



Department
for Education

Two year olds in schools: summary of delivery approaches and support needs

Baseline survey of schools

Research report

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1 Introduction and background

This report presents a summary of some of the key findings from a baseline survey of schools carried out as part of an implementation study examining what works in developing and delivering two year old provision in schools. The findings show the different delivery approaches of schools offering provision for two year olds and the support needs they identify.

The study was designed by the National Children's Bureau (NCB) in partnership with Frontier Economics on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE) to examine approaches being taken to developing two year old provision among forty-nine schools during the academic year September 2013 – July 2014. Planned activities included:

- a range of data gathering activities;
- practice support and advice, in particular from the Early Childhood Unit (ECU) within NCB; and
- workshops offering the participating schools opportunities to network and share experiences and learning.

The evaluation commenced with a DfE supported day long workshop held in November 2013. ECU delivered a key note presentation about quality care for two year olds and small group discussions focused on how schools were planning or were already delivering provision for two year olds, the planning and resources involved and initial ideas for the support and information.

After the workshop schools were sent a baseline survey to gather early feedback on their approaches to planning and set-up of provision for two year olds, emerging delivery models and costs of provision. The survey included a number of questions designed to explore what aspects of planning, set up and delivery of provision schools found challenging. These data would also inform the practice advice and support offered by NCB/ECU alongside other evaluation activities. Questions regarding the financial aspects of delivering provision for two year olds would additionally shape the design of a detailed cost questionnaire for school finance officers and inform the basis of a finance survey (outlined below).

Other components of the evaluation include:

- Gathering data in eight purposively selected schools/settings representing: different areas of the country; urban and rural settings; different types of organisation;¹ different models of delivery including full time places only, part-

¹ Including local authority nurseries, academies, foundation schools, community schools and voluntary controlled/aided schools.

time places only and a mixture of both; schools whose provision for two year olds is new; schools who have offered provision for some years.

- In these eight schools, in-depth interviews with a range of staff involved in delivering the provision for two year olds including: the Head Teacher; local early years practitioner; finance officer; a representative from the local authority or a school governor; and a discussion group for between four to six parents and carers of two year olds who have taken up a place at the school.
- The development of a self-evaluation tool, based on good practice and research about early years provision, to support schools in developing their provision for two year olds; also a short school networking contact guide to direct schools to useful resources and to promote the sharing of learning across all schools involved in the project.
- A follow up survey and a finance specific survey to all schools participating in the demonstration project, to be disseminated mid May 2014.

These activities, and the data collected, will be reported on more fully in the interim and final evaluation reports, due later in 2014.

The baseline survey

The baseline survey was administered via an online questionnaire completed between 3rd January and 7th February 2014. The findings will inform the later evaluation interviews and finance survey. A response rate of 94% was achieved. Over half of respondents were head teachers (57%) and the remainder were other senior leaders including deputy head teachers. (Please see Table 1).

Percentage findings throughout the remainder of this report are based on the 47 schools who completed the questionnaire. In some cases, when less than 47 schools completed a question, the percentage reported is based on those who have answered the question. Where less than 30 schools completed a question responses are reported as a numeric - for example, one in ten schools.

Table 1: Respondent job title

Job title	%	N
Head Teacher	57	25
Head of Early Years	14	6
Deputy Head	9	4
Other senior leader ²	20	9

Base: 44 respondents (3 not stated)

² These included 4 school business managers, 2 children's centre managers, a managing director, a nursery manager and a nursery teacher.

