Inverclyde council

Report To:	Education and Communities	Date: 5 September 2017
Report By:	Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No: EDUCOM/67/17/LW
Contact Officer:	Linda Wilkie Quality Improvement Officer	Contact No: 01475 712812
Subject:	Increase in Early Learning and Childcare to 1140 hours	

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Education and Communities Committee with information on the Scottish Government's intention to increase the entitlement of early learning and childcare to 1140 hours. It also provides the Committee with information on initial planning at a local level.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 The Scottish Government has announced a plan to increase the entitlement of early learning and childcare from 600 hours to 1140 hours by 2020.

2.2 Inverclyde Council has to submit a business plan to the Scottish Government by 29th September 2017 on how it intends to deliver this expansion.

2.3 The expansion will require substantial levels of investment in workforce and infrastructure which will be phased from 2017/18 onwards to ensure that the required capacity is in place by 2020.

2.4 Funding has been allocated by Scottish Government for early phasing of the expansion programme. A number of early phase projects are proposed and detailed in this report.

2.5 There are significant challenges in ensuring that there is capacity to deliver this expansion programme.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- Agrees the infrastructure proposals detailed at section 10 of this report subject to the necessary further statutory and non-statutory consultations noted in section 14 of the report.
- Agrees the proposals for early phase developments at section 12 of this report.
- Notes that the business case will be submitted to Scottish Government on 29th September 2017 in draft format subject to full approval at the Education and Communities Committee in November 2017.

Wilma Bain, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Scottish Government has announced its commitment to increase entitlement to early learning and childcare from 600 hours to 1140 hours for all 3 and 4 year olds and some 2 year olds by 2020.

4.2 The policy vision is underpinned by a more progressive service model which prioritises and safeguards quality provision of early learning and childcare whilst offering parents a choice of settings.

4.3 Service delivery is underpinned by 4 key principles:-

- Quality
  Quality is the key principle of the early learning and childcare expansion programme. Early Years provides the foundation for promoting secure attachment, better health, social and learning behaviours with long term impact on improved outcomes for children.

- Accessibility
  The overall capacity with the current system can be redesigned to more fully meet the ambition to extend entitlement. Plans will evidence that best use will be made of existing services and assets within the Local Authority, private and 3rd sector. Any remaining gaps will be addressed through the creation of new services.

- Flexibility
  Current early learning and childcare delivery models, particularly within local authorities must become more flexible and responsive to parental demand. This should include more settings offering all year round provision and for longer opening hours thus enhancing flexibility and choice for families.

- Affordability
  Reducing the cost of early learning and childcare for families is a significant driver in the ambition to extend early learning and childcare. This must be set alongside the redesign of early learning and childcare services in a manner that is affordable for Local Authorities and the Scottish Government and delivers long term value for money.

5.0 BUSINESS PLAN

5.1 A detailed business plan detailing the full expansion programme has to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 29th September 2017.

5.2 The plan will include the following sections:

1. Introduction and Executive summary

2. Current Service Delivery
   - a summary of current service delivery;
   - a summary of key data relating to all demand;
   - a comparison of supply to demand by local community;
   - a summary of quality, financial and utilisation metrics relating to current supply arrangements;
   - a summary of local parent and community consultation outcomes;

3. <u>Future Position</u>
   - Proposed changes to service design and local innovation
   - Implications of population growth / design

4. <u>Implementation Plan</u>
   - Quality plan
   - Phasing and prioritisation
   - Community engagement
   - Workforce plan
   - Funded providers
   - Infrastructure plan
   - Financial profile
   - Project Management plan and change support
   - Stakeholder engagement plan

6.0	**GOVERNANCE**	
6.1	A governance structure of the development has been established as follows: Strategic group – chaired by Ruth Binks, Head of Education Three sub-groups ➤ Infrastructure - chaired by Eddie Montgomery, Property Services Manager ➤ Workforce – chaired by Allan Wilson, HR Manager ➤ Quality – chaired by Linda Wilkie, Quality Improvement Officer	
6.2	The strategic group is responsible for developing the business plan and thereafter for its implementation.	
7.0	**INCREASE IN ENTITLEMENT**	
7.1	The increase from 600 hours to 1140 hours will mean that all children aged 3 to 4 years and 27% of 2 year olds will receive 30 hours per week of early learning and childcare.	
7.2	This increase has significant implications. It will require substantial expansion of current provision and a change in how services are delivered. Traditionally most children receive their early learning entitlement on a term- time sessional basis. The new delivery model requires services to be more flexible and to offer greater choice to parents.	
7.3	It is anticipated that the additional places will be delivered in a variety of ways including: - Increased partnership arrangements with private and 3rd sector providers - Making use of surplus capacity in a limited number of schools / early years establishments - Blended approaches with childminders - Shared places across extended day / year - Making use of existing Council assets for physical infrastructure expansion - New build assets for physical infrastructure expansion	
8.0	**WORKFORCE**	
8.1	This expansion will require a substantial increase in staffing. This has been calculated at approximately 111 additional Early Years Education and Childcare Officers. There will also be an increase in the number of managers, support staff, and catering / cleaning / janitorial staff.	

8.2	The workforce governance group is developing a plan to increase the workforce. To date the plan:
	• includes the development of a Modern Apprentice scheme,
	• the development of a career pathway that will provide opportunities for employees from other services within the Council to retrain,
	• options for offering an uplift in hours for part-time employees.

8.3	Skills Development Scotland has published a 'Skills Investment Plan: prospectus for Scotland's early learning and childcare sector'. Its purpose is to provide the skills evidence base for the sector and to support the workforce to fuel its expansion and provide high quality, flexible and accessible childcare.

9.0 FUNDING POSITION

9.1	The Scottish Government has stated that the expansion will be fully funded. Inverclyde Council's Business Plan is based on this assumption. Any change to the funding proposal would necessitate changes to the Business Plan resulting in, for example, less flexibility and accessibility to local provision. Details of the overall funding required in connection with the expansion are not yet available as these are subject to the completion of the on-going feasibility studies and staffing model works.

9.2	As set out in the Blueprint for 2020 Action Plan, the service model will be built upon a 'Funding Follows the Child Approach'. The key objectives of this are to prioritise and safeguard high quality provision across public, private and third sectors and to ensure choice for parents and carers. This approach will be fundamentally 'provider neutral'.

9.3	Local Authorities will continue to play a vital role in delivering the funded entitlement as the primary guarantors of quality and the key enablers of flexibility and choice.

9.4	Local Authorities will retain statutory responsibility for ensuring the funded entitlement is available to all children in their area, and will receive funding from the Scottish Government to enable them to discharge this responsibility.

9.5	Local Authorities will negotiate and agree rates with providers in the private and third sector who want to deliver the funded entitlement and who meet the national standard. However, these rates will be required to reflect national policy priorities, including payment of the Living Wage.

10.0 PROPOSALS FOR 2020

10.1	The increase to 1140 hours is a universal entitlement for all children aged 3 and 4 years and an entitlement for 27% of 2 year olds.

10.2	1140 hours equates to 30 hours of provision per week which is the same as the primary school entitlement e.g. 9am to 3pm term-time; however within Early Learning and Childcare parents / carers may wish to use the entitlement over an extended day / year, e.g. 3 full days over 50 weeks per year.

