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# Use of Childcare Among Families from Minority Ethnic Backgrounds

Alice Bell, Caroline Bryson, Matt Barnes and Ruth O'Shea

National Centre for Social Research

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*Use of Childcare Among Families from  
Minority Ethnic Backgrounds*

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*National Centre for Social Research*

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## 1 SUMMARY

This report aims to explore the ways in which experiences of and views about childcare differ between families of different ethnic origin in England. The bulk of the report is based on analysis of data from two very similar large-scale surveys carried out by *The National Centre for Social Research* (NatCen) on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)<sup>1</sup>: the *Baseline survey of parents' demand for childcare*, published in 2000,<sup>2</sup> and the *Repeat study of parent's demand for childcare*, published in 2002.<sup>3</sup> Together, more than 10,000 families were interviewed for these surveys.

In order to place the survey data in context, the authors also conducted a review of relevant literature, which is presented in Chapter Three.

This summary presents some key findings from the data analysis.

### 1.1 Family characteristics

Before considering childcare issues, we built up an outline of the characteristics of families in the different ethnic groups, with a particular focus on characteristics that might influence use of and preferences for childcare. Here, the key findings included:

- The Asian parents and children in the sample were younger than their white and Black counterparts, although the differences were more marked for Pakistani and Bangladeshi parents than for Indian parents;
- Black families were considerably more likely than other families to be headed up by a lone parent;
- The average number of additional adults living in the household was highest among Asian parents;
- Black mothers were most likely to work full-time, while white mothers were most likely to work part-time.
- Asian mothers were least likely to be in any form of paid employment, although Indian mothers were considerably more likely to be working than Pakistani and Bangladeshi mothers.
- Black families had the lowest household incomes, followed by Asian families, although, again, Indian families were better off than their Pakistani and Bangladeshi counterparts.
- Minority ethnic mothers were more likely than white mothers to say that they would ideally give up work if they could afford to, perhaps indicating that they were working primarily for financial reasons.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of the first survey, this was known as the Department for Education and Employment, DfEE).

<sup>2</sup> La Valle, I., Finch, S., Nove, A. and Lewin, C. (2000) *Baseline survey of parents' demand for childcare*, Research Report 176, London: DfEE.

<sup>3</sup> Woodland, S., Miller, M. and Tipping, S. (2002) *Repeat study of parent's demand for childcare*, Research Report 348, London: DfES.

## 1.2 Use of childcare

We looked at families' use of childcare both at a general level, and in terms of formal and informal care. Formal care was defined as childminders, nannies, babysitters, crèches, nurseries, playgroups, out-of-school clubs, family centres, nursery classes and reception classes. Informal care was defined as ex-partners, relatives and friends.

As regards use of childcare overall, we found that:

- White and Black Caribbean families were the two most likely groups to have used some childcare, when measured across both the past year and the past week. For white families, this may reflect their higher incomes and relatively high levels of maternal work (though much of this was part-time). Among Black families, it is likely to be linked to high levels of lone parenthood and full-time maternal work.
- Black children had, on average, received a greater number of hours of childcare in the past week. This, again, is likely to be related to the high numbers of Black mothers working full-time.
- Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African families were least likely to have used any childcare in the past year or the past week. For the Asian groups in particular, this may reflect both circumstances (low maternal employment, low levels of lone parenthood, tendency to have other adults living in the household) and preference (e.g. parental childcare preferred for cultural or religious reasons).

Focusing on formal care, we found that:

- Black children were most likely to be receiving only formal childcare. As with the findings on use of all childcare, this is likely to reflect high levels of lone parenthood and maternal work. However, as we see in Chapter Three, it may reflect preferences as well, as there is evidence that Black parents tend to favour childcare with an 'educational' element.
- For Black families, use of formal childcare was less likely to be linked with a child being aged three or four than among other ethnic groups. Black families were also most likely to have used some out-of-school or holiday childcare, which may partly have reflected the fact that Black mothers were most likely to have reported before- and after-school care being offered by their employers (see Table 4.14).
- Black families living in deprived areas were more likely than other Black families to use formal childcare, while the opposite was true among white families. This may reflect the fact that Black families living in deprived areas have benefited more than their white counterparts from targeted interventions such as Sure Start local programmes and the Neighbourhood Nurseries initiative, perhaps because of their lower average incomes and the likelihood of Black families being headed up by a lone parent.

Key findings on informal care included:

- In all ethnic groups, use of informal care was linked with working at atypical times, having a low household income and using a large number of hours of childcare overall;

- White families were most likely to use informal childcare and more than twice as likely as families from minority ethnic groups to use grandparents for childcare.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.3 Difficulties with arranging childcare

We looked at the experiences of families from different ethnic groups both in terms of occasions on which they wanted or needed childcare and were unable to get it ('unmet demand') and with regard to occasions on which their childcare arrangements broke down at short notice. Key findings included:

- Black parents were most likely to have experienced some unmet demand for childcare in the past year, while Asian parents were least likely to have done so.
- Minority ethnic parents were more likely than white parents to say that they had experienced unmet demand for childcare on a frequent basis (i.e. once a month or more often) over the past year.
- Minority ethnic parents were more likely than white parents to say they had experienced unmet demand because they could not afford the childcare they needed or wanted.
- Black parents were most likely to have experienced short-notice breakdowns in their childcare arrangements over the past year, while Asian parents were least likely to have encountered such problems. On average, minority ethnic parents had experienced short-notice childcare breakdowns more frequently than their white counterparts.

### 1.4 Parental evaluation of childcare provision

We explored parents' views on ideal childcare provision as well as the reasons why they had chosen the providers they had used in the past year. We also looked at data on the ease or difficulty with which they were able to travel to their providers. Key findings included:

- White mothers were more likely than minority ethnic mothers to choose informal provision as ideal. This may reflect the fact that minority ethnic families were less likely to have such care available to them - if their family lives overseas for example, or they had not lived in the UK long enough to establish a strong social network - but it may also reflect aspects of preference as well.
- While trust and affection were common reasons for choosing a childcare provider among all ethnic groups, white parents were more likely to cite these than their minority ethnic counterparts. This very likely reflects their stronger preference for informal care.
- In contrast, Black parents were least likely to give being home-based as a reason for choosing a provider, reflecting their higher use of formal care.
- Black parents were also more likely to cite factors around cost and availability as reasons for choosing a provider, linking with the earlier findings that they were

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<sup>4</sup> The relatively low proportion of Asian parents using informal care appears somewhat surprising and, while every effort was made in the questionnaires to encourage respondents to include friends and relatives as childcare providers, we can speculate that there was some under-reporting of informal care among Asian parents, perhaps especially when provided by adults who were resident in the respondent's and child's household.

the lowest earning of the ethnic groups and were also most likely to have experienced unmet demand for reasons of affordability.

- The vast majority of parents in all ethnic groups found it easy to travel to their childcare providers, but there was some evidence that Black parents found it slightly more difficult than others.

### **1.5 Information on childcare**

We looked at parents' views and experiences of receiving information about the childcare available in their local areas and found that:

- Black parents were most likely to have received information on childcare from at least one source.
- Asian parents were least likely to have received any information on childcare but were also significantly more likely than white and Black parents to say that about the right amount of information was available to them. This could reflect a lower need for such information among Asian parents, who are least likely of all the groups to be using (formal) childcare.
- Black parents were least positive about the amount of childcare information available to them, which could reflect their higher demand for childcare and supports their high levels of reported unmet demand.
- Asian parents were most likely to say they would like more information on the quality of childcare in the local area, which could indicate that concerns about quality form a barrier to use of childcare among this group.

### **1.6 Number and quality of childcare places**

Finally, we explored parents' views on the number, quality and affordability of the childcare places available in their local area. Here, key findings included:

- Black parents were most likely to say that there were too few childcare places available in their local area, supporting the earlier findings on unmet demand.
- White parents rated the quality of local childcare provision more positively than their minority ethnic counterparts.
- Asian parents were most likely to say that they did not know about either the number or the quality of childcare places available, reflecting the fact that they were least likely to have received any childcare information.
- Black parents were least positive about the affordability of childcare providers in their local areas. This reflects a number of earlier findings regarding Black families, including their lower average incomes, the likelihood of their being lone parents and the likelihood of their having experienced unmet demand for childcare for financial reasons.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

This report aims to explore the ways in which experiences of and views about childcare differ between families of different ethnic origin in England. In this introduction, we will describe how we have obtained a sample of families to analyse, how their ethnicity has been classified, the content of the rest of the report and how the data presented in subsequent chapters ought to be interpreted.

### 2.1 The sample

The sample of families that forms the basis for analysis in this report comes from two very similar large-scale surveys carried out by *The National Centre for Social Research* (NatCen) on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)<sup>5</sup>. The *Baseline survey of parents' demand for childcare* was carried out in 1999, with a report published in 2000,<sup>6</sup> while the *Repeat study of parents' demand for childcare* was carried out in 2001, with a report published in 2002.<sup>7</sup> Altogether, more than 10,000 families were interviewed and both surveys achieved a response rate of around 75 per cent.

The *Parents' demand for childcare* surveys were conducted with random samples of parents of children aged 0 to 14 across England, selected from Child Benefit Records.<sup>8</sup> As such, the findings were nationally representative at the time the interviews were carried out. The surveys took place by means of face-to-face interviews with the parents who had the main or shared responsibility for childcare decisions in their households. In the vast majority of cases, this was the mother.

The surveys included detailed information on the use of both formal childcare (for example, nursery schools, playgroups, out-of-school clubs) and informal childcare (for example, relatives and friends). Details of parental employment were also collected (working status, type of job, hours worked etc.) and parents were asked about their reasons for working and the ways in which their decisions about work and childcare interacted.

#### 2.1.1 Combining two surveys

For the purposes of this report, the data from both *Parents' Demand* surveys have been combined in order to yield sufficient sample sizes for analysis of ethnic groups at the finest possible level. The combining of the data was made possible by the fact that the same sample design was used for both surveys and by virtue of a great deal of consistency between the two questionnaires, in terms of both content and structure.

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<sup>5</sup> At the time of the first survey, this was known as the Department for Education and Employment, DfEE).

<sup>6</sup> La Valle, I., Finch, S., Nove, A. and Lewin, C. (2000) *Baseline survey of parents' demand for childcare*, Research Report 176, London: DfEE.

<sup>7</sup> Woodland, S., Miller, M. and Tipping, S. (2002) *Repeat study of parents' demand for childcare*, Research Report 348, London: DfES.

<sup>8</sup> The *Baseline survey* was also carried out in Wales, but these cases have been excluded from the combined dataset used for analysis for this report.

There are a few topic areas, however, in which the two surveys differed in such a way that it was not appropriate to analyse the combined data. For example, some questions in the Repeat survey were changed as a response to lessons learned from the Baseline survey or as a result of cognitive testing that took place between the two. In such cases, we have run analysis on the most up-to-date dataset, namely the Repeat survey. Any data taken from only the Repeat survey will be marked as such throughout the report.

Both surveys included the collection of information at three levels – the family, the child and the childcare or early years education provider. Whilst certain information was collected at the level of the family, elsewhere in the survey respondents were asked to focus on up to two children and on the providers that each child used. During the report, we have chosen to use child level, family level or provider level data as appropriate. We have clearly specified whether we are referring to families, children or providers within the report.

## 2.2 Classification of ethnic group

Respondents to both *Parents' Demand* surveys were asked to classify their ethnic group into one of the following categories:

- ◆ White
- ◆ Black Caribbean
- ◆ Black African
- ◆ Black other
- ◆ Indian
- ◆ Pakistani
- ◆ Bangladeshi
- ◆ Chinese
- ◆ Mixed Race
- ◆ Other<sup>9</sup>

Owing to small sample sizes, we have not presented separate findings for the 'Black other', 'Chinese', 'Mixed Race' or 'Other' groups in this report. Instead, the data from these groups are included under the composite headings of 'Black Total' (that includes 'Black Caribbean', 'Black African' and 'Black Other'), 'Asian Total' (that includes Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese) and 'Minority Ethnic Groups Total' (that includes all the Black and Asian groups as well as 'Mixed Race' and 'Other'). This revised list of categories forms the basic ethnic breakdown used in the report.

Some survey questions were only asked of a subset of respondents and this reduces sample sizes further. In such cases, we have been obliged to present findings at a greater level of aggregation than the basic breakdown described above. In every case, we only moved to using broader groups if sample sizes were not sufficient to present

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<sup>9</sup> Those who said 'other' were not asked to specify their ethnic group.

findings at a finer level of detail. There are four possible levels of aggregation as follows (the composition of each category remains the same as in each breakdown):

*Level One*

- ◆ White
- ◆ Black Caribbean
- ◆ Black African
- ◆ Black Total
- ◆ Indian
- ◆ Pakistani
- ◆ Bangladeshi
- ◆ Asian Total
- ◆ Minority Ethnic Groups Total

*Level Two*

- ◆ White
- ◆ Black Caribbean
- ◆ Black Total
- ◆ Indian
- ◆ Pakistani
- ◆ Asian Total
- ◆ Minority Ethnic Groups Total

*Level Three*

- ◆ White
- ◆ Black Total
- ◆ Asian Total
- ◆ Minority Ethnic Groups Total

*Level Four*

- ◆ White
- ◆ Minority Ethnic Groups Total

Thus, whilst some key questions about childcare are asked of all parents (for which we use Level One above), for many questions which are only asked of a sub-set of parents, or which are covered only by the Repeat Survey rather than both surveys, we lose ability to look at Bangladeshi families or Black African families (i.e. Level Two). For questions asked of small proportions of families, we are required to use Levels Three or Four. For each table, we mark which of the above levels has been used in the analysis.

## **2.3 The report**

The report is divided into six substantive chapters (not including the summary (Chapter One), this introduction (Chapter Two) and the conclusions (Chapter Nine).

Chapter Three presents an overview of the existing research literature on use of childcare among minority ethnic families, to provide background and context to the analysis of the *Parents' Demand* data which forms the basis for the rest of the report.

Chapter Four consists of a discussion of the key demographic characteristics of the different ethnic groups in the sample, including work status, reasons for working and ideal working arrangements. This forms a backdrop to the rest of the report, with subsequent chapters referring back to the demographic profile in order to explain differences between parents' views and experiences of childcare where relevant.

Chapter Five presents findings relating to use of childcare, both formal and informal, over both the week and the year preceding their *Parents' Demand* interview.

Chapter Six discusses how the ethnic groups differed with respect to difficulties with childcare - either occasions when parents had wanted childcare and could not get it or occasions when their arrangements had broken down at short notice.

Chapter Seven explores parents' perceptions of providers - their reasons for choosing providers, the provider types they would ideally have used and the extent to which they considered childcare services to be accessible to them.

Finally, Chapter Eight explores the ways in which parents had obtained information about childcare, any needs they may have had for more information and their perceptions of the childcare provision in the local areas where they lived.

### **2.3.1 Guidance for the interpretation of data**

Whilst weighted data were used during all analyses, the unweighted bases for each ethnic group are presented in all tables, with a description of the relevant base below.

The following symbols have been used in tables in this report:

- [ ] To indicate a percentage or mean based on fewer than 100 respondents.
- \* To indicate a percentage value of less than 0.5 per cent.
- To indicate a percentage value of zero.

