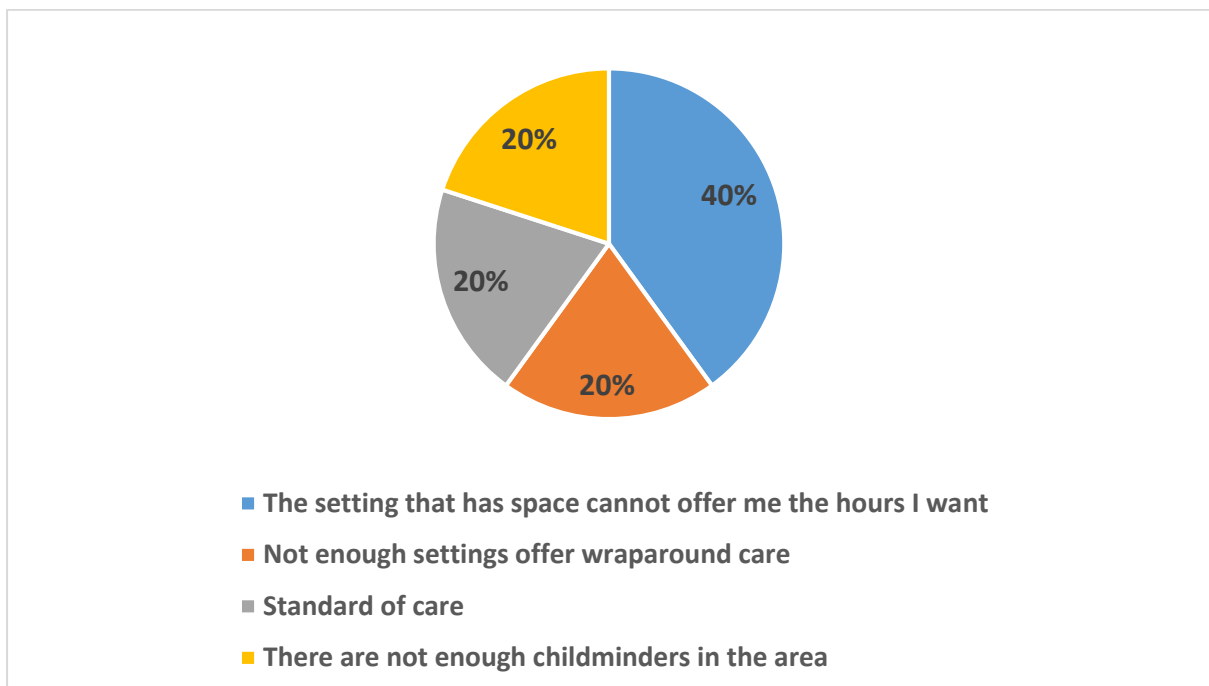
Thank you to everyone who took time to complete the survey and provide comments.

**We asked:** Are you happy with the choice of ELC settings available in the Oban, Lorn & the Isles? (ie Local Authority settings, Partner Nursery and Partner Childminder settings)

