

Edinburgh South West Report on After School Provision

A short report by the Office of Dr Scott Arthur, MP Edinburgh South West, August 2025

Summary

After school provision is an essential resource for parents, after school provision has been proven to help close the attainment gap and support children with additional needs. Provision that extends the working day is an indispensable resource for working parents.

Smile childcare was the prominent provider of wraparound childcare in Edinburgh South West, since they pulled their after-school clubs in May 2025, provision has been made up of many different suppliers, and some schools are left with no provision at all.

Scott has been contacted by constituents who have raised concerns about the availability and quality of the after-school provision in Edinburgh South West. This issue has been especially salient with the sudden announcement of Spring Oscars pulling breakfast club provision in Pentland's Primary School at the beginning of 2025, which Scott's office helped to reinstate, to ensure families still had before school provision.

In August 2025, Scott released a survey on after school provision to constituents in Edinburgh South West, to determine a preliminary understanding of experiences of the provision on offer. The responses of the survey are below.

Table of Contents

Survey	2
Survey Respondents	2
How satisfied respondents are with after school provision in Edinburgh South West?.....	4
Provision for children with additional needs	4
What are people priorities in childcare provision?	5
Summary of respondent's issues with after school provision.	6
Positives of after school provision in Edinburgh South West	6
How did respondents want childcare improved?.....	6
Summary.....	7
Next steps	7