All percentages shown in the tables are column per cents.

Only statistically significant differences (at the 95 per cent confidence level) are noted in the text.

Information on ethnic group information was not available for seventeen families in the sample. These families are excluded from the analysis throughout the report.

## 2.4 Policy changes since 1999

The data from two surveys on which this report is based were collected in 1999 and 2001. When reading the report, it is important to bear in mind that there have been some policy changes in this area since these data were collected.

A further development which has a significant impact is the introduction of free universal part time education for three year olds as well as four year olds from April 2004.

Also, following publication of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Sure Start Unit supported several small projects to explore the implications of the Act for Local Authorities and settings. These included:

- Four Inclusion pilot projects investigated barriers faced by minority ethnic communities in accessing early years and childcare services and explored ways of improving the experiences of these communities. A report based on the experiences of the pilots *Sure Start: for Everyone* was produced.
- To help raise the equality agenda in early education and childcare services, the Sure Start Unit supported the provision of advice, support and training to Local Authorities.
- A paper *Promoting Race Equality in Early Years* was produced and circulated to local authority early years officers.
- Provision of training to Children's Information Services staff to improve provision of information to black and minority ethnic parents.

The Sure Start Unit also fund Parent line Plus and other organisations to respond to parents' requests for information, identifying the universal and targeted information needed by parents and ensuring that the diversity of parents and families as customers is reflected and that in the provision of information, advice and signposting support for parents and families the most effective and appropriate medium for communication is used<sup>1</sup>.

The Commission for Racial Equality) has recently produced guidance for public authorities and partnerships on promoting race equality.

### 3 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON USE OF CHILDCARE AMONG MINORITY ETHNIC FAMILIES

#### 3.1 Introduction

The survey data we will explore in this report is not the only recent research on the childcare use of minority ethnic parents (although most other work is qualitative and relatively small-scale). In this chapter, we look at some of the key themes emerging from the literature, which throw light on the reasons for this and suggest ways in which access to childcare for minority ethnic groups might be improved in the future<sup>10</sup>.

When interpreting data on levels of childcare use, it is always essential to distinguish between three separate but closely related questions:

- How much childcare are parents *using* (and of what type)?
- What kind(s) of childcare would parents *prefer* to use (and why)?
- What kind(s) of childcare would best serve the *well being of the child*?

The answers to these three questions need not be the same. First, the amount and type of childcare used by parents is not automatically indicative of their preferences: as we will see later in this report, far from every parent interviewed for the *Parents' Demand for Childcare* surveys considered him/herself to have secured his/her 'ideal' childcare arrangements. The reasons for this gap between use and preference can span everything from affordability to availability; from flexibility according to parents' working schedules to deeply-embedded beliefs about the appropriateness of various forms of childcare; from concerns about the quality of the provision on offer in a local area to broader questions of trust and familiarity. Moreover, with respect to minority ethnic groups, it is important to note, first, that each of these barriers may be manifested in forms that differ from the white majority and, second, that there will be some barriers, most obviously concerning race, culture, language and ethnicity, which are likely to play a particularly large part in the childcare decisions of these families.

The second area of potential disparity between the three key questions set out above concerns the well being of children themselves. There is little disagreement in the literature regarding the potential benefits for children of receiving some form of non-parental (or non-familial) childcare:

"Childcare can be of considerable benefit to children, parents and communities. It can assist children's learning and development, improve social skills, support parents and parenting and can create opportunities for study, training and employment. It can break cycles of family poverty and

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<sup>10</sup> This short literature review was carried out at the start of the project. It should not be seen as exhaustive, but rather as a vehicle to flag up some of the major themes discussed about childcare amongst minority ethnic families.

enhance social and community infrastructure. Some of these benefits could be particularly valuable to black and minority ethnic communities in overcoming the disadvantages they often face." (Daycare Trust 2003: 4-5)

Of course, there is rarely one answer to the question of what type of childcare will best serve a child's well-being and there is recognition in the literature for the need to be sensitive to parental preferences in suggesting and promoting different options. Aside from preferences relating to particular types of childcare setting, parents from some cultures may be resistant to the idea of non-parental (or non-familial) childcare in any form, as a study by Save the Children found:

"Cultural explanations...offered two premises. First, that day care, effectively seen as leaving children with strangers, is a western construct and inappropriate. Second, that traditional forms of child care involved the extended family and that should continue." (West et al. (1996): 8-9).

Other research has found that Asian women are particularly likely to perceive themselves in the traditional 'carer' role, which may be incompatible with the use of non-familial childcare (Pettigrew 2003, Hall et al. 2004, Third 1995). Nevertheless, the key point is the potential for a gap between parental preferences and what may be beneficial to children as a result of attitudinal or perceptual barriers rather than practical ones. These include a sense of isolation, or a lack of confidence or a feeling of 'not fitting in'.

### **3.2 Dealing With Diversity**

Many commentators are at pains to emphasise the obvious but crucial point that not all minority ethnic families are the same and to remind us of the diversity that exists both between and within different groups, including those falling under the broader category of the 'white majority'. In addition to the inevitable diversity of ethnic groups and of individuals within those groups, an almost infinite range of characteristics and experiences will cut across parents' ethnic identity to influence their attitudes towards different types of childcare. Such factors can range from family size and lone parenthood to a child's age and whether he or she has special medical or educational needs; they may include experience of war, racial harassment or discrimination, isolation, oppression or domestic violence; they may be based upon past contact with the police, the courts, immigration authorities, the Child Support Agency (CSA), child protection officials or even with childcare settings themselves. For all of these reasons and more, parents require a choice of childcare in their local area and settings must have the resources to be flexible and sensitive to individual need.

### **3.3 Challenges and Opportunities**

Research shows that there are a number of challenges facing those who seek to improve the access of minority ethnic parents to their preferred forms of childcare and to the types of childcare that will best serve their children. The key challenges we have identified are as follows:

- Affordability
- Availability and location
- Awareness and information
- Cultural recognition, inclusion and understanding
- Expectations of childcare

These will be discussed in turn below. Where the literature yields suggestions and recommendations for ways in which these challenges might be approached, these will also be discussed.

### **3.3.1 Affordability**

Minority ethnic children living in the UK are considerably more likely than their white counterparts to grow up in poverty. While 18 per cent of white children in England and Wales fell into the bottom fifth of the income distribution in 2002, the same was true of 26 per cent of Indian children, 34 per cent of Black Caribbean children, 43 per cent of Black non-Caribbean children and 61 per cent of Bangladeshi and Pakistani children (Kober (ed.) 2003). In view of this, it is not surprising that much research has identified cost as a major barrier to the use of childcare among minority ethnic parents (Pettigrew 2003, Hall et al. 2004).

Of course, a key main route out of poverty is entry into paid employment, and childcare can clearly be a very powerful facilitator to this end. For some minority ethnic parents, however, entering the workforce can prove difficult for a range of reasons, including unrecognised or outdated qualifications, a lack of UK work experience, language problems, a lack of confidence and/or interview skills or difficulty finding appropriate jobs in their local area. For women, cultural factors can also lead to a resistance to entering the labour market. In a DWP study of lone parents from minority ethnic communities, Pettigrew found that:

“Those Asian lone parents that had stopped working when they had married, believed it had not been culturally acceptable for them to work. Even with the father gone, there was a perception, that it was still not culturally acceptable within their community to be seen to be working.” (Pettigrew 2003: 1 (research summary))

Entry into paid employment and access to childcare are therefore subject to many of the same barriers. In addition, childcare itself may act as a barrier as well as a facilitator to work for various reasons including cost (but also including availability, flexibility and so on), leading to a vicious circle situation for many poor and low income families. A Joseph Rowntree Foundation study of tenants in a Black housing association found that:

“Most mothers working and not came to the conclusion that going out to work would not be financially viable if they had to pay *anything* for childcare” (Third 1995: 2 (findings))

A variety of government initiatives, including Sure Start, seek to support these families in combining paid work and childcare.<sup>11</sup>

### **3.3.2 Availability and location**

The availability of suitable childcare at convenient times is clearly another key factor which influences families' ability to combine paid work and family responsibilities, and may be a particular issue for some minority ethnic families. West et al. found, for example, that many of the minority ethnic women they spoke to worked in service industries and therefore required childcare in the evenings. In other cases, where fathers worked in catering, the whole family might operate to a later-than-average daily schedule, making morning-only provision particularly inappropriate (West et al. 1996). Another study, conducted by Barnardos in 2000, found that long and atypical working hours were a key factor in the childcare choices of the Chinese community in Northern Ireland. The report on the Daycare Trust's 'Parent's Eye' project mentions the tricky position of some Muslim parents who wanted to use out-of-school clubs but did not wish to pay for provision after 4.30pm when their children went to the mosque (Daycare Trust 2003).

Transport can be another major barrier to use of childcare, again particularly among low-income families. In addition, for minority ethnic families, the location of a childcare setting may have further implications. One study of family centres by the Race Equality Unit came across a case where the setting was some distance away from the homes of the refugee community it was attempting to target. It was also sited in a church, which may have had a deterrent effect on the non-Christian population. As a response to this, a 'satellite site' was set up and a development worker employed to direct the service more specifically to that community (Box 2001).

### **3.3.3 Awareness and information**

Many parents who fail to access local childcare services report a lack of awareness of what is available to them. For example, a recent DfES survey showed that 40 per cent parents of three and four year olds felt they did not have sufficient information to enable them to choose a nursery education provider in their local area (Bell and Finch, 2004). Even in cases where information has been provided, some minority ethnic parents may have difficulty understanding it, particularly those who do not speak or read English to a high standard. Language barriers can also affect the spread of information about additional forms of support such as Working Tax Credit or the New Deal for Lone Parents. This is clearly an area of great importance, both in terms of providing parents with access to the services available in their local area and in order to overcome resistance to potentially beneficial forms of childcare based on misinformation or a fear of the unknown.

Research suggests a number of ways in which problems relating to awareness and information might be overcome. The provision of information in a range of languages is obviously key and, in 2003, the Daycare Trust launched the Language Line service which provides information on childcare services in more than 100

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<sup>11</sup> Three of the twelve targets set out in the Sure Start Public Service Agreement (PSA) are specifically concerned with reaching all families of all ethnic groups within the catchment area.

languages (a range of similar audio resources are also available). It is made clear, however, that the provision of information will not be sufficient, especially in raising awareness among 'hard to reach' groups such as asylum seekers, refugees or travelling communities, or parents who might find it difficult to leave their homes, for example due to poverty, isolation or disempowerment. The importance of active outreach work and targeted communications programmes is emphasised in the literature. To this end, the forging of partnerships between childcare settings and other bodies, ranging from community and religious groups to other support services and local business, is seen by many as crucial. The fact that some minority ethnic groups have developed close-knit networks functioning around shops, places of worship, cultural centres and so on, may be an advantage here. Hall et al. suggest that this is a particular feature of Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities, where child poverty is highest (Hall et al. 2004).

### **3.3.4 Cultural recognition, inclusion and understanding**

Beyond the question of awareness raising and the provision of information to minority ethnic parents is the issue of how to include and involve them once they have started to use childcare. The first thing to note here is that a lack of consensus emerged from the literature as to the extent to which it is in fact desirable to recognise ethnic difference within childcare settings. At one end of the opinion spectrum, researchers working on the Save The Children project cited above noted that some carers were resistant to the idea of explicit acknowledgement of ethnic difference within the context of the setting:

“There appears to be a belief among some that particular attention to the needs of minority ethnic families is not necessary, or that by treating all children the same those needs are served.” (West et al. 1996:10)

Similarly, Candappa notes the difficulties some local authorities had in applying an ethnically based interpretation to the category of 'children in need' deployed in the Children Act 1989. This concerned the desire to balance an acknowledgement of the possibility of racial disadvantage with a wish not to exaggerate the level of need among minority ethnic groups, which might lead to the potential stigmatisation of minority ethnic children. Various studies also noted that attempts to recognise ethnic difference in areas or settings where certain ethnic groups are very much in the minority can be particularly difficult (Candappa 1994, 'Sure Start for All'). In such cases, a focus on inclusion, assimilation and equal treatment might appear particularly attractive. Moreover, it may not just be carers and state officials who take this view. The author of an Australian study looking at use of childcare among different ethnic groups around Melbourne observed that Vietnamese parents were particularly disposed to see childcare as an 'acculturative' experience, primarily aimed at assimilating their children into Anglo-Australian culture. In addition, *none* of the ethnic groups surveyed appeared to place importance on the role of the childcare setting as a forum for advancing understanding of ethnic difference:

“...parents felt that child care did not have a definite role in promoting understanding of children's cultural background...it would appear that parents perceive the home to be the most appropriate setting for cultural exposure” (Wise 2002: 53)

In the UK, however, an apparently stronger school of thought holds that the recognition of ethnic difference within childcare settings is vital if minority ethnic children and families are to get the most out of the services available:

“Colour blind” teachers, carers and policy makers assert that they treat all children the same, that neither their colour, culture nor language makes any difference. This approach is deeply racist, because it assumes that differences will be absorbed into the dominant white culture” (Alibhai Brown)<sup>12</sup>

“Those parents with the best experiences of childcare enjoyed services which involved and understood the communities they serve.” (Daycare Trust 2003: 19)

“It is significantly more difficult to celebrate diversity in areas that seem to be mono-cultural. It is still vitally important.” (“Sure Start for All’: 12)

Such authors raise issues about the need for settings to think about ways in which they can go about recognising and embracing racial, religious and cultural diversity among their users. At a fundamental level, this would involve training staff in the implications of the Race Relations Act and preparing them to deal with occasions of racial harassment or discrimination should they arise. While racism in its more aggressive manifestations did not emerge as a major problem from the literature, Candappa says:

“Research suggests that children as young as three can be aware of simple racial differences and also give different values to them...there is therefore a need to ensure that children learn to value and respect one another in early childhood” (Candappa 1994: 228)

The same is clearly true of parents and carers alike.

Recognition, inclusion and understanding of ethnic diversity go beyond the question of tackling racism, however. West et al. make the point that minority ethnic children living in the UK are often required to mediate between their parents’ world and the western culture they experience through participation in public institutions (West et al. 1996). Therefore, the stronger the bonds between minority ethnic families and childcare providers, the lighter the burden on the children themselves.

Several studies emphasise the vital importance of engaging minority ethnic parents in the experiences of their child within the setting by consulting them regularly and giving them a sense of ownership over the provision:

“Parents needed to trust and own services and ensure that they met real and often changing needs rather than assumed needs” (Daycare Trust 2003: 18)

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<sup>12</sup> This quotation comes from Yasmin Alibhai Brown’s keynote address to a seminar organized by the European Commission Network on Childcare and Other Measures to Reconcile Employment and Family Responsibilities entitled ‘Challenging Racism in European Childcare Provision’, held in Leeds on 14-16 October 1992.