2 Summary

- The **majority of schools surveyed had been successful in setting up and starting to deliver places for two year olds (79%)**. Eight out of the ten schools who were not yet delivering places aimed to do so between February-May 2014.
- **Most schools were currently or planning to deliver provision by themselves (76%)** but around one in ten were working with private providers (9%) or children's centres (9%). Almost all provision was based or planned to be based on the main school site, usually within the main school building (56%).
- The **median number of places schools offered or planned to offer was 16**. The majority of schools indicated that these were or would be part-time places only, offered as morning or afternoon sessions across five days a week. Over half of schools said they expected to increase the number of places offered over the 2013/2014 academic year.
- The **majority of schools offered or planned to offer places in the morning and afternoon (80%) five days a week (98%)**. Half of these schools already allowed or planned to allow flexibility for families to 'mix and match' which mornings/afternoons their child attended, while the remaining half did not.
- Almost all **schools currently providing for two year olds were integrating two and three year olds together to some extent (92%)**, challenges relating to building work or changes to physical spaces had delayed progress for others.
- Just under **two in five schools were offering parents the opportunity to pay for top-up hours (38%)** and/or offer additional care around sessions (36%), with just a small further proportion expecting to start to offer this later in the year.
- **Three quarters of schools filled all of their available two year old places by the time of the survey fieldwork (74%)**. Schools used many methods to engage parents and inform them of places available, including home visits and parents' evenings. They also shared information via local connections, for example children's centre staff and health visitors.
- A number of schools reported **challenges around: registration with Ofsted (30%), identifying sources of finance (34%) and considering future financial sustainability (37%)**.
- Almost **seven in ten schools said they would welcome support and advice on sources of funding, and sustainability**. More than one in four also said they would welcome further information and support regarding developing approaches to working in partnership with parents and supporting the emotional, learning and development needs of two year olds.
- **Thirteen schools reported it challenging to develop their workforce** in order to provide high quality (level of experience and training) staff with capacity to meet the needs of two year olds and indicated they would welcome support and information on how to improve this (29%).

3 Findings

3.1 Delivery approaches

Progress to date

Participating schools and organisations began the demonstration project at differing starting points. While the majority (twenty-eight) had not provided early years places for two year olds before this project, a considerable proportion (nineteen) had done so previously, many beginning in 2012.

Table 2: When schools began delivering places for two year olds

When did you start delivering places for two year olds?		
	%	N
January 2014	11	4
September-December 2013	46	17
January-June 2013	11	4
September – December 2012	16	6
January – June 2012	0	0
Before 2012	16	6

Base: 37 respondents (all those who reported they are currently delivering places)

At the time of survey, the majority of schools (thirty-seven schools) reported that they were currently delivering places for two year olds. Those who were not yet delivering places (ten schools) reported that they had decided on an approach to delivery and were in the process of carrying out set up work (five schools) or described themselves as 'ready to go' but were waiting for the outcomes of registration with Ofsted (five schools). Eight of the ten schools who had not yet started delivering stated that they aimed to do so sometime during February-May 2014. One school aimed to do so in September 2014 while another was not sure when they would begin delivering.

Table 3: Expected start date of schools yet to begin providing

If you have yet to start delivering places, when do you expect this to be?		
	%	N
February 2014	40	4
April 2014	30	3
May 2014	10	1
September 2014	10	1
Don't know	10	1

Base: 10 respondents (who reported they are yet to begin delivering places)

Aims and influences

Echoing discussions held at the first project workshop in November 2013, respondents indicated their main reason for delivering provision for two year olds was to increase children's school readiness in order to improve children's outcomes (83%), to create links with parents at an earlier stage (55%) and/or to address a perceived lack of provision for two year olds in their local area (34%).

Table 4: Main reasons for developing and/or delivering the provision

What is your main reason for developing and/or delivering provision for two year olds in your school?		
	Main	Other
(If there are other key reasons, please tick up to a maximum of three)	%	%
To increase the school readiness of two year olds in order to improve outcomes	83	9
To create links with parents at an earlier stage	55	32
To address a lack of provision for two year olds in our local area	34	28
To enable joint planning of the curriculum across all ages	13	11
To provide convenience for parents	4	6
Other	13	n/a

Base: All respondents

Schools reported that a number of influences had shaped their approach and decisions regarding their provision for two year olds, including the needs of their local area and input at a national level:

- For the vast majority of schools, the strategic aims of the school had shaped their delivery approach (89%).
- Many schools also reported that local population and profile information (57%) and information from local needs assessment (45%) had been an influencing factor.
- In just over half of the schools, advice from the local authority (51%) and information on the strategic aims of the local authority (55%) were noted as influencing their approach.
- Also noted were consultations with parents (51%), staff (twelve schools or 26%) and the local community (nine schools or 19%).
- With regard to input from a national level, almost half mentioned advice/support from the DfE (49%) and/or national policy documents/guidance (38%).

