

**Summary Report of Responses
to the Focused Consultation
on Learning to Learn -
A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning**

October 2013



Department of
Education

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Oideachais

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CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Consultation Responses	2
3.	Key Themes Emerging	3
4.	Summary of Responses	7
5.	Glossary of Terms	81

Appendices

Appendix 1:	Membership of the Early Years (0-6) Strategy Stakeholder Advisory Group	83
Appendix 2:	Links to 'Learning to Learn - A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning' and Consultation Documents published December 2012	85

SECTION 1

Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an analysis of the responses to the focused consultation on 'Learning to Learn - A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning' and outlines the next steps which will be undertaken by the Department. Sections 2-4 outline the outcomes of the consultation.

Background to the Learning to Learn Framework

- 1.2 Following extensive consultation on the draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy published in June 2010, the Minister made a statement in July 2012 setting out the way forward. The Minister made a further statement to the Assembly in December 2012 in which he launched 'Learning to Learn - A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning' which succeeded the draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy.

Consultation

- 1.3 Extensive pre and post consultation with a range of stakeholders was carried out in relation to the draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy, including consultation exercises with parents and children. Learning to Learn was developed taking into consideration all the responses in relation to the draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy and advice from the Early Years (0-6) Strategy Stakeholder Advisory Group.
- 1.4 Learning to Learn was published for focused consultation on 4 December 2012 and provided a further opportunity for the public to indicate if any of the proposed actions required further refinement. The closing date for responses was 31 January 2013.

Next Steps

- 1.5 The Minister has considered the analysis of the responses to the focused consultation. The Department has refined some of the actions and updated the Learning to Learn framework accordingly. The Department will begin implementing the actions, some of which will involve further input from practitioners, the legislative changes required are subject to the legislative process.

SECTION 2

Consultation Responses

Responses Received

- 2.1 The Department received a total of 332 responses in relation to 'Learning to Learn'. 218 responses were received from individuals (this included 7 responses assumed to be from individuals as they did not indicate whether they were an individual or an organisation). 114 organisations submitted a response (this included 2 which stated they were both an individual and an organisation). The majority (244) used the consultation response booklet provided, 88 submitted a response in another format, with 27 of these responses commenting on a single issue which was not included in the framework; flexibility in the school starting age.
- 2.2 In addition to the public consultation, the Committee for Education received both Ministerial and departmental briefings on the proposed actions and responses to the Learning to Learn consultation respectively. The Committee also considered responses from an informal stakeholder event they hosted on 16 January 2013 and a briefing from Assembly Research on 1 May 2013. The Committee then submitted a formal response to the Department on 10 May 2013 and this has also been considered as part of the analysis.

Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

- 2.3 The consultation booklet contained both quantitative and qualitative question types. The quantitative data is based on responses to the 12 Key Actions and has been summarised throughout this report using tables, charts and commentary. Where appropriate, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole figure.
- 2.4 In relation to the qualitative data, every individual response was analysed and grouped into similar themes across the 34 individual actions, with the most prevalent issues reported in this analysis. Throughout this report, the responses have been quantified for each action. The total for each action therefore refers to the number of responses rather than the number of respondents, as respondents may have submitted more than one comment, and some respondents made no comment.

SECTION 3

Key Themes Emerging from the Consultation

- 3.1 This section focuses primarily on key themes which emerged from analysis of the responses. The key themes are taken from across all the proposed actions focusing on those which attracted a significant level of response.

Themes from the qualitative analysis of consultation responses

- 3.2 Where respondents provided a narrative comment in response to the questions asked, these comments were individually analysed. A variety of comments were provided on each proposed action. Many were general comments asking for more information on how actions would be taken forward, others raised issues specific to a particular sector such as Irish-medium education or how a particular action would impact on sectors or programmes eg Sure Start.
- 3.3 Tables have been included in Section 4 showing the most common response by respondent group against each individual action, and then overall for each of the 12 key actions.
- 3.4 Overall respondents were generally more supportive of the proposed actions in this framework, the actions which generated the most support included:
- Re-defining age range for pre-school;
 - Extending Foundation Stage;
 - Development of protocols for information sharing;
 - Assessing ICT requirements of pre-schools;
 - Identifying opportunities for joint investment and collaborative working;
 - Reviewing the building handbook;
 - Integration with DHSSPS family services;
 - Creating pilot early education support clusters;
 - Ensuring a thorough inspection regime for all DE funded early years education and learning services;
 - Reviewing the adequacy of governance and accountability across a range of existing programmes; and
 - A range of other actions were also supported including the development of an excellence fund, the review of Sure Start and the refocusing of extended schools.

3.5 The proposed actions which respondents were less supportive of included:

- Introducing flexibility for enrolment/increased class sizes;
- Extension of current SEN pilots;
- The moratorium on new or conversion to full-time pre-school provision; and
- Removal of reception (classes).

3.6 The proposed actions which respondents wanted more detail or clarification on included:

- The detail of joint working between DE and DHSSPS;
- The nature and format of provision for 2 year olds;
- The protocols for information sharing, how it would be achieved;
- The position regarding existing pre-school and Foundation Stage curricula;
- The protocols of ESaGS for non statutory pre-school and early years settings;
- The use of existing research in relation to standardised patterns of attendance and full-time pre-school provision;
- The duration of the moratorium on new or conversion to full-time pre-school provision;
- The detail of the proposed inspection system for all DE funded early years provision; and
- The administration and funding of the scheme for determining criteria for non statutory providers similar to that used for extended schools.

3.7 The proposed actions which generated the most comments included:

- Potential options for standardised patterns of attendance;
- Introducing flexibility in enrolment numbers;
- The SEN pilots;
- Implementing all the remaining actions in the Review of Pre-school Admissions Arrangements;

- Liaising with DHSSPS around qualifications;
- The moratorium on new or conversion to full-time pre-school provision; and
- The pilots for additional assistants.

3.8 A number of proposed actions appeared to have caused confusion or were misinterpreted, namely:

- The proposed action for flexibility in enrolment; some respondents interpreted this as the Department automatically increasing class sizes from 26 to 30 in statutory pre-school settings rather than a temporary flexibility at a school's request;
- The standardised closure of pre-school settings; some respondents interpreted the proposed action as meaning that all settings would be closed on the same day rather than standardising the number of days each sector had available;
- The current SEN pilots; many respondents raised issues around this proposed action which may have been influenced by the first stage of the roll out of existing pilots and lack of evaluation at the time; and
- The establishment of criteria similar to that used for extended schools; some respondents interpreted this as meaning more extended services for nursery schools and nursery units, and there was also concern about the use of the existing ES budget to support the voluntary/private sector.

3.9 A range of other issues not directly related to refinements to the proposed actions were also raised which included:

- Requests for all pre-school education to be teacher led and full-time;
- Requests for more reference to services for the 0-3 age range and more actions in relation to parenting and child care;
- The absence of any reference to flexibility in the school starting age; and
- The issue of the shorter consultation period and engagement with children/ children's version.

Themes from the qualitative analysis of the Committee for Education response

3.10 The Committee for Education supported:

- The proposed review of the effectiveness of Sure Start and encouraged the Department to work more closely with OFMDFM in its review of child care with a view to the development of complementary proposals which better tackle the needs of the 0-3 age group;
- The extension of the Foundation Stage to include a non-compulsory pre-school year and the refocusing of the Extended Schools Programme to include nursery schools and nursery units with additional resources going to voluntary and private settings; and
- The extension of the SEN pilots and the development of better continuous professional development for pre-school staff.

3.11 The Committee noted its interest in the proposal relating to the Early Years Education Clusters. The Committee noted with some caution proposals relating to the piloting of different staff/children ratios and standardised patterns of attendance, and sought assurances that child safety, staff workload and parental preference would be important considerations in the establishment and evaluation of such pilots.

3.12 The Committee asked that further consideration was given to:

- The development of “educare” provision similar to that which is available in other jurisdictions; and
- Proposals to limit all new full-time Early Years provision and to also reconsider the proposal to bring forward legislation which would limit participation in pre-school provision to one year only.

SECTION 4

Summary of Responses

Over-arching Goal: Raising Standards

Outcome: All children benefit from a high quality early years education and learning experience and acquire a positive disposition for further learning.

Key Action 1.1 The Department will redefine the pre-school programme to focus on children in their pre-school year.

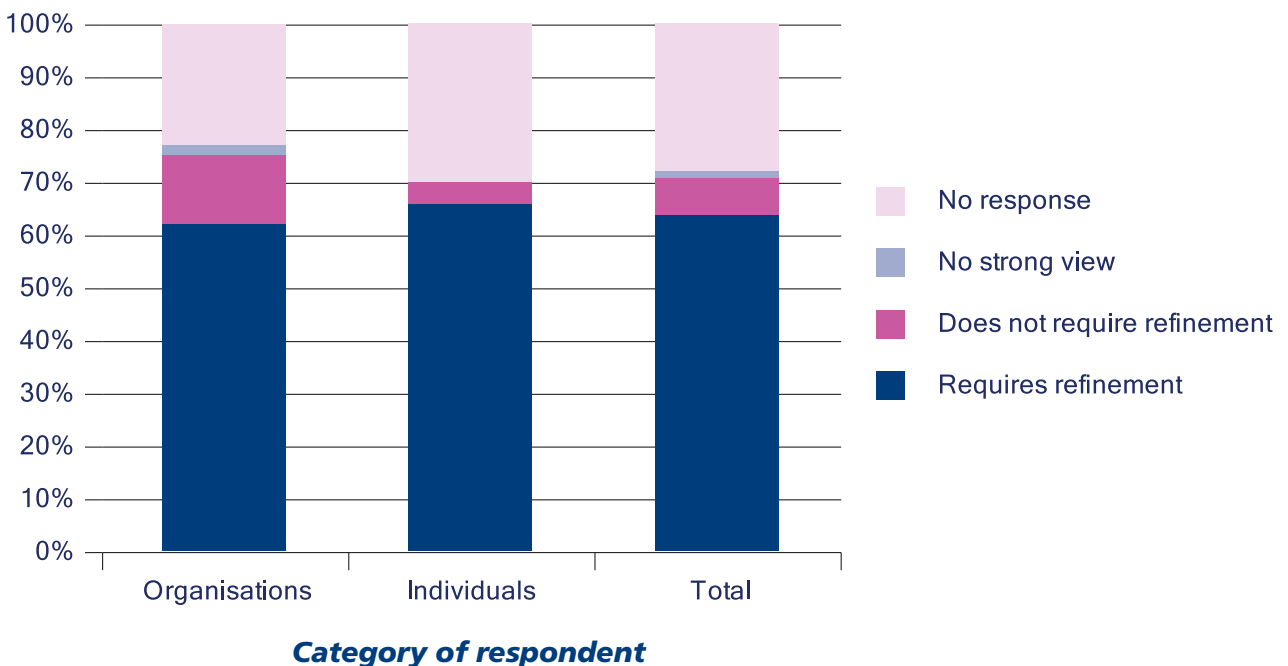
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.1 included 3 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.1 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.1 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.1



Key Action 1.1	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	71	143	214
Does not require refinement	15	8	23
No strong view	2	1	3
No response	26	66	92
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.1

Overall, 64% of respondents considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement, with organisations (62%) only slightly less likely to report this than individuals (66%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required, many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed, either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

7% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (13%) than individuals (4%).

28% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (23% of organisations and 30% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.1a Legislating to define the age range for the pre-school education programme to children aged over 3 years and 2 months.

A total of 163 responses were made by 140 (42%) respondents. 192 (58%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 214 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.1 required further refinements, 41% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.1a.

Action 1.1a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	82		81		163	
Common themes	Numbers	Rank	Numbers	Rank	Numbers	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	56	1	48	1	104	1
Respondents wanted more detail on the impact on enrolments and asked what would happen in the event of vacant places, whilst others commented that the pre-school year is not suitable for 2 year olds. Some considered the pre-school year should be teacher led.	12	3	24	2	36	2
Respondents asked for clarification on support for younger children in schools in certain circumstances (eg SEN, areas of high social deprivation). Some questioned the intention behind the proposal ie was it extra services in schools in addition to a nursery class. Some also wanted DE to define appropriate provision for children aged 0-3.	13	2	9	3	22	3
Respondents did not support the action.	1	4	0	0	1	4

Qualitative responses

Action 1.1b Retaining a power for nursery schools and units to provide services for two year olds, if needed, outside of the pre-school education programme.

