

Childminder de-registrations in Wales

January 2017

Section 1: Introduction and Methodology

1a: Introduction

PACEY Cymru has carried out a piece of work looking at reasons for childminder de-registrations in Wales given an increase in those leaving childminding which is causing concern in the sector.

Sustainability of existing, quality childcare is of importance to support the needs of children and their families and also will come to the forefront as the implementation of the childcare offer in Wales moves forward. This offer is likely to increase the need for quality, registered childcare to meet demand and so the sustainability of existing childminders is of key importance.¹

There has been a decline in the number of registered childminders in Wales in recent years. The statistics in the table A, below, show this in more detail between September 2015-2016.

Table A. Number of Registered Childminder in Wales September 2015-2016

Date	Number of registered childminders	Difference from previous quarter
31 September 2015	2216	n/a
31 December 2015	2196	20
31 March 2016	2171	25
30 June 2016	2148	23
31 September 2016	2071	77
Total difference		145 (6.5%)

(Data provided by CSSIW, 2015-16)

This decline in registered childminder numbers is a cause for concern, especially if this continues, as it is likely to have a significant impact on childcare availability and accessibility. **This report will look in more depth at de-registration**, one of the factors that impact on the overall number of registered childminders in Wales

¹ <https://www.pacey.org.uk/news-and-views/news/archive/2016-news/september-2016/welsh-government-and-the-30-hour-childcare-offer/>

1b: Methodology

Between April-October 2016 there were 134 childminder de-registrations² and PACEY Cymru, with support from CSSIW, have worked to contact those who have de-registered during this period to ascertain the reasons for de-registration and to ask further supporting questions.

Due to data protection CSSIW were only able to provide names of those who had de-registered so contact details were sourced through membership databases and information held in the public domain.

Contact with those de-registered April-October 16

Total	Sub total	Comments
134		de-registration names for period provided by CSSIW
	5	5 de-registered for personal reasons known to PACEY Cymru and so were not contacted to avoid causing upset (ie childminder was deceased)
	31	Details not able to be sourced or contact details sourced incorrect
	35	Contacted and message left but did not respond
	61	Contact made and feedback provided

The responses collated below are therefore based on the information provided by the 61 individuals who were happy to discuss and feedback. This represents 46% of those de-registered during this period and so is a valid sample to use to identify trends and issues.

Those contacted were asked set questions in a short telephone interview. Following the interviews the information was collated and key themes identified that are outlined in the tables and graphs below.

Responses were received from individuals living in a wide range of Local Authorities in Wales. A breakdown of these can be found in Annex A. Please note however that the information collated within this report has not been broken down by Local Authority due to sample sizes. The key themes and findings were consistent however across Local Authorities in Wales and so are representative of views shared. PACEY Cymru are willing to discuss relevant feedback with individual Local Authorities on request.

