



**One Parent
Families Scotland**
changing lives, challenging poverty



Flexible Childcare Services Scotland

Our social impact 2017/18





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This report describes both the social impact of affordable, flexible and good quality childcare and what we've achieved in the past year.

We estimate (conservatively) that the childcare we have provided in 2017/18 has saved the public purse £253,437.



Affordable, flexible, good quality

**‘Your service is the only one of its kind in Dundee.
It is so flexible and your staff are all amazing’**

If you are a single parent on a zero-hours contract how can you get reliable childcare when you need it, and which doesn't leave you worse off? How do you pay for childcare in order to retrain for work or for better work? What if you need childcare by the hour and not by the session? Or occasionally but not regularly?

The availability of childcare to help parents into work and training is vital in tackling child poverty.¹ But childcare affordability and flexibility are major barriers facing single parents who want to take up work or get qualifications, with the quality of childcare an associated concern.

So, these three features – affordability and flexibility and quality – shape the design of Flexible Childcare Services Scotland (FCSS), a unique childcare service which provides home-based care, daycare, out-of-school care, and crèche.

By responding directly to parents, particularly single parents, who are living on benefits or low incomes, our service is improving parents' prospects as well as those of their children.

Three years after opening, our pilot service in Dundee is demonstrating measurable benefits, both economic and social, for individuals and for communities.

This report describes what FCSS does; who it's for; why it works; and the value it brings to individuals, families and the wider community. This value is worth investment.

Note on methodology

We've compiled this report from desk research; discussions with staff members; and analysis of parent survey responses and bookings. Flexible childcare allows parents to work, study or improve their wellbeing. We've attributed a monetary value to this using the Unit Cost Database (UCD)² identified by Hare, 2016.³ The UCD brings together more than 600 cost estimates, most of which are national costs derived from government reports and academic studies. They cover crime, education and skills, employment and economy, fire, health, housing and social services. The derivation of the costs and the calculations underpinning them have been quality assured by New Economy in co-operation with HM Government.

¹ Scottish Government. Every child, every chance. The tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-22: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/03/4093>.

² <http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>.

³ Hare, P. 2016. Cost, revenues and performance indicators for OPFS: report for One Parent Families Scotland. Pro Bono Economics: London.

The policy connection

FCSS connects directly to Scottish Government programmes to support children and families and the workforce/economy

Social justice

Employability

Early learning and childcare

Poverty

Fair work

Economic development

Regeneration



Designed for families

‘Balancing the dual aims of providing high-quality early learning and childcare that’s also affordable and flexible enough for working parents on low incomes can be challenging. This duality lies at the heart of [FCSS]’⁴

Since 2014 FCSS has offered a model of daycare which is flexible, affordable and high quality, and which helps parents fulfil the commitments and work patterns expected by many employers and training providers. The daycare element is supplemented by other care to cover evening working patterns, and includes home-based care.

The service is designed around families:

- It offers the opportunities that wealthier families may manage to pay for, or find in other ways
- It responds to the barriers which impede the low-paid workforce, and those struggling to juggle childcare with the demands of insecure work: the combination of zero-hours contracts, low-paid, part-time, temporary and shift work, and rigid, sparse, expensive or unreliable childcare

FCSS gives a chance to families which are likely to struggle, and offers a way out of poverty.

Our social impact

Flexible and affordable childcare can help low-income families, including single parents gain new skills, find work, earn a good income and provide a more secure future for themselves and their children.

This results in:

- Private benefits to the people using the service (which they pay towards in fees)
- Economic/fiscal benefits of people paying income tax because they are in work rather than claiming welfare benefits because they can’t work
- Health and social benefits of parents who are supported to work and train
- Long-term benefits for children in reducing poverty⁵ and improving educational attainment and life chances

