



CHILDCARE CONSULTATION IN STONY STATFORD PARISH

Produced by YMCA Milton Keynes
on behalf of Stony Stratford Town
Council

Abstract

This report summarises the views of 71 parents on provision of wrap-around and holiday childcare in the Parish of Stony Stratford. The results of this survey suggest that overall, wrap-around childcare provision in the Parish is sufficient, but that holiday provision could be increased, particularly in August. In addition, a wide range of activities and services were suggested.

The Town Council may wish to consider facilitating: set-up; extension; or better advertising of some of these activities and services.



Nicola Walker
nicola@mkymca.com
March 2020

Executive Summary

YMCA Milton Keynes was appointed by Stony Stratford Town Council to produce and analyse a survey to better understand the views of parents and carers on the provision of childcare in the Parish. The survey was distributed in a variety of ways over a 7 week period. The data was collected using an online survey tool and paper surveys.

There was an encouraging number of responses to the survey, with 71 respondents. The majority of respondents who gave their locality (41, 82%) were from Stony Stratford, but it is important to note that Fullers Slade and Galley Hill are a smaller proportion of the population.

Overall, the majority of those who responded to this question (31, 62%), stated that they found it harder to find childcare for school holidays than to find wrap-around childcare in term-time (19, 38%).

Overall, the response to this survey suggests that wrap-around childcare in the Parish is sufficient, but that there is a greater demand for holiday childcare than is currently provided, particularly in August. In addition, this report may be useful for the current providers of childcare, in particular respondents comments on details such as times of provision and possible activities.

In addition, respondents suggested a wide range of activities that they would like to see in the Parish. The most common (4 respondents) was that there should be more youth clubs, with one suggesting a youth club for younger children. Further services were also suggested, with 3 suggesting park/family days and 2 suggesting a skate park. Three respondents commented on the cost of activities in the Parish.

Recommendation 1: The Town Council thank parents for their responses and update them on the outcomes of the survey and actions the Council plans to take as a result of the survey as soon as possible, while it is still fresh in their minds.

Recommendation 2: The Town Council may wish to share the comments on details such as times of provision (Table 1) and possible activities (Table 3) with current providers of *wrap-around childcare* in the Parish.

Recommendation 3: The Town Council may wish to consider encouraging/ facilitating greater provision of holiday childcare in the Parish.

Recommendation 4: The Town Council may wish to share the comments on details such as times of provision (Table 2) and possible activities (Table 3) with current providers of *holiday childcare* in the Parish.

Recommendation 5: The Town Council may wish to review the suggestions in Tables 3 and 4. It may be that the Town Council could facilitate: set-up; extension; or improved advertising of some of these suggested activities or services.

1. Background

YMCA Milton Keynes was appointed by Stony Stratford Town Council to produce and analyse a survey to better understand the views of parents and carers on the provision of childcare in the Parish. The survey asked for views on wrap-around childcare and holiday provision, along with also providing respondents the opportunity to comment on activities that were available in the Parish for this age group.

The purpose of this analysis is to better understand the views of parents on the availability of wrap-around and holiday childcare in the Parish. It is primarily intended for Parish Councillors but may also be of interest to other stakeholders, such as schools and organisations providing childcare or activities in, or near, the Parish.

2. Definition of terms

<i>Parents</i>	For ease of reading, “parents” has been used to indicate parents, guardians or other care-givers who responded to the survey.
<i>Respondents</i>	Although 71 respondents answered the questionnaire and 65 clicked through to the end, not all respondents answered every question. For this reason, as well as stating the number of respondents giving a particular view, the report also includes the percentage of respondents giving that view, <u>as a percentage of the number of respondents that answered that particular question.</u>
<i>n =</i>	In tables and charts, “n=” is used to indicate the total number of respondents that answered the question, or in that cohort.
<i>Wrap-around childcare</i>	This is the childcare provided to supplement the school day, it can be either before-school, after school or both.
<i>Holiday childcare</i>	This is childcare during the school holiday, to cover the hours that school would normally cover, or more (i.e. to also include standard wrap-around hours).

3. Method

YMCA Milton Keynes and Stony Stratford Town Council worked together to develop the consultation questions. The survey can be found at Annex A.

The questionnaire was available on the Council Website using an online survey tool (SurveyMonkey) from 24th December – 10th February and was further circulated in four ways:

Parish magazine

Paper questionnaires were distributed to every household in the Parish via the Parish magazine, the Town Crier. Completed forms could be posted, emailed or hand delivered to the library. These were added to the online survey.