10.3	The following tables provide information on the numbers of additional places still required after all existing services are increased to full capacity. These figures will continue to be refined to take account of consultation responses and commitments from Private Providers It outlines the existing local authority provision, Partner Providers and other Providers located in each cluster. Finally the proposals to deliver the number of places in each locality are identified.

10.4

Port Glasgow / Kilmacolm Cluster	
Additional capacity required	30 x 2 year old places 130 x 3 and 4 year old places

	Local Authority Provision	Kilmacolm Nursery Class (Kilmacolm) Rainbow Family Centre (Port Glasgow) Newark Nursery School (Port Glasgow) St. John's Nursery Class (Port Glasgow)
	Partner Providers	-
	Other Providers	Duchal Nursery (Kilmacolm) Kilmacolm Playgroup and Toddlers (Kilmacolm) St. Columba's Playgroup (Kilmacolm) 5 Childminders (Kilmacolm) 4 Childminders (Port Glasgow)
	Proposals for increasing capacity	Kilmacolm Primary School - Expansion Park Farm Community Centre - Adaptation/Conversion St. Francis Primary School Nursery Class - Alterations for new provision Partnership Arrangements with Other Providers Blended Approach with Childminders Outdoor Learning / Shared Places in Existing Services

10.5	**East End Cluster**	
	Additional capacity required	35 x 2 year old places 136 x 3 and 4 year old places
	Local Authority Provision	Blairmore Nursery School Gibshill Children's Centre Glenbrae Children's Centre Hillend Children's Centre King's Oak Nursery Class
	Partner Providers	Enchanted Forest (Greenock)
	Other Providers	2 Childminders
	Proposals for increasing capacity	Blairmore Nursery School and EYLC - Remodelling Crawfurdsburn Community Centre - Adaptation/Conversion Blended Approach with Childminders Outdoor Learning / Shared Places in Existing Services

10.6	**West Central Cluster**	
	Additional capacity required	15 x 2 year old places 104 x 3 and 4 year old places
	Local Authority Provision	Kelly St. Children's Centre Wellpark Children's Centre Whinhill Nursery Class
	Partner Providers	Wellington Children's Centre Madiera Private Nursery
	Other Providers	Kidology Private Nursery Enterprise Childcare Pre 3 Centre West College Scotland Nursery 10 Childminders
	Proposals for increasing capacity	Dempster St. Site – New build West End New Facility (Part - 2-3's) Partnership Arrangements with Other Providers Blended Approach with Childminders Outdoor Learning / Shared Places in Existing Services

10.7	South West Cluster	
	Additional capacity required	30 x 2 year old places 130 x 3 and 4 year old places
	Local Authority Provision	Aileymill Nursery Class Bluebird Children's Centre Lady Alice Nursery Class Larkfield Children's Centre
	Partner Providers	-
	Other Providers	12 Childminders
	Proposals for increasing capacity	Larkfield Children's Centre - Extension/Alteration Grieve Road Community Hall - Adaptation/Conversion St. Joseph's Primary School Nursery Class - Alterations for new provision Partnership Arrangements with Other Providers Blended Approach with Childminders Outdoor Learning / Shared Places in Existing Services

10.8	Gourock Cluster	
	Additional capacity required	15 x 2 year old places 78 x 3 and 4 year old places
	Local Authority Provision	Binnie St. Children's Centre Moorfoot Nursery Class
	Partner Providers	-
	Other Providers	Battery Park Nursery (also serves South West Cluster) 6 Childminders
	Proposals for increasing capacity	Former St. Ninian's Primary School Site – New build Partnership Arrangements with Other Providers Blended Approach with Childminders Outdoor Learning / Shared Places in Existing Services

10.9	Wemyss Bay / Inverkip	
	Additional capacity required	0 x 2 year old places 38 x 3 and 4 year old places
	Local Authority Provision	Inverkip Nursery Class Wemyss Bay Nursery Class
	Partner Providers	Enchanted Forest (Inverkip)
	Other Providers	9 Childminders (Inverkip) 4 Childminders (Wemyss Bay)
	Proposals for increasing capacity	Wemyss Bay Community Centre – extension and upgrade Increased places with Partner Provider Partnership Arrangements with Other Providers Blended Approach with Childminders Outdoor Learning / Shared Places in Existing Services

11.0	INFRASTRUCTURE	

11.1	The current Scottish Government guidance documents "A blueprint for 2020:" provide a clear message in respect of infrastructure and maximising existing assets / use of existing facilities or environments. A summary of the current infrastructure expansion proposals/possibilities including the key risks associated with each site/property is available in the Appendix section.
11.2	The advanced stage of the School Estates Management Plan limits opportunities for future expansion within existing school assets. This, combined with the relatively small number of Council owned surplus sites/buildings of any type, has been a key driver in the options considered for physical estate expansion.
11.3	The following table provides an overview of all infrastructure possibilities.

Proposed Site	Potential Development / Expansion
Port Glasgow / Kilmacolm Cluster	
Kilmacolm Primary School	Expansion (within school grounds)
Park Farm Community Centre	Conversion & Extension (Demolition & New Build Option also being investigated)
St. Francis Primary School	Adaptations for Nursery Class
East End Cluster	
Blairmore Nursery School	Adaptations to expand provision through conversion of former Early Years Language Centre accommodation
Crawfurdsburn Community Centre	Conversion & Extension (Demolition & New Build Option also being investigated)
West Central Cluster	
Dempster Street Site (Cowdenknowes)	New Build Asset
West End New Facility	New Build Asset (part expansion related – 2-3's)
South West Cluster	
Larkfield Children's Centre	Extension and alterations to existing asset
Grieve Road Community Hall	Conversion & Extension (Demolition & new Build Option also being investigated)
St. Josephs Primary School	Adaptations for Nursery Class
Gourock Cluster	
Former St Ninians Primary School Site	New Build Asset
Binnie Street Children's Centre	Outdoor Classroom / WC's
Wemyss Bay / Inverkip Cluster	
Wemyss Bay Community Centre	Extension & Upgrade to provide joint facility

| 11.4 | The following table provides information on the potential use of existing assets: |

Community Centres	
Crawfurdsburn Community Centres	Conversion and extension or demolition and new build on same site (subject to on-going feasibility studies)
Grieve Road Community Centre	Conversion and extension or demolition and new build on same site (subject to on-going feasibility studies)
Park Farm Community Centre	Conversion and extension or demolition and new build on same site (subject to on-going feasibility studies)
Wemyss Bay Community Centre	Extension and upgrading of existing asset to form joint community / education facility
Schools / Early Years Facilities	
St. Francis Primary School	Adaptations for new Nursery Class
St. Josephs Primary School	Adaptations for new Nursery Class
Kilmacolm Primary School	Expansionwithin school grounds (subject to on-going feasibility studies)
Larkfield Children's Centre	Extension and alterations
Binnie St. Children's Centre	Outdoor Classroom / WC's (trial)
Blairmore Nursery School	Adaptations / conversion of former Early Years Language Unit accommodation

| 11.5 | The following table provides information on the possible new builds: |

Potential New Build Sites	
Existing St Ninian's Primary School Site	Part use of site following demolition of existing facility to form campus arrangement.
Dempster Street (Cowdenknowes) Site	Use of former blaes pitch site (dis-used)
NB. As outlined in the table in 11.4, feasibility studies are currently on-going which will inform the viability of existing asset conversion / adaptation. Comparable costs in connection with demolition and new build options will also be considered.	

| 11.6 | A review of the usage of Community Facilities has been undertaken as part of a Community Facilities Service Review and recommendations are currently part of the overall savings proposals to be considered by the Members' Budget Working |

	Group. The 1140 hours expansion proposals incorporate the potential use of a number of under-utilised Community assets as outlined above. The Committee is requested to note and approve the proposals subject to the necessary further consultation with communities and existing user groups (where these exist).	