Survey

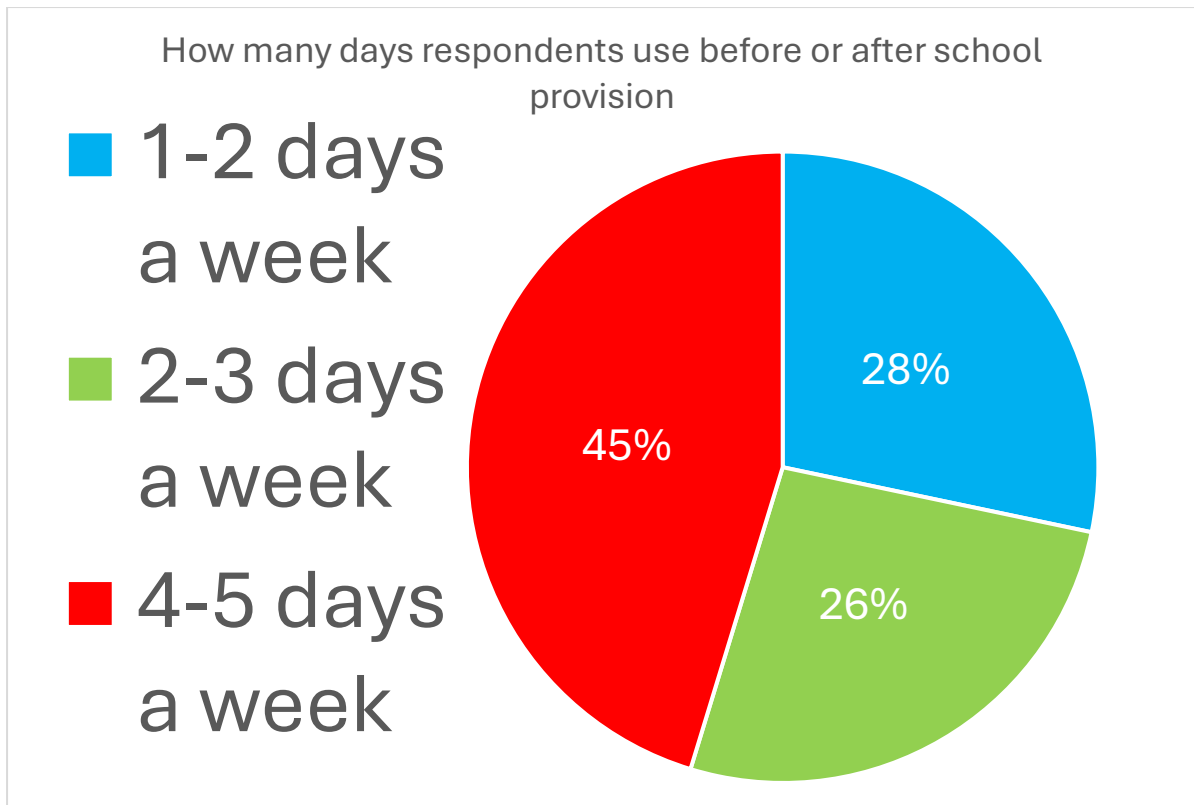
Survey Respondents

94% of respondents were parents with children at Primary School, 6% of respondents had children at nursery.

Breakdown of the schools that the children of respondents attended.

Balerno High School	1
Blackhall Primary School	1
Bonaly Primary School	36
Broomhouse Primary School	1
Buckstone Primary School	1
Canal View Primary School	1
Clifton Hall School	1
Clovenstone Primary School	2
Colinton Primary School	1
Craiglockhart Primary School	5
Currie Primary School	7
Dalry Primary School	1
Dean Park Primary School	4
Frogston Primary School	1
Juniper Green Primary School	3
Longstone Primary School	5
Murrayburn Primary School	1
Nether Currie Primary School	16
Oxgangs Primary School	2
Pentland Primary School	21
Ratho Primary School	1
Sighthill Primary School	1
South Morningside Primary School	2
St Joseph's Primary School	2

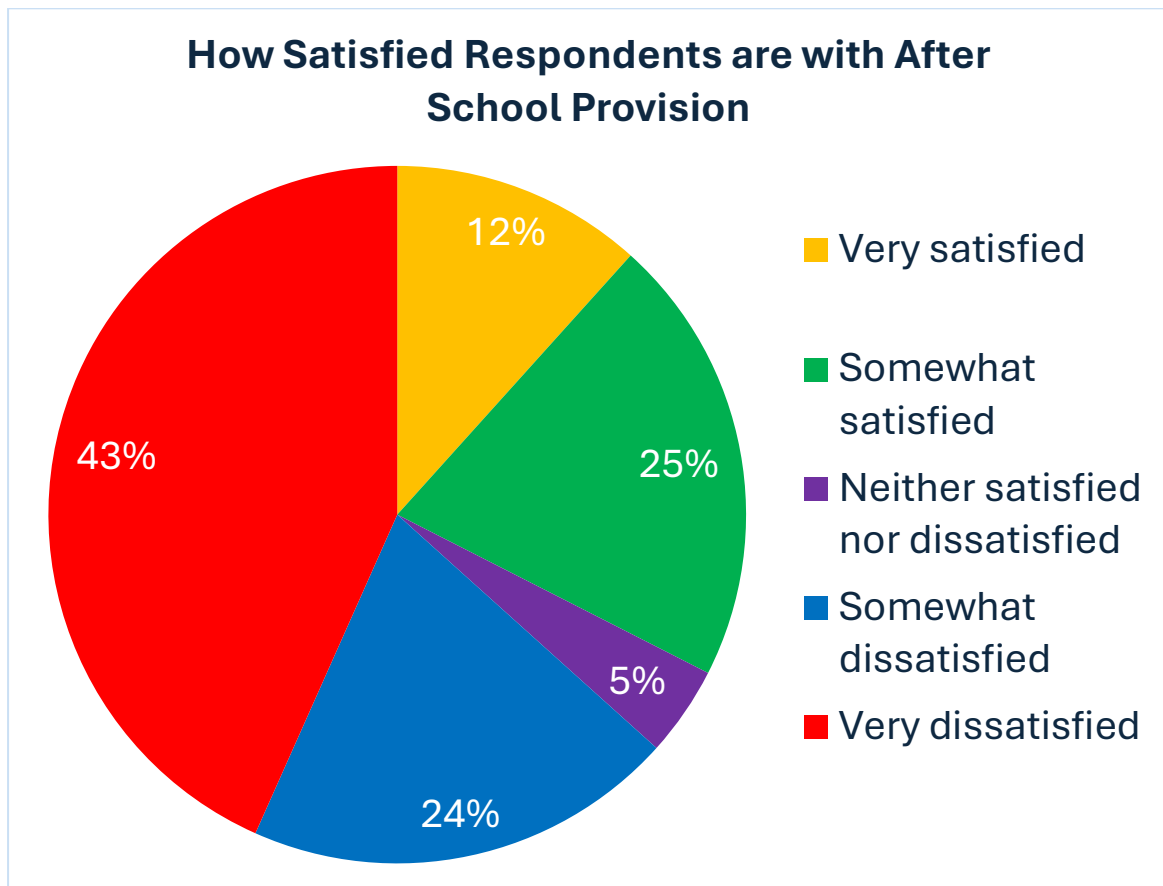
How many days a week respondents use childcare.