Where was/will the provision for two year olds be based?

When asked to indicate whether their school was/will be delivering provision on their own or in partnership with another organisation, most described working on their own (76%). A smaller proportion said they were working in partnership with other organisations, such as private providers (four) and children’s centres (four).

Table 5: Whether schools are delivering on their own or with another agency

Which of the following best describes your arrangements for delivering provision for two year olds, either on your own or with another agency?		
	%	N
My school on its own	76	36
Private sector provider	9	4
Children’s centre	9	4
Nursery	4	2
Voluntary provider (e.g. local charity)	2	1
Childminder	0	0
Other	0	0

Base: 45 respondents (2 not stated)

Almost three quarters of schools said that all provision for two year olds was based, or planned to be based, on the school site, most commonly within the main school building (64%). The remaining seventeen schools indicated that provision was/will be based in a different building, including; a separate building for two year olds (five), in a separate building for three-five year olds (five) or in a building run by another provider in partnership with the school, such as a private provider (four) or children’s centre(three).

While the majority of schools reported these arrangements are permanent (83%), eight said they were temporary (17%).

Table 6: Location of the provision

Where is your provision for two year olds being provided or where do are you planning to provide it?		
(Please tick one)	%	N
On site in main school building	64	30
On site but in a separate building dedicated to two year olds	11	5
On site but in a separate building dedicated to 3-5 years old	11	5
On site in a separate building in partnership with another provider	9	4
Co-located - with a local children’s centre	6	3
Co-located - with local nursery premises	0	0
Other	0	0

Base: All respondents

How many places were/will be offered?

Schools who were currently providing places for two year olds were asked to give a 'snapshot' of how many places they offered before January 2014. Similarly, the ten schools who were planning to deliver after January were asked to detail how many places they hoped to offer initially. All schools were asked to detail the total number of places they aimed to offer overall:

- Of the 37 schools who were already providing places for two year olds, the number of places ranged between seven and 39 with the majority offering under 20 places (65%). The median number of places offered was 16.
- The ten schools who had not yet begun delivering aimed to provide under 20 places, also with a median number of 16 places.
- Going forward, over half of all schools (53%) reported they expected to increase the number of places offered over the 2013/2014 academic year. Two schools indicated they planned to increase the number of places offered by a significant amount. One school was already offering 16 places but aimed to offer 40 by summer 2014.

Table 7: Number of places offered by January 2014

How many two year old places are you offering/planning to offer by January 2014?		
(Please enter total number of places)	%	N
1-9	27	10
10-19	38	14
20-29	11	4
30-39	24	8
40 and above	0	0

Base: 37 respondents (all those who are already delivering places)

The survey also asked about expected numbers of places in the future post January 2014; answers to this question are shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Number of places expected to be offered by schools yet to begin providing places

If your provision will be starting later than January 2014, can you provide an estimate of the number of places you hope to offer?		
(Please enter the estimated number of places)	%	N
1-9	30	3
10-19	50	5
20-29	0	0
30-39	10	1
40 and above	0	0

Base: 10 respondents (all those who have yet to begin delivering places)

When were/will these places be offered?

The majority of schools (81%) reported currently offering part-time places only.³ A small proportion of schools reported offering full time places only (five) or a mixture of full-time and part-time (three). Responses to this question are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Whether places are full-time, part-time or a mixture of both

How many of these places are (or will be) full-time and how many are part-time?		
Full-time/part-time places:	%	N
All places part-time	81	35
All places full-time	12	5
Places a mixture of full-time and part-time	7	3

Base: 43 respondents (4 not stated)

Going forward, only three schools indicated that they expected the number of full-time places to increase during the 2013/2014 academic year.

For the majority of schools, places were already, or were planned to be, available in both the morning and afternoons (80%) five days a week (98%). Half of the schools who already offered or planned to offer places in both the morning and afternoon already allowed or planned to allow flexibility for families to 'mix and match' which mornings/afternoons their child attended, while the remaining half did not.

