

Impact of Covid-19 on OSCs: follow-up survey

Introduction

The Out of School Alliance conducted a survey of its members and other providers of wraparound care (before, after-school and holiday clubs) from 5 to 20 November 2020. The aim was to follow-up on our previous two surveys, (conducted in the middle of May and in early August), to see how providers are faring now, following the re-opening of schools in September and after a half term of operating under a variety of different restrictions.

Respondents

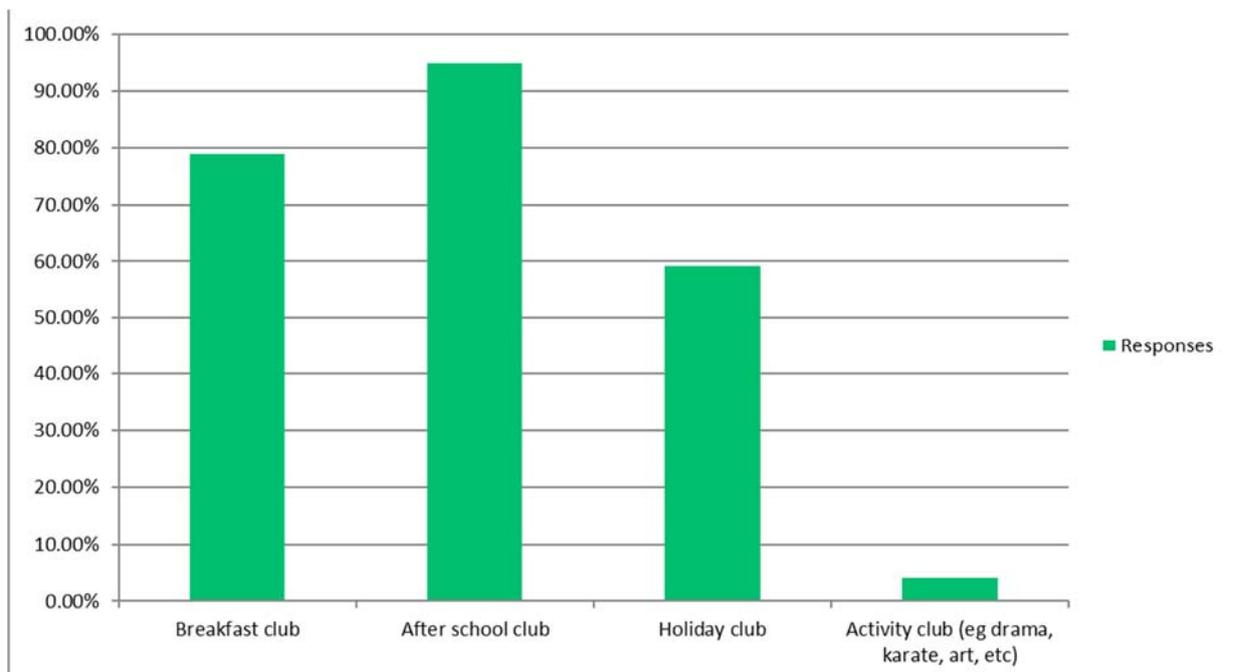
A total of 313 people completed the survey. Of these, 95% run an after-school club, 79% run a breakfast club, and 59% run a holiday club. Just 4% of respondents to the survey run a club for a particular activity such as drama, sport, etc.

The average number of childcare places at each type of club is:

- Breakfast club: 46 places
- After-school club: 52 places
- Holiday club: 38 places

The number of childcare places provided by the respondents to this survey is approximately 34,168.

Fig 1: Types of out of school club operated by respondents



It is notable that the number of respondents to the survey is approximately half that of our previous survey in August. We can't be certain of the reason for this but suspect that at least some of the reduction is due to the number of clubs that have closed down between August and November.

Wraparound clubs from lockdown to end of summer term

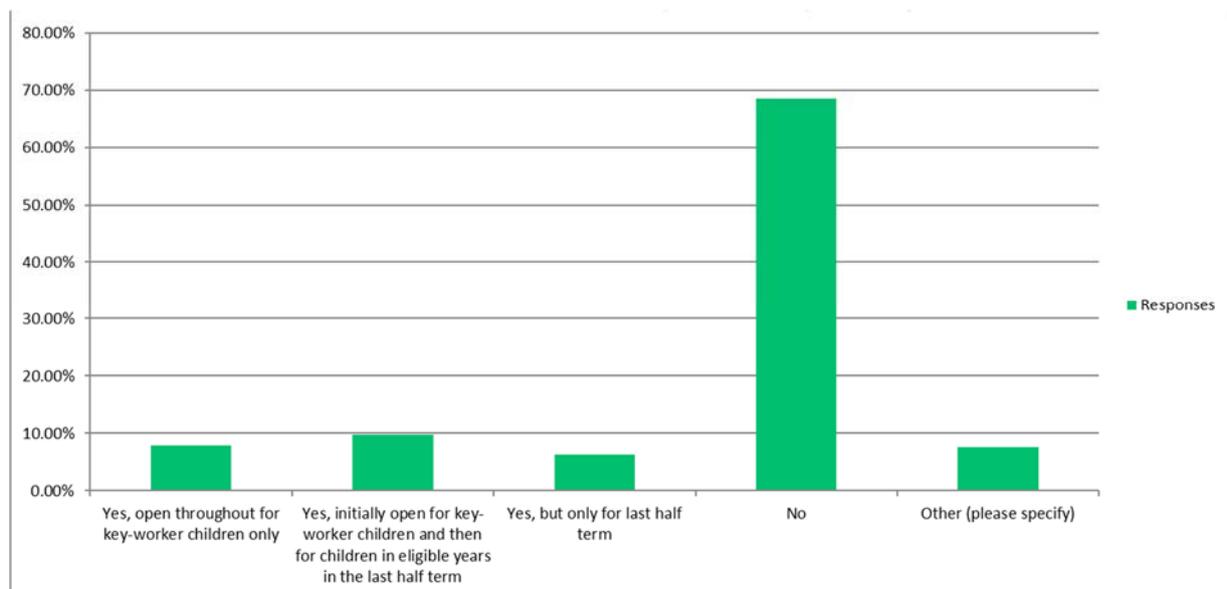
We asked the survey respondents what had happened to their before and after-school clubs between the start of the first lockdown and the end of the summer term.

The majority of before and after-school clubs (69%) remained closed for the entire period from the start of the first lockdown in March to the end of the school year in July, thereby losing a substantial part of their annual revenue.

Around 8% of before and after-school clubs remained open to provide care for the children of key workers only, and 10% cared for key worker children initially and then also for children in eligible school years for the final half term. Just over 6% of clubs opened for the last half term only.

