

Out of school, out of mind: The battle parents face finding out of school childcare ^[1]

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Source: Family and Childcare Trust

Format: Report

Publication Date: 3 Sep 2014

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts from the report:

Key findings and areas for action

A family's childcare needs do not end when children start school. Far from easing the pressure, the transition to school sees childcare woes become worse for many parents. Our report finds that out of school childcare is increasingly expensive and difficult to find, presenting parents with a stark postcode lottery of prices and availability.

Our research shows how parents are faced with widespread shortages in childcare for school age children and highlights the serious pressures that out of school childcare can place on family budgets. Parents also face large price differences of out of school childcare in the same area. Many parents struggle not only to find out of school childcare - due to a lack of places - they also have to work around the pronounced differences in prices in their local area. This all adds up to an out of school childcare landscape that is increasingly hard for parents to navigate. For many families whether they find affordable and quality childcare is down to luck. Some families are lucky enough to live near providers who have spaces and have taken action to keep prices. Many are not.

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The Family and Childcare Trust has four areas for action that would improve out of school childcare:

- Local authorities should be given clear guidance for producing Childcare Sufficiency Assessments. These must cover the needs of school age children and make action plans for improving provision for this group.
- Government needs to work with Ofsted (and equivalent authorities in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) to hold local authorities to account for assessing the levels of provision and addressing gaps.
- Government should establish statutory entitlements for out of school childcare, especially for groups that are currently facing most severe gaps in provision: deprived/rural areas/disabled children and older children.
- In England, the Department of Education should work with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Home Office to ensure sufficient de facto childcare for older children. We want to see similar action in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Related link: Decent affordable child care 'down to luck,' study finds ^[3]

Region: Europe ^[4]

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Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/14/09/out-school-out-mind-battle-parents-face-finding-out-school>

Links

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