In its best form, such inclusion will involve approaching parents not only as parents but also as individuals in their own right, helping them to overcome feelings of isolation and making them feel welcome. West et al. highlight the fact that childcare settings with a more prominent social aspect, mother and toddler groups for example, can be the most intimidating for minority ethnic mothers, especially where there is a language barrier (West et al. 1996). Several other studies refer to parents' feelings of exclusion and 'otherness' at their childcare settings (Hall et al. 2004, West et al. 1996, Daycare Trust 2003) and, as the Daycare Trust point out:

"This can very quickly lead to a climate of suspicion, fear and ignorance."  
(Daycare Trust 2003: 18)

Gaining and retaining the trust of parents is of course of paramount importance too, especially with respect to families for whom the use of non-familial childcare may go against their traditional cultural practices. A comparative study drawing on three pre-school settings in Sweden which had taken a pro-active approach to ethnic integration cites a number of ways in which parents may be made to feel like 'stakeholders' in their child's setting. These ranged from inviting parents to bring food into the setting at lunchtimes to supporting staff in learning additional languages. The efforts made in these settings went so far beyond the "token gestures" cautioned against by the Daycare Trust (Daycare Trust 2003: 19) that the author was inspired to claim of one pre-school:

"activities at Kastanjen are multi-ethnic to such a degree that diversity is not something the children are consciously aware of" (Pedwell 2003: 26)

One issue that elicits a range of views in the literature, however, is the importance of recruiting childcare staff from minority ethnic groups. Minority ethnic workers are currently under-represented at all levels of the UK childcare workforce. Some research has shown parents to be strongly concerned with the presence of staff from their own ethnic groups within their child's setting, particularly where language is an issue (Evans 2003, Daycare Trust 2003, Box 2001). The Daycare Trust report that:

"The recruitment of staff from within black and minority ethnic communities can aid mutual understanding and can dramatically improve delivery of culturally sensitive services. Those parents using services where there was staff representation from the community tended to have the best experience and the most confidence in the service." (Daycare Trust 2003: 190)

A report for the Women and Equality Unit found this to be particularly true of Asian and Muslim mothers (Hall et al. 2004). Indeed, the Unit's concern with the need for an increase in the number of minority ethnic carers has led them to issue a leaflet giving practical support and encouragement to minority ethnic women seeking to set up childminding businesses. Other research suggests that the presence of minority ethnic staff may be less important to some parents -

"Some [parents] called for ethnic minority workers: 'a service such as a playgroup would be more "user-friendly" if workers or volunteers were of ethnic origin and some could communicate with parents [...] However, some families felt that the ethnic group of the carer did not matter: 'don't think it

makes a difference', 'the nationality of the childminder was not an issue.' It was more important to know the child workers concerned." (West et al. 1996:8).

### **3.3.5 Expectations of childcare**

Finally, it is worth noting that parents' preconceptions and expectations of childcare can pose a challenge to those seeking to convey the range of options available and to promote the benefits of different types of service. We have already mentioned that parents may differ in the extent to which they expect or desire childcare settings to act as a forum for cultural, religious or ethnic education. Similarly, research has shown that they may differ in the relative priority they assign to the functions of 'education' and 'care' in pre-school provision, for example Early and Burchinal suggest that black families:

"...may be more likely to select centre-based care because of a "pro-education orientation" and the perception that centre-based programs are more like schools." (Early and Burchinal 2001: 491)

Pettigrew reports a similar finding in relation to both black and Asian lone parents in the UK (Pettigrew 2003). Similarly, other studies report that some minority ethnic parents have expressed a negative view of childminders because they perceive them to be providing poor quality care, or on grounds of a culturally-rooted resistance to 'leaving their child with a stranger' (Third 1995, Pettigrew 2003).

Clearly, parents are entitled to hold on to their personal preferences regarding different types of childcare setting and, where these are tied up with cultural concepts, there may be very good reasons for them to do so. Nevertheless, the literature also suggests that there seems to be a role for settings, communities and government to inform and educate parents generally about the characteristics and potential of different types of provision, and to overcome prejudices borne of assumption or misinformation. In the case of childminders, this might be particularly beneficial owing to the relative flexibility of the sector and its potential for assisting parents in finding a way into paid work and out of poverty. In this case, it has been suggested it might be of particular benefit to target information regarding the role of OFSTED and the meaning of 'registered childcare' towards minority ethnic groups.

The *Parents' Demand for Childcare* surveys allow us to take a more quantitative look at some of the issues raised in the current literature, most of which is based on qualitative research and case studies. The next chapter 'sets the scene' for the analysis of the *Parents' Demand* data, providing an overview of the minority ethnic families included in the surveys, in relation to their socio-demographic and economic profiles.

## 4 FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

Given that the survey was designed to represent all parents in England with children aged 14 and under, minority ethnic parents made up only a small proportion of the total sample. With nine in ten (90 per cent) respondents to the two *Parents' Demand for Childcare* surveys classifying themselves as 'white', the remaining ten per cent divided into Black (three per cent), Asian (five per cent) and mixed race or other (two per cent).

Of the Black respondents, just over half were Black Caribbean (53 per cent), while 35 per cent were Black African and the remaining 12 per cent were classified as 'Black other'. Of the Asian respondents, just under half were Indian (46 per cent), just over a third were Pakistani (34 per cent), 14 per cent were Bangladeshi and five per cent were Chinese.

The purpose of this chapter is to build up a picture of the families who took part in the *Parents' Demand for Childcare* surveys by looking at some of their key demographic characteristics according to ethnic group. We refer back to this chapter throughout the report, in trying to explain differences in usage of and attitudes towards childcare between different ethnic groups.

### 4.1 Personal and family characteristics

#### 4.1.1 Parents' Ages

##### *Mother's age*

Table 4.1 shows the age of the mothers by ethnic group.

Table 4.1 Mother's age, by ethnic group (level 1)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than 20	1	-	-	*	-	1	[5]	1	1
20 to less than 30	19	15	22	18	23	39	[55]	32	25
30 to less than 40	53	52	56	55	51	40	[31]	46	49
40 to less than 50	25	28	22	24	24	17	[5]	19	23
50 or older	2	5	-	3	1	3	[5]	2	2
Base	9099	154	100	287	232	164	69	491	1000

Base: All mothers

Amongst younger mothers (under 40), minority ethnic mothers were on average younger than white mothers. Minority ethnic mothers were significantly *more* likely

than white mothers to be aged under 30 (26 per cent compared with 20 per cent); they were also *less* likely to be aged between 30 and 39 (49 per cent compared with 53 per cent). However, amongst mothers over 40, we found no significant differences in the age profiles of minority ethnic and white mothers (25 per cent compared with 27 per cent).

Looking within the different minority ethnic groups, we see that the white versus minority ethnic differences are driven by the Asian (particularly Pakistani and Bangladeshi) rather than Black mothers. While there were no significant differences between white and Black mothers, Asian mothers were significantly more likely to fall into the 20 to 29 age group than all other mothers. In addition, Asian mothers were significantly less likely than white mothers to be aged over 40. Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups had a younger age profile than Indian mothers, although caution should be exercised with regard to the Bangladeshi group owing to the small sample.

### **Father's age**

Table 4.2 shows the age breakdown of the fathers in our sample.

**Table 4.2** Father's age, by ethnic group (level two)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than 20	*	[-]	-	-	-	-	-
20 to less than 30	9	[5]	6	9	27	17	13
30 to less than 40	49	[45]	46	51	39	46	45
40 to less than 50	34	[39]	37	36	27	31	33
50 or older	7	[11]	11	4	7	6	8
Base	7127	65	126	201	140	430	720

Base: All fathers

We find fewer differences in the age profiles of fathers than mothers, when we compare white and minority ethnic group fathers. However, it does appear that – as with mothers – Asian fathers are somewhat younger on average than white or Black fathers. Asian fathers were more likely than other fathers to fall into the 20 to 29 age bracket (17 per cent, compared with 9 per cent of white fathers and 6 per cent of Black fathers). Again, this difference amongst Asian fathers appears to be driven by the younger age profiles of Pakistani (and Bangladeshi – not shown) fathers, rather than Indian fathers. Looking back at mothers and fathers together, we would suggest that Pakistani and Bangladeshi couples are more likely to have children at a younger age in general.

#### 4.1.2 Family structure

##### *Lone and partnered parents*

Table 4.3 shows how the proportion of lone and partnered parents varied according to ethnic group.

**Table 4.3 Family structure, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Lone parent	24	60	59	61	16	16	[13]	15	31
Couple	76	40	41	39	84	84	[87]	85	69
Base	9243	157	106	298	235	165	70	497	1022

Base: All families

This table shows that Black families were substantially more likely than all other groups to be headed up by a lone parent (61 per cent, compared with 24 per cent of white families and just 15 per cent of Asian families). There were no significant differences within either the Black or the Asian group. The incidence of lone parenthood amongst the Black families is taken into consideration in the interpretation of their childcare use and needs in later chapters.

##### *Presence of additional adults*

Table 4.4 shows the proportions of households where three or more adults were resident by ethnic group.

**Table 4.4 Number of adults in household, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Three or more	13	[19]	[11]	15	38	[36]	[43]	36	25
Five or more	-	[-]	-	-	5	[12]	[26]	9	4
Base	4827	84	66	163	133	96	39	283	589

Base: All families (Repeat Survey)

It is clear from this table that the households of Asian families were considerably more likely than those of white and Black families to contain three or more adults (36 per cent, compared with 13 per cent of white families and 15 per cent of Black families). Similarly, Asian households were much more likely to contain five or more adults (9 per cent). There were no significant differences between the individual Black and Asian groups with respect to the number of adults in the household.

**Number and ages of children**

Table 4.5 shows the number of children in the family by ethnic group.

**Table 4.5** Number of children in family, by ethnic group (level 1)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
One	42	49	37	43	41	22	[31]	33	38
Two	43	34	35	36	40	32	[30]	37	37
Three or more	16	17	28	21	18	45	[39]	30	25
Base	9243	157	106	298	235	165	70	497	1022

Base: All families

On average, Pakistani and Bangladeshi families had more children than white, Black or Indian families. They were significantly less likely than other families to include only one child (22 per cent and 31 per cent, compared with 41 to 43 per cent of Indian, white and Black families). Pakistani and Bangladeshi families were also more likely than all other groups to include three or more children (45 and 39 per cent compared with 16 per cent of white families, 18 per cent of Indian families and 21 per cent of Black families). This is in spite of the fact that Pakistani parents were, on average, younger than other parents (Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

Whilst equally likely to have one child, Black families were more likely than white families to include three or more children (21 per cent compared with 16 per cent).

Table 4.6 shows the age profile of the children within each of the different ethnic groups. Note the base here is *children* rather than families.

**Table 4.6** Age of children, by ethnic group (level 1)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
0 to 2	18	20	23	22	23	25	26	25	23
3 to 4	13	14	16	15	12	12	17	13	14
5 to 7	22	20	20	21	20	24	16	21	21
8 to 11	28	27	27	26	25	23	27	24	25
12 to 14	19	18	14	17	20	16	13	17	17
Base	14663	235	174	467	375	295	117	830	1656

Base: All children

A greater proportion of children in minority ethnic families was aged two and under compared to the white children. The difference was most marked amongst Asian children, of whom a quarter (25 per cent) were two or under compared to 18 per cent

of white children. Whilst the proportion of nursery school and infant aged children (3 to 7) was around the same for all groups, a greater proportion of white children fell into the 8 to 14 age group than other children (47 per cent compared to 42 per cent of minority ethnic children). These differences should be borne in mind when looking at levels of childcare use and at parents' ideal childcare choices.

### 4.1.3 Health

#### Children's health

Table 4.7 shows the proportions of children in the different ethnic groups whose parent or guardian said they had a special educational need (SEN) or other special need. Again, note the base here is *children* rather than families.

**Table 4.7** Whether child had special need, by ethnic group (level 1)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No special needs	<b>91</b>	92	92	<b>91</b>	96	95	98	<b>96</b>	<b>94</b>
Special needs - stated	<b>3</b>	5	3	<b>4</b>	2	3	1	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Special needs - not stated	<b>5</b>	3	4	<b>4</b>	1	2	-	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Special needs - not sure whether stated	<b>1</b>	1	1	<b>1</b>	-	-	1	<b>*</b>	<b>1</b>
Base	<b>14663</b>	235	174	<b>467</b>	375	295	117	<b>830</b>	<b>1656</b>

Base: All children<sup>13</sup>

This table shows that Asian children were significantly less likely than their white and Black counterparts to be reported as having special needs (four per cent compared with nine per cent respectively). However, we should note that Asian children had a slightly younger profile than other children. As identification of special needs increases with age, this may explain the differences between Asian and other children.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Information on special needs was not available for 32 children in the sample. These children are excluded from the table.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on the childcare use and needs of families with SEN children, see Bryson et al (2005).

### Parents' health

We also looked at the proportions of parents who were reported as having a disability or long-term health problem. Among mothers and fathers, there were no statistically significant differences between white, Black and Asian parents overall, but we did find that Pakistani mothers were significantly more likely than all other groups to have some form of disability or long-term health problem (21 per cent, compared with around 10 to 16 per cent of other ethnic groups).

### 4.1.4 Income

#### Household income

Table 4.8 shows the annual household income of the families who took part in the *Parents' Demand for Childcare* surveys by ethnic group.

**Table 4.8 Household income, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Up to £10,399	21	34	47	42	18	37	[48]	29	33
£10,400 to £20,799	24	30	29	28	25	28	[26]	25	25
£20,800 to £31,199	23	12	13	12	19	10	[4]	14	15
£31,200 or more	27	18	2	11	22	6	[4]	15	15
Don't know	4	3	6	4	13	15	[17]	14	10
Refused	2	3	2	3	3	3	-	2	3
Base	9243	157	106	298	235	165	70	497	1022

Base: All families

We can see from this table that Black families were most likely to have a household income of £10,399 or less (42 per cent), followed by Asian families (29 per cent), who were also significantly more likely to fall into this category than white families (21 per cent). Accordingly, the opposite was true of the top income bracket of £31,200 or more per year, where 27 per cent of white families, 15 per cent of Asian families and 11 per cent of Black families came into this group. Pakistanis were considerably more likely than Indians to fall into the bottom bracket (37 per cent compared with 18 per cent). Sample sizes were too small to make further comparisons between the individual ethnic groups.

So, the different income profiles – with Black families poorer than Asian families poorer than white families – may affect childcare choices on many levels, including levels of use and reasons for choosing particular types of provision.

**Sources of income**

Respondents to the *Parents' Demand* surveys were also asked about the various sources from which they received their income. Their answers are presented in Table 4.9, with the most frequently cited source of income at the top.