**You said:** 82% are happy with choice of ELC settings available.

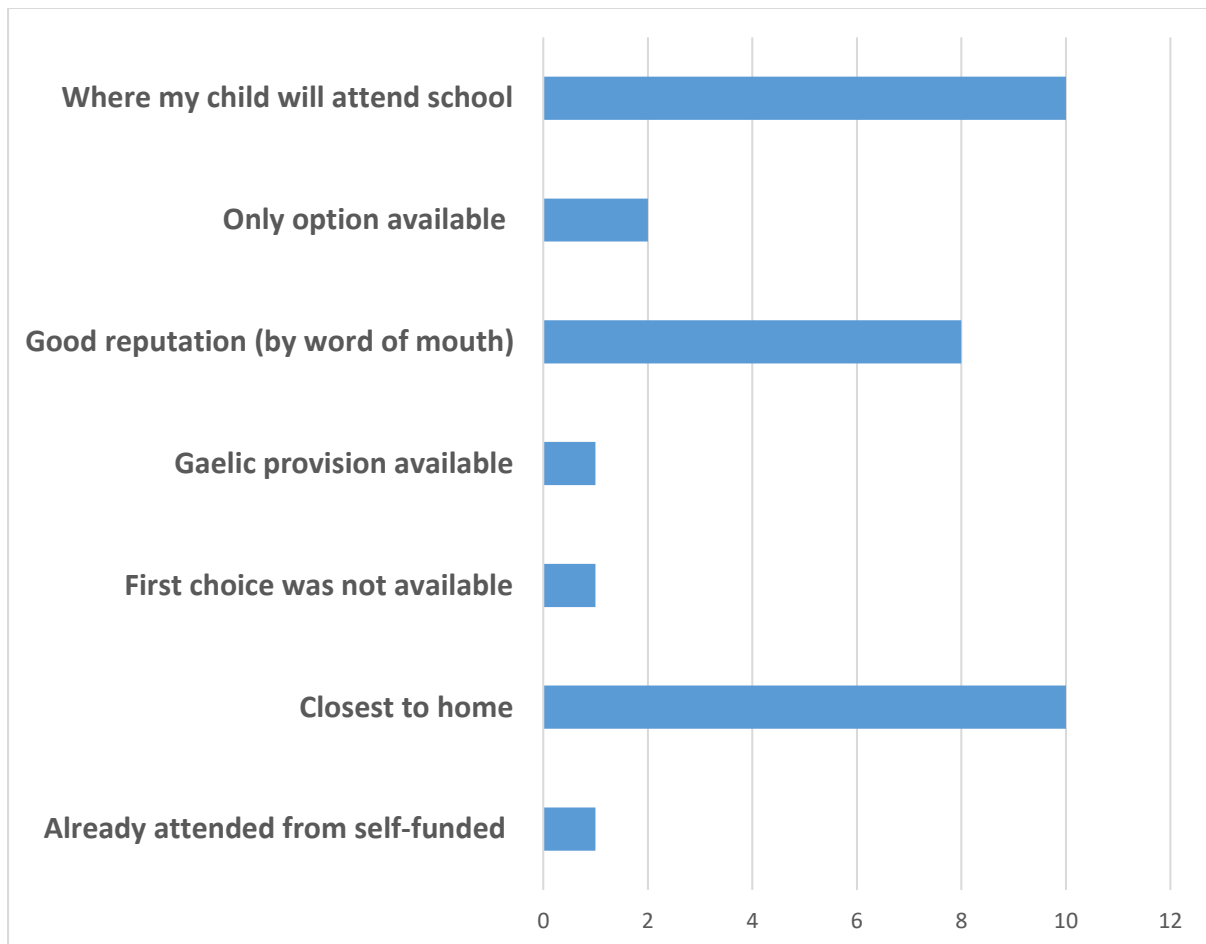


**Those who expressed unhappiness were asked to say why:**



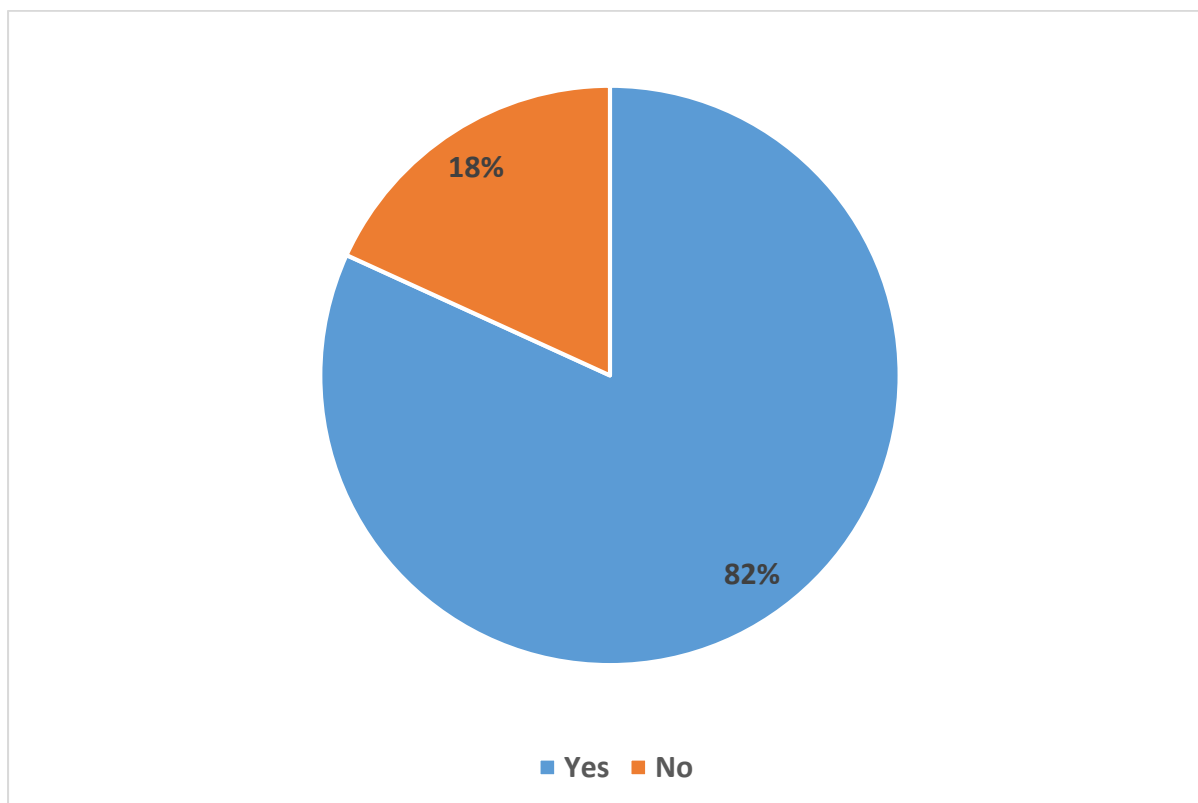
**We asked:** Why did you choose to register your child at your chosen ELC setting (with the option to select as many options as you liked)?