12.0 EARLY PHASING FUNDING

12.1 The expansion will require substantial levels of investment in workforce and infrastructure which will be phased from 2017/18 onwards to ensure that required capacity is in place by 2020.

12.2 The Scottish Government confirmed in March 2017 that the 2017 – 18 Scottish budget allocated over 60 million of new investment to fund the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) to 1140 hours by 2020. Local Authorities will receive £21 million in revenue (Inverclyde allocation £269k) and 30 million in capital funding (Inverclyde allocation £384k). This funding is to be protected for investment in expansion to 1140 hours and a proportionate reporting and monitoring framework will be put in place via forthcoming ELC expansion delivery plans.

12.3 Local Authorities have flexibility to determine the most appropriate way to phase entitlement. In considering phasing, Local Authorities should evidence consideration of the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation to ensure that the families and communities who stand to benefit most from the expansion benefit first.

Capital and revenue funding has been allocated for 2017 / 18 to invest in workforce development and expansion for 1140 hours. This can include:
- Extended opening hours for existing settings
- Opening new settings
- Developing or extending the involvement of childminders
- Enhanced provision for children with additional support needs
- Implementing or expanding innovative models of workforce deployment and training
- Developing, introducing or expanding outdoor nursery provision

There is also scope to develop project management infrastructure at a local level.

Funding should be prioritised initially to settings in SIMD 1 and 2.

13.0 EARLY PHASE DEVELOPMENTS

13.1 This section of the report outlines the 2017 / 18 early phase developments that are fully scoped. Investigations into further opportunities for outdoor learning, supporting children with additional support needs and extending operating hours within a nursery class are currently underway. Further investigation is also required into the costs associated with the provision of lunches. Funding for these projects would be available from this year's allocation.

13.2 <u>Blairmore Nursery School</u>

Blairmore Nursery School is situated in the East End of Greenock. 76% of children attending the service reside in SIMD 1 and 2.

The nursery is currently operating under capacity and it is proposed that from October 2017 it delivers full time places for all children who attend. This means that 64 children will benefit from increased hours.

The Early Years Language Centre within Blairmore Nursery School, as per a recommendation of the ASN review, is scheduled to change to an outreach service resulting in these facilities being available. It is also proposed that these facilities are developed to provide a service for 15 children aged 2-3 years with a particular focus on

children needing support with language and communication skills. Future expansion proposals include potential internal alterations / remodelling to improve the suitability of the accommodation.

These services will be staffed according to current staffing models which are in line with Care Inspectorate legislation.

These services will be closely monitored to identify learning to support successful implementation of 1140 hours across Inverclyde.

This proposal is subject to Care Inspectorate approval.

13.3	**Binnie St. Children's Centre**	

Binnie Street Children's Centre is situated in Gourock. It has 16% of children residing in SIMD 1 and 2.

Although a smaller number of children who attend the centre reside in SIMD 1 and 2 this project has been identified to enable a pilot of outdoor learning. This will enable an increase of 16 places with limited physical adaptations. Feasibility work is currently being undertaken to establish the most appropriate method of providing appropriate outdoor sheltered space with potential development of existing undercroft space to provide additional toilet and storage facilities.

A strict criterion for children accessing these full time places will be set. This will include residence in SIMD 1 and 2, children with additional support needs and looked after children.

If successful, this model has the potential to significantly reduce the capital costs associated with new builds and the management costs of stand-alone establishments.

This proposal is subject to Care Inspectorate approval.

13.4	**St. Francis Nursery Class**	

A new nursery class will be established within St. Francis Primary in Port Glasgow. The Primary School currently has 81% of pupils residing in SIMD 1 and 2.

The nursery class will provide 24 places for children aged 3 – 5 years and 15 places for children aged 2 – 3 years. All children will receive full-time places. It is anticipated that the alteration and remodelling works will be completed within the current financial year with the service proposed to be operational from August 2018. The Education Psychological Services team were relocated during the 2017 summer holiday period to allow the reallocation of space for a nursery class. The school accommodation has been reviewed to address the identification of the most appropriate location for the Nursery Class with minor works being undertaken over summer 2017 to bring the previous Psychological Services accommodation back into use for general teaching space. It is anticipated that the main works will be undertaken through the Council's Building Services Unit later in the calendar year following completion of the detailed design and building warrant approval process.

The service will be managed by the Head Teacher of the School and will be staffed as per the current staffing model which is in line with Care Inspectorate legislation.

This proposal is subject to Care Inspectorate approval.

13.5	**St. Joseph's Nursery Class**	

A new nursery class will be established within St. Joseph's Primary in Greenock. The Primary School currently has 64% of pupils residing in SIMD 1 and 2.

		The nursery class will provide 56 places for children aged 3 – 5 years and 15 places for children aged 2 – 3 years. All children will receive full-time places. It is anticipated that the alteration and remodelling works will be completed within the current financial year with the service proposed to be operational from August 2018. The accommodation is currently being used for the temporary decant of the Bluebird Family Centre in connection with current comprehensive refurbishment of that facility (within the same campus). The current timeline for transfer back to the refurbished facility is early September. It is anticipated that the main works will be undertaken through the Council's Building Services Unit later in the calendar year following completion of the detailed design and building warrant approval process. It should be noted that some further work may be required to provide additional accommodation for the main school as a result of the new nursery class facility. Officers are currently scoping the feasibility of minor infill extension to provide flexible learning space(s) within the main teaching block of St Joseph's. The service will be managed by the Head Teacher of the School and will be staffed as per the current staffing model which is in line with Care Inspectorate legislation. This proposal is subject to Care Inspectorate approval.	
13.6	Blended approach Childminders traditionally provide Early Learning and Childcare within their own homes. It is recognised that for some children this environment is beneficial. At present many children from working households access both a childminder and nursery provision. It is proposed to formalise this arrangement by offering a blended approach where 6 children will attend nursery from 570 hours and a childminder for 570 hours. This approach would be piloted in Bluebird Family Centre, Larkfield Children's Centre and Rainbow Family Centre. The number of children in SIMD 1 and 2 are 71%, 75% and 78.2 % respectively. A strict criterion for children accessing blended placements will be set. This will include residing in SIMD 1 and 2, children with additional support needs and looked after children.	
13.7	Feasibility Studies It is proposed to use revenue funding for feasibility studies, thorough Hub West Scotland, for the following projects:- • Crawfurdsburn Community Centre; • Park Farm Community Centre; • Kilmacolm Primary School; • Dempster Street site; • Wemyss Bay Community Centre.	
14.0	**CONSULTATION**	
14.1	The Acting Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities has been consulted on the current proposals in respect of potential utilisation of current under used / vacant community facilities. Inverclyde Leisure have also been consulted on the current proposals in respect of the facilities currently operated as part of the existing lease agreement. It will be necessary to undertake further consultation with local communities and current user groups (where these exist) on the proposals affecting existing under-utilised community assets.	