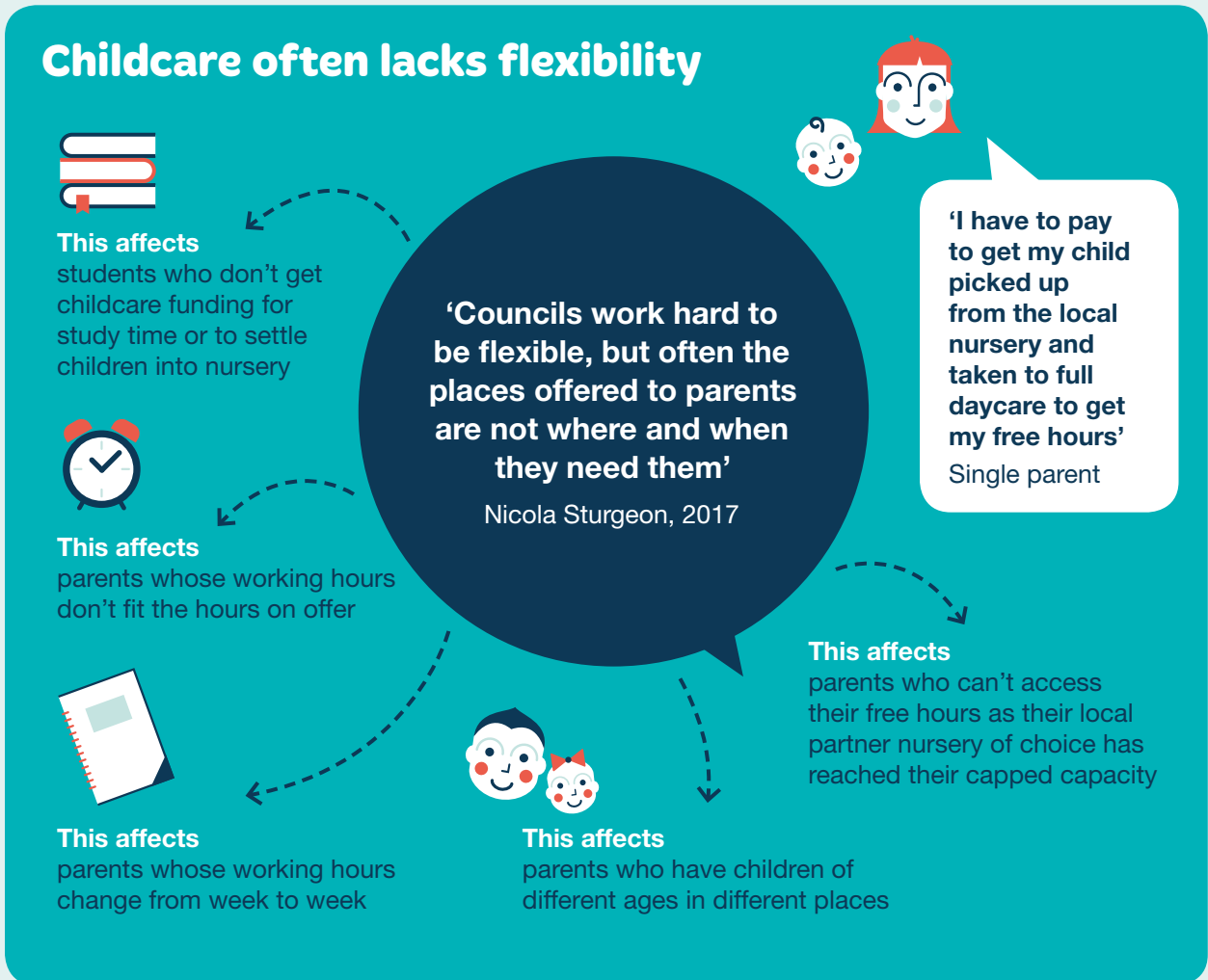
It is possible to quantify some of the social return arising from this. We estimate (conservatively) that the savings to the public purse for the year 2017/18 are **£253,437**.⁶

⁴ Hare, P. 2016. Cost, revenues and performance indicators for OPFS: report for One Parent Families Scotland. Pro Bono Economics: London.

⁵ Scottish Government. Every child, every chance. The tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-22: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/03/4093>.

⁶ See more on page 14.