**You said:** The top reasons were closest to home and where your child will attend school



**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:** 82% 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:**

“The setting does not offer wraparound care”

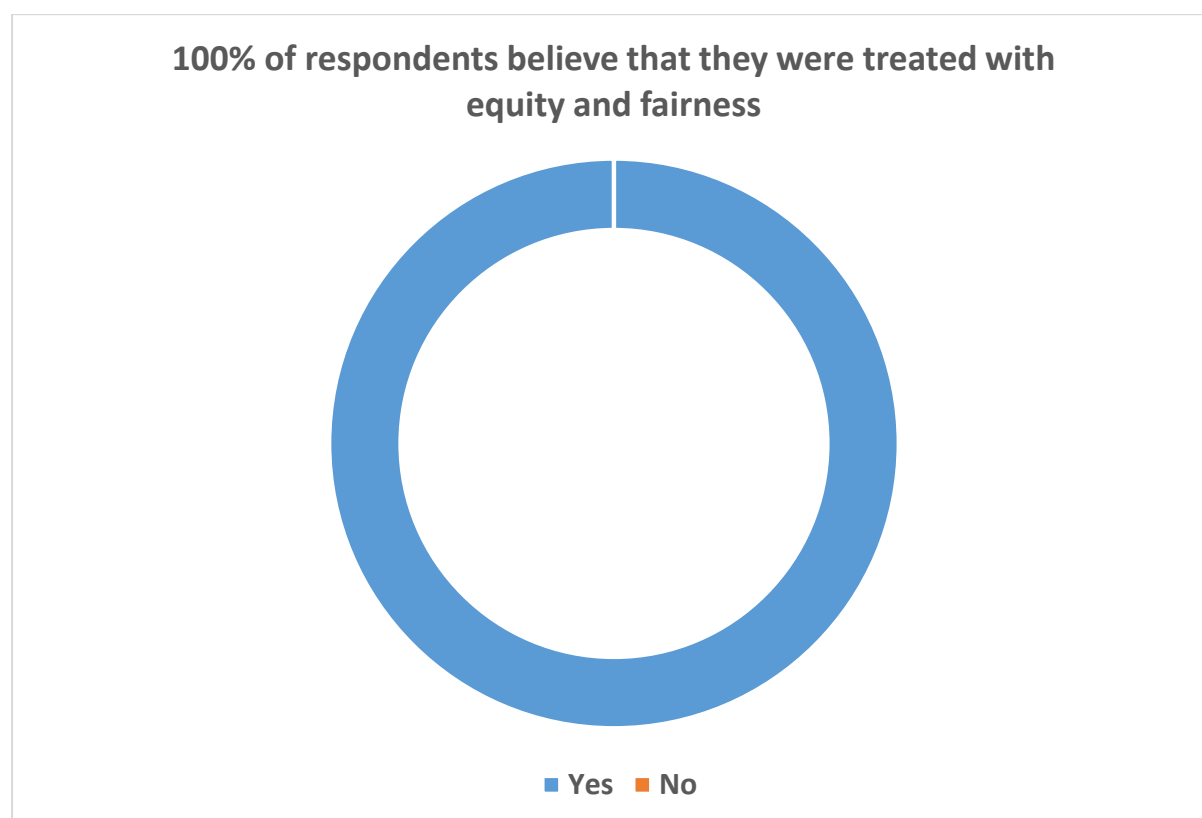
“The setting does not offer hours during the school holiday weeks”