	14.2	A survey on parent/carers views on the expansion programme is currently underway.	
	14.3	There has been engagement with Private Providers, Partner Providers, Parent / Carers, Health Services. Further engagement is planned for HSPC, Communities	
	14.4	An open meeting was held in Notre Dame High School. The meeting was attended by private providers, 3rd sector providers, partner providers, childminders, community members and other interested parties. The aim of the session was to provide an update on Scottish Government's proposals for 1140 hours of early learning and childcare and what this means for services in Inverclyde.	
15.0		**CONCLUSIONS**	
	15.1	It is evident that the 1140 hours expansion programme has many challenges; however it has the potential to give Inverclyde's children the best start in life and to close attainment and inequality gaps. It is vital that the expansion programme is careful planned and implemented to ensure high quality, flexible and accessible early learning and childcare is available across Inverclyde.	
16.0		**IMPLICATIONS**	
	16.1	**Finance**	
		Financial Implications

Funding for Early Phase Projects 2017/18. This allocation is being utilised to address the early phasing work as outlined in 13.0 above. Future years allocations will be subject to Scottish Government review of the business plans being submitted in September.

One off Costs | |

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Scottish Government		2017 - 18	£384,000		

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if applicable)	Other Comments
Scottish Government		2017 - 18	£269,000		

| | 16.2 | **Legal**
Inverclyde Council has a duty to ensure that there is provision of Early Learning and Childcare available to entitled children. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 16.3 | **Human Resources**
There is significant Human Resources implications which are detailed in section 7 of this report. | |

	16.4	**Equalities**

There are no equality issues within this report.

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
✓	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

17.0   APPENDICES

17.1   A blueprint for 2020: The expansion of early learning and childcare in Scotland – Early Learning and Childcare expansion planning guidance for Local Authorities. Scottish Government March 2017.

17.2   A blueprint for 2020: The expansion of early learning and childcare in Scotland – 2017-18 action plan. Scottish Government, March 2017.

17.3   A blueprint for 2020: The expansion of early learning and childcare in Scotland – consultation analysis report. Scottish Government, March 2017.

17.4   Skills investment plan: prospectus for Scotland's early learning and childcare sector. Skills Development Scotland, March 2017

17.5   Letter to Local Authority Chief executives, Directors of Finance and Education – Early Learning and Childcare – 1140 hours expansion 2017 – 18 Funding Allocation

17.6   Summary of the current infrastructure expansion proposals/possibilities including the key risks associated with each site/property

A BLUEPRINT FOR 2020: THE EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN SCOTLAND

ELC EXPANSION PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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ELC EXPANSION PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Edinburgh 2017

CONTENTS

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SECTION ONE: Introduction

The Scottish Government is committed to expanding the provision of funded early learning and childcare (ELC) from 600 hours to 1140 hours by 2020, and ensuring that the expansion prioritises a high quality experience for the child, recognising the significant contribution that universally accessible ELC can make to a child's development and to closing the attainment gap.

Local authorities are responsible for implementation and delivery of ELC to their local communities, within a context of high quality learning, teaching, care and nurture, in their area. Existing ELC provision will have to be transformed to deliver 1140 hours in line with Ministers' Blueprint for 2020. The ELC Expansion Programme is designed to facilitate delivery of an enhanced service model that reflects, and is responsive to, local needs.

Our policy vision will be underpinned by a more progressive service model which prioritises and safeguards quality provision of ELC while offering parents a choice of settings. The policy approach is fundamentally provider neutral – prioritising settings that are best placed to deliver quality outcomes for children and supporting our ambition to close the attainment gap, regardless of whether they are provided by the public, private, or third sectors. Local authorities will continue to play a vital role in delivering ELC – as the primary guarantor of quality and the key enabler of flexibility and choice.

Planning for the expansion will by necessity evolve over the coming years as local authorities respond to changes in local circumstances and changes in the way parents use services. The ELC Service Models Working Group will report by March 2018, providing the operational details of the new Funding Follows the Child model, a national standard for becoming a partner provider and guidance on implementing the Scottish Living Wage across all providers. Local authorities will continue to agree funded rates at local level, but should ensure that these are set to ensure delivery of the national policy framework.

This planning guidance offers a framework to support local authorities in developing their initial plans. Local authority groups have been consulted on and informed the development of this guidance. The ELC Expansion Programme will offer local authorities additional capacity to plan for and deliver this transformation through a multi-disciplinary support team. This team will provide additional service innovation and redesign capability, lead a community of learning, and offer a source of specialist expertise on complex issues that will be common to all authorities.

Whilst some planning dependencies and assumptions will crystallise during or after the initial planning period, we anticipate that reasonable local planning assumptions can be made in order to deliver an expansion plan by 29 September 2017.

This planning guidance is intended to:

• Provide simple planning advice of specific relevance to ELC sector development;

• Support development of local authority ELC expansion plans and costings – as well as informing the national ELC Expansion Programme;

• Respect the unique context of each local authority area, recognising the value of local knowledge and understanding;

• Be outcome focused – recognising that there are a range of ways to achieve the core aims of providing ELC within the parameters of quality, accessibility, flexibility and affordability;

• Underpin the delivery support that will be made available to assist local authorities with service redesign and sharing of good practice; and

- Help local authorities to gauge the extent of the change challenge and to fully resource the programme and project management capacity needed to support their local programme, whilst continuing to deliver services focused on the quality of experience for children and families.

This planning guidance is **NOT** intended to:

- Achieve a prescriptive 'one size fits all' model of service delivery;

- Enforce engagement with the delivery support capacity – authorities will shape the nature and extent of support provided to them; and

- Require local authorities to source, or examine any data that does not have a clear purpose directly relevant to the ELC planning task.

The ELC expansion plan produced as a result of this planning guidance will be used to:

- Progress the ELC Expansion Programme by articulating local plans in a nationally consistent manner;

- Assist local authorities to ensure that their local expansion plans recognise the importance of a continued focus on the quality of the child's learning and care experience throughout a period of change;

- Support the development of a national implementation framework including financial estimates and commitments;

- Inform future Spending Reviews and discussions on funding allocations; and

- Inform the monitoring and evaluation of the ELC Expansion Programme.

SECTION TWO: Key Principles

The following key principles will underpin the service delivery planning process. Planning principles that should be evidenced in the plans include:

QUALITY

Quality is the driving principle of the ELC Expansion Programme. Early years provide the foundations for promoting secure attachment, better health, social and learning behaviours with long-term impact on improved outcomes for children. Promoting child development, curriculum, pedagogy, alignment with child and family nurture services, closing the attainment gap and transitions to the next stage of the learning journey will be a key focus of the Programme. This will be underpinned by the GIRFEC approach and *Building the Ambition*[1], the national practice guidance which sets the context for high quality ELC.

Plans will ensure that change is not detrimental to children, families or ELC providers and that at least the current level of quality of learning and care experience will be maintained during the period of change. Active steps will be taken to protect and enhance the quality of provision.

A national Quality Action Plan will be published later in 2017 that will support local quality plans.