Many providers reported that they had tried to remain open to support key worker children at the start of lockdown but had had to close after just a few weeks due to low numbers. Others reported that they had remained open for key worker children until they were forced to close from 1 June due to the introduction of new rules about where and how they could operate which made continuing impossible.

Fig 2: Was your before/after-school club open between the start of lockdown and the end of the summer term?

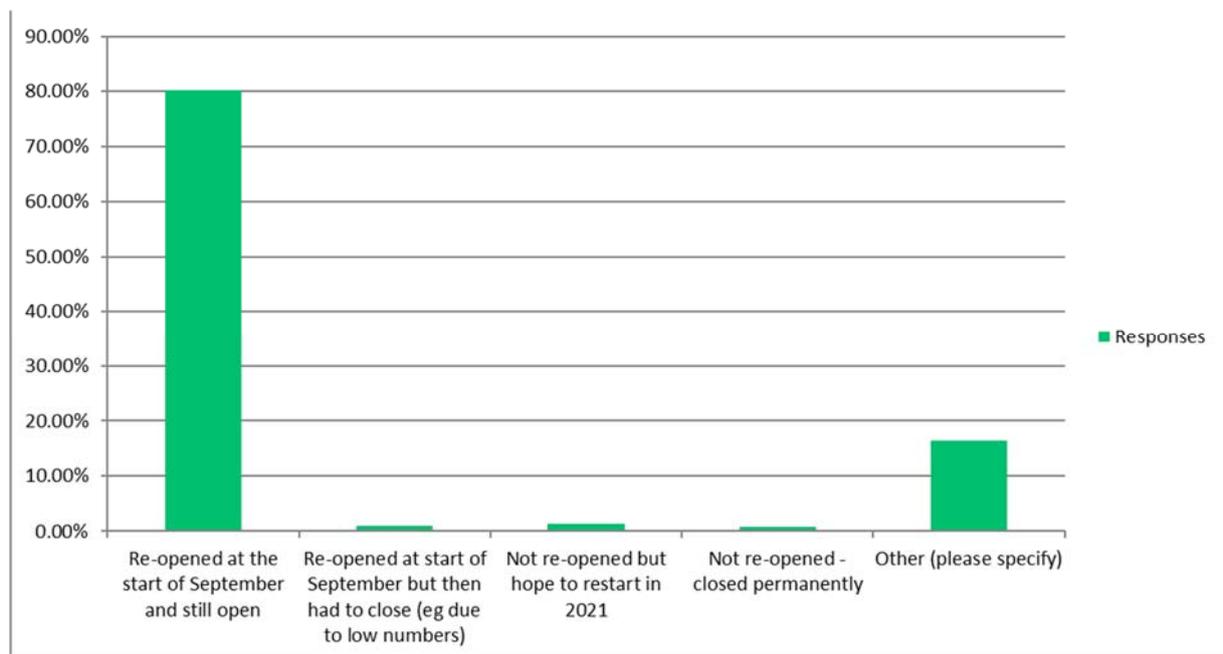


Wraparound clubs from September 2020

We asked providers of before and after-school care which had been closed up to the end of the summer term, whether they had been able to re-open with the new school year.

The vast majority (80%) of respondents said that they opened at the start of term, or shortly afterwards, and are still open. A handful of respondents reported that they had initially opened but then closed again due to low numbers, others stated that although they were remaining open it was for only a few children, and others said that they were either permanently or temporarily closed. (From anecdotal reports we believe that many more clubs have permanently closed but were not captured by the survey.)

Fig 3. If your wraparound club was closed up to the end of the summer term, when did it re-open?



Change of premises

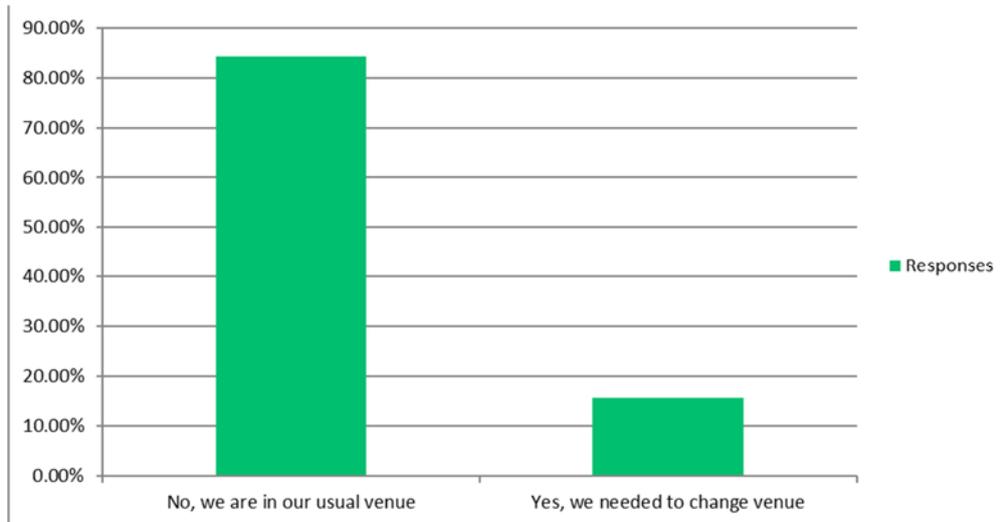
We knew that some providers were having problems either accessing their usual premises (eg because schools were reluctant to allow them to operate on school sites) or needed to take on additional premises in order to allow for social distancing. So we asked providers what they had experienced.

Whilst 83% were running in their usual premises, 16% of respondents said that they had needed to change their venue (Fig 4). Common reasons for this included:

- The community centre/village hall usually used by the club not re-opening after lockdown, so the club needing to find alternative premises.
- Needing to rent more rooms at the school (often at additional cost) in order to keep the different bubbles separate.

- Schools refusing to allow clubs to host children from other schools on their sites, so clubs needing to hire separate venues (at additional cost) in order to continue to provide childcare for each of the schools. (A third of out of school clubs typically take children from more than one school, so this is an issue that potentially affects many settings.)
- Where clubs had previously been sharing space with a nursery or pre-school class which was no longer possible due to bubbles and/or staggered start and finish times.

Fig 4: Have you had to move you club to an alternative venue in order to remain open?