Local schools

All primary schools in the Parish (St Mary & St Giles and Russell Street) circulated the electronic link to the survey to their parents. Premier Education, the company that began providing wrap-around childcare at St Mary & St Giles School in January 2020, also circulated it to parents that use their service.

Rowans Children’s centre

Staff shared the questionnaire with parents at two drop-in sessions and gathered 18 paper responses. Several were from outside the parish. These were added to the online survey.

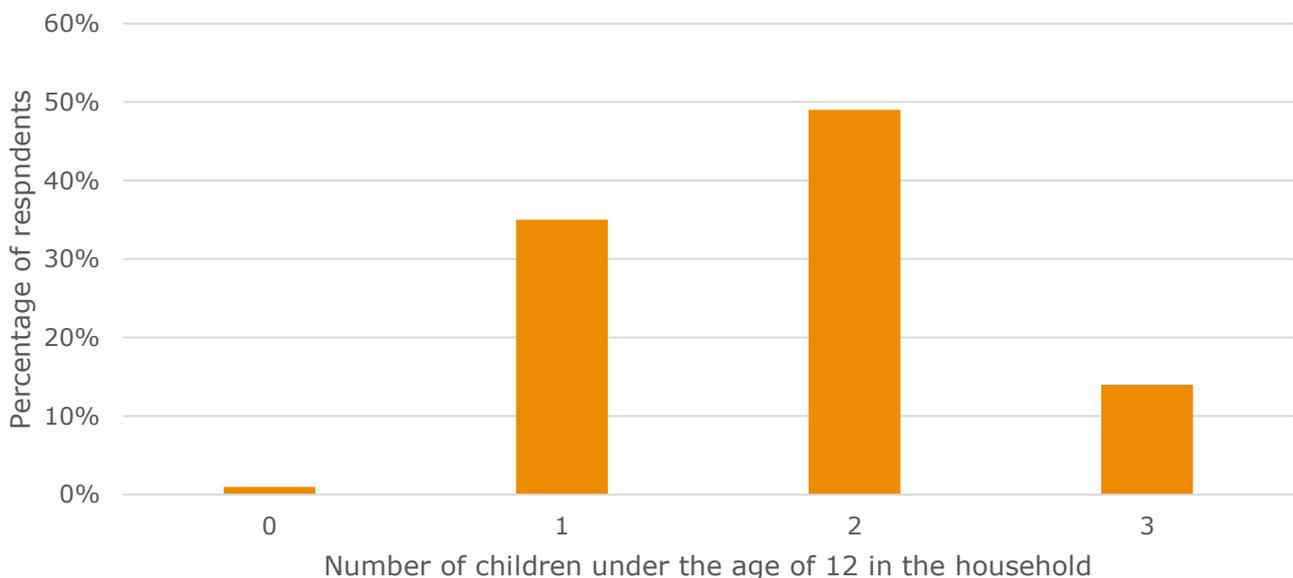
Preschool & nurseries

Shared with all preschools and nurseries in the Parish. No responses were received by post, but the data suggests that some responded to the online survey.

4. Demographic of respondents

4.1 Total responses

There was an encouraging number of responses to the survey, with a total of 71 responses and 65 respondents (92%) clicking through to the end of the survey (Completion Rate). Of these, 70 (99%) had children under 12, the one respondent without children under 12 had children of secondary age.



Graph 1: Number of children in the households of respondents

4.2 Locality

Responses were received from all three areas of the Parish. The majority of responses (41, 82%) were from Stony Stratford, but it is important to recognise that Fullers Slade and Galley Hill are a smaller proportion of the population, see Annex B. Seven respondents (14%) said they were from Fullers Slade, and 2 (4%) were from Galley Hill. The postcodes of residents are also included at Annex B.

4.3 Schools

Parents with children at Russell Street School made up the greatest proportion of respondents, despite this being the smallest of the three schools in the Parish. Thirty two percent of respondents had children at St Mary & St Giles North Site and only 2 (3%) from St Mary and St Giles South Site (It should be noted that some parents had children at more than one school). Twenty four respondents did not use one of the three primary schools in the Parish. Of these, 16 attended schools outside the Parish (listed at Annex C), 6 did not have children of school age, one was at secondary school and one home schooled.