ACCESSIBILITY

The overall capacity within Scotland's current ELC system can be redesigned to more fully meet the ambition to extend entitlement. The constraints of current service design, including current purchasing arrangements, can mean provision is underused or inaccessible to parents. Specific issues may exist around capacity and accessibility in particular locations and geographies, or with regard to ensuring access for children with additional support needs.

Plans will evidence that best use will be made of existing services and assets within the local authority, private and third sectors – with any remaining gaps addressed through creation of additional capacity. Best practice will be shared via the delivery support team to inform this service redesign process. New National Care Standards will also be published by the Care Inspectorate in Spring 2017 and a best practice Design Guide will follow in early Summer. Both documents may inform the service redesign process in terms of delivery models and physical capacity.

Additionally, capacity creation will be assisted by new regulations[2] that modify schedule 1 of the Schools Consultation Act 2010. Education authorities will not be required to comply with the specific consultation requirements under the 2010 Act if they want to establish new nursery schools or new nursery classes in schools, and/or relocate existing nursery schools and nursery classes in schools as part of their expansion planning for 1140 hours. This exemption will not apply to establishment or relocation proposals relating to primary or secondary schools, nor to proposed nursery school or nursery class closures, which will still have to comply with 2010 Act consultation requirements in full. These regulations will come into force on 31 March 2017, when the current Ancillary Order to the 2014 Children & Young People Act expires.

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1   http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/08/6262/0
2   http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/65/contents/made

FLEXIBILITY

Current ELC delivery models, particularly within local authorities must become more flexible and responsive to parental demand. Fully flexible services, for example, may build from current good practice in Scotland. This should include more settings offering all year round provision and/or longer opening hours, thus enhancing flexibility and choice for families. It may also include considering the delivery of early level learning across nursery and early stages primary in an integrated model.

It is assumed that expansion plans will set out the intention to deliver against parental need for flexible access, whilst taking account of two caveats:

1. Is it good for children? Is it good for families? The impact of any flexible offer on the experience of the child and, in turn, their family must be taken into account.

2. Is it operationally sustainable? Where operational sustainability is a concern, it is assumed that consideration will be given to other ways to meet the need and flex services, for example, use of childminders in a blended approach.

AFFORDABILITY

Reducing the cost of accessing ELC for parents is a significant driver in the ambition to extend the ELC entitlement. This must be set alongside the redesign of ELC services in a manner that is also affordable for local authorities and Scottish Government and delivers long-term value for money.

It is assumed that plans will aim to improve affordability for parents alongside creating a financially sustainable service model which makes most effective use of public funds. This may include considering both investment in local authority services and in new arrangements with the private and third sectors.

PHASING, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DEMAND LAG

The expansion will require substantial levels of investment in workforce and infrastructure which will be phased in from 2017-18 onwards to ensure that the required capacity is in place by 2020. Given the transformative nature of the expansion, and the potential structural changes that could result in the sector, it is challenging to assume that the system would be able to move smoothly from providing 600 hours to 1140 hours overnight.

Local authorities have flexibility to determine the most appropriate way to phase entitlement in their local area as they build capacity. In considering phasing, authorities should evidence consideration of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation to ensure that the families and communities who stand to benefit most from the expansion benefit first.

It is also assumed that the implementation section of the plan will take account of the local strategy for community and family engagement and take steps to manage any delays in take-up of the new entitlement as parents become aware of, and confident in, changed services. We cannot assume that simply making the service available will be enough – community and family engagement, aligned with family nurture services will be vital in creating highly valued, highly used services. Parental engagement will support the identification of priorities and assist with appropriate phasing in each area.

SECTION THREE: Planning Assumptions

ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE PLANNING EXERCISE INCLUDE:

1. Putting in place the extended ELC entitlement has the potential to transform the lives of children and families but will require significant **SERVICE REDESIGN** across the ELC sector – across public, private and third sector providers.

2. **REVENUE AND CAPITAL** funding will be made available to local authorities in line with phased plans to support cross-sectoral ELC **CHANGE** and **EXPANSION** from 2017-18 onwards, with a view to ensuring a smooth transition to Funding Follows the Child from August 2020. The Scottish Government will work with authorities to provide greater certainty over financial assumptions over the planning period.

3. Quality of the experience for children will be dependent upon a suitably **SKILLED AND QUALIFIED WORKFORCE** that focuses on leadership, valuing and developing the existing workforce, and recruiting and training a high-performing additional workforce. Local authorities will be supported by a national marketing campaign and the ELC Skills Investment Plan.

4. Growth in services must be suitably **PHASED** over the planning period (i.e. to 2020) in order to help manage community engagement, service development and wider change across the sector. Funding will be provided to support phasing.

5. Making **best use of assets** – effective expansion plans will take account of a sequential decision-making process as follows:
   a. **Use what we have:** Making full use of existing assets within the local authority (including, workforce, potential of the natural environment, buildings and infrastructure);
   b. **Use what we purchase:** Enhancing the use of partner assets– developing and extending existing partnership models against a default assumption of a continued mixed economy – strengthening both local authority and other provision (including, for example, childminders and blended models);
   c. **Create what we need** – where full use of existing local authority services and assets, plus enhanced commissioning, still leaves a gap, plan to create or build new capacity, including outdoor nurseries.

SECTION FOUR: Planning Deliverable

The deliverable is an ELC expansion plan. The planning process is iterative and initial plans may be subject to change as further information emerges. The initial plan will be approved locally and is to be submitted to Scottish Government ELC Expansion Programme no later than **29 September 2017.** The impact of local committee cycles may mean that the plan is submitted in draft subject to local approval.

The plan will:

- Be created, owned and implemented by the local authority;
- Be locally approved according to the governance arrangements appropriate to each individual authority;
- Become a working document which will evolve over time (following the initial planning period);
- Balance the local ELC context around supply and demand with delivery of Ministers' Blueprint; and
- Include an implementation plan and take account of the approach proposed in this planning guidance.

SECTION FIVE: Indicative Planning Milestones

Local authorities may find it helpful to set intermediate planning milestones to support submission of a plan by 29 September.

Illustrative milestones over a 6-month planning period.

1. **End of April** – **Mobilised**: ELC expansion planning structures in place, including local arrangements for planning support, including accommodating local decision making/ committee timeframes.

2. **End of June** – **Assessed**: Completed quality, operational and financial data analysis regarding current position, existing performance and utilisation.

3. **End of July** – **Decided**: Outcome of decision-making processes with respect to preferred options for service redesign, evidencing the planning principles, use of existing assets, enhanced purchasing arrangements and potential to create.

4. **End of September** – **Planned & Submitted**: ELC expansion plan including implementation plan prepared and submitted.

SECTION SIX: Key Planning Components

This section sets out a basic structure for the ELC expansion plan (including implementation plan) – authorities are not bound by this structure, but should ensure that all of these elements are included in the content of their plans. **The completed plan should be returned to elcdeliverysupport@gov.scot by 29 September 2017.**

Key Components	Chapter/Section	Description	Comments
Context	Introduction and Executive Summary		
Current Position	Summary of Current Service Delivery	A summary of key data relating to ALL ELC registered supply in the local authority area.	
		A summary of key data relating to ALL demand (i.e. current use) in the local area.	
		A comparison of supply to demand – by local community.	
		A summary of key data (quality, financial and utilisation) metrics relating to current supply arrangements (local authority and others).	
		A summary of local parent and community consultation outcomes.	