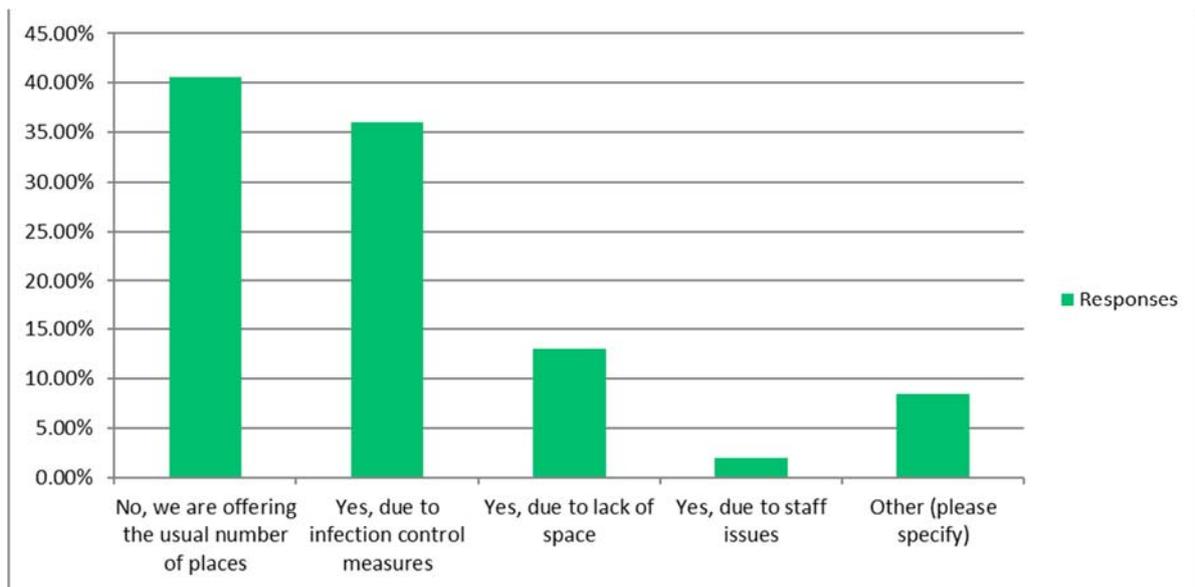
Number of childcare places

We wanted to know whether providers had needed to limit the number of children attending their settings, in order to meet the various protection measures (see Fig 5).

We found that 41% of providers were managing to care for the same number of children as pre-Covid, but most providers (51%) said that they had had to reduce the number of places they could offer. The main reasons given for reducing the number of childcare places were:

- Meeting infection control measures (36%)
- Insufficient space for bubbles and social distancing (13%)
- Staffing issues (2%).

The difficulties of accommodating and staffing separate bubbles were mentioned by many providers. Several respondents also commented that they have had to scale back their offering due to a reduced demand from parents. (We explore this issue more later.)

Fig 5: If your club is currently open, have you had to reduce the number of places?

Occupancy levels and profitability

We asked respondents how their current occupancy levels compared to the same period last year. Just 8% said that occupancy levels were unchanged, whereas the vast majority (92%) reported a drop (see Fig 6). Shockingly, some providers reported that their settings were operating at less than 25% of last year's occupancy levels:

- 22% of providers were operating at between 75% and 99% of their 2019 occupancy levels
- 34% were operating at 50-74% occupancy
- 27% were operating at 25-49% occupancy
- 9% were operating at less than 25% occupancy

Clearly for many clubs these occupancy levels are unsustainable, especially after they have already suffered significant losses due to enforced closure for an extended period earlier in the year.

We therefore asked providers whether their businesses were currently breaking even (see Fig 7). A worryingly high proportion (48%) said that they were running at a loss, 42% said that they were only covering their costs, and just 11% reported that they were making a profit.

Fig 6: If your club is currently open, how do your occupancy rates compare to this time last year?

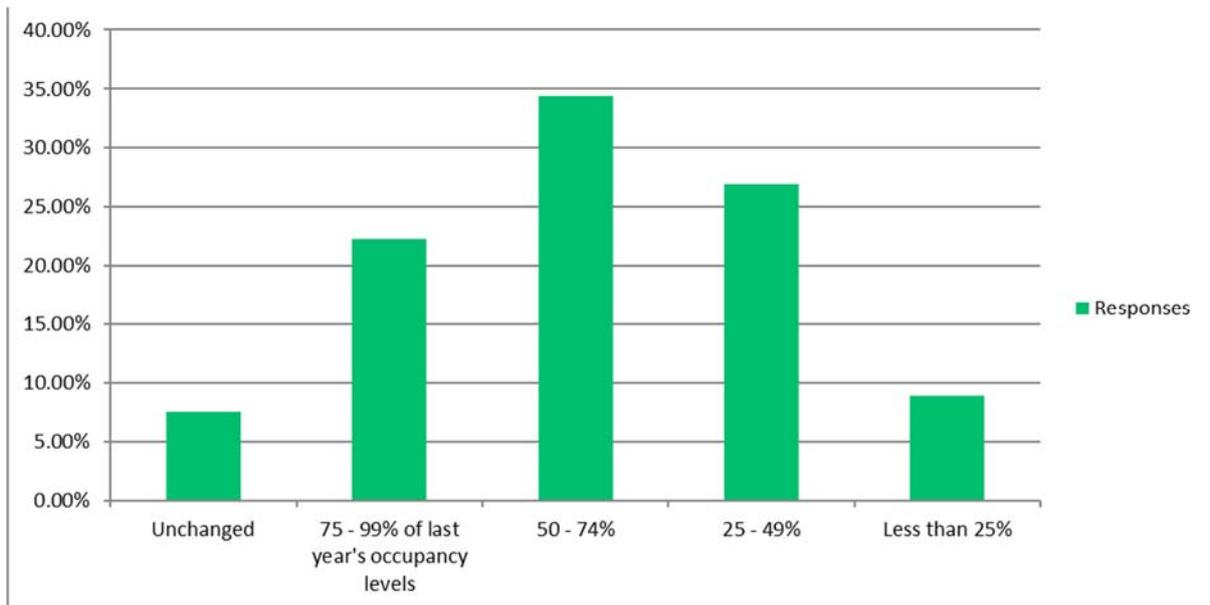
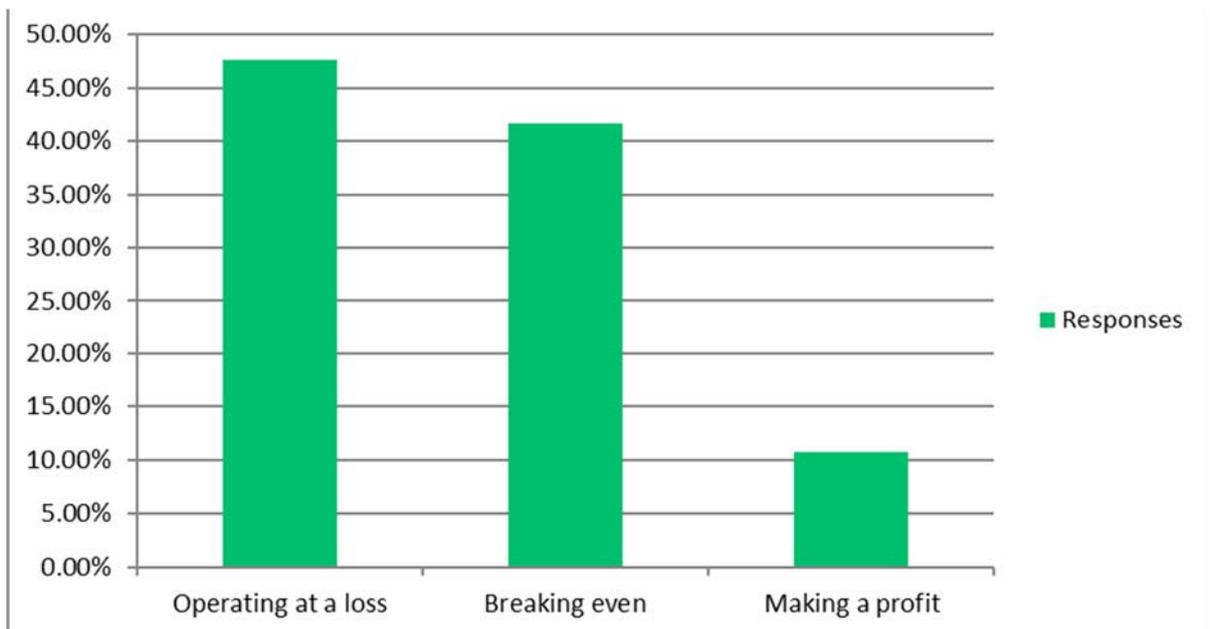