² In line with data provided by CSSIW 2017

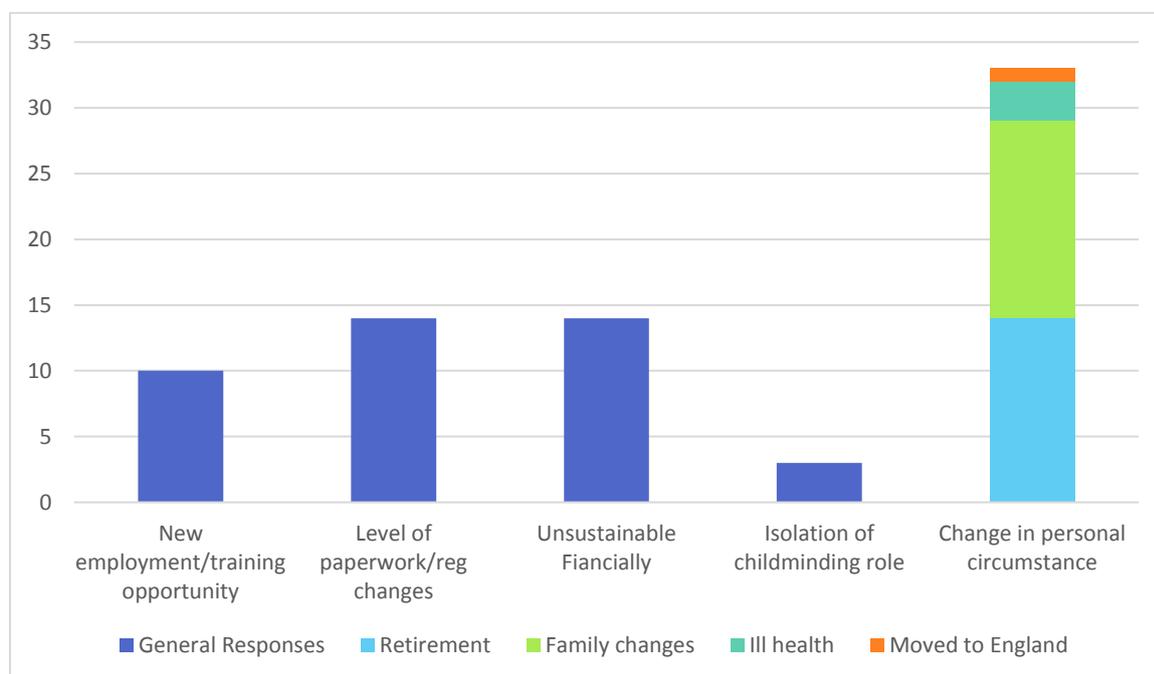
Section 2: Findings

2a: Reasons for de-registering

Following the collation of the feedback received key reasons were identified and placed into the sub-sections shown below. Please note some stated more than one reason and so have been counted against up to 2 reasons.

Reason for de-registration	Sub-section	Number stating this as reason
New employment/training opportunity		10
Paperwork/reg changes burden		14
Unsustainable financially		14
Isolation of childminding role		3
Change in personal circumstances		28
Of which	Family related	-15
	Retirement	-14
	Ill health	-3
	Moved to England	-1

Graph A: Reasons given for de-registration



It can be seen from this that the main reasons for de-registering are due to changes in personal circumstances, in the main due to retirement or a change to their family (for example children starting school or having a new baby). This was then coupled in some cases with a new employment or training opportunity that better met the needs of their changed family circumstances. This is an area that is hard to control and has been the

pattern for many years in the ‘life cycle’ of someone working as a childminder where they childmind while it suits their family circumstances and move on when their own children are older.

“I am now working as a teaching assistant, my own children were getting older and I didn't want to continue being self-employed, I wanted to be employed but still work with children”

“I am now working in accounts, I childminded in the short gap before having my second child and was never looking to be childminding long term”

There is also a significant number that stated the reasons being paperwork or regulation changes, or that the service was unsustainable financially. These areas cause concern for the future impact this could have on the sector and needs to be addressed by looking more closely at what support can be provided.

“I stopped enjoying it [childminding]. There was pressure with paperwork and more legislation. I felt I was losing sight of why I was doing it. There was pressure from parents to track development, and them demanding more.”

