

Embargoed until 00.01 16 July 2026

Families face summer holiday childcare bill of £1,145 per child as report finds holiday childcare is the 'missing piece' of the childcare puzzle

Holiday childcare costs across Great Britain have risen by 5% in the last year, leaving working parents facing an average bill of **£191 per child per week** – or **£1,145 for the six-week summer holiday** – according to Coram Family and Childcare's 21st annual Holiday Childcare Survey, published today. The report also highlights a significant lack of information about how much holiday childcare exists in local areas.

The survey finds that holiday childcare continues to cost almost three times as much as after-school childcare during term time. Across Great Britain, six weeks of a holiday club costs families an average of **£726 more** than six weeks of after-school childcare.

Wales has the highest holiday childcare costs in Great Britain and has seen the steepest annual increase, with prices rising by **10%** in the last year to **£224 per week**. Parents in Wales now face an average childcare bill of **£1,342** over the six-week summer break. Across England, costs have risen by 4% overall, but some regions have seen much sharper increases. Holiday club prices have risen by **16% in Inner London** and by **12% in the North East**, while Yorkshire and the Humber is the only region to see a small decrease, down 1%.

Across Great Britain, most councils do not know whether they have enough holiday childcare. 'Data not held or cannot tell' made up over half of all answers in England and rates were so high in Scotland that no meaningful analysis could be included in this year's report. Only Wales has more than 50% knowledge of their sufficiency, and not for all categories of children.

Where this information is known, the lowest sufficiency level in England is for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), with only **9% of councils in England** able to say they have enough holiday childcare for at least three-quarters of children and young people with SEND in their area. In Wales, just **5% of local authorities** report sufficient holiday childcare for children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN).

Childminders offer parents the best chance of securing a full day of childcare during the holidays, with 79% of childminders in Great Britain open 8am-6pm, compared to only 57% of holiday clubs. Across Great Britain, childminders were also found to be more likely than holiday clubs to be open during each of the school holidays.

Lydia Hodges, Head of Coram Family and Childcare, said: "Holiday childcare is now the missing piece of the puzzle. All nations have some level of free childcare for pre-school children but the need for childcare doesn't stop when children reach school age, or when the school gates close for the summer. In fact, it only increases. Holiday childcare is essential for parents to take and stay in work but, for too many families, the six-week break brings a sharp increase in childcare costs.

"Cost is only part of the challenge. When we asked councils whether there is enough holiday childcare in their area, the most frequent response was that they do not know. We heard this answer much more frequently than when we asked the same questions about pre-school childcare for our Childcare Survey this Spring, even though the duty to audit childcare sufficiency every year is the same for school-aged children as it is for under-fives*. This lack of information leaves parents with extended searches to find out what, if anything, is available near them.

"And children need the fun, secure activities and opportunities that holiday childcare can provide while school is out. If we want children away from social media, off their phones – they need something positive to do.

"The problem is not going to go away. Most parents need to work during the school holidays at some point, and not all will have support from other family members. If we are to ease the annual summer stress for families, there must be an acknowledgement that childcare is a year-round requirement, and action taken to ensure holiday childcare does not remain the poor cousin of early years childcare."

Coram Family and Childcare is calling on governments to:

- Reinforce the statutory duty to secure sufficient holiday childcare, ensuring provision is properly understood and planned in England and Wales, and introduce a duty to monitor sufficiency for school-age holiday childcare in Scotland.
- Allow upfront payments of the childcare element of Universal Credit during school holidays.
- Encourage increased holiday childcare provision to improve parental choice and address gaps in availability.
- Extend the Experts at Hand inclusive practice training and coaching offer to holiday childcare providers, to improve access for children with SEND.
- Support an increase in childminders so families have access to flexible holiday childcare.

Read the full report at: <https://www.coramfamilyandchildcare.org.uk/research/holiday-childcare-survey-2026/>

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- For a copy of the full report, comment and case studies, please contact Emma Lamberton, Senior Communications Manager,
Coram: emma.lamberton@coram.org.uk / 07908 827908

- The Holiday Childcare Survey 2026 is based on surveys from local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales, which were returned to Coram Family and Childcare between April and June 2026. A total of 199 local authorities returned data, generating a response rate of 97%.
- *In England and Wales. There is no sufficiency duty in Scotland.
- The first table below provides a breakdown of the average weekly price of holiday childcare by nation and region. The second table shows holiday childcare sufficiency across England regions for different groups of children, with the figures showing sufficiency for at least 75% of children

Average weekly price of holiday childcare, by region and nation, weighted for public and PVI holiday clubs

Region/nation	Cost of holiday childcare per week	
	Holiday clubs	Childminders
Great Britain	£190.77	£251.48
England	£189.71	£250.96
Scotland	£179.95	£239.56
Wales	£223.59	£262.48
East Midlands	£188.18	£219.30
East of England	£190.66	£271.88
London, Inner	£217.74	£371.82
London, Outer	£190.43	£287.69
North East	£219.76	£253.16
North West	£160.14	£215.42
South East	£226.55	£278.95
South West	£180.30	£205.58
West Midlands	£167.85	£250.25
Yorkshire and the Humber	£189.22	£245.80

Proportion of local authorities in England reporting sufficient holiday childcare for at least 75% of children in their area, regional

Region	4-7 year olds	8-11 year olds	12-14 year olds	Children and young people with SEND	Parents working full-time (9am-5pm on weekdays)	Parents working atypical hours (outside 9am-5pm on weekdays)	Children in rural areas	Total responses
East Midlands	44%	44%	22%	33%	44%	22%	14%	9
East of England	40%	20%	10%	10%	30%	10%	0%	10
London, Inner	8%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%	N/A	12
London, Outer	30%	20%	5%	0%	10%	10%	0%	20
North East	18%	9%	9%	0%	9%	9%	14%	11
North West	30%	30%	17%	17%	30%	13%	11%	23
South East	41%	47%	29%	12%	24%	12%	23%	17
South West	20%	13%	0%	0%	20%	0%	0%	15
West Midlands	31%	31%	0%	0%	38%	15%	14%	13
Yorkshire and the Humber	43%	43%	7%	21%	43%	7%	33%	14