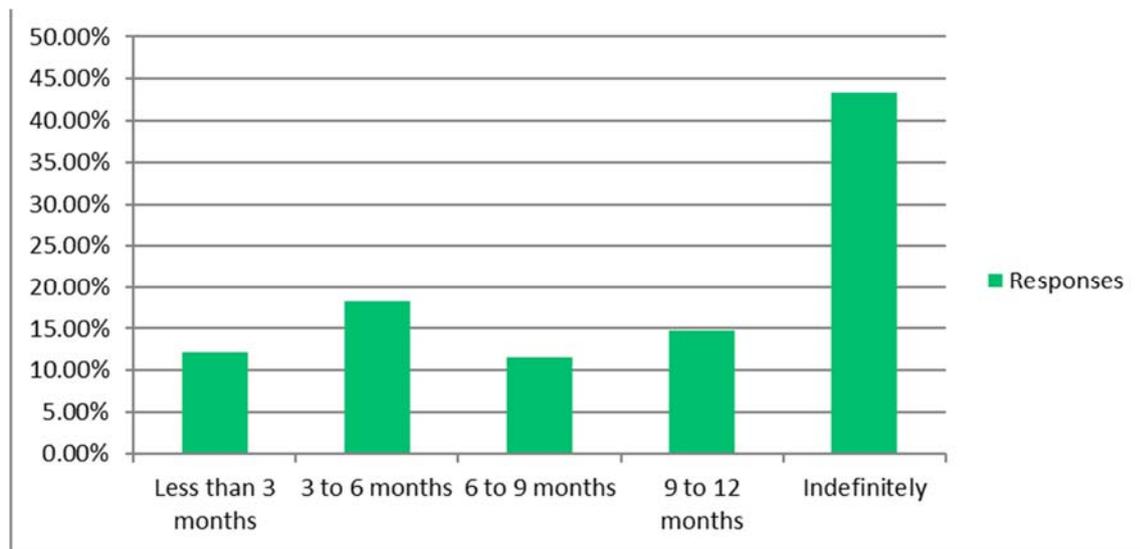
Fig 7: If your club is currently open, are you making a profit, a loss, or breaking even?



We then asked providers how long they thought that they could continue with these current occupancy levels (see Fig 8). A total of 30% thought they would be closed within the next 6 months, and 26% thought they could last between six months and a year. What is particularly concerning is that 12% thought they would be closed within three months.

Surprisingly, 43% thought that their current occupancy levels were sustainable in the long term. Presumably these represent the clubs that are currently operating at fairly close to their normal occupancy levels, or which have managed to pare down their offering to a 'break even' level through reducing staffing or opening hours, and closing less profitable settings.

Fig 8: At current occupancy levels, how long is your club likely to remain open?



Financial support and sustainability

We asked providers what financial support they had been able to access since the start of the first lockdown (see Fig 9).

The vast majority (80%) had made use of the furlough scheme (CJRS), and 28% had accessed the Bounce Back Loan scheme. But other forms of support were less applicable to providers of out of school childcare: only 19% had been able to benefit from the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), 9% had benefited from the Coronavirus SSP Rebate scheme and just 7% had been able to claim the Small Business Rates Relief grant.

A discretionary grant through the local authority had helped 13% of respondents.

10% of respondents had not been able to benefit from *any* of the listed forms of financial support.

We also asked providers what form of support they would find most helpful in order to ensure that their childcare settings remained in business (see Fig 10).

Fig 9: What types of financial support have you accessed, or do you plan to access?