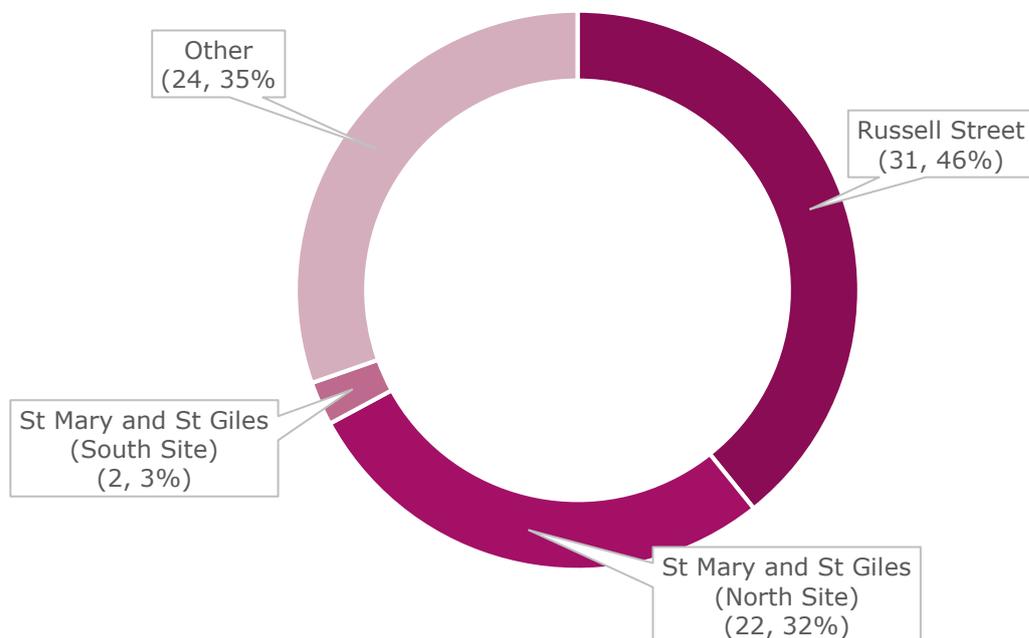


Chart 2: Schools attended by respondent’s children (n = 68). It should be noted that some parents had children at more than one school.

5. Results

5.1 Views on childcare

Overall, the majority of respondents (31, 62%) stated that they found it harder to find childcare for school holidays than to find wrap-around childcare in term-time (19, 38%).

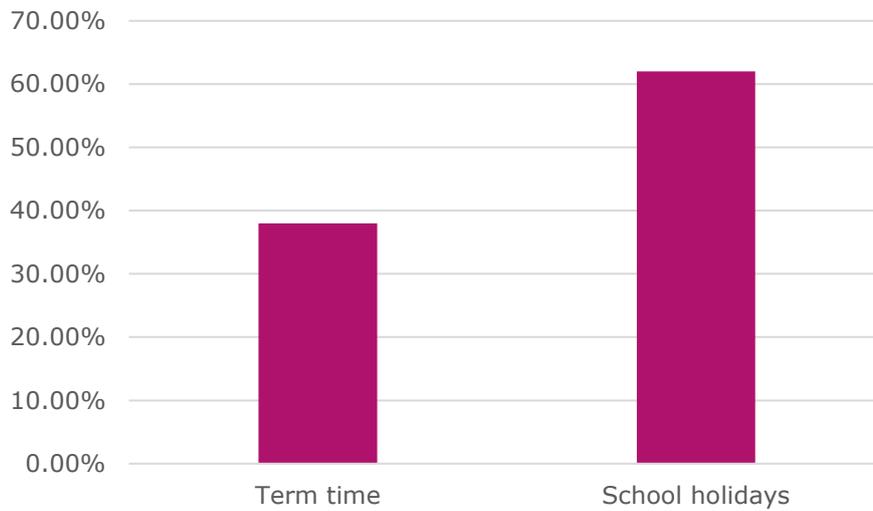


Chart 3: Respondents views on which childcare they find harder to find (n = 50)

5.2 Wrap-around childcare

All 71 respondents answered the question as to whether they use wrap-around childcare. Thirty nine (55%) respondents used wrap-around childcare, 32 (45%) did not.