Key Components	Chapter/Section	Description	Comments
Future Position	**Summary of Proposed Changes to Service Design and Local Innovation**	Summary of proposed changes to service delivery model (local authority and use of private and third sector providers). Proposals relating to quality, flexibility, affordability (to parent), accessibility, and other relevant changes to process (e.g. admissions process).	Includes a statement of how population growth/decline has influenced future service design. Includes a statement regarding the relationship locally between expanded statutory provision and non-statutory provision for 0 to 16 year olds (both pre-school and out of school) emphasising continuity of progression in the child's journey.
		Description of changes to enable full use of existing local authority assets (workforce and infrastructure).	
		Description of changes to maintain and extend use of partner assets (including quality/price/volume/conditionality of service).	
		Extent to which new – Workforce to be recruited – Physical capacity may require to be built/refurbished/sourced.	

Key Components	Chapter/Section	Description	Comments
Implementation Plan	**Series of Implementation Elements**	1. **Quality** 2. **Phasing and Prioritisation** 3. **Community Engagement** 4. **Workforce** 5. **Funded providers** 6. **Infrastructure Requirement** 7. **Financial Projections (5 year projections to 2021-22) including incremental capital and revenue costs of expansion** 8. **Planning Assumptions including financial assumptions** 9. **2017-18 expansion activity, including use of revenue and capital funding allocations** 10. **Project Management, Change Support & Stakeholder Engagement Plans**	Based on the analysis of local data and consideration of the options for service development, an implementation plan covering all relevant areas. Financial projections will include both revenue and capital projections.

SECTION SEVEN: Data Template

The data template has been designed to support local authorities with their planning. It is not mandatory, and is designed to offer local authorities an additional planning tool. The template is designed to:

• Support local authorities by collating information in a consistent and easy to understand way;

• Be as simple and uncomplicated as possible; and

• Recognise that most of the information gathered should be quick for local authorities to access.

The most challenging data to collect is anticipated to be child hours delivered per setting. The two most commonly used systems (NAMS & SEEMIS) tend not to carry this particular information. Should any local authority face issues gathering this data the ELC expansion programme can provide advice on a basis for estimation and benchmark.

Most financial data should be available from local authority finance systems against existing cost codes. For any costs per setting previously unallocated (e.g. catering costs left within primary school budget), local finance teams could offer support in conducting an appropriate allocation process. Data collection may draw upon Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland information sources.

The delivery support team will be able to help local authorities explore the data and the range of analytical options and insight that will become available.

APPENDIX: Table of additional detail relating specifcially to implementation plan

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	ELEMENTS	COMMENTS	CONTEXT
Implementation Planning – a series of individual plan elements	**1. Quality Plan**	- Specify the basis upon which day-to-day operational quality will be maintained and enhanced per setting during the period of expansion. - Specify the basis upon which Quality will be continually improved over time.	Quality provision must be maintained during the period of change.
	2. Phasing across local geography	Specify the basis of upon which expanded provision will be rolled out across the geography. Options might include neighbourhood by neighbourhood, school area by school area, with reference to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.	1140 implementation in individual settings can begin as capacity becomes available and be phased through to 2020.
	3. Community Engagement Plan	Specify the nature of the on-going engagement with local communities that supports the community to understand the changing nature of supply and the full extent to which supply is capable of adapting to their (family and community) needs.	Families and communities do not change in a uniform way, especially in a time of change over a comparatively short period. It can be expected therefore that there will be an element of 'demand lag' for the new offering that can be understood and managed via community engagement.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	ELEMENTS	COMMENTS	CONTEXT
	4. Workforce Plan	Specify the workforce plan through the period of prioritisation including consultation with existing workforce and phasing of uptake of any additional workforce.	Areas to address expected to include: leadership planning, consultation planning, industrial relations, recruitment plan.
	5. Funded Providers	Specify the nature of future relationship with funded providers including the price paid, volume and quality requirements.	This should include consideration of the implications of Living Wage and note future development of national funded provider and quality standards.
	6. Infrastructure (Physical Estate) Plan	Specify the extent of refurbishment to the existing estate and the new build requirement.	
	7. Financial Projections (spend profile)	Specify the phased cost profile for both revenue and capital over the expansion period. Include anticipated top up revenue where appropriate.	Include reporting on 2017-18 funding allocation.
	8. Financial Assumptions to support projections	List the financial assumptions made to support financial projections.	
	9. 2017-18 expansion activity, including planned use of revenue and capital funding allocations		
	10. Project Management, Stakeholder Management and Change Support.	Specify what project management support will be made available to the change effort, include an assessment of risk and dependencies in change.	

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A BLUEPRINT FOR 2020: THE EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN SCOTLAND

2017-18 ACTION PLAN

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A BLUEPRINT FOR 2020: THE EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN SCOTLAND

2017-18 ACTION PLAN

Edinburgh 2017

CONTENTS

MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

The expansion of early learning and childcare (ELC) in Scotland is one of the most important and transformative changes we are making during this Parliamentary session.

Last October, I launched *A Blueprint for 2020* consultation which set out our vision for an expansion that will almost double the entitlement to free ELC to 1140 hours per year by 2020 for all three and four year olds and eligible two year olds. That vision is underpinned by the principles of Quality, Flexibility, Accessibility and Affordability.

Quality is at the very heart of this expansion. It is widely acknowledged, including by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and EU, that the provision of universally accessible and high quality ELC enriches children with skills and confidence to carry into their schooling, and is a cornerstone for closing the poverty-related attainment gap between our most and least advantaged children. Therefore, quality is the golden thread that runs right through this Action Plan, and there are clear actions to ensure that children get the high quality experiences they deserve to help them succeed in life.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who responded to the consultation, in writing or by attending a consultation event. I participated in a number of specific events with parents and other key stakeholders as part of the Blueprint consultation and listened carefully to people's views, often shaped by their own experiences, hopes and desires, on how they wanted to see this transformation develop. An independent analysis of the views expressed through the consultation and at the engagement events is published alongside this Action Plan.

We are now ready to move into the mobilisation phase, working closely with our delivery partners. This Action Plan demonstrates that we've listened to a wide range of views, both from providers and users of ELC, which are shaping the route ahead. It also provides our delivery partners in local authorities, and the private and third sectors, with a clear policy and delivery framework in which to build capacity for 1140 hours.

I am setting out an approach that, first and foremost, will deliver the best outcomes for children, helping to deliver both excellence and equity in education; while also promoting greater choice and flexibility for parents in how they access their entitlement to 1140 hours of free ELC by 2020.

I look forward to continuing to work with our stakeholders and delivery partners as we take forward this ambitious policy and give all of our children the best possible start in life.
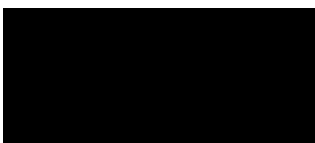
Mark McDonald
Minister for Childcare and Early Years
March 2017

INTRODUCTION

A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland was launched on 15 October 2016. It sets out our vision for an expansion that will almost double entitlement to free early learning and childcare (ELC) to 1140 hours per year by 2020 for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds. That vision is underpinned by clear guiding principles:

Quality – the expansion will ensure a high quality experience for all children, which complements other early years and educational activity to close the attainment gap, and recognises the value of those we entrust to give our children the best start in life.