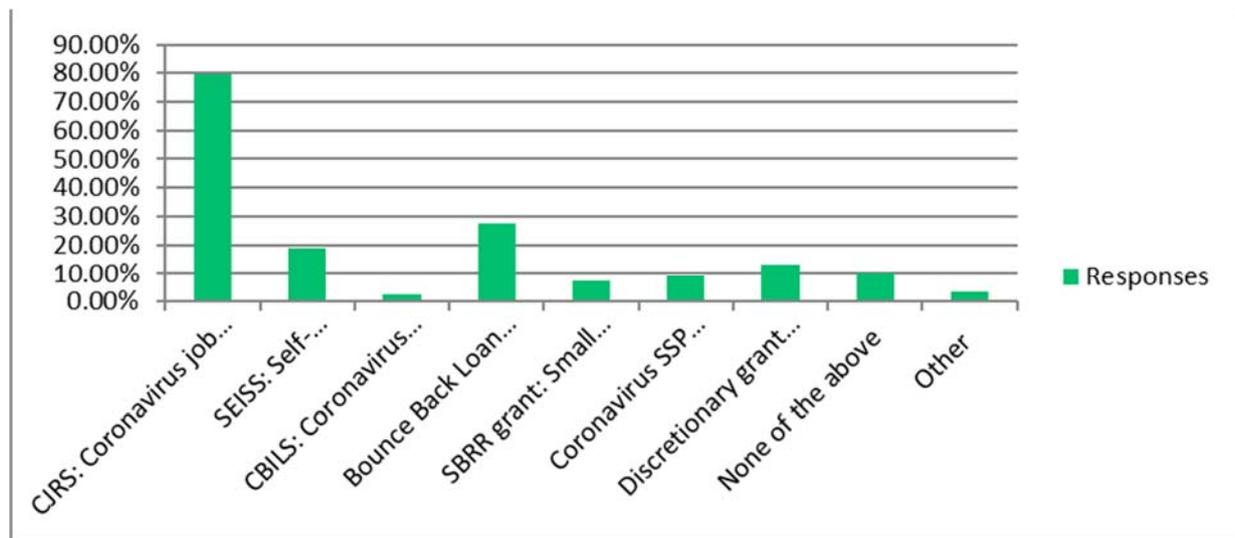
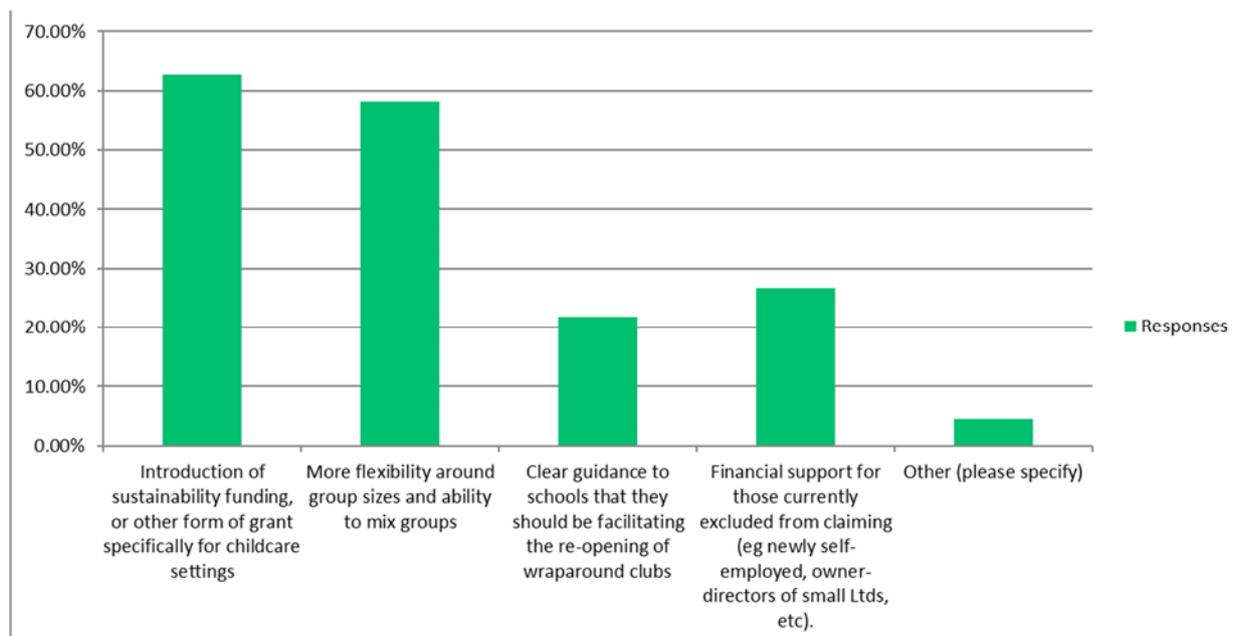


Fig 10: What measures would be most helpful in ensuring your club remains open for business?



The measure that would be welcomed by the greatest number of providers (63%) was the introduction of sustainability funding, or another form of grant specifically for childcare settings. It is notable that sustainability funding or grants have been made available to out of school childcare settings by the Welsh and the Scottish governments, but no such funding has been provided for out of school childcare in England.

Another measure requested by many providers (58%) is more flexibility around group sizes and the amount of mixing allowed. Being expected to keep the children in small, fixed groups is a significant problem for many providers and makes staffing both difficult and expensive. Although the 'Protective measures' guidance for out of school settings

recognises this difficulty and allows providers some discretion in allowing some limited mixing, in practice most clubs are based on school sites and many schools are insisting that clubs stick rigidly to the same bubbles that children are in during the school day. This means that providers can find themselves in the situation of needing to supply one member of staff for a bubble which might only have four or five children, which is clearly uneconomic.

Related to the previous point, 22% of providers would like to see the DfE giving schools stronger direction that they should be facilitating the continued operation of the wraparound clubs that run on their premises. We are hearing of many examples where an excess of caution on the part of host schools is making a difficult situation even worse for childcare providers, by imposing unnecessary restrictions on the operation of clubs such that they are either prevented from running at all, or can only do so by running at a loss.

A significant proportion of respondents (27%) asked for some form of financial support for those business owners who are currently excluded from claiming against any of the existing government schemes (eg because they have been trading for less than three years, or earned over the £50,000 threshold, or are the owner-director of a micro limited company).

Additional concerns from providers

We also asked providers what additional concerns they were experiencing which weren't covered by the other questions in our survey. We received a great many responses, which could be broken down into the following common themes:

Fall in demand

Many providers report that they have seen a dramatic fall in demand due to changes in parents' working patterns and redundancies. This is reflected in the reduction in occupancy levels shown in fig 7.

Difficulties with schools

Problems with the relationship with the host school were mentioned by many respondents. These were particularly acute for clubs which operate on school sites. Problems include:

- The school insisting on the club exactly following the school's procedures for bubbles or year groups. This ignores the fact that clubs have different guidelines which allow them a little more flexibility so that they are not left having to staff say 10 bubbles with three children in each.
- Providers complained that by schools insisting on clubs using exactly the same bubbles, they were effectively imposing a cap on the numbers that a club could take, but were still expecting providers to pay the same amount of rent as if they had their normal head-count.
- Schools preventing clubs from picking up children from different schools. Again, this is something that is allowed in the guidelines for out of school settings. We know that around a third of clubs usually pick up children from a couple of schools; this

allows them to provide childcare for schools where it would not otherwise be financially viable. When a host school refuses to allow clubs to pick up from a different school, providers are being forced to either close down the provision for the second school (thus depriving the parents there of childcare), or else temporarily open a second, uneconomical, setting at the second school thereby losing money.

- Schools changing their internal processes (eg staggered start and finish times, changes to entrances and exits) without considering or warning the wraparound clubs that will be affected by such changes.

Increased costs coupled with reduced income

Another common theme mentioned by providers was that they were being hit by a double-whammy of increased costs combined with a dramatically reduced income.

Causes of increased costs included:

- The need to purchase PPE, cleaning products, hand sanitiser, etc
- Increased staffing levels to implement the necessary extra cleaning; to supervise staggered start and finish times; and to supervise separate bubbles (often with small numbers of children).
- Needing to hire additional rooms or additional premises so that all the bubbles could be accommodated.
- Needing to hire additional venues so that clubs could continue to provide care where their usual venue was not allowing them to operate as normal. For example when School A won't allow a club to take children from School B, so the club needs to hire additional space in order to continue providing childcare for children from School B.
- Purchasing of duplicate resources to reduce sharing.
- Purchasing specific equipment (eg marquees, gazebos, outdoor seating etc) to enable more sessions to take place out of doors.