Thirty eight respondents reported which childcare they used. Many respondents use a mix of childcare options: 28 (74%) use school clubs; 18 (47%) used family and friends; and 3 (8%) use a childminder. One respondent stated that they used the Rowan’s youth club.

Forty eight respondents indicated whether they considered there to be enough wrap-around childcare in the area. Of these, two thirds (65%, 31) felt there was enough wrap-around childcare in the area, one third, (35%, 17), did not.

The majority of those that did not consider there to be enough childcare used the free-text option to explain why. There were a wide range of concerns. The most commonly expressed, by 4 respondents (24%), was that there was not always a place available for their child when they tried to book the wrap-around childcare. Three (18%) would prefer independent provision, 2 (12%) would like the childcare to be more affordable. The full list of comments is in Table 1, below. In addition, two respondents expressed support for the new provision at St Mary & St Giles School.

Issue	Number of respondents
Concern about availability of the wrap-around childcare - places were not always available ¹	4 (24%)
The choice of independent provision	3 (18%)
More affordable childcare	2 (12%)
Special Educational Needs/Autism Spectrum Disorder specific	1 (6%)
Supervised drop in café/youth group for children who can walk home	1 (6%)
Concern about provision once the Rowan centre is demolished	1 (6%)
Breakfast club needs to start before 8am	1 (6%)
More childminders needed in the Parish	1 (6%)
Afterschool club for just 1-2 hrs	1 (6%)

Table 1: Suggestions for improvements to wrap-around childcare

1 - Two respondents with children at Russell Street and 2 respondents with children at St Mary & St Giles North Site.

5.3 Holiday cover

Of the 69 respondents, twenty eight (41%) indicated that they used holiday cover, while 41 (59%) did not. Those that used holiday cover often used a variety of options. Thirteen (48%) used school clubs, 13 (48%) used family or friends while five (19%) used a childminder and five used independent clubs. These were holiday clubs run by independent providers (such as BizKidz) or sports clubs (gymnastics/football/tennis).

Views on whether there was enough childcare provision during the holidays were evenly split, with 49% (25) stating that there is enough and 51% (26) stating that there was not.

When asked what additional holiday provision respondents would like to see, there was a wide range of suggestions. Key responses, each mentioned by four respondents, were: more affordable holiday clubs; provision all holiday (with respondents stating that there is a particular shortage in August); and provision in the Parish. In addition, three respondents indicated that they would like to see an independent provider in the parish to offer a choice of service. Two respondents indicated that they would like the holiday club sessions to be longer (to better reflect the working day) and two indicated that they would like to see provision for 1-4 year olds.

Suggestion	Number of respondents
More affordable	4
Provision all holiday (including August)	4
Provision in the Parish	4
Independent provider to offer choice (two would like BizKidz back)	3
Longer sessions i.e. 8am – 6pm	2
Provision for 1-4 year olds	2
Half day options	1
More childminders in the Parish	1
One service to cover all children who are primary aged	1
Sufficient because good choice across MK	1

Table 2: Suggestions to improve holiday childcare

In addition, some respondents suggested particular activities that they would like to see as part of the holiday club provision. These were sports clubs, outside activities, a coding or lego club and a provider that offered a variety of activities (e.g. mix of craft, reading, learning, nature & physical activities).

5.4 Specific activities

We also took the opportunity to ask if there were any other activities that parents would like to see in the Parish. The three key areas of response were specific activities, suggestions of other services that residents would like to see and comments on cost of activities.

As expected, there was a wide range of suggestions of possible “clubs”. Some may also be useful activities for afterschool or holiday club provision. Three respondents felt that activities for children were well provided for in the Parish. Four respondents suggested that there should be more youth clubs, with one suggesting a youth club for younger children. Two suggested activities linked to nature/wildlife/bushcraft/forest school etc.

Activity	Number of respondents
More youth clubs (with a suggestion for youth clubs for younger children)	4
Nature workshops/wildlife club/bushcraft/forest school/fishing	2
Beavers/cubs/scouts	1
Boot camp	1
Coding club	1
Dance clubs (ballet, street dance)	1
Disco	1
Junior Stony in Bloom	1
Lego club	1
Messy play groups	1
Music club	1
Sports groups (free-running, karate)	1
Youth café	1

Table 3: Suggestions from parents for additional clubs or activities in the Parish

5.5 Other services

There was a wide range of suggestions for further services. These included park days (3 respondents) and a skate park (2 respondents).