A total of 162 responses were made by 130 (39%) respondents. 202 (61%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 214 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.1 required further refinements, 46% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.1b.

Action 1.1b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	94		68		162	
Common themes	Numbers	Rank	Numbers	Rank	Numbers	Rank
Respondents requested more information on provision for 2 year olds including more detail on form, funding, ratios, accommodation, how it would be managed and by whom, the impact on and implications for nursery schools and units. Respondents sought clarification on whether the provision would be universal, appropriately resourced, with some commenting that it should be teacher led.	40	1	31	1	71	1
Respondents wanted clarification on the role of, and impact on, Sure Start and playgroups. They also wanted clarification on alternative provision for 2 year olds.	29	2	21	2	50	2
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	21	3	14	3	35	3
Respondents did not support the action.	4	4	2	4	6	4

Qualitative responses

Action 1.1c Legislating to prevent schools establishing new or maintaining existing reception classes.

A total of 101 responses were made by 83 (25%) respondents. 249 (75%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 214 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.1 required further refinements, 66% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.1c.

Action 1.1c	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	50		51		101	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents asked about a mechanism for converting existing reception classes to statutory nursery units. Others were concerned about the loss of teacher led provision. Some suggested that reception provision should be allowed to continue where there is insufficient pre-school provision.	18	2	25	1	43	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	20	1	9	2	29	2
Respondents asked for consideration to be given to the impact on rural/isolated settings. Some questioned whether the action referred to all reception provision or only full reception classes.	8	3	9	2	17	3
Respondents did not support the action.	4	4	8	4	12	4

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.1

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.1 which were not specific to the individual actions. 43 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents commented that children should be able to secure a place in their local setting, some felt that while it was sensible to prioritise children in their pre-school year the action could put many providers into financial uncertainty (12 responses);
- Respondents commented that statutory nursery provision should host the pre-school programme, with younger children in voluntary/private sector but with flexibility for children facing barriers to learning. Others commented that the pre-school year should be teacher led and that DE needs to address over subscription in the statutory sector (11 responses);
- Respondents wanted further information regarding provision for children before the pre-school year, the role of ESA in taking forward the action with the voluntary/private sector, and the need for funding (6 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues, these included the need for funding to develop an Irish immersion two year old programme which is distinct from the statutory or voluntary pre-school education programme, the need for school principals to have input into Sure Start policy and practice, and concern that children with a statement of SEN would have to wait until age 3 for a nursery place (14 responses).

Key Action 1.2 The Department will ensure that experiences in primary school build more effectively on the child’s previous education and learning experiences.

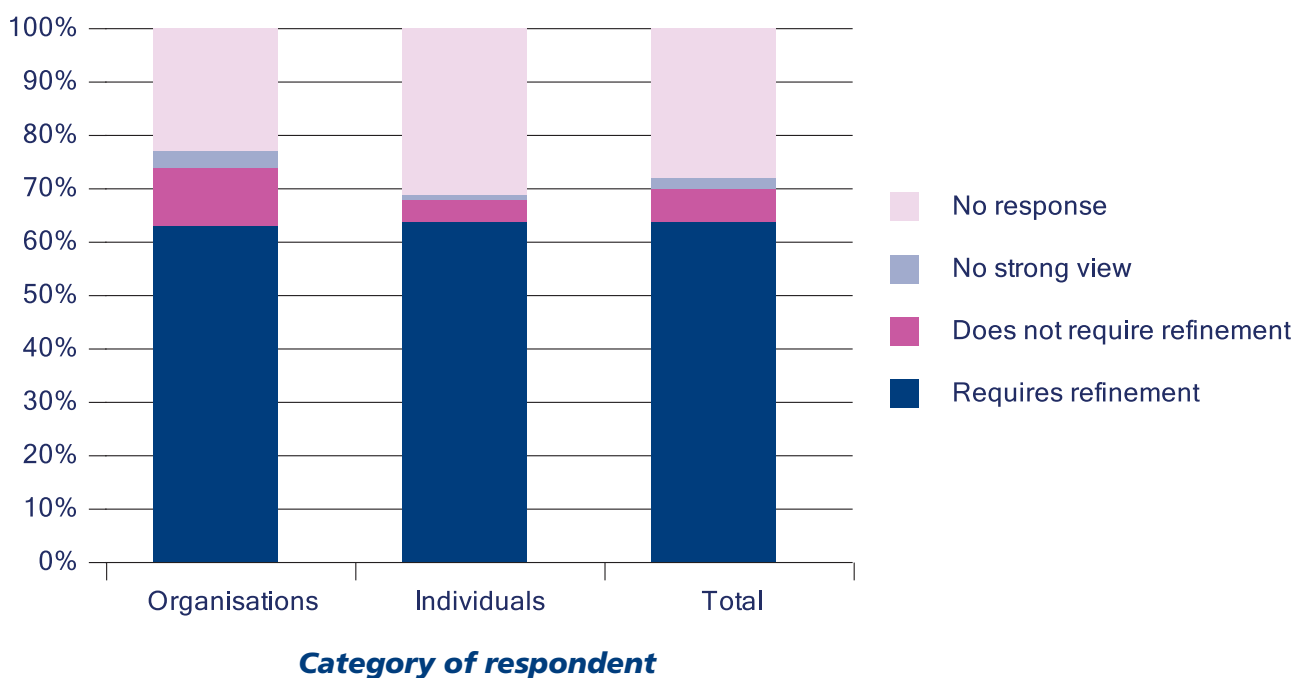
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.2 included 3 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.2 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.2 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.2



Key Action 1.2	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	72	139	211
Does not require refinement	12	9	21
No strong view	3	2	5
No response	27	68	95
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.2

Overall, 64% of respondents considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement, with organisations (63%) only slightly less likely to report this than individuals (64%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

6% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (11%) than individuals (4%).

29% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (24% of organisations and 31% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.2a Extending the Foundation Stage to include a non compulsory year (pre-school) and two compulsory years (primary), with one foundation curriculum to incorporate pre-school.

A total of 209 responses were made by 162 (49%) respondents. 170 (51%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 211 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.2 required further refinements, 31% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.2a.

Action 1.2a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	94		115		209	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	52	1	44	2	96	1
Respondents asked for more detail on partnerships between pre-school and primary schools, the nature of the support, training, and the resources required to implement the action. Some were concerned that children not attending pre-school would miss out on the first year of the Foundation Stage. Others commented on the importance of the transition between pre-school and primary school.	25	2	59	1	84	2
Respondents queried the use of the existing pre-school curriculum and requested that DE provide reassurance that the Foundation Stage Curriculum will not change as a result. They also stressed the need to consult with the nursery sector in the extension of the Foundation Stage.	6	3	11	3	17	3
Respondents commented that the extension of the Foundation Stage would require a review of the pre-school curriculum in light of recent research and Continuous Professional Development similar to that provided for Foundation Stage.	5	4	1	4	6	4
Respondents wanted consideration to be given to the needs of all children 0-6 including the needs of children aged 0-3 in foundation.	4	5	0	0	4	5
Respondents did not support the action.	2	6	0	0	2	6

Qualitative responses

Action 1.2b Developing guidance, information and support materials for parents and practitioners on preparing for and managing transitions to Foundation Stage and on to Key Stage 1.

A total of 145 responses were made by 129 (39%) respondents. 203 (61%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 211 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.2 required further refinements, 45% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.2b.

Action 1.2b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	77		68		145	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents sought more detail on who would develop the support materials and stressed the need for consultation with teaching professionals. Others raised issues around funding, staffing and services. Others stressed the need for high quality guidance materials, a flexible approach for 0-6 and avoidance of check/tick lists or standardised assessments.	25	1	40	1	65	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	21	2	9	3	30	2
Respondents wanted the transitions to include Sure Start to pre-school and pre-school to Year 1. Others emphasised the need for enhanced collaboration between pre-school and primary sectors.	19	3	7	4	26	3
Respondents stressed that current pre-school curricular guidance provides a sound foundation and a broad curriculum for all pre-school children. Others commented that the development of guidance should involve teaching professionals, the statutory sector (to reflect existing good practice), parents and CCEA and that the ETI Quality Indicators are fit for purpose.	12	4	12	2	24	4
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.2c Commissioning research on the outcomes of pre-school Irish-medium Education as outlined in the Review of Irish-medium Education.

A total of 68 responses were made by 61 (18%) respondents. 271 (82%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 211 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.2 required further refinements, 74% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.2c.

Action 1.2c	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	30		38		68	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents sought further information on this action, but were not specific in terms of the detail required.	4	3	35	1	39	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	19	1	2	2	21	2
Respondents raised issues about bilingualism and multilingualism. Others queried if the research would examine outcomes for children facing challenges such as speech and language difficulties within Irish-medium education. Others wanted the research to be informed by existing local research, to include the Sure Start Developmental Programme for 2 Year Olds, and children aged 0-6.	7	2	1	3	8	3
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.2

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.2 which were not specific to the individual actions. 44 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents commented that a smooth transition between phases is important for development and should be assisted by strengthening partnerships between pre-school providers and primary schools with a key role for teachers, and building on a child's previous experiences (11 responses);
- Respondents commented that children generally settle into P1 more quickly if they have had a pre-school experience and that consideration should be given to making the pre-school year compulsory (8 responses);
- Respondents commented that given the wealth of local and international evidence from neuroscience and educational psychology DE should consider the cognitive, emotional, social and physical needs of all children including those who are vulnerable, those with disabilities, and from pre-birth, and 0-2, particularly the first 18 months (6 responses);
- Respondents commented that consultation was required with nursery school principals and teachers regarding practice and working groups should reflect a balance of professionals. They also commented that current ETI Quality Indicators were fit for purpose and should not be changed without consultation (6 responses);
- Respondents commented that admission to pre-school education should include a commitment contract from parents to attend a parenting course or curriculum awareness course (2 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues, these included the need for consistency in pre-school provision so that children arrive at primary stage prepared, some respondents felt that not all parents are interested/supportive of the children's learning, others questioned if the 2 year old programme will be included in Foundation Stage and some suggested that the pre-school curriculum needs to focus on learning through play (11 responses).

Key Action 1.3 The Department will apply the principles of Every School a Good School to all DE funded early years provision.

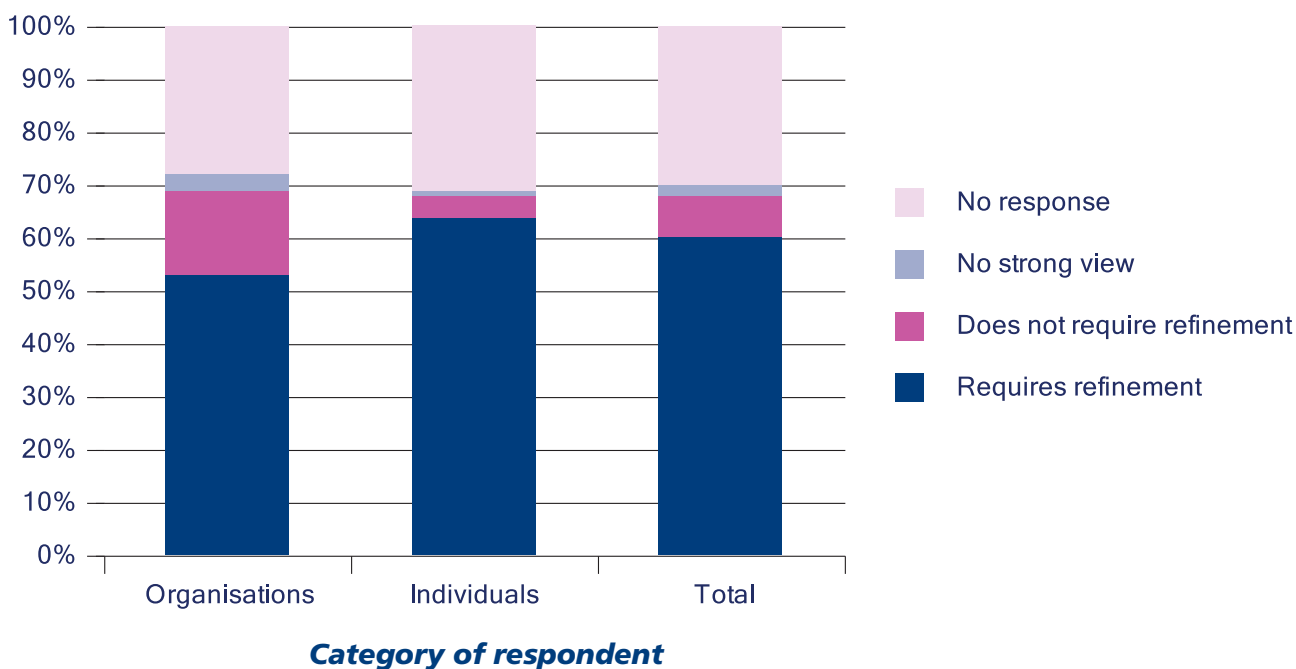
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.3 included 2 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.3 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.3 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.3



Key Action 1.3	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	60	139	199
Does not require refinement	18	9	27
No strong view	3	3	6
No response	33	67	100
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.3

Overall, 60% of respondents considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement, with organisations (53%) less likely to report this than individuals (64%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

8% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (16%) than individuals (4%).

30% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (29% of organisations and 31% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.3a Ensuring all DE funded services in the 0-6 age range are subject to a thorough area based inspection process, including the Sure Start Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds, all relevant support services for pre-school, and Foundation Stage, whilst not separating foundation from the overall primary stage.

A total of 139 responses were made by 105 (32%) respondents. 227 (68%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 199 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.3 required further refinements, 56% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.3a.

Action 1.3a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	80		59		139	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	40	1	18	2	58	1
Respondents sought clarification on the process, ie would DE continue to purchase places from settings not meeting the quality standard? Others asked about settings opting in and out of the programme, and about the professional and leadership capacity required. Some asked if it would result in the expansion of successful nursery schools in line with parents' demands.	9	3	31	1	40	2
Respondents stressed that Every School a Good School (ESaGS) should apply equally to all sectors.	13	2	9	3	22	3
Respondents wanted a level playing field in terms of accountability and inspection. Some felt it was important that the Foundation Stage remains part of the primary phase of education.	8	4	1	4	9	4
Respondents suggested that DE should collaborate more with DHSSPS, as the registering authority for settings, in terms of approaches to inspection.	7	5	0	0	7	5
Respondents had some concerns about the area based inspection approach and suggested that this is taken forward initially as a pilot. Respondents suggested there was a need to define the quality indicators that would be applied to all DE funded settings.	3	6	0	0	3	6
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.3b Developing protocols for support and intervention, outside of ESaGS, where the quality of provision is below standard.

A total of 138 responses were made by 104 (31%) respondents. 228 (69%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 199 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.3 required further refinements, 53% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.3b.

Action 1.3b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	76		62		138	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents sought clarification on the process and the timescale for change, and asked if it would result in the expansion of successful nursery schools in line with parental demand. There were questions around the leadership capacity to deliver ESaGS in the voluntary and private sector. Some commented that the protocols should be as equally thorough, challenging and rigorous as those applied to schools.	26	2	45	1	71	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	29	1	12	2	41	2
Respondents commented that support should be provided to all settings, not just those below standard and should apply equally to the statutory nursery sector. They also commented that settings should not be allowed to opt in and out of the programme and consideration should be given to quality assuring providers before entry to the pre-school programme.	7	4	4	3	11	3
Respondents wanted further clarification of the funding, support and guidance for new providers. Others suggested that specific approaches should be developed for Irish-medium Education.	8	3	1	4	9	4
Respondents questioned whether the action required further consideration as it appeared inconsistent with action 1.3a. Others questioned whether area based planning will feed into area based inspections.	6	5	0	0	6	5
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.3

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.3 which were not specific to the individual actions. 57 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents asked if the action will result in the expansion of successful nursery schools in line with parental demands (13 responses);
- Respondents commented on quality issues suggesting that provision should be teacher led or that all staff should be retrained to teacher status (11 responses);
- Respondents requested clarification on a range of issues for the private and voluntary sector, such as purchasing places from below standard settings, opting in and out of the programme, and leadership capacity (9 responses);
- Respondents asked had DE considered the apparent unfairness of funding private businesses for profit as part of the pre-school programme (6 responses);
- Respondents asked for further clarification around the key action (4 responses);
- Respondents commented that there should be consistent standards and provision across all providers (3 responses);
- Respondents commented that funding was required to successfully implement ESaGS (2 responses);
- Respondents stressed that engagement with, and access to information for, parents was a key principle in ESaGS (2 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues, these included the role of Early Years Specialist should include support and supervision of staff; ETI should develop expertise in 0-3 phase and a Foundation Stage specialist should be included on every primary school inspection; the wider aspects of Sure Start work were highlighted such as ante-natal, development work with families, attachment/bonding, speech language and communication skills development; existing protocols should be shared to determine what constitutes best practice including in Irish-medium Education settings (7 responses).

Over-arching Goal: Closing the performance gap, increasing access and equality

Outcome: All children progress and develop equitably, with appropriate support for children who face barriers to learning.

Key Action 1.4 The Department will review how early years education and learning services are effectively targeted to address barriers to learning and enhance access and equity.

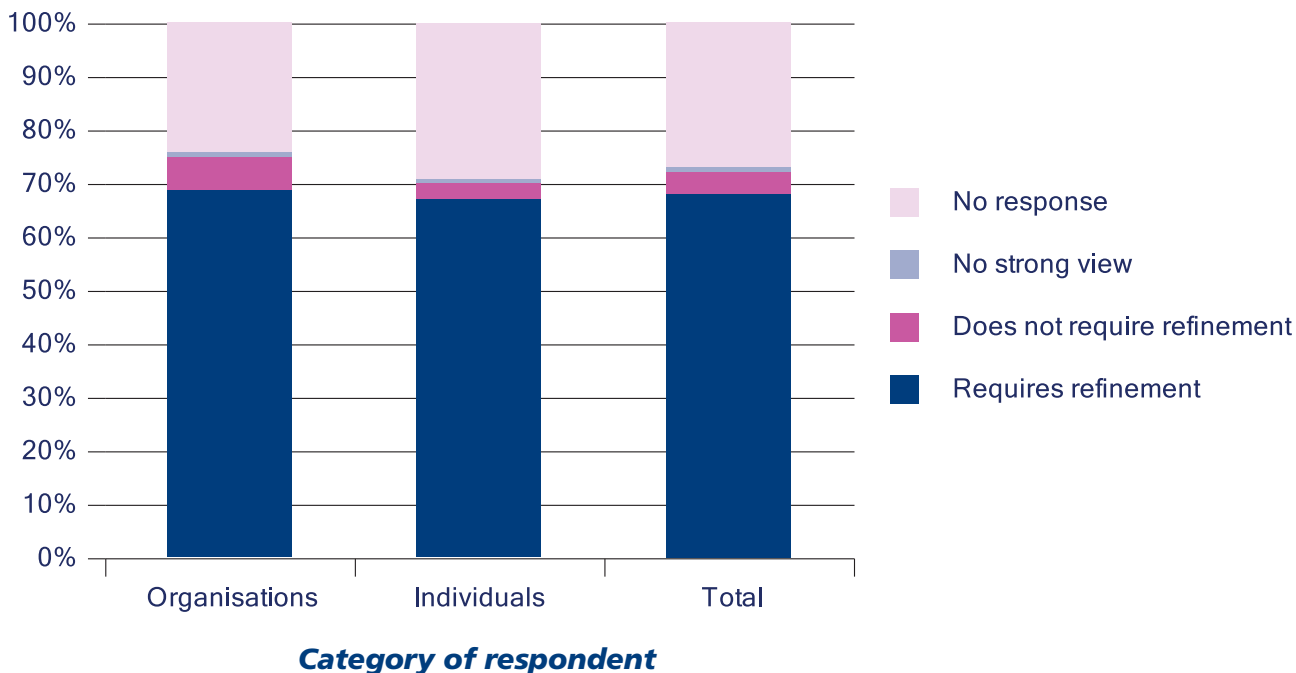
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.4 included 6 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.4 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.4 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.4



Key Action 1.4	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	79	147	226
Does not require refinement	7	7	14
No strong view	1	1	2
No response	27	63	90
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.4

Overall, 68% of respondents considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement, with organisations (69%) slightly more likely to report this than individuals (67%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

4% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (6%) than individuals (3%).

27% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (24% of organisations and 29% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.4a Refocusing the use of extended schools (ES) funding for nursery schools and units to help identify and address underdeveloped social, emotional and communication skills of young children.

A total of 127 responses were made by 97 (29%) respondents. 235 (71%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 226 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.4 required further refinements, 63% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.4a.

Action 1.4a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	80		47		127	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	35	1	17	1	52	1
Respondents stressed that extended schools funding should remain school centred and any additional coverage must be funded from additional funding, and not impact on the existing ES (extended schools) budget.	23	2	10	3	33	2
Respondents wanted clarification on the additional funding and queried if this meant enhanced or universal provision of extended schools.	11	3	12	2	23	3
Respondents suggested that many children are missing out on the support required as they do not live in areas targeted by these programmes, and stressed the need for DE to review the definition of disadvantage. Others highlighted the potential for duplication of services between ES and Sure Start in some areas.	3	5	5	4	8	4
Respondents asked about co-ordination with OFMDFM to ensure alignment with the forthcoming childcare strategy, links to regional model for speech, language and communication within Sure Starts; capital funding required to enable nursery schools to host Sure Start services; issues for schools that no longer meet criteria for ES funding.	5	4	3	5	8	4
Respondents highlighted that ES services in pre-school were not always viable given the need to extend the school day suggesting that DE should consider 'in school hours' services rather than 'out of school hours'.	2	6	0	0	2	6
Respondents did not support the action.	1	7	0	0	1	7

Qualitative responses

Action 1.4b Establishing criteria, similar to that used for ES, for voluntary and private settings in the Pre-School Programme to access additional resources proportionate to the amount they receive per place.

A total of 100 responses were made by 79 (24%) respondents. 253 (76%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 226 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.4 required further refinements, 69% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.4b.

Action 1.4b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	52		48		100	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents stressed the need for funding to be fair and transparent and clarity on the roles and responsibilities in terms of management and administration of the scheme. Others sought assurance that existing ES services would not be impacted on by this action.	20	1	33	1	53	1
Respondents sought clarification on the management and administration of extended services in voluntary and private settings and more detail on the potential duplication with Sure Start, coverage for rural areas and how delivery would be monitored regionally.	10	3	9	2	19	2
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	13	2	2	4	15	3
Respondents commented that ES should remain school centred to allow the needs of individual communities to be met. Others wanted to see schools collaborate with other sectors to encourage better partnerships to be made.	9	4	4	3	13	4
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.4c Commissioning a review of the Sure Start Programme, with co-operation from DHSSPS, to assess the extent to which the investment is helping to secure improved well being and development outcomes for children and families in the most disadvantaged areas, and the need for admissions criteria to be developed to ensure that those who need these services most can avail of them.

A total of 104 responses were made by 79 (24%) respondents. 253 (76%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 226 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.4 required further refinements, 70% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.4c.

Action 1.4c	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	72		32		104	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	31	1	9	1	40	1
Respondents queried if this will be linked to action 1.1b and requested more detail of the potential role of schools. Respondents suggested DE take advantage of expertise in the statutory nursery sector.	15	2	6	3	21	2
Respondents commented that the definition of disadvantage/need should be reviewed/extended, rather than specific to areas. Some highlighted that children with SEN live in all areas, and others highlighted the needs of rural settings.	8	3	6	3	14	3
Respondents questioned the level of parental involvement, the coverage and use of admission criteria for the programme.	8	3	4	5	12	4
Respondents wanted more detail and clarification, but were not specific in terms of the detail required.	3	6	7	2	10	5
Respondents wanted the review to consider the need for enhanced collaboration, the impact/outcomes of Sure Start on children with SEN, children's social and emotional development and preferred language needs (ie Irish/English), the amount of data and evidence available.	6	5	0	0	6	6
Respondents did not support the action.	1	7	0	0	1	7

Qualitative responses

Action 1.4d Developing potential options for the expansion of a two year old programme.

A total of 78 responses were made by 64 (19%) respondents. 268 (81%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 226 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.4 required further refinements, 76% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.4d.