**Table 4.9 Sources of income, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Child Benefit	99	99	97	98	96	98	[94]	97	97
Earnings from employment or self-employment	83	64	53	58	87	71	[65]	79	72
Income Support	15	32	36	36	12	25	[42]	20	26
Housing Benefit	14	31	39	35	8	16	[32]	14	21
WFTC/WTC <sup>15</sup>	12	16	11	15	11	27	[34]	19	16
Other state benefits	8	6	6	6	7	7	[15]	8	7
Interest	14	6	2	4	13	3	[-]	8	7
State retirement pension	1	1	1	1	7	3	[8]	5	3
Other sources	3	2	5	3	3	3	[3]	3	3
Job Seekers' Allowance	2	2	6	3	1	7	[8]	4	3
Child maintenance	8	2	3	3	*	*	[-]	*	2
Pension from former employer	2	-	-	-	1	-	[-]	1	*
No source of income	*	-	-	-	*	*	[-]	*	*
Base	9243	157	106	298	235	165	70	497	1022

Base: All families

Consistent with levels of income described above, white parents were more likely than Black or Asian parents to be earning some money through employment or self-employment (83 per cent, compared with 79 per cent of Asian parents and 58 per cent of Black parents). Related to this was the relatively high proportion of Black families receiving Income Support (36 per cent, compared with 20 per cent of Asian families and 15 per cent of white families) and Housing Benefit (35 per cent compared with 14 per cent of white and Asian families respectively). Asian families were more likely than white families to be receiving Working Tax Credit (19 per cent

<sup>15</sup> Working Tax Credit replaced Working Families' Tax Credit (formerly Family Credit) in April 2003.

compared with 12 per cent), again consistent with the Asian families' propensity to be in the middle income brackets.

Black parents were less likely than their white and Asian counterparts to say that they were receiving income from interest (four per cent, compared with 14 per cent of whites and eight per cent of Asian parents). The noticeably high proportion of Indian and Bangladeshi families receiving some money from pensions (seven and eight per cent, compared with just one per cent of white and Black families and three per cent of Pakistani families) is less likely to be a reflection of the age of these parents (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2 above) than the fact that many live with or have close relationships with their extended families (see Table 4.4 for the number of adults per household by ethnic group).

As with earlier tables, there were some significant differences between the Indian and Pakistani families in the sample. Indian parents were more likely to say they were receiving income from earnings and/or interest, whereas Pakistani families were more likely to be funded by Income Support, Job Seekers' Allowance, Housing Benefit and/or Working Tax Credit. Small sample sizes of Bangladeshi families hindered us from finding any significant differences between them and other Asian families.

#### 4.1.5 Mother's highest qualification

Table 4.10 shows how the level of the highest qualification obtained by mothers varied by ethnic group.<sup>16</sup>

**Table 4.10** Mother's highest qualification, by ethnic group (level 1)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
First or higher degree	13	10	[21]	14	22	7	[9]	15	16
A level or equivalent	12	12	[9]	12	10	6	[4]	8	10
GCSE or equivalent	52	54	[32]	44	35	25	[15]	28	34
Other qualifications	2	2	[8]	4	3	3	[7]	4	4
No qualifications	19	20	[24]	21	23	47	[52]	35	30
No information available	2	2	7	3	7	12	[14]	10	6
Base	9099	154	100	287	232	164	69	491	1000

Base: All mothers

<sup>16</sup> Sufficient data on fathers' highest qualifications were not available from the *Parents' Demand for Childcare* surveys.

While there were no significant differences between white, Black and Asian mothers at A level or above, white mothers were most likely to have obtained a qualification at GCSE level (52 per cent), followed by Black mothers (44 per cent) and then Asian mothers (28 per cent). Accordingly, Asian mothers were the most likely not to have obtained any qualifications (35 per cent, compared with 21 per cent of Black mothers and 19 per cent of white mothers). Pakistani mothers were more than twice as likely as Indian mothers to have no qualifications (47 per cent compared with 23 per cent) and were the least qualified of all the ethnic groups.

#### **4.1.6 Other characteristics**

##### ***Household tenure***

Asian families were most likely to own their accommodation outright (15 per cent, compared with five and two per cent of their white and Black counterparts respectively). White families were most likely to have a mortgage (64 per cent, compared with 30 per cent of Black families and 51 per cent of Asian families). Accordingly, Black families were most likely to rent their accommodation (65 per cent, compared with 28 per cent and 27 per cent of white families and Asian families respectively).

Black Caribbean parents were significantly more likely to have a mortgage than Black African parents (42 per cent compared with 15 per cent). Sixty per cent of Indian parents said they had a mortgage compared to half of Pakistani parents (50 per cent).

##### ***Use of vehicles***

Respondents to the *Parents' Demand* surveys were asked whether they held a full licence to drive a car or motorcycle. White parents were most likely to say they did (77 per cent), followed by Asian parents (64 per cent) and then Black parents (52 per cent). Black Caribbean parents were considerably more likely than Black African parents to hold a driving license (64 per cent compared with 37 per cent), and, within the Asian group, Indian parents were more likely to do so than Pakistani parents (78 per cent and 51 per cent respectively). (No significant differences were found between Bangladeshi parents and other Asian parents.)

Those parents who said they did hold a driving license were asked whether an appropriate vehicle (car, van or motorcycle) were normally available for them to use. White parents were more likely than Black parents to say that this was the case (93 per cent compared with 85 per cent) but neither group was significantly different from Asian parents in this regard.

## 4.2 Index of multiple deprivation

Table 4.11 shows the distribution of households between the five quintiles of the Multiple Deprivation Index by ethnic group.<sup>17</sup>

**Table 4.11 Multiple deprivation index quintile, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1 <sup>st</sup> quintile (least deprived)	22	7	2	5	9	3	[-]	6	7
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	20	5	6	5	12	4	[6]	8	9
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	18	19	9	14	17	10	[7]	14	14
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	20	20	23	22	30	22	[11]	24	24
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile (most deprived)	20	48	60	54	32	62	[76]	48	47
Base	9243	157	106	298	235	165	70	497	1022

Base: All families<sup>18</sup>

It is clear from this table that white families were more likely than minority ethnic families to be living in the least deprived 20 per cent of wards (22 per cent compared with five per cent of Black families and six per cent of Asian families); in contrast, they were much less likely to be living in areas falling into the most deprived quintile (20 per cent compared with 54 per cent of Black families and 48 per cent of Asian families). There were no statistically significant differences between Black and Asian families in this regard. However, the proportion of Black Caribbean families living in areas in the top three quintiles was significantly larger than the comparable proportion of Black African families. Similarly, Indian families were significantly more likely to live in the top 60 per cent of wards than their Pakistani or Bangladeshi counterparts.

<sup>17</sup> The data refer to the 1998 index for households interviewed for the Baseline survey and the 2000 index for households interviewed for the Repeat survey.

<sup>18</sup> 41 households lacked the necessary address data for deriving a multiple deprivation index score. Families in either of these categories are excluded from the table.

### 4.3 Work and economic activity of families

#### 4.3.1 Working status

##### *Mothers and fathers*

Table 4.12 shows the working status of mothers according to their ethnic group.

**Table 4.12** Mother's work status, by ethnic group (level 1)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
In full-time employment	23	36	27	30	30	4	[2]	17	23
In part-time employment	37	17	14	17	23	12	[5]	16	18
Not in paid employment	40	47	59	53	47	84	[94]	67	59
Base	9099	154	100	287	232	164	69	491	1000

Base: All mothers

Asian mothers were the least likely to be in paid employment (67 per cent, compared with 53 per cent of Black mothers and 40 per cent of white mothers). Black mothers were most likely to work full-time (30 per cent compared to 23 per cent of white mothers and 17 per cent of Asian mothers), whereas white mothers were considerably more likely than their Black and Asian counterparts to be in part-time employment (37 per cent compared to 17 per cent and 16 per cent respectively). Pakistani and Bangladeshi mothers were much more likely than Indian mothers *not* to be in paid employment (84 per cent and 94 per cent respectively compared with 47 per cent). Again, this will relate to later sections on childcare use.

Table 4.13 shows the same data for fathers.

**Table 4.13** Father's work status, by ethnic group (level 2)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
In full-time employment	88	[85]	68	86	61	72	72
In part-time employment	2	[7]	10	7	13	10	10
Not in paid employment	9	[8]	22	7	26	18	18
Base	7127	65	126	201	140	430	720

Base: All fathers

While white fathers were significantly more likely to be in paid employment than their Black or Asian counterparts (91 per cent, compared with 78 per cent and 82 per cent respectively), there were no significant differences between the Black and Asian groups in this regard. Within the Asian group, Indian fathers were considerably more likely than Pakistani fathers to be working (93 per cent compared with 74 per cent).

#### 4.3.2 Availability of family-friendly practices

Table 4.14 shows the kinds of family-friendly practices that were available to the working mothers in our sample.

**Table 4.14** Availability of family-friendly practices for working mothers, by ethnic group (level 3)

	White	Black total	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%
School holiday play schemes	7	13	5	9
Term time working	17	6	9	9
Workplace nursery or crèche	5	6	3	5
Before and after school care during term time	3	8	2	4
Subsidised nursery or crèche	2	3	2	2
Employer covers full cost of childcare	*	1	1	1
Employer covers part of the cost of childcare	2	3	2	2
None	72	71	82	76
Base	5050	130	141	369

Base: All mothers whose main activity was paid employment

Black mothers were significantly more likely than white mothers to say that their workplace provided a school holiday playscheme (13 per cent compared with seven per cent). In contrast, white mothers were more likely to say that they had the opportunity to work during term times only (17 per cent compared with six and nine per cent of Black and Asian mothers respectively). The only other statistically significant finding in this table was that Black mothers were especially likely to report that their employers provided before and after school care during term time (eight per cent compared with three per cent of white mothers and two per cent of Asian mothers).

We looked at the same data for working fathers but very few fathers in any ethnic group reported the availability of any individual family friendly practice and there were no significant differences between the ethnic groups in this regard. This may partly reflect a difference in the workplaces of fathers as opposed to mothers but may also indicate a lower level of awareness among fathers who, as other research has shown, are less likely than mothers to take up such opportunities.

### 4.3.3 Working mothers' ideal arrangements

The surveys explored mothers' preferred working arrangements. Working mothers were asked whether:

- They would prefer to work more hours if they had access to good quality, convenient, reliable and affordable childcare;
- They would prefer to reduce their working hours in order to spend more time with their children if they could afford to do so;
- They would prefer to give up work to stay at home to look after their children.

Table 4.15 shows the proportion of mothers who answered positively to these questions (i.e. they either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed'). Note that mothers gave independent answers to each of the options above (i.e. they could agree or disagree to more than one.)

**Table 4.15** Mother's preferred working arrangements, by ethnic group (level 3)

	White	Black total	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%
Work more hours	21	39	43	40
Work fewer hours	65	85	77	78
Give up work	49	57	65	56
Base	5411	131	157	399

Base: Respondent mothers whose main activity was paid work

Black and Asian working mothers were more likely than white working mothers to say that, if they could afford it, they would ideally prefer to stay at home and look after their children full-time (57 and 65 per cent compared to 49 per cent). They were also more likely to want to work fewer hours than they currently did, if their finances allowed them to do so. 85 per cent of Black working mothers and three quarters (77 per cent) of Asian mothers would have done so, compared to two thirds (65 per cent) of white mothers.

However, when faced with the statement "If I could arrange good quality child care which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours", minority ethnic working mothers were twice as likely than white working mothers to agree (40 per cent compared to 21 per cent).

The fact that minority ethnic working mothers were more likely than their white counterparts to say that they wanted to work more, and more likely to want to work less or give up work if they could afford to indicates a lower level of satisfaction generally with current working arrangements among minority ethnic mothers. This may be due to greater financial need to work amongst some minority ethnic groups or different perceptions of the childcare choices available to them.

#### 4.3.4 Activities of non-working mothers

Table 4.16 shows the main activities of those mothers whose main activity was not full-time or part-time paid work.<sup>19</sup>

**Table 4.16** Activities of non-working mothers, by ethnic group (level 2)

	White	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Looking after the home/family	86	77	83	96	91	87
Unemployed	3	11	6	*	2	5
Other	7	4	7	2	4	4
Student	4	7	2	1	2	3
Government training scheme	*	1	1	-	*	1
Retired	*	-	1	-	*	*
Base	3534	149	107	137	323	580

Base: All mothers whose main activity was not paid work

Amongst these mothers, Asian mothers were significantly more likely than both white and Black mothers to cite their main activity as 'looking after the home or family' (91 per cent said this, compared with 86 per cent of white mothers and 77 per cent of Black mothers). In addition, within the Asian group, Pakistani mothers were more likely than Indian mothers to cite this as their main activity (96 per cent compared with 83 per cent).

Non-working Black mothers were most likely to say that they were unemployed (11 per cent, compared with three per cent of white non-working mothers and two per cent of Asian non-working mothers). They were also more likely than Asian non-working mothers to be studying (seven per cent and two per cent respectively). Indian non-working mothers were more likely than Pakistani non-working mothers to describe themselves as unemployed (six per cent compared with less than 0.5 per cent).

#### 4.4 Key findings

In this chapter, we have built up a picture of the families who took part in the *Parents' Demand for Childcare* surveys by looking at some of their key demographic characteristics according to ethnic group. The purpose of this exercise has been to gain an overview of the kind of characteristics that might influence their usage of and attitudes towards childcare. In this regard, the following findings are especially key:

<sup>19</sup> There was not a sufficient number of non-working fathers to carry out the same analysis.

- The Asian parents and children in the sample were younger than their white and Black counterparts, although the differences were more marked for Pakistani and Bangladeshi parents than for Indian parents;
- Black families were considerably more likely than other families to be headed up by a lone parent;
- The average number of additional adults living in the household was highest among Asian parents;
- Black mothers were most likely to work full-time, while white mothers were most likely to work part-time.
- Asian mothers were least likely to be in any form of paid employment, although Indian mothers were considerably more likely to be working than Pakistani and Bangladeshi mothers.
- Black families had the lowest household incomes, followed by Asian families, although, again, Indian families were better off than their Pakistani and Bangladeshi counterparts.
- Minority ethnic mothers were more likely than white mothers to say that they would ideally give up work if they could afford to, perhaps indicating that they were working primarily for financial reasons.

## 5 PARENT'S USE OF CHILDCARE

Within the surveys, parents were asked about all the childcare they used, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They were asked to include any time when their child was not with them or their current partner, or at school. Both regular and irregular arrangements were recorded as was the use of both formal (e.g. day nursery, out-of-school club) and informal (e.g. grandparents) care.

Parents were asked a number of general questions about their use of childcare over the past year, whilst more detail was collected about the childcare used in the reference week.<sup>20</sup> All information was collected with reference to up to two selected children in the household. Omitting information about additional children in the household will result in a slight underestimation of the overall incidence of the household's childcare usage, if arrangements were used for the additional children but not for either of the selected two.

In this chapter, we have classified childcare providers into two groups – early years education and other formal childcare providers and informal childcare providers<sup>21</sup>.

### **Early years education and other formal childcare providers:**

- ◆ Childminders
- ◆ Nannies
- ◆ Babysitters
- ◆ Crèche/nurseries
- ◆ Playgroups
- ◆ Out-of-school clubs
- ◆ Family centres
- ◆ Nursery and reception classes attached to primary schools

### **Informal childcare providers:**

- ◆ Ex-partners
- ◆ Grandparents
- ◆ Friends
- ◆ Relatives
- ◆ Siblings

Within this chapter we focus on the use of childcare across children in different minority ethnic groups. We address the following questions –

- ◆ Which children received childcare in the previous year?
- ◆ Which children received childcare in the previous week?

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<sup>20</sup> The reference week was the week beginning Sunday preceding the date of interview. However, if that week was a school holiday for any of the children in the household, the week before was used. However, for simplicity, we refer from now on to the 'last' or 'previous' week.