Causes of reduced income cited by providers included:

- Reduction in demand from parents (as mentioned earlier).
- Cap on child numbers due to bubbles / available space meaning that even where there is still demand, the number of children that can be accommodated is much less than normal.
- Loss of income whenever a child needs to self-isolate and can't attend, or when a school bubble closes and a whole cohort of children can't attend.

Staffing problems

Staffing is always a problem at out of school clubs even in normal times, due to the short and awkward hours. Now clubs face the problem of having increased staffing requirements (as outlined above), which are difficult to meet because of:

- Lack of availability due to existing staff needing to self-isolate, or clinically vulnerable staff needing to shield.
- Reduction in income (as outlined above) with which to pay for the additional staff needed.

Provider burn-out

Providers reported that they were suffering from the ongoing stress and anxiety arising from the competing demands of trying to keep the children safe, providing a continuity of service for working parents, supporting staff, and trying to balance the books when faced with falling income and rising costs. Many providers are racking up debts in order to remain open, and others are simply calling it a day and closing down.

The individual responses to this question can be found in full in *Appendix A: Voices of providers*.

Conclusion

The responses to the survey show that providers of before, after-school and holiday clubs are really struggling.

- 92% reported a drop in occupancy levels compared to this time last year
- 51% reported that they have had to reduce the number of childcare places they could offer
- Nearly half (48%) of the providers who are still open say that they are running at a loss and 42% say that they are just breaking even

Although not captured in the survey, we also know from communications with our members that many clubs have already closed down permanently, or are about to close. Very few providers who have already closed their club participated in the survey, probably because they no longer use their club's email account and no longer follow social media accounts for the sector, so are less likely to have been aware of the survey.

The impact of the Covid-19 epidemic does seem to be quite variable from club to club; some clubs are on the brink of collapse whereas others (albeit a minority) have only been minorly affected.

Clubs which seem to be weathering the storm more successfully seem to be those which:

- Operate in areas where the demand for childcare has remained high (eg parents are more likely to work in jobs that can't be done from home, and which have been less affected by redundancies).

- Operate from their own premises so are able to make their own decisions about opening, bubbles, etc.
- Operate on school sites where they have a very good relationship with the school, and their role as part of the school community is valued.

Clubs which are more badly affected seem to be those which:

- Operate in areas where more parents have shifted to working from home, or where there have been more widespread redundancies, thereby reducing demand.
- Operate on school sites where the school has been very reluctant to accommodate the club, and does not value the club as part of the wider school community, or appreciate the importance of the childcare it provides for working parents.
- Operate on school sites where the wraparound provision is seen as an annoyance or an irrelevance when the school is itself struggling with the Covid safety measures for its children, and therefore insists that providers follow exactly the same procedures. There is little understanding that the guidelines for out of school clubs are different, and that it is simply impossible for clubs to remain open if, for example, they have to have a multitude of separate bubbles with just a couple of children in each.

It is notable that the two measures that would most be welcomed by providers are:

- Some form of sustainability funding for the sector, to make up the shortfall in numbers and thereby enable providers to remain open with reduced occupancy until the situation improves.
- Clear direction from the DfE to schools to emphasise the importance of wraparound provision remaining operational going forward. Such direction for schools needs to recognise that wraparound provision is allowed to be more flexible regarding the composition of bubbles, and taking children from other schools, and only with such flexibility can clubs hope to remain financially viable.

Without more assistance to the sector, there will be even more closures and a resultant lack of school-aged childcare once the economy starts to open up again and more parents need to return to work.

Appendix A: Voices of providers

Introduction

The final question of our survey asked providers what other issues out of school clubs are facing at the moment.

In the main report we have covered the common themes that emerged from the large number of responses. This section includes the actual contributions from respondents.

Responses

We have had to cancel pick up from some schools as can't mix children from different schools.

Schools have been very clear in telling us how many kids we can have, it would have been nice to get a rent reduction in line with the reduced income.

Staff shortages due to self isolation

Closing due to school ending lease on building because of bubbles.

Lack of children makes running games difficult - we don't always have enough. It is disheartening and we do worry about where some of the children are being cared for. We provide a safe haven.

Number of class bubbles required to self isolate & additional impact on low occupancy. We are not charging if children required to self isolate as in deprived areas & families are already facing financial hardship

The bubble systems are meaning that my costs are much higher, I need more staff to care for the children, but my income is lower because our occupancy has reduced

Staffing 4 bubbles with only a few children per bubble. Can only take 15 children per school (4x school bubbles) and many children only do a few sessions per week so we have many empty spaces daily. Cleaning is very difficult to upkeep due to other users in the community hall we operate from.

We need help also when year group bubbles close and numbers drop for two weeks.

Extra expenses for COVID safe practices ie sanitizers cleaning products & supplies more staffing costs etc.

Staffing the bubbles and cover for staff isolating is becoming a problem. Also siblings being separated is causing upset.

Unpredictability of the future, Forward planning, particularly financially, is difficult as when a school bubble goes out for 14 days we lose income. There is no way of knowing when, if or how often this will happen.

Just that it seems ridiculous that I can run a holiday club with mixed ages and schools but not run an after school club with children all from the same school. Not even allowed to run if it's only children from one year group.

Not mixing year groups is the biggest challenge and the time the cleaning is all taking

Canceling parents due to uncertainty and working at home. Difficult to uphold T&Cs. Want to support staff, families but financial losses are not sustainable. Govt should value private sector wraparound care and fund us with grants on the interim, if they want us to be here when Covid is over.

Access to PPE (gloves, cleaning materials, masks) as a private provider these can be difficult to get and have become very expensive - especially as we are unable to claim the VAT back - these items should be exempt from VAT for childcare providers.

We also run residential camps which have been closed and after 25 years threatening to be ended forever.

I do not have the words to eloquently describe how I feel today... desperately sad, very worried and scared. As an individual, I have been let down by this Government. I can see my business (other others) having to close through not fault of my/their own and then Gov will set up 'new initiatives' to offer OOS care...

Due to the 2 schools we offered our service to not being allowed to mix we had to open a second club at the other school to allow us to provide our service for both schools.

We get no help with food.

We have had to buy double everything to maintain the separate bubbles. I.e: outdoor equipment.

High rent set by the school ongoing. Nurseries etc have had rate holidays

The issue of payment when a year group is sent home for 2 weeks to isolate

If we had a staffing shortage eg: self isolation, we would have to close down for that period of time, resulting in loss of income.

Having to use more staff for less children. Collecting children at different times from different exits instead of at one meeting point.

The potential staffing shortage/difficulties resulting from self isolation/staff children being sent home to isolate/staff illness, etc.