Table 10: Time of day when places are/will be offered

If you are offering, or planning to offer part-time places, will these be:		
	%	N
Available in both mornings and afternoons	80	37
Mornings only	15	7
Afternoons only	4	2

Base: 46 respondents (1 not stated)

Table 11: Flexibility of places offered by schools offering places in mornings and afternoons

Will children be able to 'mix and match' between attending for some mornings and some afternoons?		
	%	N
Yes	50	18
No	50	18

Base: 36 schools (1 not stated)

³ Note: the two year old offer funds fifteen hours per week.

Did schools currently offer or plan to offer enhancements to the funded part-time places?

Schools reported a mixed picture when asked whether they offered or planned to offer the following enhancements to the funded part time places for two year olds:

- Top up hours paid for by parents/carers.
- Additional care around sessions.
- Places during school holidays.

Twenty-four schools in total reported offering enhancements to the funded part time places for two year olds. This ranged between offering all three enhancements (eight schools), two enhancements (five schools) or one enhancement (eleven).

- Of these twenty-four schools, seventeen indicated that parents had or would have the opportunity to pay for additional hours themselves. No school reported that top up hours are or would be paid for from the school budget.
- Sixteen schools currently offered or planned to offer additional care around sessions. Twelve schools indicated that they offered, or planned to offer, places during the school holidays.
- The remaining 21 schools (two did not answer) reported not offering, or planning to offer, any enhancements in addition to the funded part-time places. It does not seem that this is set to change, as only a small proportion of schools reported that they would offer additional care around sessions going forward over the 2013/2014 academic year.

Table 12: Type of enhancement offered by school's offering enhancements to funded places

Which of the following types of enhancements to the funded part-time places, are you offering/planning to offer?		
	%	N
Top up hours paid for by parents/carers	71	17
Provision before or after the part-time sessions	67	16
Places during school holidays	50	12
Top-up hours paid for from my school budget	0	0

Base: 24 respondents (2 not stated)

What did integration between two and three year olds look like?

Thirty-four of the thirty-seven schools currently delivering places to two year olds reported integrating two and three year olds (92%):

- A high proportion reported doing so all of the time that two year olds were within the setting (fourteen) or for some time every day (twelve). Only three schools reported doing so on certain days only.

- Four schools reported doing so as the child approached their third birthday, integrating only during the term before their third birthday as ‘rising threes’.
- One school did not answer.

Table 13: When two and three year olds are integrated (schools currently providing)

When does this happen?		
	%	N
All of the time that two year olds are within the setting	40	14
Some time each day that two year olds are within the setting	33	12
During the term before the third birthday	11	4
On certain days only	8	3
Two and three year olds are not integrated	8	3

Base: 36 respondents (1 not stated)

Three schools currently providing places had not integrated two and three year olds but aimed to do so as soon as possible. They explained that delays in building work and changes needed to the physical space had prevented them from doing so to date. Once completed, one school noted they expected to integrate during “*external play, snack times, and language development focus times*”.

Seven schools who had not yet begun providing places for two year olds indicated that two and three year olds would be integrated some of the time they are in the setting and one indicated that they would be integrated all of the time.

Table 14: When two and three year olds will be integrated (schools not yet providing)

When do you hope to offer integrated provision for two and three year olds?		
(Please tick all that apply)	%	N
Some of the time that two year olds are within the setting	78	7
All of the time that two year olds are within the setting	11	1
On certain days only	0	0
Other	11	1

Base: 9 respondents; 9 of 10 schools not yet delivering places (1 not stated)

What did schools do to prepare for delivering places for two year olds?

Engage parents to inform them of places available

For the majority of schools (74%) all places had been filled by the time of completing the survey and they were working from a waiting list, indicating that demand had outstripped supply in their local area.

Table 15: Places currently filled

How many places, if any, are currently filled?		
	%	N
All places have been filled and we have a waiting list	74	23
Not applicable/not started delivering yet	26	8

Base: 31 respondents (16 not stated)

Schools appeared to have worked hard to engage and inform parents of the places available, (42%) reported doing so three or four months ahead of delivery while a third reported doing so one or two months ahead of delivery.