Who provides respondents childcare?

For 60% of respondent's childcare was provided by a private provider. Many parents relied on a combination of parents, other parents of children at the school and family and friends to make up enough provision. Only 6% of respondents cited school as their main provider of childcare.

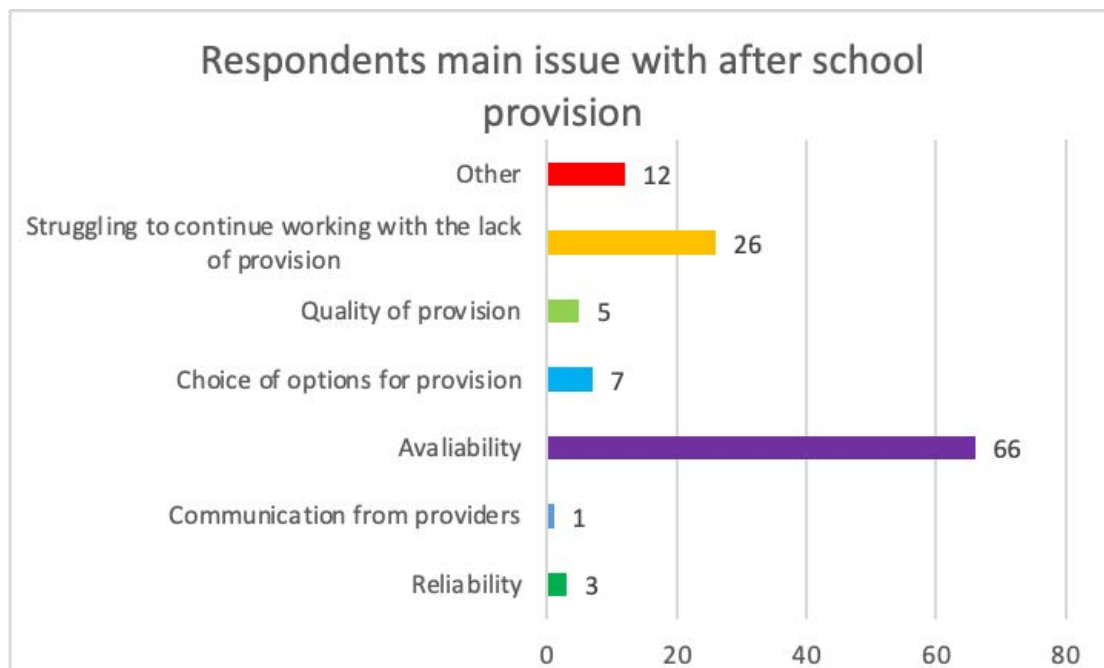
How satisfied respondents are with after school provision in Edinburgh South West?



Overall respondents found it more difficult to access childcare in term time, with 87% of respondents finding it 'somewhat' or 'very' difficult to access term time childcare. Compared with 43% in holiday time.

