

CHILDMINDERS

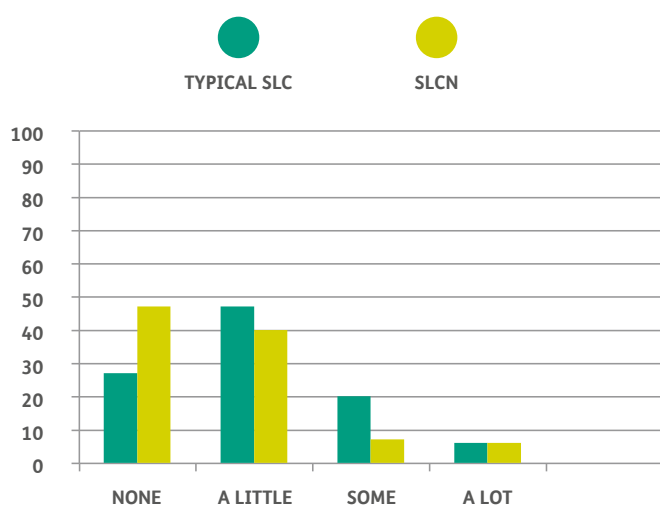
The survey attracted a small cohort of 16 respondents from the childminding workforce. This role was analysed separately from the early years workforce as a number of childminders work across both early years and primary phases and, as the survey found, they have quite different training preferences compared to practitioners working in nurseries or schools.

One hundred percent of childminders felt SLC skills for the children they work with were very important but only just over a third (38%) felt very confident about their ability to support the development of these skills.

Initial Training and CPD

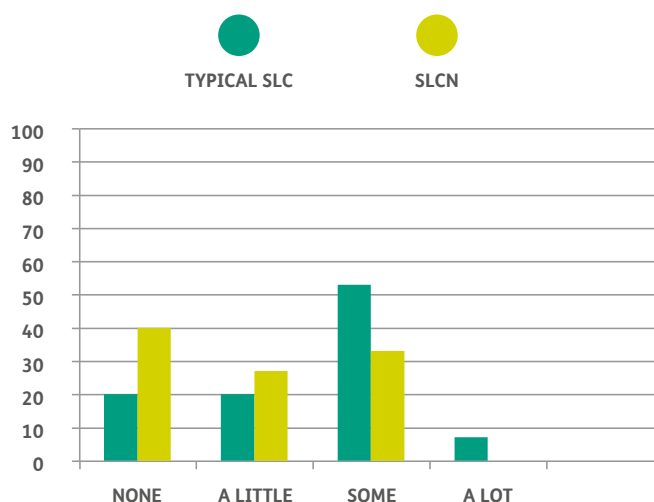
More than two thirds (69%) of childminders reported that they had received little or no learning around typical SLC development in their initial training and this figure rises to a concerning 81% when asked about learning around identifying and supporting children with SLCN. This is a reflection of the varied routes into childminding and the lack of a mandatory SLC element.

AMOUNT OF INITIAL TRAINING RECEIVED



Furthermore, 20% of respondents reported they had received no CPD in their current role around typical SLC development, but this doubled to 40% when asked about CPD activities around identifying and supporting SLCN.

AMOUNT OF CPD RECEIVED



Barriers

Two thirds of respondents (62%) felt that the most significant barrier to accessing learning opportunities in their current role was a lack of budget, and 40% cited lack of time.

The barriers and challenges faced by this population of the workforce in accessing CPD opportunities are possibly greater than in other roles or sectors. This is likely to be due to the nature of the childminding role, which often involves working alone and therefore with very limited scope for being released from the setting.

“Being a childminder I have found many opportunities are not available to me compared to those who work in nurseries, schools and bigger settings”



Motivation and Preferences

Contrary to the responses of the majority of other sectors or roles, online self-directed learning (67%) was the preferred format for undertaking CPD for childminders, followed by informal activities, such as reading around a topic of interest (56%), and face to face training (33%). This is a reflection of the barriers childminders face and shows flexibility as well as a clearly motivated workforce to overcome these challenges.

One hundred percent of respondents reported that they felt training in this area was essential to their role, with 89% of them ranking 'to improve my practice' as a motivating factor for undertaking CPD opportunities. More than three quarters (78%) felt they needed a better understanding of the area despite only 11% of respondents working closely or directly with a child with SLCN. This last point is a concern given what we know about the prevalence of SLCN, particularly in areas of socio-economic deprivation, and suggests a need for further training and support.

Relevance, time and cost were all major influencing factors when choosing CPD opportunities.

Training Needs

Consistent with the early years and the primary sector, supporting children learning EAL with SLC was highlighted as a training need by more than half (56%) of childminders and 44% felt they needed more learning around understanding typical SLC development. Only one person felt they had received sufficient CPD in their current role.

This particular group were the only cohort to suggest that weekend and evening training opportunities would improve access to opportunities. There was also the suggestion that financial support would help improve access to CPD as it would allow cover to be brought in whilst training opportunities were accessed. This is an important consideration for government as they roll out the free childcare offers and attempt to drive up quality in the early years settings.