Table 16: Timescale for engaging with parents

When did you start, or do you expect to start, engaging with the parents of two year olds, in preparation for offering places?		
(Please tick one item)	%	N
3-4 months ahead of delivery commencing	42	19
1-2 months ahead of delivery of two year old places commencing	33	15
Longer than that	22	10
Don't know/can't remember	2	1

Base: 45 respondents (2 not stated)

Schools also used a wide range of methods, presented in Table 17. The most frequently used strategies were: letters home to parents (85%); using the school website (72%) and schools newsletter (70%).

Table 17: Parental engagement strategies

How did you engage/how are you planning to engage with the parents of two year olds during the 13/14 academic year?		
(Please tick all that apply)	%	N
Letters home to parents	85	40
School website	72	34
School newsletter	70	33
Flyers/leaflets/brochures	66	31
Local authority parent/family information services	66	31
School notice boards	57	27
Parents' evenings	57	27
Children's centres	57	27
Via health visitors	57	27
Making home visits to parents	45	21
Via flyers on notice boards around the community	28	13
Via text/email	23	11
Via other local services	15	7
Local newspaper	4	2

Day to day discussion with individual parents	4	2
Parent support programme	2	1

Base: All respondents

When asked which ways of engaging parents schools found to be most effective, schools indicated the following methods:

- Using school contacts and resources, such as letters home to parents of existing children (47%), school newsletter (28%) and school website (24%).
- Drawing upon wider connections within the local community, such as children's centres (30%) and engaging parents via health visitors (28%).
- Engaging parents during informal day-to-day conversations, such as pick-up and drop-off times (26%), as well as offering parents a chance to meet and discuss the provision through home visits (26%) and parents' evenings (19%).

Table 18: Effectiveness of parental engagement strategies

Which ways of engaging with parents of two year olds have you found to be the most effective so far?		
(Please tick to select up to three of the following)	%	N
Letters home to parents	47	22
Children's centres	30	14
School newsletter	28	13
Flyers/leaflets/brochures	28	13
Via health visitors	28	13
Making home visits to parents	26	12
Day to day informal conversations with parents	26	12
School website	24	11
Local authority parent/family information services	21	10
Parents' evenings	19	9
School notice boards	13	6
Via other local services	9	4
Via flyers on notice boards around the community	6	3
Via text/email	4	2
Local newspaper	2	1
None of the above	2	1
Other	0	0

Base: All respondents

Adapting the physical environment of the school

When asked to what extent schools carried development work in preparation of delivering places for two year olds, 85% of schools (forty) reported carrying out some changes to the physical environment of the school while a smaller proportion (seven) reported their current environment was adequate and no changes were made. Of the forty schools who reported making changes:

- Eighteen schools reported adapting the washing/changing/toilet facilities 'a lot' and thirteen 'a little' to make them appropriate for two year olds.
- Fifteen schools reported adapting the indoor physical environment 'a lot' and twenty-one 'a little'.
- A similar proportion of schools (fifteen) reported adapting the outdoor environment 'a lot' and nineteen 'a little'.
- A smaller proportion of schools indicated changes were made to kitchen facilities 'a lot' (eight) or 'a little' (eight). Twenty-two schools reported their kitchen facilities were adequate and no changes were made.

New approaches for working with parents

In addition to the range of physical adaptations to their school premises, as Table 19 below illustrates, survey respondents indicated that they had made some changes to their staffing (including recruitment and training) and also the way they worked with parents.