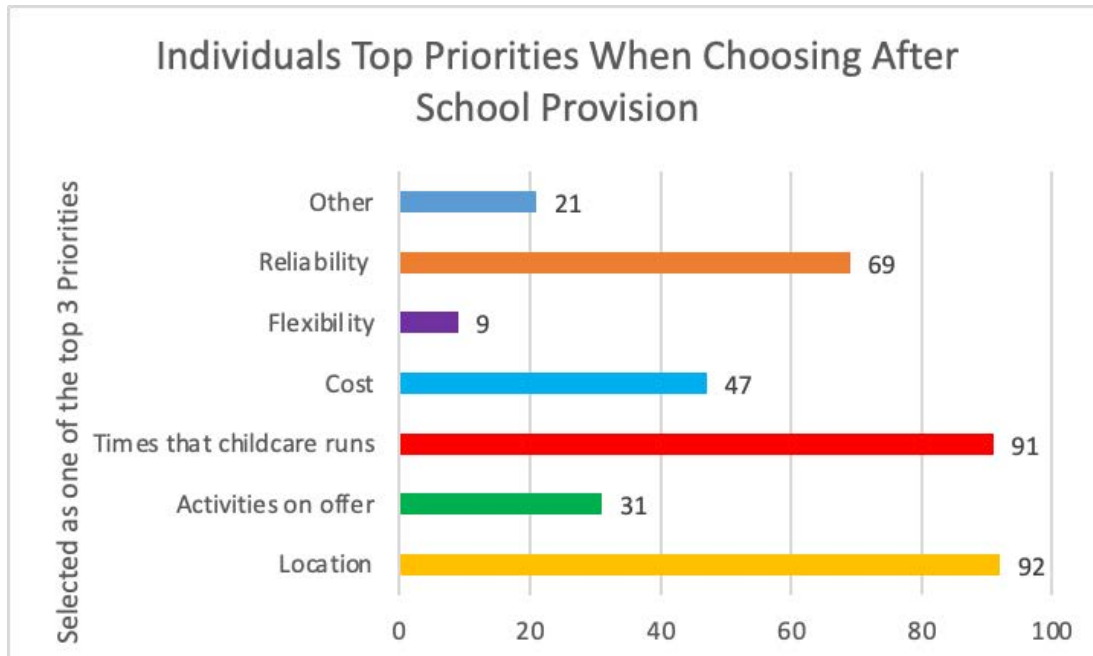
Provision for children with additional needs

Respondents who have children with additional needs cited that the childcare provision was good when they managed to get a place and has been of support to their child.



Among the other issues cited were parents' inability to work, or having to work compressed hours to provide childcare, because of the lack of availability and options.

What are people priorities in childcare provision?



Among the other issues raised by respondents were availability, and safety of children.

Summary of respondent's issues with after school provision.

1- Lack of availability

Long waiting lists, one option that is oversubscribed, some parents have a couple of days provision but need more.

2- Impact on families

Parents are having to reduce work hours or stop working entirely.

3- Cost

Costs of provision have increased.

Positives of after school provision in Edinburgh South West

- Parents value staff
- Holiday club provision
- Enrichment activities are great

When childcare is available in lots of cases the provision is good.

How did respondents want childcare improved?

- More spaces
- More staff to increase capacity, and keep children engaged in activities
- Offer the same service but make it cheaper
- Wrap around care – or extend the school day to match the working pattern of working parents.

Summary

Childcare provision is extremely limited in Edinburgh South West, the lack of availability is the most prominent issue, with reliability and cost of childcare among other concerns. The supply of wrap around care within the constituency does not meet the demand and needs of parents. There is a need for coordinated action

Next steps

Dr Scott Arthur MP has arranged a roundtable to better understand constituents' experiences and thoughts on after school provision.

This event will be held on Zoom at 7.30pm on Tuesday the 2nd of September 2025.