



# Road to Recovery

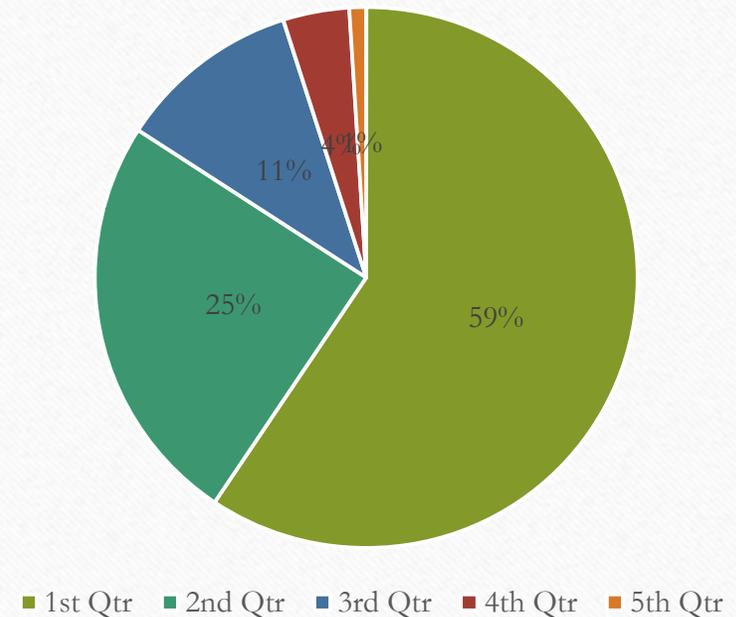
The challenges facing early years

# A sector in crisis

## Financial implications for providers

Non-Domestic providers – Nurseries, pre-schools, maintained nursery schools.

- 60% are struggling and focusing only on survival.
- 25% stable but no long term growth plans.
- 11% expanding through organic growth.
- 4% are distressed and at a high risk of closure.
- 1% advancing with expansion plans.



## Financial implications

### Key challenges contributing to their financial position:

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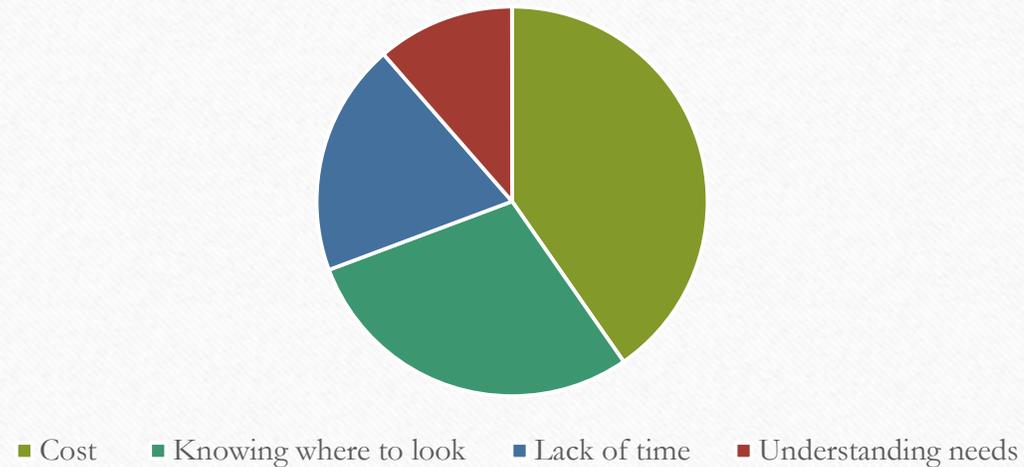
- Inadequate funding rates (68%).
- An increased decline in demand during lockdowns (57%).
- Increased staffing costs (49%).
- Managing staff absence (40%).
- Test result delays (28%).
- Cutting jobs (24%).

# Barriers to business support

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The biggest barriers to accessing support identified were cost, pressures on time and knowing where to look.

Business support challenges



# The impact on staff Wellbeing and training

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The significance of early years mental health is becoming increasingly recognised in both scientific research and policy setting.

It is estimated that there are over 364,400 childcare workers in the UK that are working with around 1.7 million children every year.

However, mental health issues for children aged 0-5 continue to increase and nursery workers are regularly facing challenges including a lack of support and training, particularly in terms of how to support the mental health needs of young children.

# The Anna Freud Centre survey

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The Anna Freud Centre survey, carried out at the end of 2020, looked at early years providers' experiences in relation to the mental health needs of the children they worked with.

## **Nursery staff responses:**

- 69% of nursery staff have experienced working with babies and children affected by trauma.
- 71% had worked with babies and children affected by domestic abuse.
- 48% had worked with children who had experienced bereavement.
- 42% noticed that the pandemic had significantly impacted children's emotional wellbeing.
- 98.5% believe they have a key role in supporting the mental health of babies and young children.

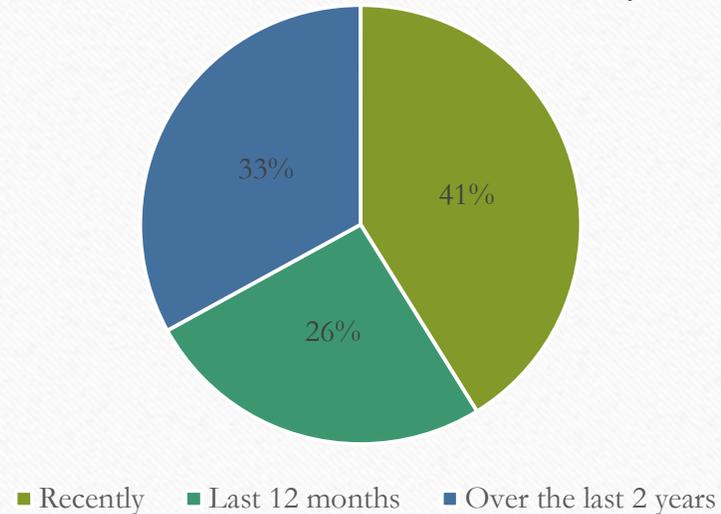
# The Anna Freud Centre Survey

## Concerns over staff training

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Dealing with mental health issues of children and their parents or carers is a significant part of the role of being a nursery worker, according to the survey.

Asked if they had worked with children whose behaviour they found particularly difficult.



# Conclusion: How to protect sector sustainability?

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The sector is one that was already in a crisis. Immediate recommendations include:

- Financial support to match the increasing operating costs.
- Emotional and financial support for practitioners so that they are not under undue pressure themselves.
- Deliver tools and training needed to provide the vital care so many children need.
- Address the staff retention challenges.