Flexibility for families



Features of FCSS:

Open Mon to Fri 7am to 6pm

Pick up and drop off from/to home/school/nursery

No retainer for being on holiday

One week's notice of requirements

Flexible booking: by the hour

No deposit

Parents only pay for what they book (fees depend on the age of the child)



Adapting to families a

Gina takes up
part-time job

She works during school holidays:
no family support for childcare

JUNE 2014

Gina is a single parent. She works from 9am to 3pm but would need to pay from 8am to 6pm in private nursery.

Child picked up from school nursery and taken to FCSS until mother collects

Child can't be collected during school holidays

Mary starts college

Elected to the student union involving evening meetings

No childcare needed during school holidays

JUNE 2014

Mary is a single parent, registered disabled with one child at nursery.

Child is:

- Picked up from home and taken to local authority nursery
- Picked up and taken to FCSS
- Dropped home at 6pm

Out-of-hours provided at home

'I couldn't get FCSS didn't provide after-school offs at home'

as their needs change

She increases her hours to full-time

She is still in work

MARCH 2018

red for school

Child starts school

Child goes to FCSS:

- After school
- School holidays
- In-service days

'I would not be able to work without this service'

ed days

She completes course

She gets a job

She is still in work

MARCH 2018

care home

FCSS place held at no cost

Child keeps nursery place and makes smooth transition to school

have gone to college if not do the pick-ups, drop-and care in between'

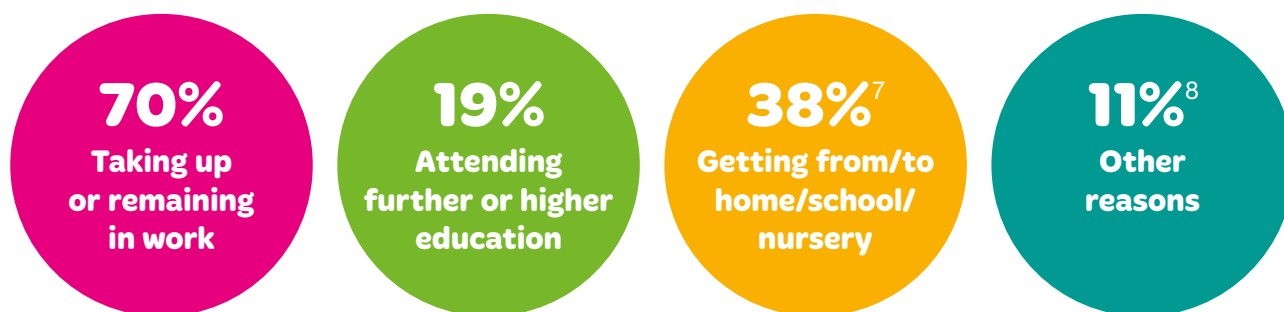


Supporting families and the childcare workforce: achievements 2017/18

Supporting families

In the year to March 2018 we provided 28,932 hours of childcare to 184 children from 163 families. 43% of children were funded by social work for 11% of the childcare we provided (social work bookings tend to be short and short-term, for example to support transition to foster or kinship care). Further Education colleges and families themselves funded 89% of the childcare we provided. This was for 106 children from 90 families. Over half of these (53%) were one parent families.

These 90 families used our service for:



Supporting the childcare workforce

To ensure high quality childcare, we invest in our own childcare workforce and actively support others keen to work in the children and families sector. We employ 39 staff including five undertaking an SVQ3 in Social Services, Children and Young People and one an SVQ4 qualification. We offer opportunities for students and others to learn about working with families and the value of supportive and flexible childcare. Over the past year, we have:

- Supported five full-time social work student placements; two social work students on three-day and two on 15-day placements; one community learning and development student on a four-month placement; one paediatric student nurse on a four-week placement; and one trainee health visitor on a three-day placement
- Employed one young person as a sessional trainee worker (now doing SVQ3 training with us). This is a collaboration with Helm which works with young people who face barriers to developing sustainable careers
- Offered placements to schools for career support. Our manager is a SSSC ambassador, which involves going to schools and career fairs to encourage young people to take up work in the care sector (with support)

⁷ We provide this service to 25 school-aged children (5+); 14 children (age 3 to 5) who would qualify for Early learning and childcare (ELC) funded hours; and four children aged 0 to 3. The data doesn't show whether it is a pick up/drop off or where the child is picked up and dropped off.