<sup>21</sup> For a full set of definitions, refer to Woodland et al (2002), Appendix A.

- ◆ What types of childcare were they receiving?
- ◆ How much childcare were they receiving?

We address each in turn.

## 5.1 Usage of childcare

### 5.1.1 Childcare use in the last year

As we know from other research, the vast majority of children under 15 will have received some form of childcare during the previous year. Across the baseline and repeat surveys, 83 per cent of parents had done so. We also know from the literature that certain minority ethnic groups may be less likely to use (at least particular forms) of childcare, due to a range of economic and social factors. So, looking across different minority ethnic groups, what proportion of children had received childcare in the past year?

Table 5.1 shows the proportion of children receiving any form of childcare (either formal or informal) in the past year by ethnic group.

**Table 5.1 Use of childcare in past year, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Used childcare	85	84	55	72	61	57	47	57	64
Did not	15	16	45	28	39	43	53	43	36
Base	14663	235	174	467	375	295	117	830	1656

Base: All children

Overall, children from minority ethnic groups are less likely than their white counterparts to have received childcare over the past year (64 per cent and 85 per cent respectively). However, this broad comparison disguises a wide variation between children of different minority ethnic groups. Black Caribbean children are just as likely as white children to have received childcare in the past year (84 per cent and 85 per cent), whereas Black African children's levels of usage were more similar to those of Asian children (55 per cent and 57 per cent respectively). Amongst Asian children, Indians and Pakistanis were slightly more likely than Bangladeshi children to be receiving childcare. This more or less correlates with the propensity of mothers to be in paid work across the ethnic groups.

### 5.1.2 *Childcare use in the last week*

So, is this pattern repeated if we focus on childcare used in the previous week? Table 5.2 below shows the proportion of children receiving any form of childcare in the past week by ethnic group.

**Table 5.2 Use of childcare in past week, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Used childcare	51	51	32	42	41	24	26	31	36
Did not	49	49	68	58	59	76	74	69	64
Base	14663	235	174	467	375	295	117	830	1656

Base: All children

We find the same rank order across the ethnic groups. As we would expect, levels of usage in the past week are considerably lower than in the past year. That aside, white and Black-Caribbean children were again more likely to have received childcare than children from other groups (each 51 per cent). Conversely, the lowest levels found amongst Black African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi parents (32 per cent, 24 per cent and 26 per cent respectively).

In the next section, we look in more detail at the types of childcare providers used for different children. Amongst those who have received childcare – in the past year or the past week – do children from different minority ethnic groups have particular propensities for receiving certain forms of childcare rather than others?

## 5.2 Types of providers used

### 5.2.1 *Providers used in the last year*

Parents were asked to classify the providers they had used in the last year and the last week using categories that they were given on a showcard. Table 5.3 shows the incidence of children receiving care from different types of provider in the last year.

**Table 5.3 Use of childcare providers in the past year (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No care used	15	16	45	28	39	43	53	43	36
<i>Early years /formal</i>									
Childminder	8	10	5	8	5	1	1	2	5
Nanny/au pair	2	3	1	2	1	1	-	1	2
Babysitter	15	6	4	6	2	-	-	1	4
Crèche/nursery	12	17	11	14	10	9	13	10	12
Playgroup	10	7	2	4	6	4	3	5	5
Nursery/reception class	8	8	8	10	5	6	8	6	8
Family Centre	*	-	-	*	*	-	-	*	*
Out of school/holiday club	11	21	13	16	7	4	*	4	9
<i>Informal</i>									
Ex-partner	8	3	8	5	*	1	-	*	3
Grandparent	58	30	11	23	32	29	17	28	28
Sibling	7	9	4	6	7	4	7	6	6
Friend/relative	37	35	24	32	24	22	17	22	26
Other	1	2	2	2	1	*	-	1	1
Base	14663	235	174	467	375	295	117	830	1656

Base: All children

The combination of relatively small sample sizes and low levels of usage of many provider types make it difficult to draw many firm conclusions about different patterns of use across ethnic group. Amongst formal childcare use, maybe the starkest difference between minority ethnic groups is in their use of out-of-school or holiday clubs for school-aged children, where Black children were more likely than white children and white children more likely than Asian children to have used them. In Chapter 4, we reported that Black mothers are actually more likely to have out-of-school provision and holiday clubs provided by their employers. Amongst pre-school providers, there is little difference in the use of nurseries, which will often be used for educational rather than childcare purposes. Amongst informal provision, there is a stark difference in the amount of parents who say that grandparents look after the children. Amongst white children, six in ten (58 per cent) had been looked after by grandparents in the past year. This is almost double the proportion in any other ethnic group. This is possibly a reflection of a likelihood of having grandparents living nearby - or in the same country, but perhaps goes against the 'common' view of using close-knit family networks amongst the Asian

community, and is maybe surprising given the greater propensity of these families to have three or more adults living together<sup>22</sup>.

The broad story is maybe clearer when we look at the proportions of children receiving formal and informal childcare across the ethnic groups. Table 5.4 below shows levels of usage in the past year.

**Table 5.4 Use of formal and informal childcare in past year, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Only formal	12	29	20	25	14	14	17	15	17
Formal and informal	35	28	16	24	14	6	7	10	17
Only informal	39	28	19	24	32	37	24	32	29
None	15	16	45	28	39	43	53	43	36
Base	14663	235	174	467	375	295	117	830	1656

Base: All children

From Table 5.4, the propensity for Black children – compared to others – to be receiving only formal childcare is clear. Whilst white children are most likely to be either receiving only informal care or to be mixing formal and informal provision, Black children’s providers are spread across the three combinations, and Asian children are most likely to be using only informal childcare providers.

We could hypothesise as to the reasons for many of these differences between ethnic groups. For instance, we could be looking at variations in work patterns, in local childcare availability or family networks. In section 5.5, we use regression analysis to look at this issue in more detail.

### **5.2.2 Providers used in the last week**

Parents were also asked about the types of providers they had used in the previous week, and these are shown in Table 5.5 below.

<sup>22</sup> The relatively low proportion of Asian parents using informal care appears somewhat surprising and, while every effort was made in the questionnaires to encourage respondents to include friends and relatives as childcare providers, we can speculate that there was some under-reporting of informal care among Asian parents, perhaps especially when provided by adults who were resident in the respondent’s and child’s household.

Table 5.5 Use of childcare providers in the past week (level 1)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No care used	49	49	68	58	59	76	74	69	64
<i>Early Years/formal</i>									
Childminder	4	5	3	4	3	1	-	1	2
Nanny/au pair	1	-	1	*	1	-	-	*	1
Babysitter	3	2	3	2	1	-	-	*	1
Crèche/nursery	6	10	4	6	7	4	10	6	6
Playgroup	4	4	1	2	2	1	-	2	2
Nursery/reception class	4	4	4	5	3	3	5	3	4
Family Centre	*	-	-	-	*	-	-	*	*
Out of school/holiday club	4	10	5	7	4	1	*	2	4
<i>Informal</i>									
Ex-partner	4	1	4	2	*	-	-	*	1
Grandparent	21	9	6	8	16	11	3	12	11
Sibling	2	3	1	2	3	1	3	2	2
Friend/relative	8	10	9	9	5	4	6	4	6
Other	4	5	1	4	2	1	4	2	3
Base	14663	235	174	467	375	295	117	830	1656

Base: All children

Again, it is maybe easier to identify differences in usage if we collapse the providers above into formal and informal care. In previous analyses of the baseline and repeat data, the proportion of formal childcare rises in relation to informal childcare, reflecting the more consistent use of formal arrangements and irregular use of informal childcare provision. Comparing ethnic groups, white children were the most likely to be receiving only informal childcare arrangements, Black Caribbean children were the most likely to be receiving only formal childcare arrangements in the past week, with other groups equally likely to be using formal and informal provision in the past week (see Table 5.6).

**Table 5.6 Use of formal and informal childcare in past week, by ethnic group (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Only formal	16	25	13	19	17	8	13	12	15
Formal and informal	8	7	4	5	3	1	2	2	4
Only informal	26	19	13	17	21	15	11	17	17
None	49	49	68	58	59	76	74	69	64
Base	14663	235	174	467	375	295	117	830	1656

Base: All children

### 5.3 Times when household used childcare

Using data from the Repeat Survey<sup>23</sup> on childcare used in the past week, we can investigate the times of days on which various parents used childcare. This is a particularly interesting issue, given evidence from the survey and from other literature that parents from particular ethnic backgrounds are more likely to work atypical hours, such as weekends.

We look at 'normal' hours of childcare split into –

- ◆ Weekday daytime – from 9am to 3.29pm
- ◆ Weekday late afternoon – from 3.30pm to 5.59pm

And childcare use at more atypical times –

- ◆ Weekday early mornings – from 6am to 8.59am
- ◆ Weekday evenings – from 6pm to 9.59pm
- ◆ Weekday nights – from 10pm to 5.59am the next day
- ◆ Weekends

These are not exclusive categories and a single extended period of childcare may cover several of them.

Unfortunately, as we are looking at data from one only of the two surveys, the numbers of parents who had used childcare in the last week were insufficient to look across the more detailed ethnic groupings. Rather, here we look at whites, Blacks and Asians in aggregate (Table 5.7). In our commentary, we focus on white, Asian and all minority ethnic parents, as the number of Black families is under 100 and their percentages should therefore be treated with caution.

<sup>23</sup> Information on sessions was not collected in a consistent way in the two surveys. We have therefore taken the most recent data.

**Table 5.7** Timing of childcare sessions in past week, by ethnic group (level 3)

	White	Black total	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%
Weekday, early morning	35	[35]	26	30
Weekday daytime	72	[69]	77	74
Weekday late afternoon	67	[90]	53	67
Weekday evening	39	[50]	20	34
Weekday night	14	[11]	3	8
Weekend	25	[17]	21	20
Base	2824	85	126	277

Base: All families who had used childcare in past week (Repeat Survey)

As we would expect, parents in all three groups were most likely to be using childcare between 9am and 3.29pm, with no significant variation between them. Over 70 per cent of parents who had used childcare in the past week had done so during this time. Looking down the session times, the rank order of usage is more or less the same between the different groups, with the other 'normal' childcare session in the after-school afternoon hours (3.30pm until 5.59pm) being the second most used time period. This is followed by much smaller proportions using care in the evenings, early mornings, weekends and very few people using care at night.

Although sample sizes mean that it is difficult to detect statistically significant differences, of the three broad groups, Asian parents seem least likely to use childcare in the more atypical sessions such as weekday early mornings, evenings and nights. This is contrary to the finding that Asian working mothers are the most likely to be working at weekends, suggesting that they may be using some form of 'shift-parenting' rather than childcare during these times.

#### 5.4 Quantity of childcare used in the past week

Parents who had used childcare in the past week were asked to provide details of each session of childcare they used in the last week including the time the provision started and the time it ended. This information enables us to calculate the number of hours of childcare used by children in that week. We look at the mean number of hours used for the children in the past week (Table 5.8).

**Table 5.8** Hours of childcare used in past week, by ethnic group (level 2)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
Mean hours	17	20	20	15	[16]	15	18
Base	7646	122	208	165	76	285	646

Base: All families who had used childcare in previous week

Amongst those who had used childcare in the past week, Black children had, on average, received more hours of childcare in the past week than white or Asian children (20 hours compared to 17 and 15 hours respectively). This fits in with our finding that Black mothers are more likely to be working full-time than white or Asian mothers.

## 5.5 Significant predictors of use of childcare

In earlier sections, we have shown that certain minority ethnic groups are less likely to use particular forms of childcare. There are certain economic and social factors related to ethnic group that complicates the relationship between ethnic group and the use of childcare. Consequently assessing the association between ethnic group and the use of childcare can be a complex process. More sophisticated statistical tools than those used so far are therefore needed to explore this inter-play of factors. In this section we report on logistical regression analysis used to explore the relationship between ethnic group and the use of childcare by controlling for other factors. We look at the predictors of using any childcare in the past week. We then look separately at the use of formal and informal childcare. Due to the sample sizes of children receiving childcare in the past week, we have only been able to compare white, Black and Asian children, rather than disaggregate further into particular ethnic groups. The regression tables can be found in Appendix A.

### 5.5.1 Use of childcare in the reference week

In this analysis, we were attempting to answer the question ‘Are the factors that predict whether a child has received any childcare in the past week the same or different for children in different minority ethnic groups?’ We therefore ran separate regression models for white, Black and Asian children to see whether the same socio-demographic variables emerged as being important in predicting whether or not a child had received any childcare in the week (see Table 1 in Appendix A).

Amongst white children, those more likely to have received childcare in the past week were –

- Those aged 3 and 4 (i.e. the nursery school age group)
- Those whose mother worked (full or part-time, with an increasing likelihood with the more hours that their mother worked)

- Those *not* in the lowest household income bracket (i.e. over £10,400 per annum)

And those less likely to have received childcare in the past week were –

- Those in households with at least one school-aged child
- Those with siblings (rather than a single child)
- Those in two-parent households
- Those whose mother had no or lower educational qualifications

How does this compare with minority ethnic children? Do the same socio-demographic variables predict their use of childcare in the past week? Whilst some predictors were similar, there appear to be differences between the white and minority ethnic children<sup>24</sup>.

There is evidence that Black parents are using childcare for a wider age range of children than white and Asian parents. White children were most likely to have received childcare if they were aged 3 and 4 and white school-aged children were increasingly less likely to receive childcare as they got older. Although Asian children were also most likely to be receiving care when aged 3 or 4, no such significant relationship was found amongst the Black children. Whilst Black children over 11 were significantly less likely to receive childcare than other children, amongst the 11s and under, there were no significant differences.

The pattern of childcare use for Black children may well be a function of the working patterns of Black mothers (more likely to be in full-time work) and the availability or use of certain forms of childcare, such as after-school-clubs for school-aged children. This is further substantiated by the fact that, amongst Black children, there is no significant association between having any children in the household at school and using childcare.

Amongst all ethnic groups, children were significantly more likely to have received childcare if their mother was working. However, amongst minority ethnic children, the significant predictor was to have a mother working 16 hours or more compared to having a mother working at all, as with the white children).

Whilst a relationship was found between household income level and likelihood of using childcare amongst the white children, no such significant relationship was found amongst the minority ethnic children. The affluence of the area in which they lived was not significant for any groups.

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<sup>24</sup> However, we should be cautious. The smaller sample sizes amongst the minority ethnic groups may be suppressing our ability to find significant variables. Certainly where we find significant differences amongst white children and not amongst other children, the pattern of results is often the same, if not significant.

### **5.5.2 Significant predictors of use of formal and informal childcare**

Given the different levels of usage of formal and informal childcare providers amongst different ethnic groups, logistic regression was undertaken in order to look at what influences the use of *formal* and *informal* childcare in the past week. So, in this analysis, we were attempting to answer the question 'Are the factors that predict whether a child has received any formal childcare in the past week the same or different for children in different minority ethnic groups?' and similarly 'Are the factors that predict whether a child has received any in formal childcare in the past week the same or different for children in different minority ethnic groups?' Again, we ran separate regression models for white, Black and Asian children to see whether the same socio-demographic variables emerged as being important in predicting whether or not a child had received formal or informal childcare in the week (see Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix A).