In order to keep the bubbles separate, we have had to employ more staff to look after each bubble. Despite the fact we have less children attending, due to parents being out of work, or to people having to isolate and our numbers being lower, we have more staff than ever.

We also have to spend an unbelievable amount of money on cleaning products and PPE in order to keep the children and staff safe.

Temp closures due to staff self isolating. So open on and off. No stability

Workforce stress and anxiety

Our Infant school is on a different site, this did mean we had to stop the infants from coming to the juniors.

Uncertainty of having to close will result in more financial hardship to make staff redundant.

Only able to take students from one school at the moment.

Prior to lockdown we were collecting from more than 1 school/setting - we cannot now offer this.

The stress of running the club is a lot higher, trying to juggle staff/bubbles. We're using more staff with less children. We're in a tent as we had a marquee which blew down (luckily we moved the children minutes before). The tent has been loaned to us but is cold and muddy. It is really hard to keep positive and keep the lovely atmosphere our club had prior to COVID. Some funding to buffer our budgets without having to fill in loads of forms for grants would be helpful. Forms = more stress when we're already trying to deal with the day to day running of a Covid secure club.

Holiday Club always did take children from other schools but we are not doing so currently to reduce contacts.

Number of attendees is much lower than before but this does help with spacing groups out.

When guidelines are changing we are given such short notice it makes it very difficult to rota/retrain/reengage staff and run a business to ensure that clubs can run as they need to.

Our main problem is lack of co-operation from the school we run out of.

Just having support from an independent body.

Parents working from home in many instances have withdrawn their children, and will not return unless parents leave home to go to work. The ruling from the CMA that no charges can be made if you close, means that in the event of a closure, as a Director I have no income, as they still need to carry on administration, and only draw dividends when the company is profitable. In addition, the overheads need to be covered. My personal savings have been depleted, and whilst we are currently covering costs as we have started to trade after 5 months of closure, this will not be recovered. Like many, we are a family business with both adults in the household dependent on the club for our livelihood. Many regular bookings have been lost, which we hope will gradually return, although in an uncertain world, we only expect this to be on an ad hoc basis at best, and not until the spring at the very earliest.

Had to employ extra staff due to school staggered opening and closing times more costs. Also the extra cleaning cost to keep staff and children safe

Being split into bubbles makes it difficult to care for SENCO children.

Confusion over very unclear guidelines, bubbles within schools and staff isolating causing ratio issues as we cannot mix staff between sites

Holiday play scheme and the difficulty in keeping the children in the same bubbles as school. This is for the half term holidays

Business Interruption Insurance refuse to pay out.

Morton Michel Playsafe policy.

We only take children from other schools in holiday club.

For privately owned clubs my experience has been that the support from the school to remain open has been vital.

Numbers decreasing as more guidance/ measures come out, but costs increasing in order to staff the bubbles separately.

The smaller groups mean that we need to have more staff to look after fewer children

Staffing especially if they have to self isolate or shielding. As we are operating 7 bubbles we are stretched wont take much for us to close due to lack of staff.

Have had to employ more staff to cover the bubbles in different areas, and this is having a major impact on how we run.

I think that you have covered most issues. Finances, low occupancy and constant uncertainty.

Difficult to manage separate bubbles with staffing.

The government should pay the help that parents get for childcare instead of parents. Then the money definitely goes to who it should.

Business rates have had to be paid as relief only applied to one of our two businesses.

I feel funding isn't there for clubs with reduced numbers of children due to parents working from home as we still have to have 2 staff whether it is 1 child or 10 . We are struggling to survive.

Our financial position is greatly affected by having to split children into bubbles as close as those which school operate meaning we sometimes have 3 staff looking after only 5 children.

Current occupancy has been variable due to second lockdown. Late government guidance has given us issues in trying to plan and getting clear information.

Some of the situation leading to my having to close revolved around the instruction to close at the start of the first lockdown with few exception. Parents/carers were then told their children must only attend one setting initially before this was clarified as not applying to osc. Sadly osc were not included in the early planning for the pandemic and despite valiant efforts on your part the eventual clarification came too late to save my business. My decision has since been vindicated by the very low numbers attending the school's offering. I expect numbers will eventually recover to pre-pandemic levels and there will be an opportunity for a new business to start up from scratch. Please note that I have had to resign my Oosa subscription to save money.

One of our clubs have been unable to re open as the school dont want us back in until the r rate remains consistently low so that club is shut for now. Also instead of picking up from 5 schools we are currently only taking from one school at our other club(that school doesnt need transport), also whether the gov will say that wrap around care in community buildings will have to shut even if we are the only people using it! that seems unfair and surely its safer than using school premises when we can control the cleaning routine and know who is on site !!!!

The unfair ruling for self employed who can't access any financial support because their profit was £50K over the past three years. It's taken me 18 years of hard work and dedication to build a business that I am passionate about. In turn, my business has enabled thousands of parents to go to work thus supporting the economy. I have always paid my NI and taxes and those of my staff... I am an unpaid tax collector as well as a childcarer! Leicestershire LA has not specifically looked into the effects of Covid-19 on OOSC as the children we care for are counted in school's attendance. We are being mocked and totally forgotten by the Government.

With a limit of 15 children on roll we are now unable to be flexible with parents who want last minute booking or casual bookings. We now have to offer a minimum of 3 days a week attendance when some parents only need one or two days.

Schools refusing to reduce rent charges.

Obtaining food in suffices quantities from Tesco's.

Parents working from home so not requiring breakfast or after school care

Staffing re-bubbles .

Having enough staff to operate our bubble system so far we have managed to run 4 bubbles with appropriate staff.

Worry what will happen if we have a lot of staff off sick and isolating.

Again insurance has been a big issue for us we felt we should have received payment which would have helped us greatly.

Parents working from home has massively reduced our occupancy

I don't have enough children/income at the moment to cover all my staff wages, however I need all staff to cover all the staggered start and finish times at school and to supervise the children in different areas within my club safely.

My bank account was nil at the start of September so I took a £10,000 bounce back loan to get us going again thinking I could pay it back in February with the incentive that the government would pay £1000 for each member of staff kept on after furlough ended however this incentive has now been removed so I am in debt.

I am a director of my business and I rent the local community centre who does not pay business rates so I have not been able to claim any grants or funding. Furlough was a great help while we were closed in the first lockdown but now we are open I have all the costs to pay but not as many children attending due to parents who are not working or working from home and managing their own childcare at the moment. "

I have 3 settings. Only one is really struggling. I will have to close it at the end of this half term.

Lack of communication with the school, when they make changes we are never informed and it's very hard keeping the bubbles apart as our room is very small

In order to break even and keep the club running I have been working every shift and keeping staff costs to a minimum. I have also been forced to take a job at the school I am based in to help the costs of running my home and to help pay for my ever looming tax bill. This means I have been working 12-13 hour days since the beginning of the summer holidays. I then come home at night and work another 1-2 hours planning and keeping accounts/bookings in order and replying to parents. I am beyond worn out and can't continue. I have been telling myself that if things don't pick up after Christmas I will just have to fold. With this second lock down and need for the service reduced even further I think that might come sooner rather than later.