Flexibility – the expansion will support more parents and carers in work, training or study, through greater choice of provider and patterns of provision that are better aligned with working patterns whilst delivering this in a way that ensures a high quality experience for the child.

Accessibility – ELC capacity is sufficient and is as conveniently geographically located as possible – particularly in areas of higher deprivation and in rural communities – to support families and enable parents and carers to work, train and study, while also appropriately meeting the needs of children who require additional support and parents who request ELC through the medium of Gaelic.

Affordability – the expansion will increase access to affordable ELC which will help to reduce barriers to participating in the labour market which parents and carers face.

The consultation questions set out in the Blueprint sought views on our vision and high-level principles for the expansion as well as the key policy choices that had to be made. It included questions on funding models, phasing, encouraging payment of the living wage, role of providers in the private and third sectors, ensuring equality of access, supporting learner transitions and the inspection and regulatory regime.

The consultation closed on 9 January 2017 and we received 336 written responses; 62% of which were from individuals and 38% from organisations. The Minister for Childcare and Early Years hosted a series of consultation events aimed primarily at parents and carers, so that we could balance the responses from providers within the ELC system itself with the users of that system, and ensure that we were listening to the very widest range of opinion.

Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve Excellence and Equity in Education – A Governance Review, which reviewed the way that ELC and school education is organised, ran alongside the Blueprint consultation, and closed on 6 January 2017. The Scottish Government is currently carefully considering the responses it received along with evidence from a wide range of sources. We will set out our response to the Governance Review in a Next Steps paper later in the year, and this will provide further clarity on the future approach to inspection and a governance structure that will support the expansion of ELC.

The consultation has helped to inform the development of the policy and delivery framework for the expansion. It is now imperative that we work in partnership with local authorities and other key partners to deliver this vision.

This Action Plan commits us to a series of actions in 2017-18 to ensure that the expansion of ELC is rooted in a high quality experience for our children and to support our delivery partners in building additional capacity.

This Action Plan sets out the policy framework that will underpin the expansion in order to:

- Ensure a high quality experience for the child; improving outcomes for all children, especially those who will benefit most;

- Support the vision of an education system which delivers both excellence and equity for all children in Scotland;

- Provide a key contribution to our wider work to close the attainment gap;

- Support our ambitions to reduce child poverty by contributing to the delivery of our ambitious statutory targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill;

- Support transitions through early years settings and into school to ensure continuity and progress through the learner journey;

- Offer parents an increased choice of settings where they can access their funded ELC entitlement;

- Enable a system that is provider neutral with the focus on the settings best placed to deliver quality outcomes for children;

- Increase the flexibility of how the funded entitlement is delivered in order to support more parents to work, train or study, especially those who need routes into sustainable employment and out of poverty;

- Provide the opportunity for an enhanced role for childminders in delivering the funded entitlement;

- Help support parents to improve and enrich the home learning environment by integrating ELC with the range of family support;

- Enable payment of the Living Wage and the promotion of Fair Work practices;

- Be underpinned by a funding model which ensures the long-term sustainability of the system;

- Provide substantial new employment opportunities across all of Scotland with a range of roles across different qualification levels, supporting local economies; and

- Reduce the costs that parents and carers face in paying for childcare, with total ELC entitlement providing an estimated annual saving of £4,500 per child per year.

There are two sections to this Action Plan. Section One focuses specifically on quality and sets out the conditions, support and investment that will drive quality experiences and ensure ELC plays a key role in addressing inequalities in child outcomes. Section Two sets out how we will ensure that we build the structures and capacity – both infrastructure and workforce – required to deliver 1140 hours in a way that is flexible, accessible and affordable. Quality of the child's experience is the single most important goal and it will be clear how this has driven all of the decisions that have been taken and the actions set out across this plan.

There is a full list of actions at the end of this document. Unless otherwise stated, actions are to be achieved **by March 2018**.

We intend to publish annual action plans and themed progress reports along the route to 2020; starting with a focus on quality in October 2017, with others on: workforce development and expansion; inclusion; infrastructure; and family engagement and nurture to follow between now and 2020.

SECTION 1: SECURING A HIGH QUALITY EXPERIENCE FOR ALL CHILDREN

A high quality experience for all children is the driving force of the expansion of ELC entitlement to 1140 hours. We know, from a range of research, that high quality ELC provision promotes longer-term benefits for children and young people, offering them the best possible start in life. A recently published report from the Study of Early Education and Development provides the following useful summary of the evidence:

> *"There has been a substantial amount of research on the quality of early years provision and the potential benefits of attending a high quality provider for child development. A number of studies have shown that accessing early childhood education and care, in good quality provision in particular, can have a positive effect on the educational, cognitive, behavioural and social outcomes of children, both in the short and long term. Some evidence suggests that the positive impact is greatest on children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. This suggests that early childhood education and care has the potential to make a key contribution to narrowing the gap in development between groups of children."*[1]

Developing a Quality Action Plan

The development of policy on ELC and the planning for expansion to 1140 hours has already been driven by a clear focus on quality. To ensure that this remains at the heart of our agenda as we build to 2020, we will produce a Quality Action Plan in close consultation with key stakeholders who best understand, not only what drives quality, but also what more needs to be done to strengthen this. The next few months will be an opportunity to take stock of that and think systematically about the key drivers of quality in ELC and how they link to child outcomes, to make sure we have a comprehensive policy framework for improving quality. This will include consideration of the drivers of structural quality (how the system is designed and organised) as well as process quality (practice within ELC settings).

As well as considering the provision of formal ELC, the Quality Action Plan will consider how we can support parents to improve and enrich the home learning environment by integrating ELC with the range of family support available. Research shows that when parents and carers support their children's learning, and when children live in a stimulating home learning environment, it improves children's attainment and achievement. Family learning encourages family members to learn together, fostering positive attitudes to lifelong learning.

- **We will produce a Quality Action Plan, by the end of October 2017, that sets out what more needs to be done to strengthen quality in ELC, and will use this as a driver for improving children's outcomes.**

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1   Study of Early Education and Development: Good Practice in Early Education. Meg Callanan et al. Research Report January 2017

Developing the ELC workforce

We know that the most important driver of quality in ELC is a dedicated, highly skilled and well-qualified workforce, whose initial and continued training enables them to fulfil their own potential and equip our young children to do the same. We will ensure that leadership development opportunities feature prominently in our Quality Action Plan, supporting professionals as they continue in or move into leadership roles.

Through implementation of the Quality Action Plan and Skills Investment Plan for ELC, we will ensure that there are high quality and flexible learning opportunities available to the ELC workforce at all levels, including access to distance and virtual learning opportunities, part-time and out-of-hours college provision and work-based learning.

Access to graduate-level early years educators

The EU's Key Principles of a Quality Framework[2] underlines the importance of well-qualified staff in pursuing quality in ELC. The Education Scotland report *Making the Difference: The impact of staff qualifications on children's learning in early years* found that the graduate-level qualifications (specifically, the BA Childhood Practice Award) were having a positive impact on children's learning in the early years:

> *"Staff have a clearer understanding of child development and feel more confident and motivated in delivering the curriculum. We know that staff are using their new knowledge and skills to improve learning for children, for example outdoor learning. They are delivering more child-led learning which promotes deeper and challenging learning experiences."*[3]

Our plans for expansion of ELC need to recognise that the graduate workforce is changing. The introduction of the BA Childhood Practice in 2009 has increased the number of non-teacher graduates who have specialist early years expertise and knowledge. The course completion figures indicate that around 1,200 have now graduated with this degree and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) estimate that around 280 people complete graduate-level courses each year. The introduction of the M.Ed Early Years (offered by the University of Strathclyde and the University of Aberdeen) in 2009-10 has also enhanced skills at post-graduate level with an annual intake of around 30-40 students each year.