Looking firstly at *formal* childcare provision, it appears that minority ethnic families are more often using it for non-work reasons, primarily as pre-school education. The strongest predictor of the use of formal childcare amongst all three ethnic groups is the child being of nursery school age (i.e. 3 or 4). However, amongst white children, being junior school aged or above (8 and over) is significantly associated with *not* receiving formal childcare (unlike ethnic minority children). Thus, whilst the 3s and 4s are the most likely to receive formal care, under 7s generally are more likely than 8s and over to be in formal childcare. Amongst Asian children, infant school children (5 to 7 year olds) are significantly more likely to use formal childcare than the comparison group of under 3s, whereas amongst Black children, only the 3s and 4s are significantly more likely to receive formal childcare, compared to all other groups.

The (lack of) association with mothers' working patterns is also consistent with the use of formal childcare as nursery education as opposed to childcare. Amongst minority ethnic children, we find no association between mothers working and use of formal childcare. The story amongst white children is less clear, with children whose mothers work part time (up to 29 hours) less likely to use formal childcare than those whose mothers do not work. This may be due to the combination of nursery education used for non-work reasons and formal childcare in the definition of childcare. Again, amongst minority ethnic children, there is no association between receiving formal childcare and their household's income, whilst white children are more likely to have received formal childcare if they are not in the lowest household income bracket.

We have some potential evidence of the use of formal childcare in more deprived areas of the country. Amongst Black children, those living in the more deprived quintiles were significantly more likely to have received formal childcare than Black children living in other areas. However, the opposite was found amongst white children, when those in the most deprived areas were less likely than others to have received formal childcare in the past week. This difference may be due to different forms of formal childcare being used by the two groups - formal childcare (for those who are working) versus formal nursery education which may be free or more readily available in more deprived areas.

So, how does the socio-demographic profile of those using formal childcare compare to those using *informal* childcare? We know from the descriptive tables that white children are more likely to have received childcare from informal sources in the previous week than other children. What are the underlying factors that predict the use of informal childcare amongst different minority ethnic groups?

We found that several of the predictors (mothers' work status, mothers' qualifications, age of the children) are the same as those found to predict the use of childcare more generally. However, what is of particular interest with regards informal childcare specifically is -

- The association between use of informal childcare and working atypical hours: Amongst all groups, use of childcare at the weekend was strongly associated with using informal childcare. Conversely, use of childcare during weekday daytimes was negatively associated with using informal childcare. This links with the lack of availability of formal childcare options beyond the traditional Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 working hours.
- The association between using a lot of childcare and using informal childcare: Amongst white and Asian groups, those who use more than 30 hours childcare in a week are more likely to use some informal childcare.
- The association between using informal childcare and having a lower household income: Amongst white and Black children, the use of informal childcare is linked to a lower household income. For white children, it is also linked to living in the two most deprived quintiles of the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

## 5.6 Key findings

In this chapter, we have looked at the use of childcare among parents from different ethnic groups. Our key findings include:

### ***Use of childcare***

- White and Black Caribbean families were the two most likely groups to have used some childcare, when measured across both the past year and the past week. For white families, this may reflect their higher incomes and relatively high levels of maternal work (though much of this was part-time). Among Black families, it is likely to be linked to high levels of lone parenthood and full-time maternal work.
- Black children had, on average, received a greater number of hours of childcare in the past week. This, again, is likely to be related to the high numbers of Black mothers working full-time.
- Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African families were least likely to have used any childcare in the past year or the past week. For the Asian groups in particular, this may reflect both circumstances (low maternal employment, low levels of lone parenthood, tendency to have other adults living in the household) and preference (e.g. parental childcare preferred for cultural or religious reasons).

### **Use of formal childcare**

- Black children were most likely to be receiving only formal childcare. As with the findings on use of all childcare, this is likely to reflect high levels of lone parenthood and maternal work. However, as we saw in Chapter Three, it may reflect preferences as well, as there is evidence that Black parents tend to favour childcare with an 'educational' element;
- For Black families, use of formal childcare was less likely to be linked with a child being aged three or four than among other ethnic groups. Black families were also most likely to have used some out-of-school or holiday childcare, which may partly have reflected the fact that Black mothers were most likely to have reported before- and after-school care being offered by their employers (see Table 4.14).
- Black families living in deprived areas were more likely than other Black families to use formal childcare, while the opposite was true among white families. This may reflect the fact that Black families living in deprived areas have benefited more than their white counterparts from targeted interventions such as Sure Start and the Neighbourhood Nurseries initiative, perhaps because of their lower average incomes and the likelihood of Black families being headed up by a lone parent.

### **Use of informal childcare**

- In all ethnic groups, use of informal care was linked with working at atypical times, having a low household income and using a large number of hours of childcare overall;
- White families were most likely to use informal childcare and more than twice as likely as families from minority ethnic groups to use grandparents for childcare.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> The relatively low proportion of Asian parents using informal care appears somewhat surprising and, while every effort was made in the questionnaires to encourage respondents to include friends and relatives as childcare providers, we can speculate that there was some under-reporting of informal care among Asian parents, perhaps especially when provided by adults who were resident in the respondent and child's household.

## 6 DIFFICULTIES WITH CHILDCARE

Respondents to the Repeat Survey<sup>26</sup> were asked whether there had been any occasions in the past year when they wanted or needed child care but found they were unable to get it. Table 6.1 shows their responses by ethnic group.

**Table 6.1 Whether experienced unmet demand for childcare in the past year, by ethnic group (level 3)**

	White	Black total	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	
Yes	24	34	19	27
No	76	66	81	72
Base	4827	163	283	574

Base: All families (Repeat Survey only)

Black parents were most likely to have reported such difficulties (34 per cent), while Asian parents were least likely to have done so (19 per cent).

### 6.1.1 Frequency of unmet demand

Parents who said they had experienced some unmet demand for childcare in the past year were asked how often such occasions had occurred. Minority ethnic parents were significantly more likely to say that they had experienced unmet demand at least once a week on average over the past year (20 per cent compared with eight per cent of white parents) or between once a week and once a month (27 per cent and 17 per cent respectively). Correspondingly, white parents were more likely than minority ethnic parents to say that they had experienced problems getting the childcare they wanted less often than once every two months (52 per cent compared with 38 per cent).

### 6.1.2 Circumstances in which unmet demand occurs

Minority ethnic parents were more likely than white parents to say that unmet demand had occurred in the following circumstances:<sup>27</sup>

- ◆ When they had a job interview (six per cent compared with two per cent)
- ◆ When they wanted to start studying (14 per cent compared with six per cent)
- ◆ When they wanted or needed to study for extra hours (13 per cent compared with seven per cent)
- ◆ When they wanted or needed to go shopping (12 per cent compared with six per cent)

<sup>26</sup> The question on unmet demand in the Baseline Survey was incompatible with the Repeat Survey question because the latter was improved after a cognitive testing exercise.

<sup>27</sup> The base for all percentages cited is all parents who said they had experienced unmet demand in the past year. Respondents could give more than one reply to this question.

The only circumstance in which white parents were more likely than minority ethnic parents to report unmet demand having occurred was when they wanted or needed to work extra hours (28 per cent compared with 21 per cent). This may partly reflect the greater proportion of working parents in the white group (see Section 4.2).

White parents were more likely to report unmet demand between 6am and 9am (before school) (16 per cent compared with eight per cent of minority ethnic parents) and between 3.30pm and 6pm (after school) (37 per cent compared with 24 per cent). This may, again, reflect the proportions of working parents in the different ethnic groups, and also the fact that white parents were more likely to have only children of school age living in their household (see Section 4.1.2). We also know that Black parents were more likely to have out-of-school provision offered by their employers.

### 6.1.3 Reasons for unmet demand and whether caused problems

Minority ethnic parents were more likely than white parents to say that they were unable to get the childcare they needed or wanted because they could not afford it (38 per cent of those who reported unmet demand in the past year gave this reason, compared with 25 per cent of white parents). White parents were more likely than minority ethnic parents to say that they had experienced unmet demand because their usual childcare arrangements had not been available (43 per cent and 26 per cent). Minority ethnic parents who had experienced problems were no more or less likely than white parents to report it causing them problems.

### 6.1.4 Breakdown at short notice

Parents who took part in either of the *Parents' Demand* surveys were asked about whether any of their childcare arrangements over the past year had broken down at short notice.

Table 6.2 shows the frequency with which parents who had used childcare in the past year had experienced short-notice breakdowns in their arrangements.

**Table 6.2** Frequency of short-notice breakdowns in arrangements, by ethnic group (level 2)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
At least once a week	1	3	4	3	2	3	2
At least once every other week	1	2	2	1	-	1	1
At least once a month	2	6	5	5	2	4	4
At least once every two months	3	3	4	2	1	2	3
Less often	19	10	15	15	10	11	16
Never	74	76	70	74	85	80	74
Base	8187	139	238	161	102	316	728

Base: All families who had used childcare in the past year

Asian parents were significantly less likely than Black parents to say they had experienced any short-notice breakdowns in their childcare during the past year (20 per cent compared with 30 per cent), while the 26 per cent of white parents had done so. There were no significant differences between the Black and Asian groups in terms of the frequency with which they had experienced short-notice childcare breakdown, but both Black and Asian parents reported more frequent breakdowns than white parents (e.g. four and three per cent reported such a breakdown having occurred at least once a week, compared with just one per cent of white parents).

## 6.2 Key findings

In this chapter we have looked at the experiences of families from different ethnic groups both in terms of occasions on which they wanted or needed childcare and were unable to get it ('unmet demand') and with regard to occasions on which their childcare arrangements broke down at short notice. Our key findings include:

- Black parents were most likely to have experienced some unmet demand for childcare in the past year, while Asian parents were least likely to have done so;
- Minority ethnic parents were more likely than white parents to say that they had experienced unmet demand for childcare on a frequent basis (i.e. once a month or more often) over the past year;
- Minority ethnic parents were more likely than white parents to say they had experienced unmet demand because they could not afford the childcare they needed or wanted;
- Black parents were most likely to have experienced short-notice breakdowns in their childcare arrangements over the past year, while Asian parents were least likely to have encountered such problems. On average, minority ethnic parents had experienced short-notice childcare breakdowns more frequently than their white counterparts.

## 7 PARENTAL EVALUATION OF CHILDCARE PROVISION

This chapter presents information on the childcare providers wanted or used by parents in the past year. The chapter explores:

- ◆ Parents' ideal childcare provision
- ◆ Factors which influenced the choice of providers
- ◆ Parents' ratings of the quality of childcare services
- ◆ The accessibility of different providers

The bases vary between households (when looking at ideal provision), providers used in the past year (when looking at factors influencing choice of providers) or the smaller number of providers used in the past week (when looking at accessibility issues).

### 7.1 Ideal childcare provision

Elsewhere in the report, we look at parents' perceptions of the childcare they use and of what is available to them. Here, we look at the types of childcare that parents would ideally like to use if money and availability were not issues. Parents were shown a list of provider types and could choose as many or as few as they wanted. Although we show all the providers chosen as being ideal in Table 7.1 below, we concentrate mainly on the broad choice of formal and informal childcare options shown in Table 7.2. The base is here is all mother respondents from the Repeat Survey only<sup>28</sup>. It was decided to look at mothers only as maternal and paternal choices may differ, although we did not have sufficient fathers in the sample to analyse separately.

Due to sample sizes, we have not analysed parents' responses according to the childcare they currently use. Rather, we concentrate on the differences in choices between ethnic groups (with reference to differences in their actual childcare arrangements).

From Table 7.1 below, we find that -

- ◆ The propensity to choose the various pre-school options varies very little between mothers in different minority ethnic groups.
- ◆ In general, Asian mothers are somewhat less likely to choose home-based (either theirs or the provider's) childcare as ideal. They are less likely than others to cite childminders, nannies, au pairs or babysitters as a preferred option.

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<sup>28</sup> Data on ideal childcare arrangements was collected differently in the baseline survey, which meant it was not possible to merge the data from the two surveys. The most recent data - from the Repeat Survey - was therefore chosen.

- ◆ Asian mothers are also less keen on the use of out-of-school clubs, such as breakfast, after-school or holiday clubs than other mothers.
- ◆ Amongst informal provider options, white mothers were more likely than others to want grandparents, partners, friends or other relatives to be looking after their children than Black or Asian mothers. Whilst the differential choice of grandparents may be a reflection on mothers being less likely to choose an option as ideal if it is in reality impossible (e.g. grandparents living abroad, or too far away). However, this does not explain Black and Asian mothers being less likely to think other informal carers – such as partners or friends – as being ideal for their children.

**Table 7.1 Ideal childcare providers, by ethnic group (level 3)**

	White	Black total	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%
Childminder	31	26	22	25
Nanny/au pair	22	26	16	20
Babysitter	31	28	20	24
Crèche or nursery	34	38	37	37
Playgroup	23	20	28	24
Nursery/ Reception class	28	31	33	31
Family Centre	7	11	10	11
Out of school club	50	56	37	44
Ex-partner	8	13	2	6
Grandparents	61	36	41	40
Sibling	12	13	11	12
Friend/neighbour	51	41	31	37
Respondent themselves	9	8	8	8
Partner	50	22	30	30
Other	3	1	3	3
None of these	4	7	14	10
Base	4638	154	241	512

Base: All respondent mothers, Repeat Survey

When we split the providers cited by mothers as ‘ideal’ into formal and informal providers, we find that the vast majority of mothers in all groups choose at least one formal provider type amongst their ideal (see Table 7.2).

Informal provision is far more popular amongst white mothers than Black and Asian mothers, with 84 per cent of white mothers choosing at least one informal option compared to 70 per cent of Black mothers and 76 per cent of Asian mothers. This is reflected in a greater propensity amongst white families to be using informal childcare.

**Table 7.2 Formal vs informal ideal childcare providers, by ethnic group (level 3)**

	White	Black total	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%
Formal	86	93	82	86
Informal	84	70	76	74
Formal and informal	71	63	57	60
<b>Base</b>	<b>4638</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>512</b>

Base: All respondent mothers, Repeat Survey

Note: Ethnic group information was not available for 17 families in the sample. These families are excluded from the table.

## 7.2 Influences on choice of provider

The discussion above was about what mothers view as ideal childcare arrangements, in the absence of cost or availability constraints. In addition, parents who had used childcare in the past year were asked about the factors that influenced their choice of provider. Here, issues such as cost and availability will of course have been influencing factors in their choices.

Parents were shown a list of possible factors that were known to cover most circumstances and, in addition, they could also suggest other reasons that may have been specific to their situation. Due to limited sample sizes within each ethnic group, we are unable to analyse people's reasons for choosing particular types of childcare provider by the types of providers they used. Rather, we use these data to investigate the types of factors that influence people in their choices between one type of provider and another. Note that these choices are being made for a wide age range of children, from 0 to 14 years old.

The base for this analysis is all childcare providers used in the past year. Table 7.3 shows the range of factors influencing choices of childcare provider for each ethnic group.