Venues I.e. we operate some of our sessions from a small country estate that is open to the paying public still. However due to lack of clarification they are postponing all of our sessions with them & not reviewing them till January.

Also, non-registered out of school clubs I.e Forest Schools.

We are based in a Church therefore not eligible for Grant's as we do not have business rates.

Challenge to get staff to cover sessions/ bubbles. Had to employ 2 extra members of staff.

The money lost staying open for keyworker/ vulnerable children (£700 per week)- financially closing would have been better but staying open seemed the right thing to do.

Pods - particularly the limit of 15, but also having to negotiate with our school (our landlord) and for them to accept how we pod children.

How to get parents back to using my service again. Parents have got use to working from home with their children around them. Not now in a position to pay for childcare. Concern that sending their child to club may put their family at a greater risk of catching covid -19

Limited bubble numbers is our main issue due to space. We could reduce staff to save money but then we have children in these bubbles who require us to need all staff in in order to manage the groups safely and effectively but with no extra funding. Our bounce back loan has helped for the foreseeable future but it is a worry if things don't change in the next 6 months."

We are concerned that children are allowed to attend other clubs such as drama, football ect.

Unnecessary exposure for us all :(

As non profit club we are really worried about how we will cope if we have to close a bubble for isolation. We will not be paid by parents but still have staff and rent to pay. After having to refund for the last 2 weeks before March lockdown we are in a very precarious situation moneywise!

Parents expectations not always realistic to the needs of a small business to remain open with the regulation and hoops childcare practitioners have to go through. The pandemic has highlighted this further.

Closure due to staff isolation

Year groups closure

Confusion over guidance.

We have had to have bubbles of children from different schools therefore have needed more staff to supervise the bubbles.

Numbers fluctuating due to bubbles isolating.

Always being the forgotten childcare. And we couldn't open in lock down as we could not break school bubbles, which was impossible

Our numbers are low because parents are on furlough, had their hours cut or have lost their jobs.

Cover costs when staff have to self isolate or time off for children whose class bubbles have been closed

Staff shielding. Covering ssp and wages for temporary staff

Reduced rent as we have fewer children.

London offices working from home & continued furlough impacts demand

Foodsupplying breakfast & afternoon snacks

Support for costs of staff going off self isolating.

School insists on class bubbles meaning service is not fantastic for children's well-being. Much custom lost and now operating at a severe loss with half of staff lost.

Lack of information and support given to breakfast and after school clubs

Higher staff ratio.

Mostly for me it's the size of bubbles when we in primary which they keep saying is safest. My two bubbles of max 15 children! Great if they all came full time but they don't! So I'm now offering only 30 places across the whole week rather than the 24 per session! Heartbreaking opening up some sessions with only 5 children. We could safely have all our children back with the cleaning regimes we have to compete etc. We have parents who need places but we are full.

Only able to take from one school

Lack of numbers

Lack of income

Although our club does take children we've had to suspend it at present due to bubbling concerns and lack of space

High staff turnover

Having to purchase activities that can be used outside and easily cleaned

Lower requests/demand as more parents now working from home

Schools not allowing us to work in their grounds, reduced numbers, and not being able to mix schools. We run wholly outdoor clubs

Increase in parents working from home, losing jobs and sharing child care with friends and neighbours to avoid sending to holiday club. Previous lock down there were 70+children attending as key worker children in the summer holiday 15 - 27 / day only

Staffing issues

The group bubbles and having to have more staff in to cover the bubbles at a far lower uptake in numbers which means paying out for staff to look after very few children

Staffing issues when closing bubbles to isolate that then affects siblings and so the numbers in other bubbles are low and parents are reluctant to pay to keep there space.

Increased overheads due to staffing bubbles into extended hours. Increased hire costs for remaining in separate rooms. Not able to offer extended hours to Forest school groups due to no public transport travel back to the school venue, so pick up and drop off is at the park. Difficulty getting permission from parks for Forest school activities so limited activities only are available otherwise insurance is compromised. Government treating Forest school like a sports club. The parks are not given clear guidance and are over cautious.

Children are not allowed to mix with children from other schools this is difficult as we collect from more than one. Children are having to be kept with only children from their school this impacts when we may only collect 1 or 2 children from a certain school as they are by themselves for the whole time with one member of staff.

Parents working from home has caused lots of children to not attend/be booked in

Unable to get insurance cover for loss of trade in first lockdown

Schools still charging market rates for rent - no flexibility despite us providing a much needed service for parents.

PPE - help with the costs like schools get "

The fact that furloughed or redundant parents need help, which will in turn help us.

We are based in an area of high deprivation and have a flexible fee policy. Many families our on zero hour contracts and so when their children had to isolate because someone in their class was ill and they couldn't work, they don't get paid, we couldn't charge them fees. Because their child isn't sick they do not qualify for any support and so in half term we delivered emergency food parcels and packed lunches to these families too.

Parents working from home has halved the number of children we are taking.

Issues around refunds when the schools are closed

We have been impacted hugely by the number of parents working from home that can therefore now do the school runs

The groupings of ages/key stage is putting a real strain on our service.

Also now only those parents who work can use us, so we have lost some children whose parents have now been furloughed or lost their jobs in this second lockdown

We cannot open due to the school decision. We require children from both our schools to make the setting work.

Transport and staggered starts affecting costs. PPE and cleaning costs

Not enough income to cover wages/rent/phones/insurance but still needing all of those plus extra staff to meet covid requirements, head teachers that don't care about any of the above, no support from govt for school she childcare

We did take children from another school , but the head told us we couldn't during the pandemic.

This has resulted in a significant reduction in our numbers each afternoon, 😞

No income for director. Cost of necessary cleaning and safety equipment. Cost of adding resources for bubbles. Danger of having to close due to covid and having no income.

Increase in rent from school its doubled since coming back in September

Cancelled bookings means refunds and credit is equivalent of refunds down the line. Clubs like ours have growing debt as the result of cancelled bookings. A grant is really the only way to resolve this.

Loans just add to the problem.

When parents are advised to work from home, our industry becomes unnecessary. Government should take responsibility for their comments and either help us financially to survive or reiterate to parents that our settings are safe and important places for their children to be

For holiday care we do take children from different schools and are not able to maintain same school bubbles - this affects our viability. And level of staffing required to maintain school bubbles for after school care is about 25% higher with only 80% capacity then pre Covid so something has to give.

Having to bend over backwards for headteachers and follow their requirements that are not our guidance!

Extra costs of PPE and cleaning materials