Service	Number of respondents
Park days/family events/street party/summer fete	3
Skate park	2
Activities for 1-4 year olds	1
Clubs/activities that run in the holidays	1
Club for SEN/ASD in early teens (weekend)	1
More for pre-teens and teenagers	1
More outdoor play/parks	1
Promote free MK Dons sessions better	1
Splash park	1

Table 4: Suggestions from parents for additional services in the Parish

5.6 Affordability

Three respondents commented on the cost of these types of activities, two suggested that it would be helpful if there could be free or affordable activities for children from families in

financial hardship and one suggested that it would be helpful if more clubs could take childcare vouchers.

6. Conclusions & Recommendations

Overall, two thirds of respondents (65%, 31) considered there to be sufficient wrap-around childcare, while one third (35%, 17) did not. Of those that used the free-text option to explain why, only 4 respondents (24%) indicated that there wasn't always a place available in the school wrap-around service. Other comments were on details such as number of hours that the service is available and lack of choice of provider, as shown in Table 1. This suggests that there is sufficient wrap-around childcare in the Parish.

The response to the survey suggests greater demand for holiday childcare than is currently provided, particularly in August. In addition, respondents suggested a range of activities and services that they would like to see in the Parish, and three commented on the affordability of these.

Recommendation 1: The Town Council thank parents for their responses and update them on the outcomes of the survey and actions the Council plans to take as a result of the survey as soon as possible, while it is still fresh in their minds.

The good response rate from parents suggests that these respondents are engaged on this issue and hopeful that this consultation will deliver change. They should be thanked and updated to maintain this level of engagement.

Recommendation 2: The Town Council may wish to share the comments on details such as times of provision (Table 1) and possible activities (Table 3) with current providers of wrap-around childcare in the Parish.

Of those that did not consider there to be sufficient wrap-around childcare in the Parish, several respondents used the free-text box to comment on the current service. These comments, given in Table 1, may be useful for the providers of wrap-around childcare in the Parish, to help them better tailor their services to the needs of parents in the Parish.

Table 3 also includes a wide range of activities that respondents were keen that their children access. Although intended as a list of suggested clubs or activities in their own right, it might also be of interest to providers of wrap-around childcare.

Recommendation 3: The Town Council may wish to consider encouraging/ facilitating greater provision of holiday childcare in the Parish

The response to this survey suggests that there is demand for more holiday childcare in the Parish than is currently provided. Two thirds of respondents (31, 62%) stated that they found it harder to find childcare for the school holidays and half of respondents (26, 51%) did not think there was enough childcare during school holidays. In particular, 4

respondents commented on a particular shortage in August. However, as one respondent noted and others indirectly indicated, there is greater choice across Milton Keynes.

Recommendation 4: The Town Council may wish to share the comments on details such as times of provision (Table 2) and possible activities (Table 3) with current providers of holiday childcare in the Parish.

The comments in Table 2 may be useful to current providers of holiday childcare in the Parish, in particular that some respondents would like to see increased flexibility regarding timings and length of provision. This may help providers to better tailor their services to the needs of parents in the Parish.

Table 3 also includes a wide range of activities that respondents were keen that their children access. Although intended as a list of suggested clubs or activities in their own right, it might also be of interest to providers of holiday childcare.

Recommendation 5: The Town Council may wish to review the suggestions in Tables 3 and 4. It may be that the Town Council could facilitate the following: set-up; extension or improved advertising of some of these suggested activities or services.

Respondents suggested a wide range of activities and services they would like to see in the Parish. The most commonly suggested activity (4 respondents) was for more youth clubs. For further discussion of youth clubs, see the parallel report on a Youth Consultation in the Parish. Further services were also suggested, with 3 respondents suggesting park/family days and 2 suggesting a skate park. Three respondents commented on the cost of activities in the Parish. The full range of suggestions can be found in Table 3 and Table 4. The Town Council may be able to facilitate either the set-up, extension or improved advertising of some of these activities and services.

Annex A – Survey questions

Primary school aged children – survey about childcare provision

This survey is anonymous, we will not know who has replied. It is for parents or carers.

Please either complete this survey online at <http://www.stonystratford.gov.uk/news/blog-article/youth-consultation> or return your completed questionnaire to the library or photograph/scan and send to youthconsultation@stonystratford.gov.uk. Please photocopy as necessary.