**Table 7.3 Factors influencing choice of childcare provider<sup>29</sup> (level 1)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black African	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Trust	73	59	54	57	68	63	[59]	65	62
Showed affection	39	31	25	30	38	33	[34]	34	33
Reliable	29	26	22	24	20	12	[8]	16	23
Looked after child as I would	29	25	20	23	31	30	[27]	29	26
Convenient location	23	29	29	27	20	22	[17]	21	25
Wanted child to be at home	22	18	16	17	30	22	[33]	27	22
Mix with other children	16	19	17	18	19	5	[15]	14	17
Good reputation	13	13	8	12	14	9	[6]	12	13
Trained staff	12	19	10	18	12	8	[8]	10	14
Fitted with work hours	12	13	13	11	14	4	[3]	10	11
Used for other children	12	12	7	10	9	5	[11]	8	10
Educational opportunities	9	14	15	14	14	13	[19]	15	13
Not afford paid childcare	12	16	22	17	12	13	[10]	12	15
Low cost	11	15	9	14	6	5	[13]	6	10
Recommended	9	10	4	9	8	6	[9]	8	9
No other choice	9	17	22	16	9	9	[5]	9	12
Because was child's relative	5	3	5	4	2	4	[-]	2	4
Child's choice	2	1	1	1	1	*	[-]	1	1
Employer subsidy	*	*	-	*	1	-	[-]	1	*
Base	30705	411	212	728	441	250	94	842	2127

Base: All providers used in the past year

Very broadly, the rank order of reasons was similar across all ethnic groups. The key points to draw out from the detail of the table above are –

- ◆ Amongst all groups, trusting the provider is the biggest factor influencing their choice of childcare provider. However, despite its high rankings for all parents, white parents were more likely than other parents to cite this as a reason (73 per cent compared to 62 per cent). In turn, Asian parents were more likely than Black parents to cite trust as a reason.

<sup>29</sup> A small number of reasons were not compatible between the two surveys and have therefore been excluded from this table.

- ◆ Alongside trust, two other key reasons for choosing a provider, amongst all groups, is the likely amount of affection the provider will show to the child and the reliability of the provider. However, on all these factors, white parents are more likely to cite them as important than Black and Asian parents.
- Black parents are least likely to say that a reason they chose their provider was because they wanted their child to be looked after at home (which links with their actual choice of provider types) and are more likely than other parents to say that they have chosen their provider because of its convenient location.
- ◆ Black parents were slightly more likely than others to cite factors around cost and a lack of available choices. For ten per cent of providers used by Black parents, not being able to pay for childcare was an influencing factor. For a similar proportion the fact that it was low cost was important. Providers for Black parents were almost twice as likely to have been chosen due to a lack of other options than providers of other parents. This links clearly with Black mothers citing that the main driving force behind their taking paid work is the need for money and them citing affordability as a reason for unmet demand. It also links with the finding in the later chapter on costs that Black parents are more likely to rate local childcare as unaffordable than other parents.

### **7.3 Accessibility of childcare providers**

In the Repeat Survey, parents who used childcare in the reference week were asked how easy or difficult it was to get to their provider. Table 7.4 shows that amongst all ethnic groups, the vast majority of parents (around three quarters) thought that their provider was within easy reach of their homes.

However, Black parents were less likely to rate their journey as 'very' rather than 'fairly' easy than other parents (38 per cent of Black parents compared to 51 per cent of white parents and 56 per cent of Asian parents).

**Table 7.4** How easy/difficult was it to get to the provider from home? (level 2)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very easy	51	35	38	49	[66]	56	47
Fairly easy	23	37	32	30	[20]	25	28
Fairly difficult	6	12	9	5	[10]	7	7
Very difficult	4	4	4	2	[2]	2	3
Provider goes to parent's home	15	12	16	14	[2]	10	15
Base	10666	159	271	165	74	303	775

Base: Repeat Survey only: All providers used in the past year excluding those that lived with respondent

#### 7.4 Key findings

In this chapter, we have looked at the types of childcare providers parents would ideally use and their reasons for choosing providers. We have also focused on the ease or difficulty with which they were able to travel to the providers they used. Our key findings include:

- White mothers were more likely than minority ethnic mothers to choose informal provision as ideal. This may reflect the fact that minority ethnic mothers were less likely to have such care available to them - if their family lived overseas for example, or they had not lived in the UK long enough to establish a strong social network - but it may also reflect aspects of preference as well;
- While trust and affection were common reasons for choosing a childcare provider among all ethnic groups, white parents were more likely to cite these than their minority ethnic counterparts. This very likely reflects their stronger preference for informal care;
- In contrast, Black parents were least likely to give being home-based as a reason for choosing a provider, reflecting their higher use of formal care;
- Black parents were also more likely to cite factors around cost and availability as reasons for choosing a provider, linking with the earlier findings that they were the lowest earning of the ethnic groups and were also most likely to have experienced unmet demand for reasons of affordability.
- The vast majority of parents in all ethnic groups found it easy to travel to their childcare providers, but there was some evidence that Black parents found it slightly more difficult than others.

## 8 INFORMATION ABOUT AND PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDCARE IN THE LOCAL AREA

In this chapter, we look at parents' attitudes toward childcare in terms of the information they have received and would like to receive about childcare provision and their assessment of the childcare available in their local area.

### 8.1 Information about childcare

Respondents to the Repeat Survey were asked whether they had received information about childcare from a range of possible sources. Their responses are shown in Table 8.1.<sup>30</sup>

Table 8.1 Sources of information about childcare, by ethnic group (level 3)

	White	Black total	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%
Word of mouth	38	45	31	36
Local Authority	12	17	12	14
Local library	5	12	7	8
Health visitor	9	8	7	7
Local advertising	10	8	4	5
Children's information services	3	8	3	5
Doctor's surgery	4	2	3	3
Local community centre	2	5	2	3
School child attends	2	2	2	2
Employment service	2	1	2	2
Employer	3	4	*	2
Yellow Pages	3	7	2	3
National organisations (e.g. CAB)	2	3	*	1
Internet	2	1	1	1
Childcare provider	1	1	-	*
Church or religious group	*	-	1	*
<i>ChildcareLink</i>	1	1	-	*
Any of these	53	65	48	53
None of these	47	35	52	47
Base	4827	163	283	574

Base: All families (Repeat Survey only)

Note: Percentages may add up to more than 100 per cent because parents could give more than one reply.

<sup>30</sup> Although a similar question was asked of respondents to the Baseline survey, the list of answer categories was much shorter so it was not possible to look at the whole picture of childcare information sources using the merged data.

Black parents were most likely to have received information about childcare from at least one of the sources mentioned (65 per cent, compared with 53 per cent of white parents and just 48 per cent of Asian parents).

Looking at the specific sources, Black parents were most likely to have received such information via word of mouth (45 per cent compared with 38 per cent of white parents and 31 per cent of Asian parents) and/or from children's information services (eight per cent, compared with three per cent of white and Asian parents respectively). White parents were significantly more likely than Asian parents to have received information from local advertising (10 per cent compared with four per cent).

Parents who took part in both *Parents' Demand* surveys (and who had used childcare in the past year) were asked whether they thought the amount of information about childcare that was available to them was about right, too much or too little (Table 8.2).

**Table 8.2** Parents' assessment of the amount of information about childcare available to them, by ethnic group (level 2)

	White	Black Caribbean	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
About the right amount	32	26	28	41	44	44	33
Too much	1	1	*	1	-	1	1
Not enough	46	58	55	40	38	37	48
Don't know	21	16	16	18	18	19	18
Base	8187	139	238	161	102	316	728

Base: All families who used childcare in the past year

Asian parents were most likely to say that about the right amount of childcare information was available to them (44 per cent compared with 32 per cent of white parents and 28 per cent of Black parents). This is consistent with Black parents being more likely to cite unmet demand in the past year.

## 8.2 Childcare in the local area

Table 8.3 shows how parents who had used childcare in the past year rated the number of childcare places available in their local area.

**Table 8.3 Parents' perceptions of the number of childcare places available in their local area, by ethnic group (level 2)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
About the right number	28	15	18	28	27	27	22
Too many	1	1	1	1	-	1	1
Too few	45	63	60	40	34	35	45
Don't know	27	21	21	30	39	38	32
Base	8185	138	234	161	102	316	724

Base: All families who had used childcare in the past year

As we might expect from the data on unmet demand, Black parents were more likely than other parents to say that there were not enough childcare places available in their local area: 60 per cent said this, compared with 45 per cent of white parents and 35 per cent of Asian parents (the difference between the white and Asian groups is also significant). Asian parents were most likely to have said they did not know about the number of places available in their area (38 per cent compared with 27 per cent of white parents and just 21 per cent of Black mothers. This may reflect the earlier finding that Asian parents were least likely to have reported receiving information about childcare from a wide range of sources.

Table 8.4 shows how parents who had used childcare in the last year rated the quality of the provision on offer in their local area.

**Table 8.4 Parents' perceptions of the quality of childcare in their local area, by ethnic group (level 2)**

	White	Black Caribbean	Black total	Indian	Pakistani	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very good	15	9	9	10	11	11	10
Fairly good	37	30	32	39	26	31	31
Fairly poor	10	17	16	13	9	11	11
Very poor	4	11	9	4	4	4	6
Don't know	34	34	34	33	50	44	42
Base	8185	138	234	161	102	316	724

Base: All families who had used childcare in the past year

White mothers were most likely to have rated the quality of local provision as ‘very good’ (15 per cent compared with nine per cent of Black mothers and 11 per cent of Asian mothers). They were also significantly more likely overall to have rated it either as ‘fairly good’ or as ‘very good’ (52 per cent compared with 41 per cent of Black mothers and 42 per cent of Asian mothers). Asian mothers were most likely to have said that they did not know about the quality of local provision (44 per cent compared with 34 per cent of white and Black mothers).

Indian parents were more likely than Pakistani parents to rate the quality of the childcare available in their local area as ‘very good’ or ‘fairly good’ (49 per cent compared with 37 per cent). In contrast, Pakistani parents who had used childcare in the past year were significantly more likely than their Indian counterparts to say that they did not know whether a sufficient number of childcare places were available in their local area (50 per cent compared with 33 per cent).

In the Repeat Survey, parents were asked about the affordability of childcare in their local area. They were asked –

*Thinking about the overall affordability of childcare in your local area, for a family like yours how good would you say this is?*

Table 8.5 shows the distribution of responses by broad ethnic groups.

**Table 8.5 Affordability of local childcare, by ethnic group (level 3)**

	White	Black total	Asian total	Minority ethnic groups total
	%	%	%	%
Very good	6	4	5	5
Fairly good	27	20	25	24
Fairly poor	22	20	23	20
Very poor	13	28	9	16
Don't know	31	28	37	34
Base	4827	163	283	574

Base: All families in Repeat Survey

Although the proportions saying that levels of local childcare affordability are ‘very good’ are similar across each group, if we aggregate the ‘very’ and ‘fairly good’ responses, we find that Black parents are more likely than white or Asian parents to be concerned about the cost of local childcare. Only a quarter of Black parents think that it is good compared to a third of white and Asian parents. Black parents are more likely to rate affordability as poor, and particularly likely to rate it as ‘very poor’. Three in ten (28 per cent) Black parents rate affordability of local childcare as ‘very poor’ compared to 13 per cent of white parents and nine per cent of Asian parents. These perceptions are consistent with the lower socio-demographic profile of Black parents who are more likely to have lower incomes, be lone parents and feel

that they have to work for economic reasons. We also know that Black parents were more likely to have cited the cost of childcare as a reason for unmet demand in the previous year.

### **8.3 Significant predictors to rating the availability of local childcare places**

We used logistical regression to explore the relationship between the ethnic group and reported availability of childcare places by controlling for other factors. The results are summarised in Table 4 in Appendix A. Perhaps the most striking finding is the association between a perceived lack of available childcare places and the area in which people live. Amongst white, Black and Asian families, those who lived in the most deprived areas were more likely to report a lack of childcare places. Amongst Black families, this only applied to those living in the most deprived quintile. However, for Asian and white families, this perception held if they were not in the least or second least deprived quintile.

Interestingly, these perceptions do not appear to be inextricably linked to people's own household income. Whilst amongst white families, those with incomes over £31,200 were more likely than others to think that there were inadequate childcare places. Potentially these are people more likely to be able to afford formal childcare and therefore look for it. Amongst minority ethnic families, those in the middle income brackets (£10,400 to £20,799) were the most likely to report a lack of available places.

### **8.4 Key findings**

In this chapter, we have explored the information that parents had received about childcare and their assessments of the number and quality of the childcare places available in their local areas. Our key findings include:

#### ***Information on childcare***

- Black families were most likely to have received information on childcare from at least one source;
- Asian parents were least likely to have received any information on childcare but were also significantly more likely than white and Black parents to say that about the right amount of information was available to them. This could reflect a lower need for such information among Asian parents, who are least likely of all the groups to be using (formal) childcare;
- Black parents were least positive about the amount of childcare information available to them, which could reflect their higher demand for childcare and supports their high levels of reported unmet demand;
- Asian parents were most likely to say they would like more information on the quality of childcare in the local area, which could indicate that concerns about quality form a barrier to use of childcare among this group

**Number, quality and affordability of childcare places**

- Black parents were most likely to say that there were too few childcare places available in their local area, supporting the earlier findings on unmet demand;
- White parents rated the quality of local childcare provision more positively than their minority ethnic counterparts;
- Asian parents were most likely to say that they did not know about either the number or the quality of childcare places available, reflecting the fact that they were least likely to have received any childcare information.
- Black parents were least positive about the affordability of childcare providers in their local areas. This reflects a number of earlier findings regarding Black families, including their lower average incomes, the likelihood of their being lone parents and the likelihood of their having experienced unmet demand for childcare for financial reasons.

## 9 CONCLUSIONS

This report has explored views and experiences of childcare among families of different ethnic origin across a diverse range of dimensions. In many cases, the analysis has raised further questions meriting deeper exploration and, therefore, in conclusion, we will focus on making some suggestions as to possible areas for future research.

The report shows that white and Black Caribbean families were most likely to have used some form of childcare, while Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African families were least likely to have done so. Black families had also used a greater number of hours of childcare than their white and Asian counterparts. The high levels of childcare use among Black parents are likely to be linked to a number of characteristics including the high likelihood of being a lone parent and the predominance of full-time work among Black mothers.

There were indications in the data that Black families were especially likely to have experienced problems with childcare availability, which are very likely to be linked with their high demand for these services. Black parents were most likely to say that there were too few childcare places available in their local area; they were also most likely to cite availability as a reason for choosing the providers they had used. Cost was also a major issue for Black families, which was also unsurprising given both their high demand for childcare and their low household incomes. Of all the ethnic groups, Black families were most likely to give cost as a reason for choosing providers, and also expressed the most negative perceptions of the affordability of local childcare. In addition, of all the ethnic groups, Black parents were most likely to say that they had experienced occasions on which they had not been able to get the childcare they needed or wanted for financial reasons.