Table 19: Extent of development work

To what extent did your school (and any partner agencies) carry out the following types of development work in order to provide quality provision for two year olds - or if you are in the process of setting up your provision, how much development work has been needed?			
	A lot	A little	None
	%	%	%
Adapt the washing/changing/ toilet facilities to be appropriate for two year olds	40	29	31
Train staff about the needs of two year olds	36	53	11
Adapt or develop pedagogical approaches for working with two year olds	36	47	18
Recruit new staff	35	44	22
Adapt the outdoor environment to be appropriate for two year olds	33	41	26
Adapt the indoor physical environment to be appropriate for two year olds	32	45	23
Adapt roles of existing staff	30	54	15
Make changes to comply with legal requirements for working with two year olds	30	41	28
Adapt or develop the curriculum	27	53	20
Adapt the kitchen facilities to meet the needs of two year olds	18	18	34
Adapt or adopt new approaches for working with parents	17	51	32

Base: 45-47 respondents (0-2 not stated)

How was the provision for two year olds staffed?

Almost all schools (forty-six) indicated they made changes to their existing staffing model and/or training to some extent in preparation for delivering places for two year olds. Of these forty-six schools:

- Thirty-six schools reported recruiting new staff, the majority of which also reported adapting the roles of existing staff (thirty-one).
- Ten schools reported their current resourcing was adequate and did not recruit new staff. Of these schools, a high proportion reported adapting the roles of existing staff 'a little' (six) or 'a lot' (one). The three remaining schools were those with experience of delivering places for two year olds and reported not adapting the roles of existing staff or recruiting new staff.
- Forty-two schools reported carrying out training with staff about the needs of two year olds 'a little' (twenty-five) or 'a lot' (seventeen).

Table 20: Number of staff working with two year olds

How many people will staff your provision for two year olds?		
(Please enter total number of staff)	%	N
1	0	0
2	24	10
3	17	7
4	31	13
5	10	4
6	5	2
7	5	2
8	5	2
9	2	1
10	2	1

Base: 42 respondents (5 not stated)

When asked to share suggestions for how other schools can use their budgets and staff time effectively, one school noted the importance of quality staff in engaging parents.

“Employ the most well qualified/experiences staff that you can afford and use them to engage with the parents at every opportunity- stay and play sessions, parent workshops, home visits etc.”

Ratio of staff to two year olds

A majority of schools reported a staffing ratio of one member of staff to four children (96%) and the remaining two schools reported one staff member to three children (4%).

Table 21: Planned staff to child ratio

What is your planned staffing ratio for your sessions for two year olds?		
	%	N
1:4	96	43
1:3	4	2

Base: 45 respondents (2 not stated)

Which staff are working with two year olds on a regular basis?

The vast majority of schools (92%) reported that an early years professional/teacher was currently or planned to be working on a day-to-day/regular basis with the two year olds. In over half of schools (56%), it was planned for two year olds to have direct contact with an early years professional and/or teacher qualified all of the time, while a third (33%) reported this would be during some sessions only.

Just over half of schools (51%) reported that a nursery assistant works or will work with two year olds on a regular basis. Many schools indicated that a higher teaching assistant (40%) and/or teaching assistant (62%) was or would be working with two year olds, while nine schools indicated that a SEN teaching assistant was or would be working with two year olds (19%).

Table 22: Type of staff working with two year olds on a regular basis

Please tell us about the staff working (on a day-to-day/regular basis) with two year olds: who does it include? (Please tick all that apply)		
	%	N
Early years professional/teacher	92	42
TA	62	29
Nursery assistant	51	24
Higher teaching assistant (TA)	40	19
SEN TA	19	9
Head teacher	13	6
Other	6	3

Base: All respondents

Table 23: Frequency of contact between children and an early years professional/teacher qualified to work with two year olds

How often will the two year olds in your provision have direct contact with an early years professional and/or a teacher qualified to work with this age group?		
	%	N
All of the time that two year olds are within the setting	56	25
Some sessions only	33	15
Don't know yet/still planning	11	5

Base: 45 respondents (2 not stated)

3.2 Challenges

Aspects of planning, set-up and delivery of provision considered 'not easy' by schools

Schools were asked to rate a number aspects of the planning, set-up and delivery of provision as 'easy', 'ok' or 'not easy' as well as indicate whether the matter still required attention. This is presented in Table 24. For many schools, some aspects were clearly easier than others:

- The majority of schools said that they found it 'easy' or 'ok' to support the learning and development needs of two year olds (33% and 61%) as well as their emotional needs (29% and 64%).
- A similar proportion of schools felt advertising and recruiting parents had been 'easy' (44%) or 'ok' (41%), as had developing approaches to working in partnership with parents (39% and 57%).
- Securing buy-in from governors and/or other local stakeholders was considered easy by the majority of schools (58%) and 'ok' by a third (33%).

