

Nursery resources 'spread thinly' [GB] ^[1]

Author: Eason, Gary

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AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

An extension of free nursery education in England is having the "unforeseen consequence" of reducing the care children get, teachers have claimed.

The entitlement to free care for three and four-year-olds is being extended from 12.5 hours to 15 hours a week.

The National Union of Teachers suggests resources are being spread more thinly, the care given to each child being cut. The government says it expects local authorities to support the availability of good quality childcare.

The NUT's evidence comes mainly from a small sample of 80 teachers working in nursery schools that have piloted the extension of free hours. The most common strategy to manage the extra work reported in the NUT's questionnaires was a change to the pattern of the day.

Nurseries had introduced earlier start times and/or later finishes for teachers and support staff. As a result more than half the teachers said their workloads had increased.

A third said the extension had reduced the amount of time available for teachers to talk with parents about their children's progress. The NUT sees the responses as a straw in the wind indicating that problems are developing.

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- reprinted from BBC News

Region: International ^[2]

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