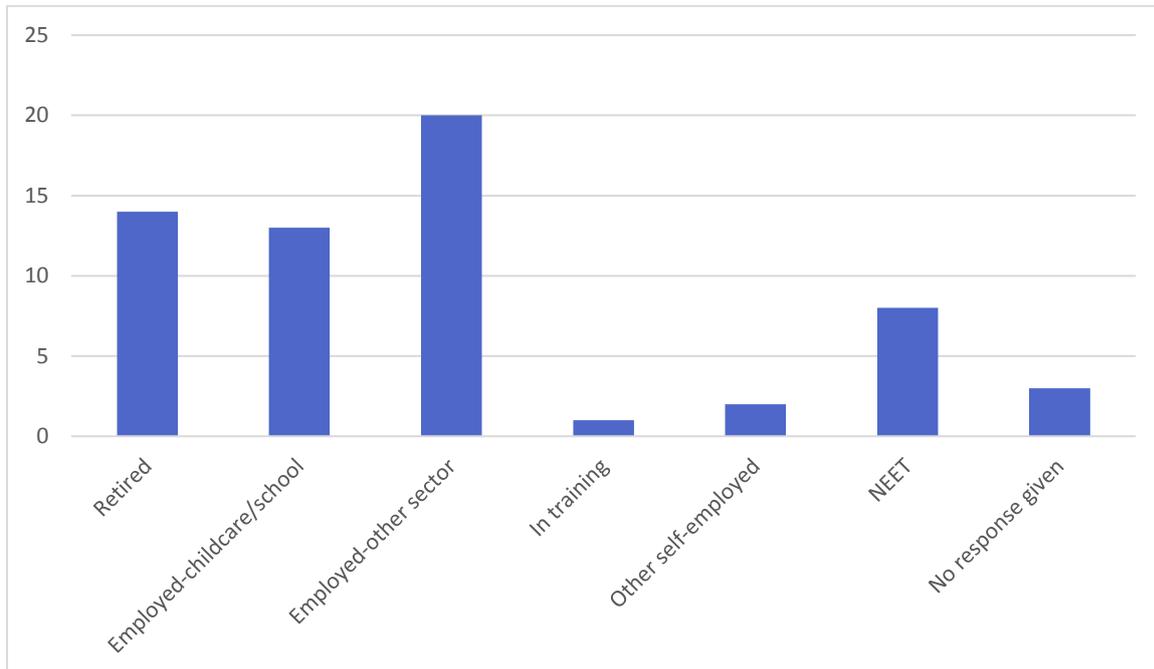
As expected the responses between the reasons are closely linked and interwoven with one reason impacting on another. For example many who stated that the service was unsustainable also stated that a new employment or training opportunity was one of the reasons for de-registering. It is hard to identify the main reason in many cases due to the nature of personal situations however it can be clearly seen that all the reasons given above have had a significant impact on the number of de-registrations.

2b.What are those who de-registered doing now?

Those who responded were also asked what they were now doing and their current status can be found below.

What they are doing now	Sub-section	Number of responses
Retired		14
In employment in related childcare/education field		13
Of which	Other childcare	-3
	School	-10
In employment in other field		20
Training		1
Other self-employed occupation		2
Not in employment, education or training (NEET)		8
No response given		3
Total responses		61

Graph B: What are those who de-registered doing now?



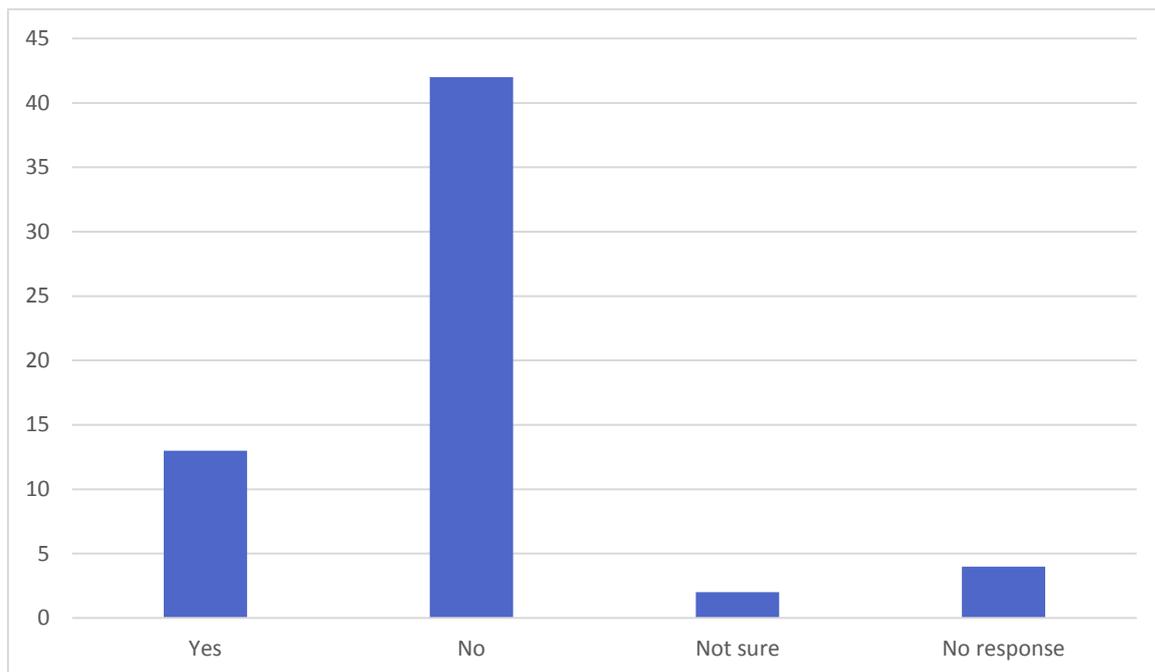
It can be seen from this that a significant number have moved on to other employment opportunities (55%) with 30% of these being in other childcare or school settings. This potentially shows the displacement of childminders to the wider childcare/education sector.