“The setting was not flexible enough on the days/hours of attendance”

“The only option is 5 short days”

**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 Oban Lorn and Isles area?

**You said:**

“The ELC would benefit from a permanent 2 and under service as childminders are difficult to access from the island”

“This nursery has been nothing but supportive and caring towards me and my child, we are both very sad to be leaving to go to school this year. The manager is amazing, she's so kind & puts the children first at all times”

“More nurseries need to offer care that starts at 8am or 8.30am, I work early and it is very difficult to find childcare in the mornings. There is also only 1 holiday provision for children under 5 in Oban and Lorn, this needs to change as my child doesn't like (x nursery) and I have to rely on family to take him”

“Excellent standard of care given by friendly teachers and assistants, my daughter has developed her reading, numbers and writing confidence since joining and is ready for primary school, where she has already developed some relationships”

“Early starts from 8am would be beneficial as I start work at 8.30am which isn’t flexible”

“Having little/no wraparound care or options for school holidays makes things very difficult when both parents are working full time”

“Having 2 year olds in what would traditionally be ELC for 3-5 year olds is not great - they are not set up for 2 year olds and this impacts on the 3-5 year old learning/experience. 2 year olds need nurtured and have different needs. I don’t believe council run ELC allow staff the time and/or space for these children”

“The staff are lovely, and they attend all the children according to their necessities. Very good activities and developing of capacities.... Very happy with our choice”

“More childminders are needed definitely. My child's nursery is nearby and will be their future primary school as well, so that is great”

“I believe ELC shouldn’t be giving the children screen time in the form of cartoons. They should be supporting more messy outdoor play”

“It would be really helpful for the school and nursery setting to offer wraparound care, e.g. breakfast clubs & afternoon clubs so that parents can do a full day’s work”

“The ELC is great but the hours were 8.30 to 2.30 until Easter when it changed to 8.45 to 2.45, there is no option for 3 longer days per week, the hours make it very difficult for parents with children in both ELC and the school”

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

**You said:** I believe ELC shouldn’t be giving the children screen time in the form of cartoons

**We will:** Reinforce that all ELC settings should be delivering a consistent model of ELC that includes experiences and opportunities around a broad range of curriculum including appropriate use of technology to build skills for lifelong learning. We will communicate this feedback to the individual setting concerned and support to further develop appropriate use of technology within the ELC.

**You said:** More childminders needed / more wraparound care / flexible hours / earlier start times would be beneficial

**We will:** Endeavour, in our smallest communities, to provide care for 2YOs where staffing and space allows

**We will:** Explore opportunities to improve flexibility in the hours offered at settings for funded childcare

**We will:** Look at adapting to the needs of localised communities with regards to the open/close times of ELC settings

**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:** Excellent standard of care / Nursery has been nothing but supportive / The staff are lovely / The ELC is great

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