The problems Black families experienced in finding affordable childcare may be linked to a need or preference to rely more heavily than other ethnic groups on formal provision. Our analysis showed that Black families were more likely than their white and Asian counterparts to use formal childcare; there was also evidence that they tended to use formal care across a wider age range than other groups (i.e. use of formal care was not as strongly linked with having a child aged three or four). These findings may be explained by a number of factors, including – again – high levels of lone parenthood, as well as a possible preference for childcare with an ‘educational’ element: a characteristic of Black parents that emerged from the literature review. However, the possibility was also noted that some minority ethnic families may be obliged to seek formal childcare on the basis that informal care is not available to them, for example if they do not have family members in the country, or if they are recent immigrants who have not yet had time to establish strong social networks. The factors that influence the high use of formal care among Black families would therefore certainly be one interesting area for further research.

The finding that, on average, Asian households included a greater number of adults than the households of families with other ethnic origins could suggest that Asian parents typically have greater access than their Black counterparts to informal

childcare. It was intriguing, therefore, to find that Asian families were less likely than both white and Black families to report use of informal care. This is likely, to some extent, to reflect low levels of maternal work, particularly among Pakistani and Bangladeshi mothers; it may also, as we have noted, indicate some under-reporting of informal care among Asian respondents, perhaps caused by a failure to conceptualise childcare provided by close family members within the category of 'informal care'. In order to illuminate this finding, it would be worth exploring further the use of informal care among Asian families, with a focus on the division between parental care and care provided by other family members. The basis on which negotiations between Asian parents and their children's informal carers take place, and the role of cultural and religious factors in these, could also be extremely interesting areas for further research.

The literature review indicated that cultural and religious factors could also be particularly important in developing an understanding of views of formal childcare among some Asian communities. Our own analysis indicated that Asian families were considerably less engaged with the formal childcare markets around where they lived than other ethnic groups: they were, for example, least likely to have received any information on local childcare services and most likely to say they did not know enough about the number and quality of childcare places to make an assessment of the provision in their area. What we could not discover, however, was whether this lack of engagement with local formal childcare markets was the result of a deliberate and informed rejection of formal care among this group (on grounds of lack of need or an informed preference for informal care) or whether it stemmed from norms, perceptions and traditions that might prove malleable over the shorter or longer term. Asian parents' perceptions of formal childcare, and the influence of these on decisions about work among Asian mothers, would therefore be another topic around which future research could prove very fruitful. This would be of particular interest given recent policy developments (see 2.4) in these areas.

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## APPENDIX A

Logistic regression is a multivariate statistical technique that uses a set of independent variables to predict the probability for an event to occur. The event is binary (for example, the use of childcare or not) and logistic regression is required to examine complex relationships between explanatory factors simultaneously. The results of these analyses (as presented in Tables 1 to 4) are presented as odds (e.g. odd of using childcare rather than not using childcare) for each factor (characteristic) conditional on, or allowing for, the other factors in the table. As a consequence, odds ratios higher (lower) than 1 imply that the characteristic was associated with an increased (decreased) probability of using childcare compared with the reference category.

Odds that appear in **bold text** are statistically significant. That is, they represent a significant difference between the proportion of people for the characteristic in question compared with the reference category.

It should be noted that because other characteristics have been conditioned for, a logistic regression analysis might reveal relationships that are quite different from those observed from a simple bivariate exploration of the data.

**Table 1 Logistic estimation of childcare use in the reference week**

	Odds ratios		
	White	Black	Asian
<b>Child has Special Educational Need (SEN)</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes, not stated or do not know if stated	1.107	1.241	0.000
Yes, stated	1.227	1.394	<b>3.521</b>
<b>Age of child</b>			
0-2	1.000	1.000	1.000
3-4	<b>3.942</b>	1.644	<b>4.917</b>
5-7	<b>0.847</b>	0.684	2.003
8-11	<b>0.613</b>	0.522	1.478
12-14	<b>0.245</b>	<b>0.104</b>	0.590
<b>Ages of all children in the household</b>			
No children attending school	1.000	1.000	1.000
Pre-school and school-age children	<b>0.811</b>	0.927	0.544
All children attending school	<b>0.645</b>	0.983	0.199
<b>Number of children</b>			
1	1.000	1.000	1.000
2	<b>0.779</b>	0.704	0.863
3 or more	<b>0.791</b>	0.764	0.798
<b>Family type</b>			
Lone parent	1.000	1.000	1.000
Couple	<b>0.498</b>	0.567	0.810
<b>Highest qualification of mother</b>			
First or higher degree	1.000	1.000	1.000
A-level or equivalent	0.954	0.488	1.476
GCSE or equivalent	<b>0.713</b>	0.598	0.756
Other qualifications	1.011	<b>0.074</b>	0.910
No qualifications	<b>0.526</b>	0.554	<b>0.501</b>
<b>Hours mother worked per week</b>			
Not in work	1.000	1.000	1.000
1-15 hours	<b>1.783</b>	2.049	2.356
16-29 hours	<b>2.820</b>	<b>3.088</b>	<b>2.763</b>
30-44 hours	<b>4.116</b>	<b>6.058</b>	<b>6.149</b>
45 hours or more	<b>4.292</b>	<b>6.967</b>	<b>4.519</b>
<b>Household income</b>			
Up to £10,399	1.000	1.000	1.000
£10,400 - £20,799	<b>1.229</b>	<b>2.107</b>	1.362
£20,800 - £31,199	<b>1.191</b>	1.522	1.021
£31,200 or more	<b>1.499</b>	1.282	1.913
<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles</b>			
Least deprived	1.000	1.000	1.000
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	1.034	1.850	1.210
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1.044	1.025	2.001
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	0.993	1.096	1.959
Most deprived	1.047	0.797	1.302

Base: All children. Note: Odds ratios in bold are statistically significant (p<0.05).

Note: Children with missing data on any factor in the table are excluded from analysis. This was three per cent of children.

**Table 2 Logistic estimation of formal childcare use in the reference week**

	Odds ratios		
	White	Black	Asian
<b>Child has Special Educational Need (SEN)</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes, not stated or do not know if stated	1.132	1.844	*
Yes, stated	1.087	3.026	0.617
<b>Age of child</b>			
0-2	1.000	1.000	1.000
3-4	<b>4.153</b>	<b>4.404</b>	<b>14.239</b>
5-7	0.841	1.028	<b>6.335</b>
8-11	<b>0.762</b>	0.811	3.350
12-14	<b>0.301</b>	0.539	3.222
<b>Ages of all children in the household</b>			
No children attending school	1.000	1.000	1.000
Pre-school and school-age children	0.908	0.672	3.208
All children attending school	<b>0.632</b>	2.937	0.640
<b>Number of children</b>			
1	1.000	1.000	1.000
2	<b>1.282</b>	3.122	<b>0.228</b>
3 or more	<b>1.327</b>	3.616	<b>0.162</b>
<b>Family type</b>			
Lone parent	1.000	1.000	1.000
Couple	<b>0.750</b>	0.550	0.257
<b>Highest qualification of mother</b>			
First or higher degree	1.000	1.000	1.000
A-level or equivalent	<b>0.647</b>	1.067	0.839
GCSE or equivalent	<b>0.419</b>	0.987	0.332
Other qualifications	0.832	0.000	2.073
No qualifications	<b>0.448</b>	1.773	0.809
<b>Hours mother worked per week</b>			
Not in work	1.000	1.000	1.000
1-15 hours	<b>0.688</b>	0.116	0.728
16-29 hours	<b>0.776</b>	0.972	0.829
30-44 hours	1.037	0.435	0.360
45 hours or more	0.743	0.166	0.260
<b>Household income</b>			
Up to £10,399	1.000	1.000	1.000
£10,400 - £20,799	<b>1.290</b>	2.967	0.776
£20,800 - £31,199	<b>1.343</b>	1.132	0.417
£31,200 or more	<b>2.372</b>	6.202	2.211
<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles</b>			
Least deprived	1.000	1.000	1.000
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	0.927	1.089	1.442
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	0.880	4.622	0.482
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	<b>0.703</b>	<b>6.459</b>	1.048
Most deprived	<b>0.664</b>	6.805	0.504
<b>Childcare used - weekday early morning</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>1.268</b>	1.357	3.164

<b>Childcare used - weekday daytime</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>2.261</b>	1.629	<b>8.423</b>
<b>Childcare used - weekday late afternoon</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	0.957	1.224	<b>3.797</b>
<b>Childcare used - weekday evening</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	1.040	<b>3.474</b>	0.766
<b>Childcare used - weekday night</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>0.505</b>	<b>0.027</b>	0.236
<b>Childcare used - weekend</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>0.660</b>	0.333	<b>0.199</b>
<b>Number of hours of childcare used per week</b>			
Up to 10 hours	1.000	1.000	1.000
11-20 hours	<b>1.437</b>	0.943	1.438
21-30 hours	<b>1.446</b>	1.272	1.048
31-40 hours	<b>2.068</b>	3.204	0.384
41-50 hours	<b>1.648</b>	1.729	0.151
More than 50 hours	1.204	<b>3.606</b>	1.790

Base: All children who received childcare in the reference week.

Note: Odds ratios in bold are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Note: Children with missing data on any factor in the table are excluded from analysis. This was three per cent of children.

Note: \* indicates too few cases for sensible analysis.

**Table 3 Logistic estimation of informal childcare use in the reference week**

	Odds ratios		
	White	Black	Asian
<b>Child has Special Educational Need (SEN)</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes, not stated or do not know if stated	0.951	0.736	*
Yes, stated	0.878	0.209	2.510
<b>Age of child</b>			
0-2	1.000	1.000	1.000
3-4	<b>0.548</b>	1.184	<b>0.106</b>
5-7	1.133	1.736	0.301
8-11	1.285	2.780	0.388
12-14	<b>3.254</b>	1.366	0.622
<b>Ages of all children in the household</b>			
No children attending school	1.000	1.000	1.000
Pre-school and school-age children	0.943	1.227	0.298
All children attending school	<b>1.301</b>	0.087	1.397
<b>Number of children</b>			
1	1.000	1.000	1.000
2	<b>0.740</b>	<b>0.054</b>	1.326
3 or more	<b>0.694</b>	<b>0.156</b>	2.689
<b>Family type</b>			
Lone parent	1.000	1.000	1.000
Couple	<b>1.275</b>	4.011	4.359
<b>Highest qualification of mother</b>			
First or higher degree	1.000	1.000	1.000
A-level or equivalent	<b>1.465</b>	2.465	0.560
GCSE or equivalent	<b>1.986</b>	2.032	1.998
Other qualifications	1.307	0.000	0.558
No qualifications	<b>1.620</b>	0.166	0.452
<b>Hours mother worked per week</b>			
Not in work	1.000	1.000	1.000
1-15 hours	<b>1.829</b>	17.351	2.422
16-29 hours	<b>1.849</b>	0.551	3.600
30-44 hours	1.113	<b>7.269</b>	3.103
45 hours or more	1.235	<b>9.877</b>	2.281
<b>Household income</b>			
Up to £10,399	1.000	1.000	1.000
£10,400 - £20,799	0.999	<b>0.181</b>	1.411
£20,800 - £31,199	1.012	0.226	2.562
£31,200 or more	<b>0.549</b>	<b>0.006</b>	0.472
<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles</b>			
Least deprived	1.000	1.000	1.000
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	1.103	2.435	0.725
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	1.097	0.207	2.355
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	<b>1.367</b>	0.084	4.542
Most deprived	<b>1.600</b>	0.224	5.958
<b>Childcare used - weekday early morning</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	1.074	0.569	0.455

<b>Childcare used - weekday daytime</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>0.809</b>	<b>0.201</b>	<b>0.183</b>
<b>Childcare used - weekday late afternoon</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>1.517</b>	3.149	<b>0.232</b>
<b>Childcare used - weekday evening</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>1.693</b>	<b>0.069</b>	2.571
<b>Childcare used - weekday night</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>2.097</b>	0.000	0.794
<b>Childcare used - weekend</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes	<b>7.244</b>	<b>17.454</b>	<b>13.819</b>
<b>Number of hours of childcare used per week</b>			
Up to 10 hours	1.000	1.000	1.000
11-20 hours	0.928	1.062	0.737
21-30 hours	0.944	1.190	2.448
31-40 hours	<b>0.779</b>	0.268	2.649
41-50 hours	1.339	1.628	<b>12.199</b>
More than 50 hours	<b>1.634</b>	0.047	1.916

Base: All children who received childcare in the reference week.

Note: Odds ratios in bold are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Note: Children with missing data on any factor in the table are excluded from analysis. This was five per cent of children.

Note: \* indicates too few cases for sensible analysis.

**Table 4 Logistic estimation of reported lack of available childcare places**

	Odds ratios		
	White	Black	Asian
<b>Child has Special Educational Need (SEN)</b>			
No	1.000	1.000	1.000
Yes, not stated or do not know if stated	<b>1.437</b>	0.819	0.001
Yes, stated	<b>1.326</b>	0.660	<b>0.048</b>
<b>Age of child</b>			
0-2	1.000	1.000	1.000
3-4	<b>0.854</b>	2.130	0.641
5-7	0.991	1.721	0.721
8-11	0.921	2.483	<b>0.353</b>
12-14	0.882	1.247	0.516
<b>Ages of all children in the household</b>			
No children attending school	1.000	1.000	1.000
Pre-school and school-age children	0.958	0.861	2.219
All children attending school	1.089	1.677	1.310
<b>Number of children</b>			
1	1.000	1.000	1.000
2	<b>1.257</b>	0.810	0.889
3 or more	<b>1.464</b>	1.503	0.949
<b>Family type</b>			
Lone parent	1.000	1.000	1.000
Couple	<b>0.625</b>	1.143	0.464
<b>Highest qualification of mother</b>			
First or higher degree	1.000	1.000	1.000
A-level or equivalent	<b>1.237</b>	<b>3.555</b>	0.898
GCSE or equivalent	0.895	1.554	0.660
Other qualifications	<b>1.641</b>	0.128	0.348
No qualifications	0.872	1.051	<b>0.171</b>
<b>Hours mother worked per week</b>			
Not in work	1.000	1.000	1.000
1-15 hours	0.947	0.248	1.164
16-29 hours	1.063	0.494	1.403
30-44 hours	<b>1.219</b>	0.982	1.161
45 hours or more	1.278	0.001	0.728
<b>Household income</b>			
Up to £10,399	1.000	1.000	1.000
£10,400 - £20,799	1.162	<b>4.491</b>	<b>2.332</b>
£20,800 - £31,199	1.092	1.381	2.080
£31,200 or more	<b>1.353</b>	1.041	1.472
<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles</b>			
Least deprived	1.000	1.000	1.000
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile	1.063	6.200	<b>3.641</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile	<b>1.188</b>	3.903	<b>4.498</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile	<b>1.278</b>	6.447	<b>4.081</b>
Most deprived	<b>1.579</b>	<b>9.585</b>	<b>3.336</b>

<b>Providers of childcare used in reference week</b>			
None	1.000	1.000	1.000
Formal only	<b>1.193</b>	0.962	0.736
Formal and informal	1.127	2.531	0.555
Informal only	<b>1.133</b>	<b>6.871</b>	1.332

Base: All children in families who felt there was or was not a lack of available childcare places, i.e. excludes those who 'did not know' (approximately one-quarter of all families).

Note: Odds ratios in bold are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Note: Children with missing data on any factor in the table are excluded from analysis. This was five per cent of children.

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