Action 1.4d	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	58		20		78	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents queried if the action was linked to action 1.1b and requested that DE consider the potential role of schools.	19	1	9	1	28	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	18	2	1	4	19	2
Respondents queried the role of the voluntary and private sector, what criteria would be used, and stressed the need for DE to consider the role of parents.	9	4	8	2	17	3
Respondents raised issues around the role of Sure Start in any expansion, the qualifications of leaders, ratios, the needs of Irish-medium Education in respect of 2 year olds, SEN and disadvantaged children.	12	3	2	3	14	4
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.4e Monitoring the uptake and completion of early years education and learning opportunities by children at risk of exclusion, including children with special education needs and/or disability, looked after children and traveller children and newcomer families.

A total of 39 responses were made by 30 (9%) respondents. 302 (91%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 226 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.4 required further refinements, 90% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.4e.

Action 1.4e	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	29		10		39	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	14	1	0	0	14	1
Respondents wanted more information and clarification in relation to monitoring impacts.	3	3	7	1	10	2
Respondents suggested that the action should apply to all - inclusive of disability/SEN/rurality/poverty.	5	2	1	2	6	3
Respondents commented on the specific needs of SEN children and some considered that the framework had no specific actions for children with a disability.	3	3	1	2	4	4
Respondents stressed the need for resources to help settings identify and address needs including inclusion.	3	3	0	0	3	5
Respondents did not support the action.	1	6	1	2	2	6

Qualitative responses

Action 1.4f Subject to recommendations emerging from the evaluation, extending the pilots in early years settings initiated by the Review of SEN and Inclusion, to help improve access to specialist support and build capacity across pre-school settings.

A total of 178 responses were made by 133 (40%) respondents. 199 (60%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 226 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.4 required further refinements, 45% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.4f.

Action 1.4f	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	85		93		178	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents raised concerns about the current pilots which they considered were not meeting the needs of children. Others asked for one to one programmes for individual children. Respondents wanted a full evaluation of current pilots before moving forward.	31	1	58	1	89	1
Respondents did not support the action.	20	2	16	2	36	2
Respondents commented on the need to speed up the process of identifying needs and providing quicker access to support. Respondents suggested that all pre-school settings require adequate specialist support for SEN and inclusion.	14	3	14	3	28	3
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	12	4	0	0	12	4
Respondents suggested that the 1:13 ratio in the statutory sector is no longer appropriate given high level of children with SEN.	7	5	2	5	9	5
Respondents requested more detail/clarification but were not specific.	1	6	3	4	4	6

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.4

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.4 which were not specific to the individual actions. 54 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents wanted a review of 'disadvantage' with a focus on the needs of the individual rather than the area. It was suggested that there should be a tailored programme for each child with additional needs. They also asked for clarification on how DE will address barriers to learning (12 responses);
- Respondents suggested there was a need to utilise the fully qualified nursery teachers in addressing children's needs and in professional development of the sector. Respondents wanted to see a lowering of the pupil:staff ratio as this was important to addressing needs of children (12 responses);
- Respondents commented that there was a need for quicker assessment of special needs, and then access to support and streamlining of systems (10 responses);
- Respondents asked for clarification and more detail on funding and the impact on other services (5 responses);
- Respondents commented that there was a need to widen the focus of services to include programmes provided by the voluntary sector. They also commented on the lack of proposals for 0-3 age group and outside of Sure Start (3 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues, these included the role of Sure Start in delivering this action, lack of understanding of prior experiences of children including family situations, health, including linkages to the statutory health sector, and that work should be undertaken to help parents understand the benefits of pre-school education (12 responses).

Key Action 1.5 The Department will collaborate with other departments to work towards a common goal of improving outcomes for children.

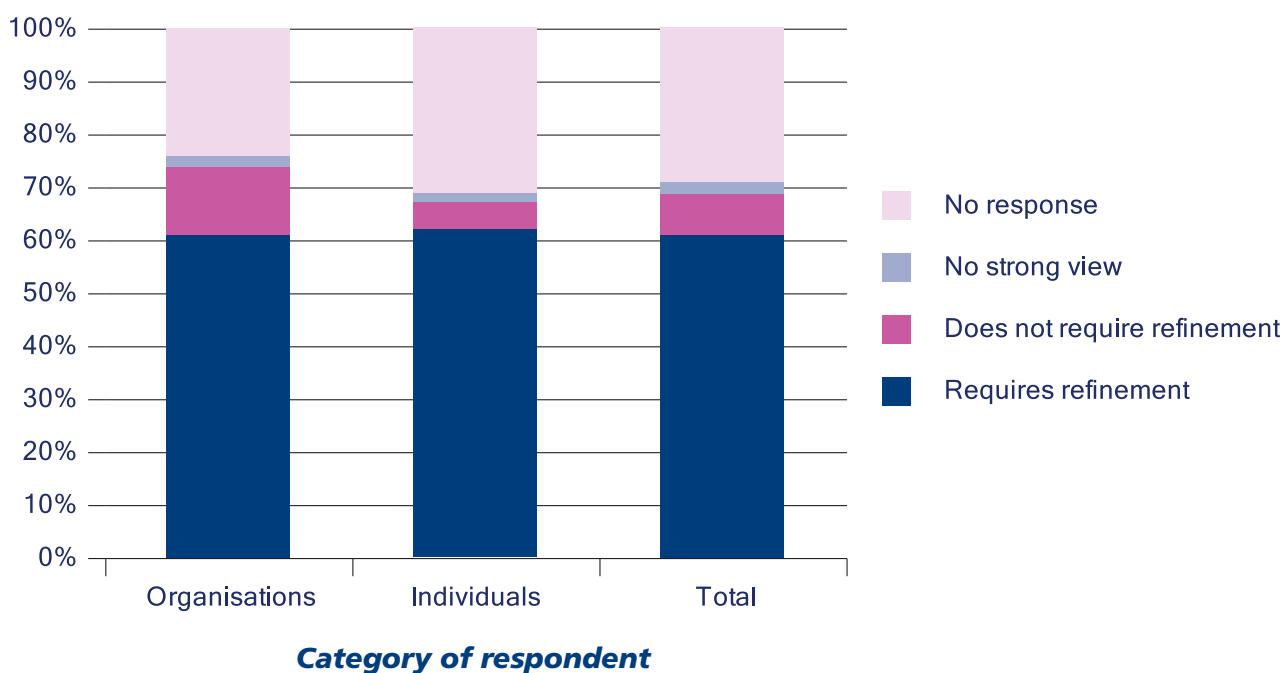
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.5 included 2 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.5 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.5 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.5



Key Action 1.5	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	70	134	204
Does not require refinement	15	11	26
No strong view	2	5	7
No response	27	68	95
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.5

Overall, 61% of organisations and individuals considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement. Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required, many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

8% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (13%) than individuals (5%).

29% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (24% of organisations and 31% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.5a Identifying opportunities for investing jointly with DHSSPS, DSD, DoJ and OFMDFM under the DSC framework in evidence based family intervention/parenting programmes planned, commissioned and evaluated through the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP).

A total of 219 responses were made by 153 (46%) respondents. 179 (54%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 204 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.5 required further refinements, 35% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.5a.

Action 1.5a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	95		124		219	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents wanted more detail on delivery, budgets, monitoring and evaluation. Others suggested the need for further consultation.	23	2	62	1	85	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	37	1	38	2	75	2
Respondents highlighted that existing school budgets cannot cover the additional workload associated with the action. Others queried how it will work in practice.	4	5	20	3	24	3
Respondents supported collaboration and a multi-disciplinary/multi-agency approach.	18	3	3	4	21	4
Respondents requested clarification of ‘evidence based’. Some suggested that C&YPSP needed to be strengthened, that DE must work with the forthcoming childcare strategy, build on existing practice and evaluate what is currently in place. Others stressed the need for sustained funding not short term initiatives.	13	4	1	5	14	5
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.5b Improving the co-ordination of service delivery to individual families by ensuring that early years education and learning services/workforce are integrated into the DHSSPS Family Support Hubs and into the Health and Social Care Trust Early Years teams' family support structures.

A total of 181 responses were made by 125 (38%) respondents. 207 (62%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 204 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.5 required further refinements, 47% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.5b.

Action 1.5b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	88		93		181	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	33	1	33	2	66	1
Respondents considered that the action required more detail on resources, monitoring and evaluation. Some suggested the action needed further consultation.	23	2	34	1	57	2
Respondents were concerned about increased workload/stress on pre-school sector, highlighting issues with lack of health visitor checks.	5	5	20	3	25	3
Respondents supported the need for more collaboration and a multi-disciplinary/multi-agency approach.	13	3	3	4	16	4
Respondents wanted clarification on what Family Supports Hubs were, the level of resources required, skill sets needed and others suggested the hubs should be established in neutral/shared areas.	7	4	0	0	7	5
Respondents queried 0-3 provision, links with OFMDFM, co-ordination between DHSSPS and ETI, and the position of Sure Start.	4	6	1	6	5	6
Respondents stated that joint agency activity exists between statutory nursery settings and other services and suggested that more streamlined approaches are needed including the sharing of information.	3	7	2	5	5	6
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.5

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.5 which were not specific to the individual actions. 41 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents wanted more detail on delivery and consultation with schools (12 responses);
- Respondents stressed the need for additional funding (9 responses);
- Respondents supported collaboration, both interdepartmental and multi-agency (8 responses);
- Respondents stressed the need for parenting programmes to be included/made available (4 responses);
- Respondents commented that additional support services are needed for all children, not just those identified as at risk (3 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues; these included timescales; the need to take advice from Irish language services; the need for sub cover; and the alignment with the forthcoming childcare strategy (5 responses).

Enabling Goal: Developing the Education Workforce

Outcome: The workforce is appropriately skilled, competent and supported to deliver effective early years education and learning services to all children, their parents and families.

Key Action 1.6 The Department will establish appropriate support mechanisms to drive up standards in pre-school provision and disseminate best practice.

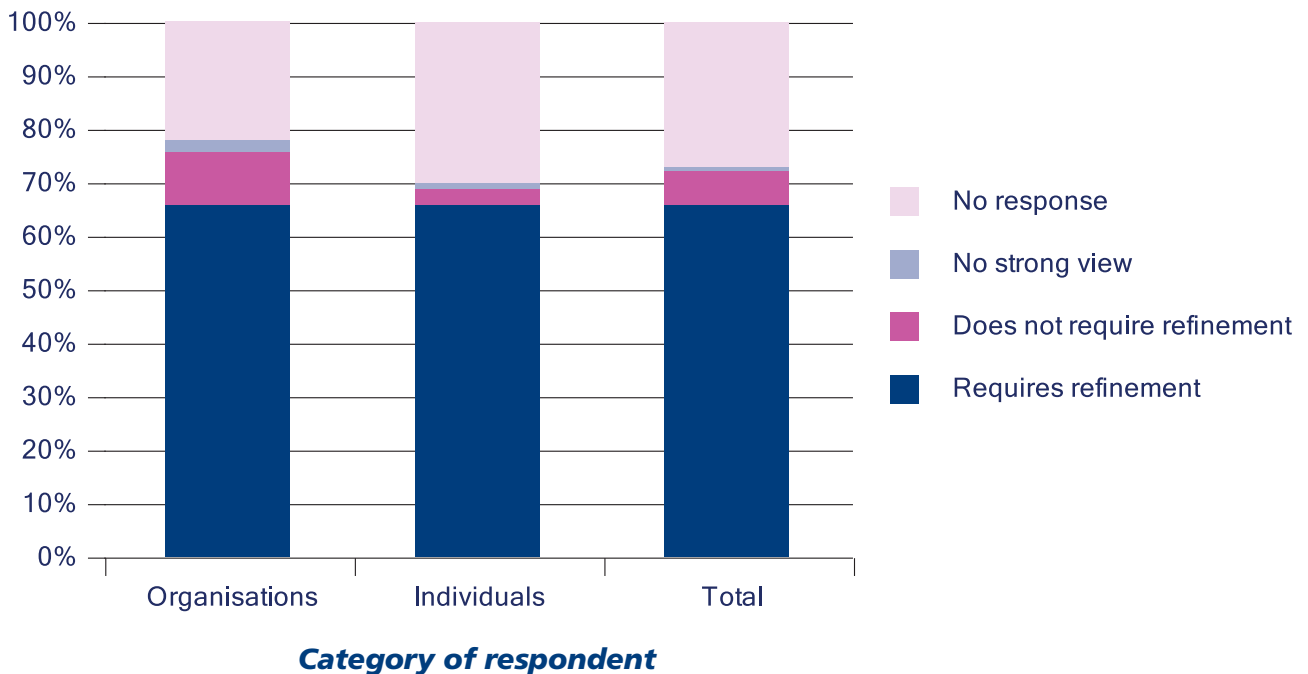
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.6 included 5 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.6 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.6 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.6



Key Action 1.6	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	75	144	219
Does not require refinement	11	7	18
No strong view	2	2	4
No response	26	65	91
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.6

Overall, 66% of organisations and individuals considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement. Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

5% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (10%) than individuals (3%).

27% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (23% of organisations and 30% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.6a Creating 11 pilot Early Years Education Support Clusters, 2 in each board area and one other which may be Irish-medium specific, to raise standards by making greater use of the teaching expertise in nursery schools and units along with expertise in playgroups across other relevant providers and early years specialists.

A total of 144 responses were made by 110 (33%) respondents. 222 (67%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 219 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.6 required further refinements, 54% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.6a.

Action 1.6a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	90		54		144	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	43	1	20	1	63	1
Respondents raised issues about the additional workload this would create for nursery principals. Others wanted more use of expert teachers and stressed the need for an "outstanding" ETI report and for a highly qualified lead cluster.	14	3	13	2	27	2
Respondents wanted to see more detail on collaboration with health services and whilst supportive wanted more information on the specific sectoral issues eg Irish-medium Education/Sure Start. Others queried the need for the lead cluster to have an "outstanding" ETI report. Issues were also raised about funding.	15	2	7	4	22	3
Respondents wanted more detail but were not specific.	6	5	11	3	17	4
Respondents suggested building on existing cluster arrangements.	12	4	3	5	15	5
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.6b Developing an 'Excellence in Early Education Fund' to provide seed/ additional funding to the clusters to incentivise greater collaboration, and support the additional requirements on the lead cluster which must have an 'outstanding' inspection report.

A total of 77 responses were made by 66 (20%) respondents. 266 (80%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 219 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.6 required further refinements, 74% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.6b.

Action 1.6b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	48		29		77	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	31	1	11	2	42	1
Respondents sought clarification on how the fund would be managed, structured and the criteria to be used. Others asked about the implications for schools unwilling to take part.	7	3	14	1	21	2
Respondents queried the need for a lead cluster to have an "outstanding" ETI report. Others stressed the need for funding and secondment of staff to the lead cluster.	9	2	4	3	13	3
Respondents did not support the action.	1	4	0	0	1	4

Qualitative responses

Action 1.6c Liaising with DHSSPS around the current qualifications relevant to early years education and learning particularly around literacy and numeracy.

A total of 176 responses were made by 121 (36%) respondents. 211 (64%) respondents choose not to comment. Whilst 219 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.6 required further refinements, 49% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.6c.

Action 1.6c	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	90		86		176	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents wanted to see qualifications reviewed but asked how DE would structure it. Others suggested a minimum of 5 GCSEs including maths and English or minimum of NVQ level 3. Others again referred to parents wanting teacher led provision. Some suggested more input from teacher training colleges.	41	1	49	1	90	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	32	2	26	2	58	2
Respondents wanted clear support and staff development strategies with some suggesting a bursary scheme to assist staff in further development.	7	3	8	3	15	3
Respondents highlighted the need for staff to understand the connection between brain development and attachment and improved practice in supporting children. Some stated that it was crucial to work with DHSSPS on qualifications.	5	4	1	5	6	4
Respondents were concerned that any up skilling would lead to increased costs and/or staff leaving. Others queried why the same standards do not apply across all funded pre-school settings.	2	5	2	4	4	5
Respondents considered that other areas, such as social and emotional development, require enhanced focus for early years staff, not just literacy and numeracy.	2	5	0	0	2	6
Respondents did not support the action.	1	7	0	0	1	7

Qualitative responses

Action 1.6d Developing a programme of continuous professional development for staff and management committees in funded settings with a focus on leadership and management.

A total of 112 responses were made by 79 (24%) respondents. 253 (76%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 219 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.6 required further refinements, 68% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.6d.

Action 1.6d	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	80		32		112	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents sought clarification on how this action would be taken forward, and who would deliver it.	26	2	13	1	39	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	28	1	9	2	37	2
Respondents wanted to see a clear focus on CPD for all staff and particularly in terms of leadership, stressing that it should occur regularly and involve school leaders. There were calls for it to be adequately resourced.	18	3	6	3	24	3
Respondents wanted the CPD to reflect the statutory sector approach.	4	4	3	4	7	4
Respondents highlighted how staff welcomed CPD and suggested potential providers.	2	5	1	5	3	5
Respondents wanted to see more clusters beyond the 11 proposed and more emphasis on best practice.	2	5	0	0	2	6
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.6e Standardising the closure days for pre-school settings to maximise available time for staff development.

A total of 60 responses were made by 44 (13%) respondents. 288 (87%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 219 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.6 required further refinements, 83% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.6e.

Action 1.6e	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	42		18		60	
Common themes*	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents queried who would decide which days the settings closed.	20	1	6	2	26	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	16	2	1	4	17	2
Respondents asked for clarification in relation to closure days and asked if this would be subject to consultation.	3	3	9	1	12	3
Respondents did not support the action.	3	3	2	3	5	4

**Some of the responses suggest a misinterpretation of the proposed action.*

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.6

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.6 which were not specific to the individual actions. 77 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents highlighted that young people deserve the best adult support available (28 responses);
- Respondents suggested a minimum of 5 GCSEs at A-C including Maths and English and stressed the need for the key action to apply to all settings and sectors including Sure Start (15 responses);
- Respondents re-iterated calls for all provision to be teacher led (10 responses);
- Respondents wanted school teachers and leaders to have the authority to consider the needs of their own setting and evaluate their own practice (5 responses);
- Respondents raised concerns about the quality of provision across some providers (4 responses);
- Respondents expressed concern around the collaboration required between DE, DHSSPS, and OFMDFM in the wider context of Learning to Learn and childcare but noted that this may increase the workload for settings in the dissemination of best practice (4 responses);
- Respondents wanted more detail on how the key action would be taken forward and by whom (2 responses);
- Respondents suggested that the framework should consider the Nutbrown recommendations (2 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues; these included agreeing with the main aim generally but wanting clarity on the role of voluntary and private settings. Some respondents stressed the need for funding, others felt that practice was generally good (7 responses).

Key Action 1.7

The Department will work with DHSSPS to develop protocols for delivery bodies to enhance information sharing, early identification and intervention services for children and families at risk, and review joint training requirements across disciplines as well as improving inter-professional communication.

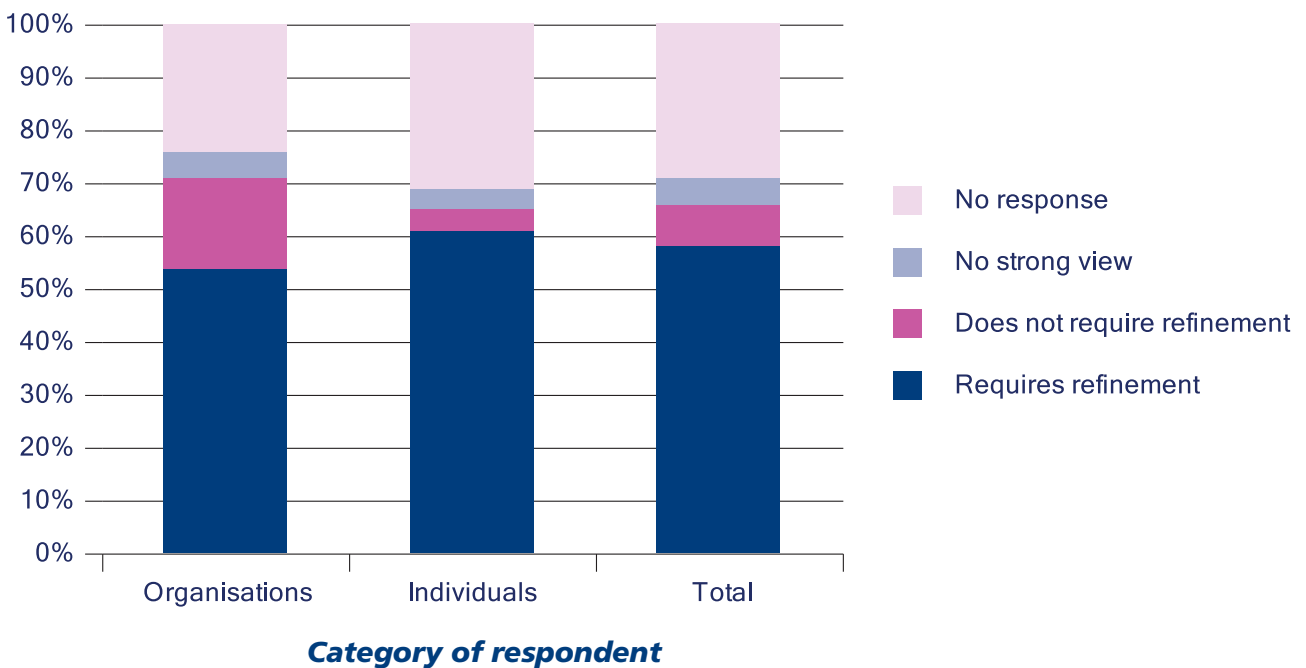
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.7 (one action); respondents were asked to indicate if the action required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.7 by respondent group

Does the action under 1.7 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.7



Key Action 1.7	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	61	132	193
Does not require refinement	19	9	28
No strong view	6	9	15
No response	28	68	96
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.7

Overall, 58% of respondents considered that the action required further refinement, with organisations (54%) less likely to report this than individuals (61%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed for the key action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

8% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to the action, with organisations more likely to report this (17%) than individuals (4%).

29% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (25% of organisations and 31% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.7 The Department will work with DHSSPS to develop protocols for delivery bodies to enhance information sharing, early identification and intervention services for children and families at risk, and review joint training requirements across disciplines as well as improving inter-professional communication.

A total of 236 responses were made by 162 (49%) respondents. 170 (51%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 193 respondents indicated that the proposed action under 1.7 required further refinement, 26% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.7.

Action 1.7	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	104		132		236	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	44	1	41	1	85	1
Respondents wanted more clarification generally on the support required for training and parental support. Some respondents stressed the need for a shared Management Information Service.	14	4	37	2	51	2
Respondents sought clarification on how this would be funded, the protocols to be developed and timescales. Some had concerns about the increased workload.	18	2	30	3	48	3
Respondents were concerned about how meaningful this would be to children/families. Some suggested that clarification/further discussion was required on delivery and additional funding.	15	3	16	4	31	4
Respondents welcomed the action, but wanted improvements in the speed and quality of information sharing, and a review of relevant legislation. Some suggested the need for consultation with those involved to alleviate problems and ensure consistency of the information shared.	11	5	7	5	18	5
Respondents wanted a clear definition of Early Intervention to ensure it is translated into widespread good practice.	2	6	0	0	2	6
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	1	6	1	7

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.7

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.7 which were not specific to the individual action. 16 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents wanted more discussion on meaningful early intervention for families stressing the need for time to be allocated to facilitate the action, stating that schools cannot fund this through existing budgets. Others advised that schools already work closely with professional bodies (5 responses);
- Respondents asked for clarification on the support and training that will be available and whether it will be practitioner led (2 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues; these included the need for clear and defined strategies and protocols to be put in place for parental involvement, and emphasis on collaboration to improve outcomes through changed practice (9 responses).

Enabling Goal: Improving the Child's Learning Environment

Outcome: High quality education and learning services delivered in safe, nurturing and accessible environments in partnership with parents and carers as their child's first and ongoing educators.

Key Action 1.8 The Department will revise the pre-school programme to ensure that all target age children benefit from an equitable pre-school experience.