A number of schools reported challenges to do with Ofsted registration, identifying sources of finance and/or considering future financial sustainability.

- Reflecting feedback during the workshop with schools in November, schools appeared to have found the financial aspect of the two year old provision a challenge to date. While many reported that identifying/allocating sufficient funds for their current provision for two year olds had been 'ok' (57%), over a third (34%) had found it 'not easy'.
- A similar proportion of schools (37%) also reported that planning the longer-term financial sustainability of provision had been 'not easy'. This was seen as an on-going issue for many schools (35%) that still required attention.
- Schools appeared to have had differing experiences when registering with Ofsted; while some found the process 'ok' (39%), almost a third of schools found the process 'not easy' (30%). Of the 19 schools who reported encountering substantial delays in setting up or starting to deliver provision, a high proportion (13 schools) specified issues with Ofsted registration as the cause.

Schools reported varied experiences when developing their workforce in order to provide high quality (level of experience and training) staff with capacity to meet the needs of two year olds in an appropriate environment. This closely mirrored feedback from the workshop in November 2013, where these issues were identified as key concerns by some schools, often seen as timely and costly barriers to progress.

"The room wasn't ready at the specified time, this created a delay in 2 year old provision."

While many schools found the process of developing facilities and an appropriate environment for two year olds had been ‘easy’ (28%) or ‘ok’ (57%), over one in ten reported this as ‘not easy’ (13%). This variation possibly reflects the different starting points of each school, with some schools already delivering provision to two year olds while others had to make substantial changes to their physical space to do so. Of the schools who reported encountering unexpected costs (ten) and substantial delays (19 schools) in setting up or starting to deliver provision, four gave examples of the need to improve their building and toilet facilities in particular.

Similarly, developing quality staff capacity, via recruitment or training, was considered ‘easy’ or ‘ok’ by many (30% and 57%), yet ‘not easy’ by over one in ten (13%). During the workshop in November, a number of schools reported finding it difficult to recruit qualified staff with relevant experience. Those who had recruited staff externally had to deliver subsequent in-house training to raise their standards. Other schools had been concerned that there was not enough funding to provide the one to one staffing that supporting children with SEN required.

When asked to share key learnings on resources needed to develop provision, schools found the following to be important:

“High quality staff to ensure consistent high standards as the current cohort of two year olds were vulnerable children”

“Most important, high quality staff who are passionate about twos, who provide a language rich environment that is full of fun.”

“Ensure staff are matched appropriately to the responsibility- we are having to look to re-recruit!”

Table 24: Areas in which school’s found ‘easy’, ‘ok’ or ‘not easy’

Please tell us whether you have found the following matters easy or not easy; please also note any that still require attention.				
	Easy	OK	Not Easy	Matter still requiring attention
	%	%	%	%
We have found identifying/allocating sufficient funds for our current provision for two year olds	6	57	34	2
We have found the process of registering with Ofsted	17	39	30	13
Developing facilities and an appropriate environment to address the physical needs of two year olds has been	28	57	13	2
Developing a quality staff capacity, via recruitment or training	30	57	13	0

Addressing legal requirements has been	21	70	9	0
Advertising and recruiting parents of two year olds has been	44	41	9	7
Supporting the emotional needs of two year olds	29	64	4	2
Supporting the learning and development needs of two year olds	33	61	2	5
Securing buy-in from governors and/or other local stakeholders	58	33	2	7
Developing approaches to working in partnership with parents	39	57	2	2

Base: 43-47 respondents (0-4 not stated)

3.3 Ongoing support and information needs

The survey identified that the majority of schools did not provide places for two year olds prior to knowing about the demonstration project, which may be an important consideration on their ongoing support and information needs.