2c: Could anything have been done to keep those who de-registered in the childminding sector?

Respondents were also asked whether anything could have kept them childminding to gauge what further information or support could be offered to those currently registered to avoid further declines.

Could anything have been done to have kept you childminding?	Number of responses
No	42
Yes	13
Don't know	2
No response	4
Total	61

Graph C: Could anything have been done to have kept you childminding?



The vast majority (70%) stated that nothing could have been done to have kept them childminding.

"No. It came to a natural end after 10 years"

"No. I just never got up and running - it was a personal choice I felt there was the support there if I needed it."

"No. I had tried marketing but unsure why I couldn't fill vacancies as was reasonable compared to nurseries but don't think anyone could have done anything to help at all. It felt like the right time to move on"

Of those who said that something could have been done the examples given were as follows

8 stated that they would have benefited from increased support or information provided locally or nationally

3 stated that less paperwork would have made them more likely to continue

1 stated that having an opportunity to become a funded education provider may have made a difference

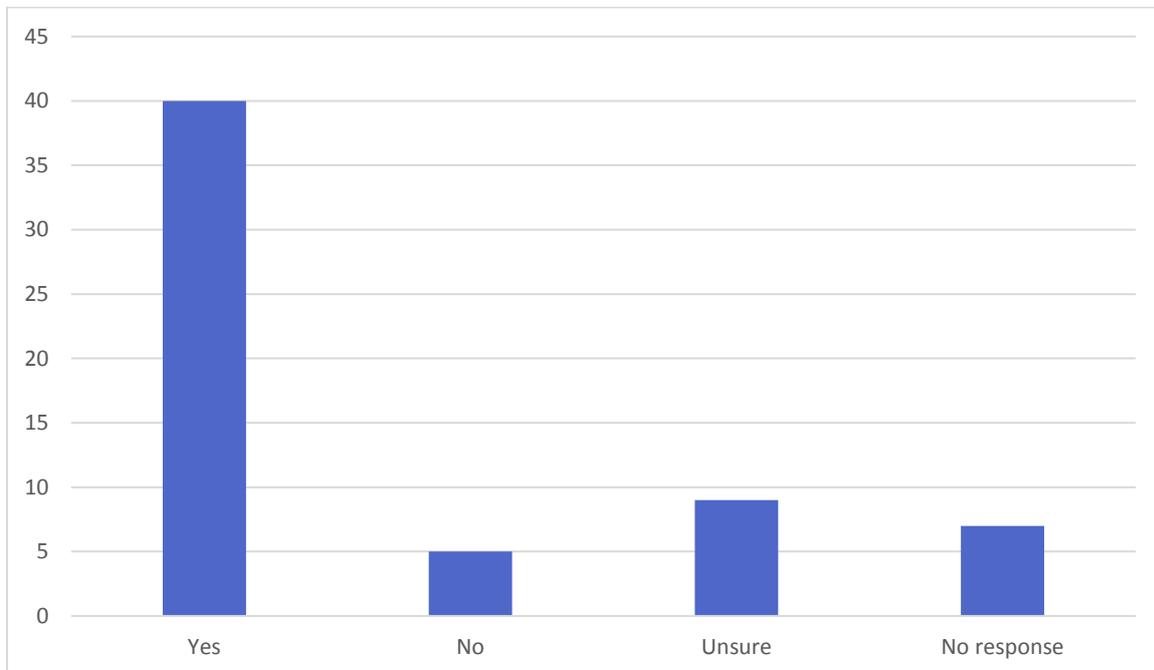
1 stated that financial support in the early days would have been beneficial.