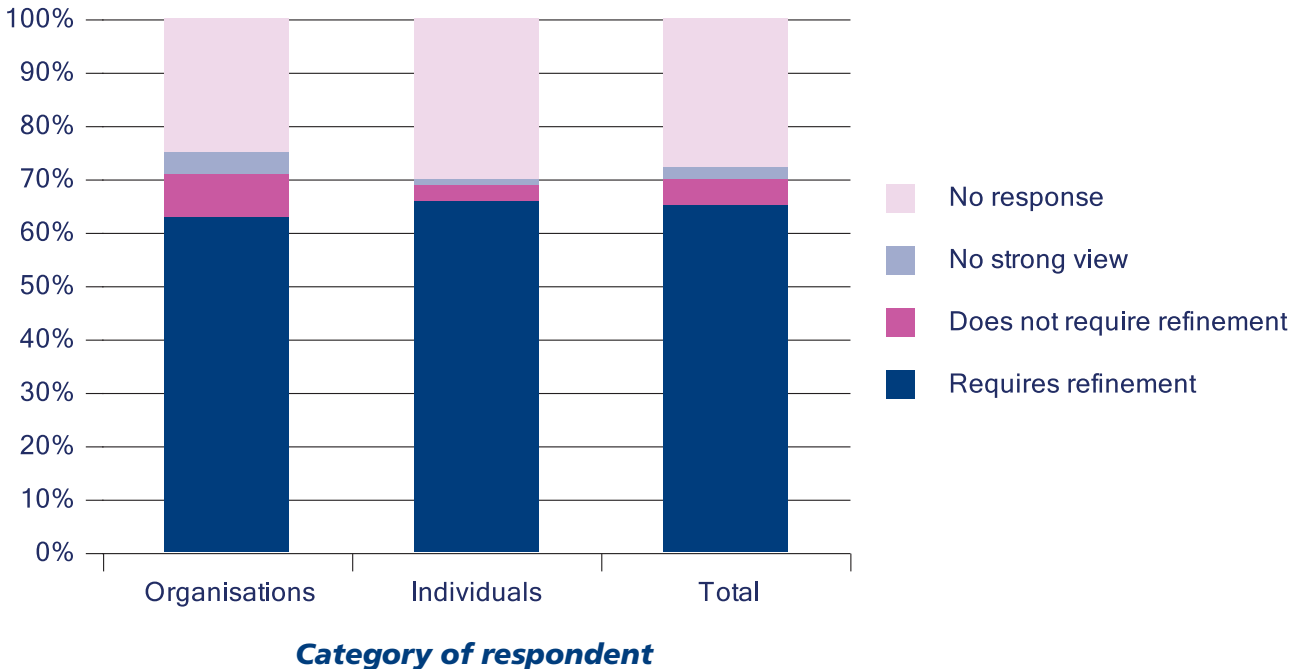
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.8 included 3 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.8 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.8 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.8



Key Action 1.8	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	72	144	216
Does not require refinement	9	7	16
No strong view	4	1	5
No response	29	66	95
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.8

Overall, 65% of respondents considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement, with organisations (63%) only slightly less likely to report this than individuals (66%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

5% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (8%) than individuals (3%).

29% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (25% of organisations and 30% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.8a Introducing flexibility in overall enrolment for nursery schools and nursery units up to a maximum class size of 30 (in line with current arrangements for Foundation) where the school is over subscribed with target age children, the additional children are all target age, and the Board of Governors and ELB/ESA are satisfied that the premises and staffing structure can support the increase.

A total of 263 responses were made by 168 (51%) respondents. 164 (49%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 216 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.8 required further refinements, 32% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.8a.

Action 1.8a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	124		139		263	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents did not support the action.	41	1	50	1	91	1
Respondents agreed with the need to increase capacity in the statutory sector but urged caution with this approach; some stated that increasing class size was not the best way to achieve this. Respondents wanted to see oversubscribed schools allowed to expand to meet parental demand. Some respondents called for more teacher led, full-time places.	31	2	46	2	77	2
Respondents raised concerns about the potential impact on pupil/teacher ratios, the risk of less contact time with children, and poorer identification of additional needs. They also suggested that class sizes should be reduced and highlighted potential health and safety and building capacity issues.	30	3	31	3	61	3
Respondents wanted more information/clarification on implications for staffing and teaching and the need for additional funding.	6	4	8	4	14	4
Respondents raised issues in relation to class size, citing research on smaller class sizes and the impact on education, some referenced Irish language immersion.	5	6	2	5	7	5
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	6	4	1	6	7	5
Respondents sought clarification on the impact on other providers of moving to 30 and the links to area planning.	5	6	1	6	6	7

Qualitative responses

Action 1.8b Piloting the deployment of additional assistants in nursery schools and nursery units to increase the staff to child ratios across statutory pre-school settings. In taking this forward the Department will work directly with nursery school and primary school principals to develop this pilot.

A total of 144 responses were made by 99 (30%) respondents. 233 (70%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 216 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.8 required further refinements, 60% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.8b.

Action 1.8b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	95		49		144	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	38	1	17	2	55	1
Respondents wanted clarification on the qualifications and level of assistance to be provided, others felt pilots should be targeted at disadvantaged children, with some concerned that the pilots could draw staff from voluntary and private provision.	26	2	18	1	44	2
Respondents highlighted pupil/teacher ratio issues, disparity in ratios between statutory and private/voluntary sectors, and highlighted the need for more consistency in ratios, qualifications and funding.	18	3	5	3	23	3
Respondents wanted more information/clarification on funding issues, additional funding required, and sustainability beyond the pilot.	11	4	4	4	15	4
Respondents wanted to see further consultation with school principals on how this will be taken forward.	0	0	4	4	4	5
Respondents did not support the action.	2	5	1	6	3	6

Qualitative responses

Action 1.8c Issuing guidance on reducing the length of settling in time for pre-school and Year 1 (Foundation) to take account of the child's previous experience.

A total of 123 responses were made by 91 (27%) respondents. 241 (73%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 216 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.8 required further refinements, 64% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.8c.

Action 1.8c	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	70		53		123	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	38	1	22	2	60	1
Respondents welcomed this action but stressed the need for principals/teachers to retain discretion/professional judgement and for flexibility.	27	2	27	1	54	2
Respondents highlighted that some children settle quicker than others and some settle quicker into groups. Others wanted more explanation/information.	2	3	4	3	6	3
Respondents wanted to see this guidance in place for the 2014/15 academic year.	2	3	0	0	2	4
Respondents did not support the action.	1	5	0	0	1	5

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.8

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.8 which were not specific to the individual actions. 67 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents commented that all children should have the opportunity to attend 1 year in a nursery school setting (18 responses);
- Respondents raised issues around pupil:staff ratios (9 responses);
- Respondents commented on teacher qualifications/working conditions, and the lack of principal release time (8 responses);
- Respondents wanted to see an expansion of statutory nursery provision in line with parental demand (5 responses);
- Respondents commented on equity issues, ratios, experience, part-time/full-time, and qualifications (3 responses);
- Respondents were concerned about the use of research and suggested that DE needs to look at the EPPNI research again (2 responses);
- Respondents commented on the importance of parental support for children (2 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues, these ranged from some considering this a good aim to others querying the rationale/intention. Issues were also raised around infrastructure requirements and the need for capital investment (20 responses).

Key Action 1.9 The Department will over time standardise patterns of attendance as part of the pre-school programme.

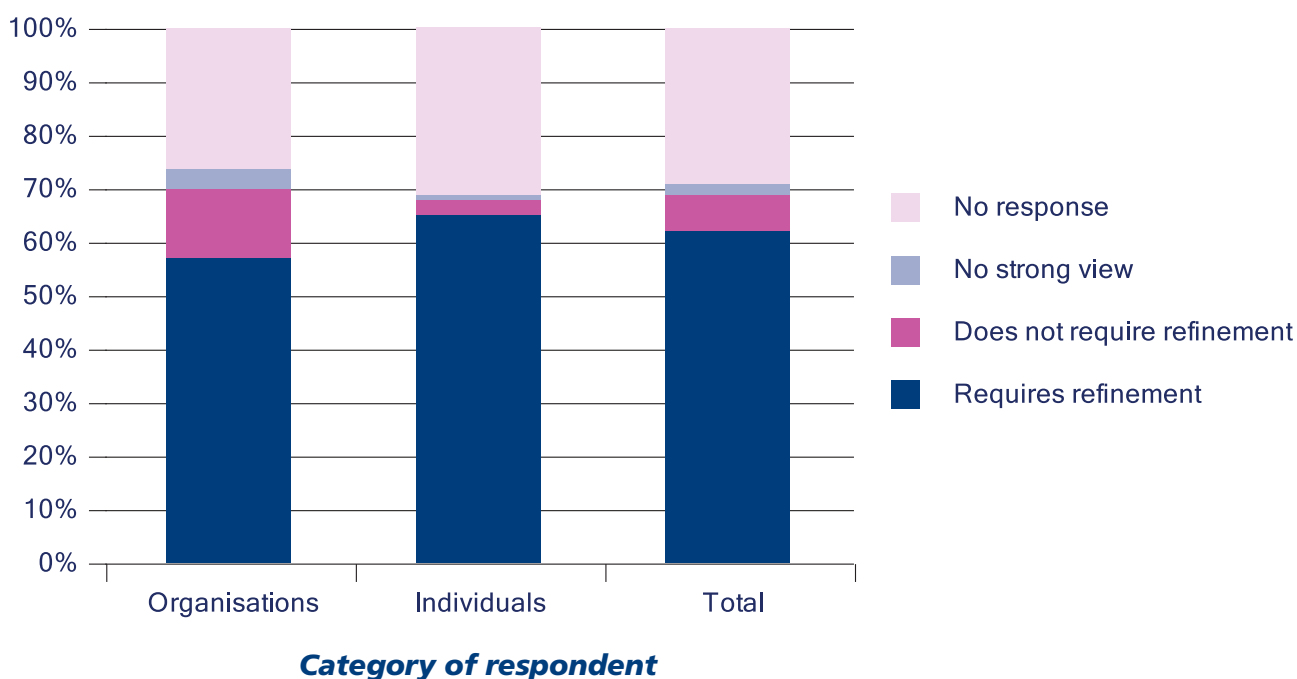
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.9 included 2 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.9 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.9 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.9



Key Action 1.9	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	65	141	206
Does not require refinement	15	7	22
No strong view	5	3	8
No response	29	67	96
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.9

Overall, 62% of respondents considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement, with organisations (57%) less likely to report this than individuals (65%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

7% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (13%) than individuals (3%).

29% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (25% of organisations and 31% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.9a Placing a moratorium on any new or additional full-time provision or conversion from part-time to full-time (defined as over 4.5 hours) in advance of reviewing the current levels of full-time provision and the needs of children being served by it.

A total of 152 responses were made by 96 (29%) respondents. 236 (71%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 206 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.9 required further refinements, 60% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.9a.

Action 1.9a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	68		84		152	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents stressed the benefits of full-time provision, and asked that the moratorium is kept as short as possible. Others expressed concern that this would reduce flexibility in pre-school provision and limit the ability to adapt to changing circumstances.	30	1	72	1	102	1
Respondents did not support the action.	10	2	6	2	16	2
Respondents wanted more information/detail on why this was needed, who would carry out the review, and who would be consulted. Respondents suggested that more research is required on the benefits of full-time provision with input from parents.	9	4	5	3	14	3
Respondents queried the Department's use of EPPNI and suggested a lack of understanding of the benefits of full-time provision.	10	2	1	4	11	4
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	6	5	0	0	6	5
Respondents felt the action would be beneficial if it was aligned to an overall review of pre-school provision and locality planning. Others wanted the review aligned to the forthcoming childcare strategy.	3	6	0	0	3	6

Qualitative responses

Action 1.9b Considering potential options for standardised patterns of attendance as part of wider considerations of area based planning for pre-school provision.

A total of 216 responses were made by 167 (50%) respondents. 165 (50%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 206 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.9 required further refinements, 29% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.9b.

