

## **What parents and carers told us - Key findings**

### **Early education and childcare**

- 3 in 4 families said they are using, or have used, a government-funded early years place for their child.

This shows that funded childcare is an important source of support for many families.

### **Talking to professionals**

- Nearly 8 in 10 parents said they would feel confident talking to a professional, nursery or school if they had concerns about their child's development.

This suggests most families feel able to ask for help when they need it.

### **Topics families most want help with: -**

Parents and carers said they most often seek advice or support about:

- Children's emotions, behaviour and feelings
- Feeding, including breast or bottle feeding and introducing solids
- Toilet training
- Speech, language and communication
- Social development

Other areas included physical development, vaccinations, bed-wetting, and vision or hearing concerns.

Families also shared that they prefer different professionals for different topics i.e., health visitors for feeding or developmental concerns, and GPs for vaccinations and physical health.

### **Health visitor reviews (2–2½-year check)**

Parents said they attend the 2–2½-year health visitor review because:

- They wanted professional advice
- They had concerns about their child's development
- They felt the review was an important or expected check

Those who had not yet received a review mostly said their child was not old enough. A small number said they were unaware of the review or felt confident without it.

## **Childhood vaccinations**

All parents who answered the vaccination questions had children who were fully or partially vaccinated.

Parents said vaccination was important to:

- Protect their child from serious illnesses
- Support children's immunity

A small number of parents reported delaying or missing some vaccines due to personal choice or difficulties booking appointments.

## **Preparing children for starting school**

Parents and carers told us that the most important skills for starting school are:

- Independence in self-care
- Emotional wellbeing
- Social skills
- Communication

Some parents shared concerns about children being expected to do things that do not feel appropriate for their age or stage of development.

Just over half of parents felt they had enough support or advice to help prepare their child for school, noting that many children in the survey had not yet started school.

## **What support families value**

Parents described receiving support through:

- Workshops or information sessions
- Printed and online resources
- Activities and opportunities offered by schools, such as settling-in visits

Suggestions for future support included:

- More playgroups and informal sessions
- Practical guidance (for example, toilet training)
- Digital information that can be accessed at any time
- Better promotion of local services and support offers