Table 25: Experience of working with two year olds

Did your school already provide early years places for two year olds prior to knowing about the demonstration project?		
	%	N
No	60	28
Yes	40	19

Base: All respondents

Table 26 below shows that the on-going support and information needs identified by schools closely mirrored many issues they identified as challenging:

- The majority of schools said they would welcome information and advice on financial matters, including; sources of funding for provision for two year olds (69%) and planning for long term financial sustainability (69%).
- Many schools would also welcome information and advice with regards to developing staff quality and capacity, via recruitment or training (29%).
- When asked to rate the confidence of their staff in aspects of working with two year olds on a scale of 1 (not confident) to 5 (extremely confident), a significant proportion of schools reported that staff were less confident in supporting the needs of children from families who are speakers of other languages (45%) and working in ways that are inclusive of two year olds with special educational needs and disabilities (32%). It would seem these are potential areas where information and support would be welcomed by schools.

Many schools would also like to further improve on the following aspects of their provision, including:

- Developing approaches to working in partnership with parents (29%). In the run up to delivering places, twenty-four schools (51%) reported carrying out ‘a little’ development work to adapt or adopt new approaches for working with parents while fifteen (32%) did not.
- Supporting the emotional needs of two year olds (27%) and supporting the learning and development needs of two year olds (20%).

Table 26: Current support needs

In which of the following areas would you welcome information or advice?		
	%	N
Sources of funding for provision of two year olds	69	31
Planning for long term financial sustainability	69	31
Developing approaches to working in partnership with parents	29	13
Developing a quality staff capacity, via recruitment or training	29	13
Addressing legal requirements	29	13
Supporting the emotional needs of two year olds	27	12
Providing a physical environment suitable for two year olds	22	10
Supporting the learning and development needs of two year olds	20	9
Advertising and recruiting parents	20	9

Base: 45 respondents (2 not stated)

As shown in Table 27, most schools were confident or very confident about the level of staff knowledge and skills needed to work with two year olds including those with SEN or disabilities. However, a significant number of survey responses (19%) expressed concern over supporting children from families who were speakers of another language,.

Table 27: Extent of training, support and resources needed for staff

Thinking about the development of the knowledge and skills, and the confidence of your staff for working with two year olds, how much training, support and resources do you think they need, based on a scale of 1 (not confident/need more) through to 5 (very confident/nothing further needed)?					
	1	2	3	4	5
	%	%	%	%	%
Able to support the needs of children from families who are speakers of other languages	6	13	32	30	19
Confident to work in ways that are inclusive of two year olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	4	4	28	37	26
Address the personal care needs of two year olds (for example, use of changing facilities) and support their transition to greater independence in toileting and self-care	2	2	11	21	64
Support the emotional needs of two year olds	2	2	13	40	43

Support the learning and development needs of two year olds	2	4	13	45	36
Able to work in partnership with parents to achieve the above	0	2	15	44	39

Base: All respondents

One of the key aims of the evaluation is to facilitate schools sharing knowledge and experience of providing for two year olds with one another. Table 28 notes the areas where schools felt they could offer useful learning or expertise to other schools. These included:

- Integrating provision for two and three year olds (65%);
- Supporting the learning and development needs of two year olds (51%); and
- Developing approaches to working in partnership with parents (44%).

Table 28: Areas of potential knowledge exchange

Are there any areas below where you feel you could offer useful learning (of things that have worked well as well as anything that was difficult) or expertise that could benefit other schools developing provision for two year olds?		
(Please tick all that apply)	%	N
Integrating provision for two year olds with three year olds	65	27
Supporting the learning and development needs of two year olds	51	22
Developing approaches to working in partnership with parents	44	19
Facilities and environment to address physical care needs of two year olds	35	15
Developing a quality staff capacity, via recruitment or training	33	14
Supporting the emotional needs of two year olds	30	13
Securing buy-in from governors or other local stakeholders	26	11
Ofsted registrations	21	9
Advertising and recruiting parents	12	5
Planning for long term financial sustainability	9	4
Addressing legal requirements	9	4
Source of funding for the 2 year old provision	7	3
None of the above	12	5
Other	4	2

Base: 43 respondents (4 not stated)



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