⁸ Including socialisation for children; attending OPFS employability courses or family support groups; time to address parental mental health issues.

A model that works: how change happens

All families

have:

- **improved family wellbeing** through more control and more choices for childcare that meets their needs
- **improved family finances** through affordable childcare and participating in work/education/training

All staff

have:

- **flexible career opportunities** in the childcare sector
- support to ensure **up-to-date skills and knowledge**
- the commitment to **pay at least the 'real' living wage**

All children

have:

- **quality, nurturing and early learning and childcare** wherever and whenever they need it
- **resources that are rich** and close the attainment gap
- **improved chances**





What parents say ...

'Without the flexibility of the service we would be paying out four times as much in childcare. We are lucky to have my mother-in-law help two days a week. I am a nurse who works shifts, therefore, our requirements vary on a weekly basis'



'We love the daycare service because of the flexibility and the staff! My husband works shifts and has days off during the week so the service means we don't have to pay for a 'full-time space' like we would need to at every other nursery in Dundee, when we don't need it. It has meant that we can still both work but have high quality childcare that we are not just working to pay for so it has enhanced our quality of life too. The staff are all amazing with our daughter and us as worried parents too!'





‘Using families at home has been amazing for me. It means I was able to return to education for two years and I’m now able to work knowing my daughter is safe and happy. My little one loves coming to day care. The staff are always friendly and helpful and are always on hand to do anything they can to help you’

‘In the holidays we don’t need to pay for our daughter’s space if she is on holiday which is amazing! The flexibility of the one week’s notice is fab too as things can change at either of our workplaces so it means we can easily add on days or take days off’



Calculating the savings

Rationale	Numbers	Counterfactual ⁹	Attribution	Unit cost ¹⁰	Saving
FCSS has enabled single parents to enter into, or sustain, employment. This means not claiming JSA (income-based or contribution-based JSA applies for single parents with children over 3)	19 single parents with children aged 3+	4	15	£10,321	£154,815
FCSS has enabled single parents to enter into, or return to, work following maternity leave. This means not claiming Income Support (entitlement for single parents with children aged 0 to 3)	10 single parents with children aged 0 to 3	2	8	£7,972	£63,776
FCSS has provided children aged 0 to three with regular quality early learning and childcare (ELC) contributing to their development. This prepares them for their funded ELC at age 3 to 5 and improves school-readiness	33 children aged 0 to 3 regularly attending	7	26	£1,053	£27,378
FCSS has enabled parents to attend college leading to an NVQ-level qualification	16 parents attending college	8	8	£559	£4,472
FCSS has enabled parents to attend university leading to a graduate level 4+ qualification	1 parent attending university	0	1	£2,996	£2,996
TOTAL					£253,437

⁹ We have made the following assumptions:

- For every five single parents in employment, one would have found alternative childcare to enable them to achieve the same outcome
- For every two parents at college, one would have found alternative childcare to enable them to achieve the same outcome
- For every five children aged 0 to 3 attending regularly, one would have received equivalent care elsewhere

¹⁰ <http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>.



‘I would not be able to afford the cost of regular childcare and, subsequently, not be able to attend university’

We have not attributed any financial value to the following outcomes. Although the service has contributed to these, the costs are more difficult to quantify.

Outcome	Rationale
Improved family finances	We tailor each childcare package to meet the needs of the family. The family pays only for the childcare used. We do not charge retainers or fees for places held but not needed (for example over the summer holidays).
Improved wellbeing for parents	By planning our service around the needs of the family, we help to reduce parents’ stress/anxiety in trying to fit in with less flexible services.
Reduced reliance on welfare benefits for families	We enable parents to enter into/sustain employment. In some circumstances this means reduced reliance on welfare benefits. Whilst we have information about the entitlements of single parents who are unemployed, we do not routinely collect this information from other families.
Increased gender equality in the workforce	We enable women who might otherwise be excluded to enter into, or remain in, the workforce.



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