Action 1.9b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	102		114		216	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents stressed their continued support for full-time provision.	24	2	65	1	89	1
Respondents wanted to see more detail, including the reasons for standardisation, and what constituted an appropriate length of session. Others wanted more bespoke consultation.	37	1	35	2	72	2
Respondents asked that any review of the pattern of attendance should be piloted and linked to area based planning.	16	3	6	3	22	3
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	9	4	4	4	13	4
Respondents were concerned that standardisation was a threat to existing full-time provision. They were also concerned about a range of issues including the impact on feeder schools, possible loss of teaching staff and potential impact on quality. Others felt that DE should not strive for a one size fits all system.	9	4	0	0	9	5
Respondents were concerned that this was about primarily driving down costs resulting in part-time 2.5 hours provision which they regarded as unsuitable for some children.	5	6	2	5	7	6
Respondents did not support the action.	2	7	2	5	4	7

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.9

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.9 which were not specific to the individual actions. 45 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents stressed the benefits of full-time provision, including the provision of a hot meal, more curriculum coverage, and opportunities for socialisation. Respondents felt that the longer hours supported the move to primary school more effectively (24 responses);
- Respondents agreed that pre-school is not childcare, stating that pre-school provision delivers a carefully planned pre-school curriculum which meets the educational needs of the child. Respondents were concerned that the private sector charges for part-time and full-time places whereas other providers in the programme can only offer part-time (9 responses);
- Respondents wanted more engagement with parents regarding the importance of pre-school for child development. Respondents were concerned that the afternoon session impacts on working parents. Respondents wanted provision to meet demand, stating that increasing class size and reducing time is not the solution (7 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues, these included the importance of quality not quantity of provision, that available places are not necessarily in the right place, and that part-time sessions in dual day provision can only be 2.5 hours because of contractual agreements on direct teaching time (5 responses).

Key Action 1.10 The Department will adopt an area based approach to managing the early years estate and consider the optimum use of premises.

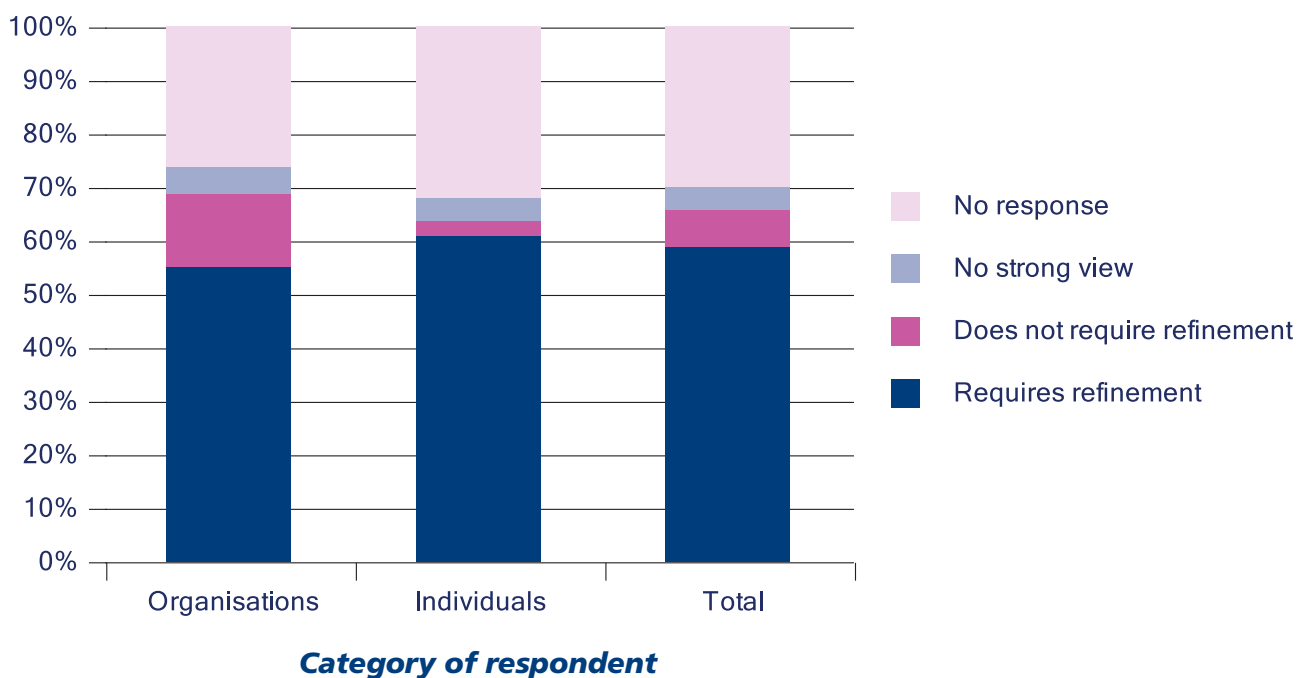
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.10 included 2 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.10 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.10 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.10



Key Action 1.10	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	63	133	196
Does not require refinement	16	7	23
No strong view	5	9	14
No response	30	69	99
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.10

Overall, 59% of respondents considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement, with organisations (55%) less likely to report this than individuals (61%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

7% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (14%) than individuals (3%).

30% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (26% of organisations and 32% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.10a Reviewing the Building Handbook for Nursery Schools to reflect the additional need for parental and community engagement.

A total of 177 responses were made by 118 (36%) respondents. 214 (64%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 196 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.10 required further refinements, 48% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.10a.

Action 1.10a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	98		79		177	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	44	1	26	1	70	1
Respondents wanted to see consultation with/input from nursery schools in reviewing the handbook.	12	4	19	2	31	2
Respondents stressed the need for the review to ensure optimum use of premises, such as parental and community use.	24	2	7	5	31	2
Respondents wanted to see changes reflect the role of nursery schools as community hubs but considered that the opportunities for this were currently limited by size restrictions.	15	3	13	3	28	4
Respondents wanted more information on whether all nurseries could accommodate bigger class sizes and queried the intent behind the move towards increased class sizes.	1	5	12	4	13	5
Respondents wanted to see the review align with the increased flexibility for class sizes to 30 and reflect the issues around capacity and ratios.	1	5	2	6	3	6
Respondents did not support the action.	1	5	0	0	1	7

Qualitative responses

Action 1.10b Assessing the ICT infrastructure requirements of nursery schools and any associated needs of DE funded pre-school settings.

A total of 143 responses were made by 95 (29%) respondents. 237 (71%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 196 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.10 required further refinements, 59% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.10b.

Action 1.10b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	84		59		143	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	49	1	30	1	79	1
Respondents stressed the need for nursery schools to have parity with primary schools. Respondents wanted staff in nursery schools to avail of CPD and felt the proposed action would significantly improve administration. Respondents considered that all schools/pupils should have access to ICT/C2k.	32	2	22	2	54	2
Respondents wanted more information and consultation on implementation. Other issues highlighted were the specific needs of children with hearing difficulties, and the use of ICT to help with speech and language.	3	3	7	3	10	3
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.10

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.10 which were not specific to the individual actions. 28 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents welcomed equity in quality/standards of the learning environment and stressed the need to consider parental support and community engagement as integral to the use of premises (8 responses);
- Respondents stressed the need for the statutory sector to be given priority, and commented that the same support should apply to the statutory nursery sector as primary schools (5 responses);
- Respondents queried how provision will be standardised as not all nursery schools/units are able to facilitate the proposed increase in enrolment (4 responses);
- Respondents commented that any consideration of the use of premises must apply to all settings including private and voluntary settings (3 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues, these included use of schools for community use during holidays, ICT standards in nursery schools, and proposed changes should be supported with additional funding and training. The area based approach was welcomed (8 responses).

Enabling Goal: Transforming the Governance and Management of Education

Outcome: Early years education and learning services are modern, accountable, and child-centred and delivered efficiently and effectively in line with DE policy.

Key Action 1.11 The Department will ensure the effective planning, management and co-ordinated delivery of early years education and learning services.

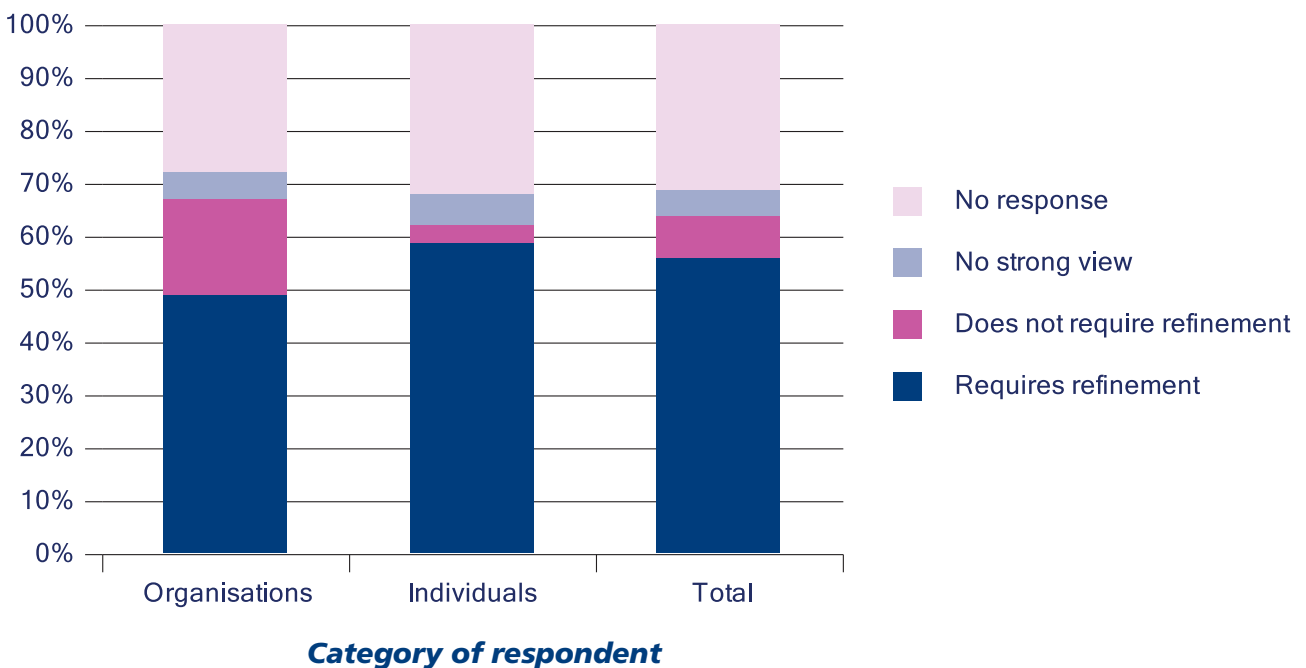
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.11 included 4 detailed actions; respondents were asked to indicate if any of the actions required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.11 by respondent group

Do the actions under 1.11 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.11



Key Action 1.11	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	56	129	185
Does not require refinement	20	7	27
No strong view	6	12	18
No response	32	70	102
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.11

Overall, 56% of respondents considered that one or more of the actions required further refinement, with organisations (49%) less likely to report this than individuals (59%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed either for the key action or for each action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

8% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to any of the actions, with organisations more likely to report this (18%) than individuals (3%).

31% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (28% of organisations and 32% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.11a Clarifying and communicating early years policy and priorities to enable ESA to deliver the pre-school admissions system and provide advice on future development proposals in line with DE policy.

A total of 61 responses were made by 56 (17%) respondents. 276 (83%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 185 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.11 required further refinements, 76% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.11a.

Action 1.11a	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	34		27		61	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents sought clarification on how services would be administered consistently across the statutory, voluntary and private early years providers. Others wanted to know if the admission process for pre-school would include standardising the appeals mechanism.	21	1	25	1	46	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	9	2	1	2	10	2
Respondents stressed the need for clear governance, guidance for parental and community engagement and ESA to undertake full consultation with service users.	4	3	1	2	5	3
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.11b Reviewing the adequacy of current governance and accountability arrangements in place across the range of existing programmes.

A total of 138 responses were made by 97 (29%) respondents. 235 (71%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 185 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.11 required further refinements, 56% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.11b.

Action 1.11b	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	72		66		138	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	36	1	23	2	59	1
Respondents considered that accountability in the statutory pre-school sector is transparent/ clear and asked that DE ensure the same level in the voluntary and private sectors. Some respondents called for more consultation including with the unions.	24	2	24	1	48	2
Respondents wanted more information on enhanced governance of Sure Start, a central place for applying for nursery/pre-school places, and the application of an appeals process to all funded pre-school settings.	7	3	18	3	25	3
Respondents sought clarification on a range of issues including transparency around the PEAG decision making process, the allocation of places, and equity in terms of inspection, particularly for potential pre-school providers.	5	4	1	4	6	4
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.11c Requiring ESA to review current arrangements for the delivery of all funded pre-school services to achieve maximum benefit from a single managing authority, including reviewing the role of PEAG generally and in relation to the Child Care Partnerships.