2d: Would those who de-registered promote childminding as a career/work choice to others?

The final question asked was whether those who had de-registered would promote childminding as a career or work choice to others.

Would you promote childminding as a career or work choice to others?	Number of responses
Yes	40
No	5
Unsure	9
No response	7
Total	61

Graph D: Would those who de-registered promote childminding as a career/work choice to others?



It can be seen from this that an overwhelmingly number of respondents were positive about promoting childminding as a career or work choice to others (67%). A large number of these were extremely positive in their response.

“Yes - I wouldn't have done it for 30 years if I hadn't enjoyed the role”

“Yes absolutely and have done”

“Yes definitely, I loved it, it was my life and my livelihood.”

Of those who were unsure it was mainly around wanting to ensure the person understood the childminding role, responsibilities and what it entailed before they committed to it.

“Not sure. You need to understand how it can take over your whole life, you need to have the commitment and be a certain type of person to make it work.”

“Not sure, it is not something you can do light-heartedly. It is not “just” childminding”

Those who would not recommend were mainly concerned about how expectations and the profession has changed and the ‘red tape’ involved.

“No not these days, too much red tape”

“No, it has changed over the last 20yrs. I feel like we [older childminders] are a dying breed CSSIW tries to get rid of and they are not recognizing experience. Need to have administration skills to be the right person now”

Section 3: Conclusion and recommendations

It can be seen from the findings above that even in those who have de-registered there is a great deal of positivity about childminding as a career or work choice.

The reasons for de-registration are complex and interwoven and it is hard to unpick clear actions that would make a significant difference to the sector. However, there do appear to be some key themes which could be considered to support registered childminders in the future in line with business sustainability, paperwork and regulation changes.

In line with this and linking to the need to ensure sustainability of quality childcare to support development and delivery of the childcare offer in Wales PACEY Cymru has the following recommendations to make:

PACEY Cymru recommendations

1. To review current member resources and develop further resources, based on gaps identified by this piece of work, to support childminders in relation to business sustainability and appropriate development plans and records for children of all ages based on national guidance. Including sharing of resources produced by others and working in partnership where needed (for example with the Care Council for Wales).
2. Further develop joint work with Cwlwm and Digital Communications Wales to support digital inclusion and marketing which in turn supports business sustainability and issues with paperwork, recording and reporting to CSSIW.
3. To implement revised support plan and pilot for increased contact, through booked slot for telephone support, to all newly registered childminders in Wales within 3 months of registration. This will support with identifying issues and offering information and guidance on resources, further support (including PACEY Local- see recommendation 5) and CPD opportunities to support business sustainability and decrease isolation.
4. Support key members to further develop and facilitate PACEY Local peer-to-peer support networks across Wales to reduce isolation of childminders and offer further

platforms of discussions of key issues and updates. Also scope development of a 'buddying' scheme between newly registered and experienced childminders that could link to the PACEY Local networks.

