

About Early Years: summer snapshot

A focus on men in childcare

Ceeda launched the independent 'About Early Years' research programme in May 2017 to track key sector trends on a regular basis and provide timely analysis for childcare providers, policy makers and investors.

This paper highlights findings on men in the early years workforce, based on survey returns from 366 PVI nurseries and pre-schools¹ weighted and grossed to reflect the target population of settings on the Ofsted Early Years Register.

A small move in the right direction

Detailed profiling of 3,930 early years staff showed just 5% are male, an increase on the figure of 2% last captured in large scale survey research by the Department for Education in 2013.²

A word of caution is required however - all surveys have margins of error and a change of just 3 percentage points falls within this margin. Repeat measures are needed to be confident that real progress is being made.



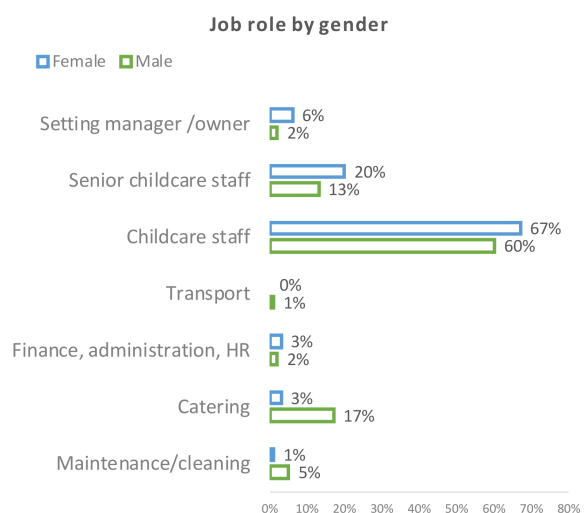
¹ Password protected survey invitations were sent to a representative panel of 1,188 PVI pre-school playgroups and nurseries in the period July to August 2017. A total of 366 returns were received giving a response rate of 31% and a confidence interval of 5.1 at the 95% confidence level. Survey data has been weighted and grossed to reflect the sampling frame: Ofsted Childcare providers and inspections as at 31 March 2017.

² Department for Education. Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2013. TNS BMRB Report JN 117328

International comparisons indicate the UK is not atypical in its struggle to attract men into childcare, though the European Commission reported in 2014 that Portugal, Iceland, Turkey and Norway do better, with between 5% and 7% of the early years workforce being male.³

Denmark topped the league with 23% of assistant level staff and 15% of pre-school teachers being male. International comparisons are muddled however, by differences in early years infrastructure and school starting age.

Increasing the number of male workers in the sector is important but equality is, of course, about much more than this. What type of work are men undertaking and do they have the same opportunities to progress?



The study found men are more likely to work in support roles such as maintenance/cleaning (5%) and catering (17%) and are less likely than women to be in senior childcare roles (13% compared to 20% of women), or in overall charge of a childcare setting (2% compared to 6% of women).

³ European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Eurostat, 2014. Key Data on Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe. 2014 Edition. Eurydice and Eurostat Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

Key statistics

Male staff are slightly younger with an average age of thirty-one, and 35% are aged less than twenty-five years. For women, the average age is thirty-four and 30% are aged under twenty-five years.

Men have been in post with their current employer for an average of 3.2 years compared to women's 4.8 years. Over three quarters of men (79%) started work at their current setting within the last three years, compared to 63% of women.

A slightly younger age profile and shorter length of time in post could lend support to the theory that the number of men entering the sector has increased in recent years, however these are not straightforward indicators and could also point to a less positive scenario of higher turnover rates amongst men.

The About Early Years programme will continue to collect key data on these trends. If you would like to put forward suggestions for future question areas please get in touch with the study team.

Contact the study team:

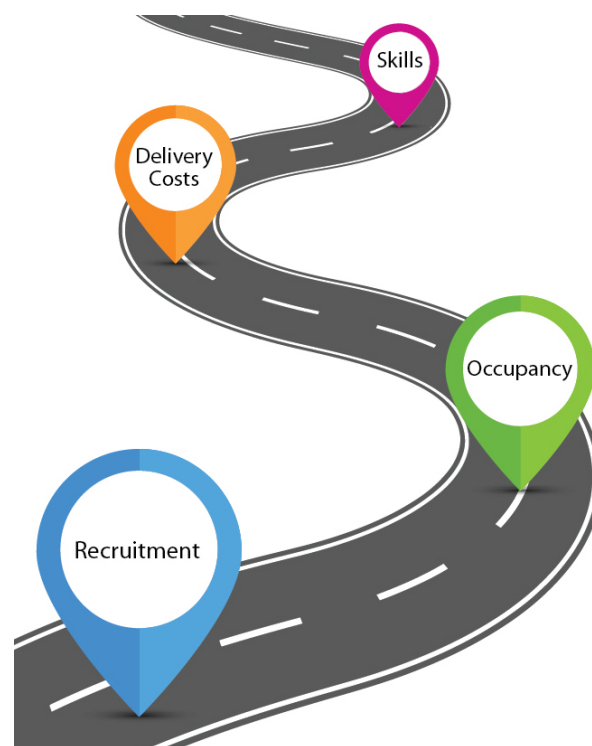
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