A total of 92 responses were made by 82 (25%) respondents. 250 (75%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 185 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.11 required further refinements, 63% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.11c.

Action 1.11c	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	49		43		92	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents stressed the need to streamline bureaucracy in the application procedure and ensure equity in the appeals process. They also wanted ESA to consider the process for admitting providers to the Pre-School Education Programme in terms of quality and review the role of PEAG with input from practitioners.	26	1	21	1	47	1
Respondents queried why new arrangements could not be brought in ahead of the establishment of ESA. Others queried which directorate within ESA would be responsible for implementing the actions and asked how ESA would administer this.	12	2	19	2	31	2
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	7	3	1	4	8	3
Respondents wanted more effective planning, coordination and transparency including a review of the displacement policy with some referencing Irish-medium education and integrated education specifically in this regard. They also wanted to see pre-school provision planned in accordance with projected population and birth rate statistics.	4	4	2	3	6	4
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses

Action 1.11d Requiring ESA to create a comprehensive Management Information System for pre-school admissions, and early years education services funded by DE for children up to compulsory school age.

A total of 43 responses were made by 38 (11%) respondents. 294 (89%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 185 respondents indicated that the proposed actions under 1.11 required further refinements, 86% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.11d.

Action 1.11d	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	17		26		43	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents wanted more information/clarification but were not specific.	4	3	23	1	27	1
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	7	1	2	2	9	2
Respondents wanted consistency and welcomed a standardised approach to data collection but stressed the need for this to be adequately resourced.	6	2	1	3	7	3
Respondents did not support the action.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.11

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.11 which were not specific to the individual actions. 62 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents asked for clearly defined guidelines for pre-school settings and clarification on the role of ESA (17 responses);
- Respondents wanted to see the appeals process applied equally across all pre-school providers (16 responses);
- Respondents wanted recognition of the importance of professional judgement and wanted less bureaucracy with transparency of finance and budgets across the pre-school sector (6 responses);
- Respondents wanted more consultation with practitioners (5 responses);
- Respondents commented that ESA should consider how providers are admitted to the programme to ensure quality (4 responses);
- Respondents wanted to see the needs of the Irish-medium sector taken into account (2 responses);
- Respondents wanted to know how this would apply to Sure Start and 0-3 (2 responses);
- Respondents commented on the issues faced by Management Committees (2 responses); and
- Other respondents raised specific or distinct issues, these included the need to reflect the priorities of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities; the need to overcome challenges in the admissions process in terms of demand, supply and capacity; the need for a review in terms of equity and comparable costs and quality of education; and a stronger voice for and better links with voluntary and private sectors (8 responses).

Key Action 1.12 The Department and ESA will implement all remaining actions in the Review of Pre-School Admissions Arrangements aimed at streamlining and simplifying the system for accessing pre-school places.

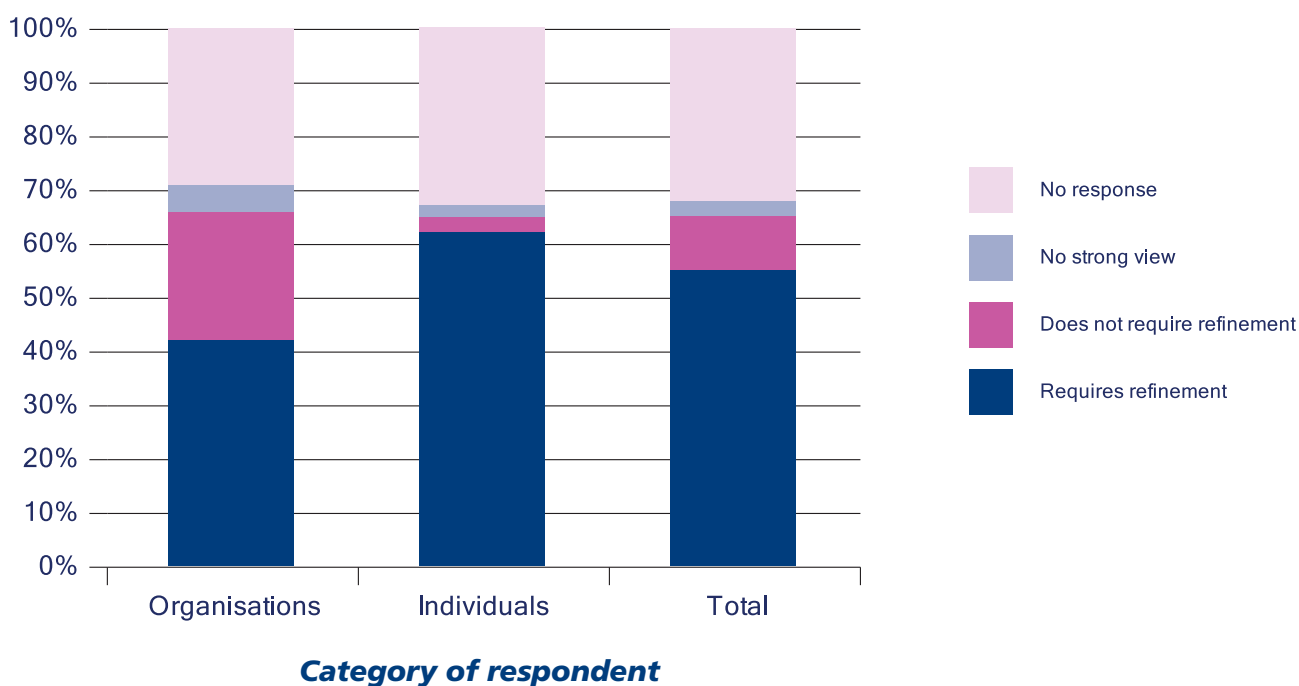
Quantitative responses

Key action 1.12 (one action); respondents were asked to indicate if the action required further refinement. The responses by respondent type are shown in percentages in the graph below, with the actual numbers provided in the table.

Quantitative response to Key Action 1.12 by respondent group

Does the action under 1.12 require any further refinement?

Key Action 1.12



Key Action 1.12	Organisations	Individuals	Total
Requires refinement	48	135	183
Does not require refinement	27	7	34
No strong view	6	5	11
No response	33	71	104
Total	114	218	332

Quantitative Analysis - Key Action 1.12

Overall, 55% of respondents considered that the action required further refinement, with organisations (42%) less likely to report this than individuals (62%). Whilst many respondents indicated that further refinement was required many did not offer any further comment on the nature of the refinement needed for the key action, this is detailed further in the qualitative analysis.

10% of respondents considered that no refinement was required to the action, with organisations more likely to report this (24%) than individuals (3%).

31% of respondents did not indicate if a refinement was needed or not (29% of organisations and 33% of individuals); this mainly comprises those who did not use the consultation response booklet.

Qualitative responses

Action 1.12 The Department and ESA will implement all remaining actions in the Review of Pre-School Admissions Arrangements aimed at streamlining and simplifying the system for accessing pre-school places.

A total of 139 responses were made by 120 (36%) respondents. 212 (64%) respondents chose not to comment. Whilst 183 respondents indicated that the proposed action under 1.12 required further refinement, 44% did not provide comment on the specific refinement needed for the proposed action 1.12.

Action 1.12	Organisations		Individuals		All	
	71		68		139	
Common themes	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Respondents had some concerns about aspects of the review including equity of the right to appeal; the opportunity for non-statutory providers to opt in and out of the Pre-School Education Programme; lack of consultation; use of quality indicators; and funding.	28	1	33	1	61	1
Respondents welcomed the reduction in bureaucracy and wanted outstanding issues from the Review of Pre-School Admissions Arrangements addressed, including a central admissions system, removal of chronological age, simplification of the application system, a revised approach to disadvantage, and the role of parents.	17	2	6	4	23	2
Respondents wanted further information on how ESA and DE would implement all remaining actions in the Review of Pre-School Admissions Arrangements.	9	4	11	3	20	3
Respondents welcomed/supported the action.	15	3	5	5	20	3
Respondents were concerned at what they considered to be underinvestment in the statutory nursery sector. Some reported that parents wanted full-time teacher led provision.	1	5	12	2	13	5
Respondents did not support the action.	1	5	1	6	2	6

Qualitative responses - Key Action 1.12

Additional Comments

Respondents made other comments in relation to key action 1.12 which were not specific to the individual action. 10 responses provided additional comments which included:

- Respondents wanted streamlining of provision with similar session times, staffing levels, a right of appeal, similar qualifications of staff; others wanted a system whereby providers are required to declare funding from all sources (5 responses);
- Respondents expressed concern that the early January deadline for applications is not appropriate (3 responses); and
- Respondents wanted to see direct consultation with service providers (2 responses).

Qualitative responses

Additional comments section of response document.

All responses to the final section of the consultation response booklet were analysed and similar ones grouped together to show the main issues emerging. A total of 167 respondents provided additional comments in this section. 165 respondents chose not to provide any additional comments.

Common themes

- Respondents made comments on a range of issues including: use of social disadvantage for pre-school admission criteria, existing reception provision, health services, 0-3 provision, quality and qualifications, funding and general comments on the structure and content of the framework (39 responses);
- Respondents wanted more support for full-time provision including teacher led provision (38 responses);
- Respondents highlighted the particular needs of children with additional and/or special educational needs, including the benefit of 2 years of pre-school, smaller class sizes, and stressed the need for additional support (28 responses);
- Respondents provided supportive comments on the proposed framework and actions (27 responses);
- Respondents stressed the need for an area based planning approach which should apply across all settings (18 responses);
- Respondents raised concerns about the timing of the consultation (11 responses); and
- Respondents supported 2 years of pre-school education (6 responses).

SECTION 5

Glossary of Terms

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
BOG	Board of Governors
C&YP	Children and Young People
CCP	Child Care Partnership
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DE	Department of Education
DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
ELB	Education and Library Board
ES	Extended Schools
ESA	Education and Skills Authority
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
EY	Early Years
FE	Further Education
HSCT	Health and Social Care Trust
IME	Irish-medium Education
LMS	Local Management of Schools
PEAG	Pre-School Education Advisory Group
SEN	Special Educational Needs
S&L	Speech and Language
TSN	Targeting Social Need

Membership of the Early Years (0-6) Strategy Stakeholder Advisory Group

Paula Barr	Shantallow Sure Start
Sharon Beattie	General Teaching Council for NI (GTCNI)
Jenny Boyd	Enniskillen Nursery School
Marie Cavanagh	Gingerbread
Dr Marleen Collins	Education and Training Inspectorate
Gerry Conway	Health and Social Care Board
Louise Coyle	NI Rural Women's Network (NIRWN)
Gerardine Cunningham	Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)
Elaine Conway/Ellen Finlay/ Robyn McCready	Children in NI
Siobhan Fitzpatrick	Early Years the Organisation for Young Children
Sean Holland	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Pauline Leeson	Children in NI
Alice Lennon/ Dawn Crosby	Representative of ELBs
Alasdair MacInnes/ Richard Duffin	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Patricia McAlister	Altram
Barbara McConnell	Stranmillis University College
Majella McDowell	Galliagh Nursery School
Celine McStravick	National Children's Bureau
Maurice Meehan/Mary Black	Public Health Agency
Paula Murray	Christ the Redeemer Primary School
Kyra Pauley	Women's Centres Regional Partnership (WCRP)
Heino Schonfeld/Michelle Harris	Centre for Effective Services
Carolyn Stewart	MENCAP

Links to 'Learning to Learn - A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning' and Consultation Documents published December 2012

Learning to Learn - A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning -
Focused Consultation document published December 2012

http://www.deni.gov.uk/english_a_framework_for_ey_education_and_learning.pdf

Learning to Learn - A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning - Irish version -
Focused Consultation document published December 2012

http://www.deni.gov.uk/irish_a_framework_for_ey_education_and_learning.pdf

Focused Consultation Response booklet

<http://www.deni.gov.uk/img-z04114617-0001.pdf>

Equality and Human Rights Policy Screening for Proposed/Revised Policy - Learning to Learn -
A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning - November 2012

http://www.deni.gov.uk/learning_to_learn_-0001.pdf