1. How many children are there in your household under 12?

How many children are 11 or over? See questionnaire overleaf for children in secondary education.

2. Which school does/do your primary aged child/children attend?
 - Russell Street
 - St Mary and St Giles (North Site)
 - St Mary and St Giles (South Site)
 - Other (please specify)
3. Do you use wraparound care for your child/ren? Yes / No (Please circle)
If yes, what services do you use? (Tick all that apply)
 - School clubs
 - Childminder
 - Family & friends
 - Other (please state)
4. Is there enough wraparound care in the area? Yes / No (Please circle)
If no, what else would you like to see?
5. Do you use childcare for your child/ren during school holidays? Yes / No (Please circle)
If yes, what service do you use? (Tick all that apply)
 - School clubs
 - Childminder
 - Family & friends
 - Other (please state)
6. Is there enough childcare for your child/ren during school holidays? Yes / No (Please circle)
If no, what else would you like to see?.....
7. Which do you find harder to cover, term time or school holidays? (choose one)
 - Term time
 - School holidays
8. Are there any other activities that you would like to see in the Parish?
.....
9. Which area of the Parish do you live in? (delete as appropriate)
Fullers Slade / Galley Hill / Stony Stratford - Please give your postcode

Thank you

Annex B – Spread of responses from across the Parish

We do not have data on the number of families living in each area of the parish, however the percentage of residential properties and people registered to vote are very similar, so they are used as an indicator of population. These are indicated in columns 2 and 3 of the table below.

Of those respondents that told us which area of the Parish they live in, there was a high number of responses from parents in Stony Stratford compared to the overall Parish population, as shown in column 4.

Area	Number of residential properties*	Number of people registered to vote*	Respondents that stated their locality**
Fullers Slade	614 (17%)	1167 (19%)	7 (14%)
Galley Hill	413 (12%)	773 (13%)	2 (4%)
Stony Stratford	2517 (71%)	4218 (68%)	41 (82%)
Parish Total	3544 (100%)	6158 (100%)	50 (100%)

*Data provided by Milton Keynes Council (contact: Saranjeet Chana, saranjeet.chana@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

** Twenty-one respondents did not answer the question.

This could be because: a) there was a high response rate from parents at Russell St school (which serves this part of the Parish) – perhaps this school shared the survey in a way that got greater engagement; b) there is a high concentration of young families in this area; c) that parents in this locality were more engaged in the survey or d) a combination of these or other factors.

MK11	Mk11 1DD	Mk11 1eu	Mk11 1hy	MK11 2BD
MK11 1BE	Mk11 1de	MK11 1EX	Mk11 1JF	MK11 2BE
MK11 1DA	Mk11 1DF	Mk11 1ez	MK11 1JL	Mk11 2BN
Mk11 1DA	MK11 1DS	Mk11 1fg	MK11 1LE	Mk11 4HP
MK11 1DA	MK11 1DS	MK11 1HD	MK11 1NW	
MK11 1da	MK11 1EE	MK11 1HJ	Mk11 1rb	
Mk11 1db	Mk11 1EG	MK11 1HY	MK11 2AD	
Mk11 1db	Mk11 1eh	MK11 1HY	MK11 2BD	

The postcodes of respondents within the Parish

MK11 (Fairfields)	MK19 6FA (Deanshanger)
MK11 4BD (Fairfields)	MK5 7BD (Shenley Lodge)
MK11 4BQ (Fairfields)	MK8 1DD (Whitehouse)
MK12 5AX (Wolverton)	MK8 1DQ (Whitehouse)
MK12 6AQ (Greenleys)	MK12 (Wolverton)
MK12 6HL (Stacey Bushes)	MK12 5FE (Wolverton)
MK12 6LS (Greenleys)	MK19 (Northern villages)
MK13 7AZ (Stantonbury)	MK19 (Northern villages)

Postcodes of respondents from other parishes

Annex C – Other schools used by respondents

Twenty four respondents did not use one of the three primary schools in the Parish. of these, 6 did not have children of school age, one was at secondary school, one home schooled and the rest attended schools outside the Parish, these are listed below.

School	Number of respondents using this school
Fairfields Primary School	4
St Mary Magdeline School	2
Akley Wood Junior School	1
Deanshanger Primary School	1
Greenleys Junior School	1
Old Stratford Primary School	1
Priory Common School (Bradwell)	1
Tickford Park School	1
Whitehouse Primary School	1