5. To further partnership working with Job Centre Plus and other identified partners to ensure childminding is seen as a positive career choice.

Local Authority Recommendations

1. To consider the implications on the wider childcare sector of strategic level decisions made in the Local Authority- for example commissioning of services (including early years education) that may displace existing childcare places or disadvantage some forms of childcare providers from opportunities. This would support sustainability of childminding provision.
2. To ensure consideration of the importance of parental choice in funding childcare and early years places especially in line with the development of the childcare offer to support sustainability of childminding provision.
3. To commit to working with PACEY Cymru to take a closer look into addressing the bias towards school/large group settings for funded early years provision. In doing so potentially create new opportunities for childminders that support sustainability flexibility, accessibility and diversity of childcare provision,
4. To acknowledge the business support and training needs of existing childminders in all areas not just deprived areas of a Local Authority to support the sustainability of childminding provision.
5. To look potentially at different models to support recruitment of childminders based on good practice from other areas where there have been high levels of success and engage PACEY Cymru in this work.

CSSIW recommendations

1. CSSIW to continue with the current clear communications to registered childminders and other childcare providers on any changes- involving the umbrella childcare organisations in the wording of these communications to ensure that these are clear and concise to the sector they are reaching. This will ensure consistency of information and support those who hear conflicting information from peers and others.
2. CSSIW to continue to engage with the sector through joint engagement events to involve providers in developments relating to regulation, registration and inspection ensuring these are held at times that suit the needs of providers (for example evenings and weekends).
3. CSSIW to consider splitting content of e-newsletters between social care and childcare and play to ensure accessible information and guidance specifically to the individual sector following feedback received.

Welsh Government recommendations

1. To support business sustainability of childminders by ensuring opportunities to deliver funded programmes, including the new childcare offer, are accessible to childminders.
2. In partnership with PACEY Cymru and the Care Council for Wales ensure career and qualification pathways are fit for purpose for registered childminders and that there is consideration and appropriate focus given to registered childminders in the Childcare and early years 10 year workforce plan. This includes supporting the continued professionalisation of the childminding role.
3. To ensure that programmes of funded training and qualifications are accessible and appropriate to the needs of pre-registration, newly registered and more experienced childminders to support career progression and quality improvement.
4. In partnership with CSSIW and the wider sector to review the definition of a registered childminder. This includes consideration of a:
 - clear position in relation to the maximum number of childminding assistants that can be employed in a childminding setting,
 - clear, written requirement for employing an assistant and the definition of what is meant by 'working under supervision'
 - clear position on how many registered childminders can work together from one setting under the definition of childminding.

These points can cause confusion and a clearer position would support business sustainability and consistent messaging as well as potentially providing development opportunities for some settings.

5. To develop further tools and resources and guidance on child development planning and recording with support from the wider sector so that a consistent approach is taken. This will reduce confusion felt by providers around this. The Foundation Phase Profile could be used as a base for this and 'bolt ons' developed to support all children under the age of 12 in regulated childcare settings.
6. To consult with the sector on development of a national quality improvement framework, linking clearly to CSSIW's Quality of Care Review/Self-Assessment of Service, ratings and New Inspection Framework that supports consistency and quality improvement across the sector and so in turn supports business sustainability.

Annex A- Local authority breakdown

Blaenau Gwent	1 response
Bridgend	1 response
Caerphilly	4 responses
Cardiff	2 responses
Carmarthenshire	1 response
Ceredigion	2 responses
Conwy	1 response
Denbighshire	3 responses
Flintshire	8 responses
Gwynedd	4 responses
Isle of Anglesey	4 responses
Merthyr Tydfil	0 responses
Monmouthshire	4 responses
Neath Port Talbot	5 responses
Newport	5 responses
Pembrokeshire	1 response
Powys	4 responses
Rhondda Cynon Taff	2 responses
Swansea	3 responses
Torfaen	1 response
Vale of Glamorgan	2 responses
Wrexham	3 responses