We will continue to invest in graduate and post-graduate level training specifically to promote early years education, including consideration of whether new direct entry undergraduate courses are required to support development of the workforce. As part of our work to develop the Quality Action Plan, we will work with professional bodies to consider how we can further strengthen the role of teachers in delivering learning in ELC settings.

Curriculum for Excellence has provided a coherent curriculum from 3-18 years which supports continuity and progression. It has supported a shift in how children are engaged in learning by introducing a broader curriculum, more hands-on learning and play-based opportunities. This is supplemented by Building the Ambition, published by Scottish Government in 2014, which contains guidance for ELC practitioners who work with children from 0-5 years old; and, sets out how high quality interactions and experiences can be delivered within caring and nurturing environments.

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2   Key Principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care: report of the Working Group on Early Childhood Education and Care (under the auspices of the European Union) (October 2014)

3   'Making the Difference: The impact of staff qualifications on children's learning in early years', Education Scotland (2012)

We will continue to ensure that pedagogy is adequately reflected in the training of our ELC workforce, particularly for graduate-level practitioners, and that undergraduate courses offer a balance between child development, pedagogy and management.

- **We will increase support for the M.Ed Early Years Pedagogue courses at Aberdeen and Strathclyde Universities from the 2018-19 academic year.**
- **We will improve the quality of data available on the graduate workforce, by supplementing the data on teachers with information on the number of staff with a relevant graduate level qualification working within the sector.**

Robust quality standards and inspection

We will continue to ensure that the ELC entitlement is underpinned by national quality standards which focus on delivering positive experiences for children and are directed at achieving positive outcomes. The Scottish Government's new statutory National Care Standards, due for publication in 2017, will strengthen this further by setting out child-centred and outcome-focused expectations of quality across all care and health provision, including ELC.

- **As part of our response to the Education Governance Review, we will ensure we have the right inspection arrangements in place for fair, transparent and consistent assessment of quality in ELC. In particular, we will consider how we can build on the excellent work the inspectorates have undertaken in recent years to create a more streamlined and holistic system supporting quality improvement in ELC.**

Securing a role for childminders

Childminders will have a key role in delivering the expanded funded entitlement. A recurring theme in the consultation was that childminders should have more opportunities to access training using both formal and informal learning mechanisms, from mandatory courses, to sharing best practice across networks.

We are committed to delivering a new standard of best practice for childminders. As part of this we have provided additional funding to the Care Inspectorate to take forward the development of a Learning and Development Pathway for all childminders. We have extended this funding into 2017-18.

- **We will work with the Care Inspectorate and other partners to launch a new Learning and Development Pathway for childminders in September 2017.**

A number of respondents to the Blueprint consultation highlighted that, under the current system, childminders who provide the funded entitlement are not subject to the same qualification requirements as other ELC workers. We know that childminders are already delivering high quality provision: childminders are more likely than most other childcare services to achieve Care Inspectorate grades of very good and excellent.[4] However, the skills base of the sector is often overlooked or not understood by parents, carers and other professionals working in the sector.

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4   Early Learning and Childcare Statistics 2015, November 2016, Care Inspectorate, http://www.careinspectorate. com/images/documents/3591/Early%20Learning%20and%20Childcare%20statistics%20report%202015.pdf

We believe that a minimum qualification could provide reassurance, in respect of quality of provision, for parents who are facing choices over the best option for childcare. However, we know that we would need to ensure that the necessary infrastructure, including flexible training options and financial support arrangements, is in place before this could be implemented. We would need to support the profession in moving towards qualification requirements over time.

- **We will work with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), the Care Inspectorate, the SSSC and other key delivery partners to consider, as part of the best practice standard for childminders, the potential for a requirement for those childminders delivering the funded ELC entitlement to be qualified to the same level as an ELC practitioner.**

Effective partnership working to support transitions into, through, and out of, ELC

Children face a number of transitions throughout their learner journey: from the home to early learning and childcare, across different ELC settings, within those settings, and into school. The system must ensure that these transitions support continuity, coherence and progression. Consultation responses emphasised the need for clear transition plans to support children through their early-learner journey. They highlighted the need for effective partnership at transition stages, with allied professionals and specialists identified as having valuable contributions to make to smooth transitions. The need to share relevant information about children was a common theme.

Working across organisational boundaries and putting children and their families at the heart of decision making, is a central feature of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) – the Government's national approach that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people in Scotland. Our approach underpins all of our work with children and young people and plays a fundamental part in realising the Scottish Government's goal of giving all our children and young people the best possible start in life. Our approach is about everyone working together to support every child and young person's wellbeing – by spotting and dealing with issues as early as possible, and working with parents and services rather than waiting until they escalate into potential crisis.

- **As set out in the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan[5] we will provide clarity on how appropriate data on children's progress is shared between professionals working with children from the early years onwards. This should help to support transitions.**

The Attainment Scotland Fund, including the Pupil Equity Fund, can be used to support transitions, which can include the transition from ELC to primary. The Scottish Attainment Challenge funds are already being used in this way in Dundee, where funding has been used to employ (in partnership with the NHS) speech and language therapists for all nurseries attached to attainment challenge schools. Early years staff are also working in partnership with families to develop early vocabulary and early literacy skills in children from 2 years old, using well-evidenced programmes. These examples have been shared on the National Improvement Hub as good practice examples of 'Interventions for Equity'.

- **We will identify and share examples of how the Attainment Scotland Fund and the Pupil Equity Fund are being used to support transitions from ELC to primary school.**

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5   2017 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan, Scottish Government 2017

Closing the attainment gap

We know that the socio-economic gap in cognitive development opens up well before children start primary school. Narrowing this gap in the pre-school years must be part of our strategy to promote equity and excellence.

We also know from the Growing Up in Scotland Study that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are no less likely – compared to those from more advantaged backgrounds – to attend pre-school settings of the highest quality.[6] This means that ELC can play a key role in closing the attainment gap.

The Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014 extended entitlement to funded ELC to around a quarter of 2 year olds whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits, ensuring those who will benefit most from funded ELC are able to take advantage from age 2. Improving uptake of funded ELC by families of eligible 2 years olds could make a significant contribution to closing the attainment gap before children begin primary school. We will continue to work with local authorities, and others, to promote and increase the flexibility and uptake of the expanded provision as we move towards the expansion to 1140 hours. We recently published research on the drivers and barriers to uptake amongst 2 year olds,[7] which will underpin our policy development and the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative is testing approaches to improving the up-take of funded ELC for eligible 2 year olds.

- **We will continue to explore options through UK legislation to enable the sharing of data by DWP and HMRC to allow local authorities to identify eligible families.**

- **We will provide dedicated support to local authorities to help improve uptake amongst eligible 2 year olds.**

We have started work to implement our commitment to provide an additional graduate in nurseries in Scotland's most deprived areas by August 2018. An extra 435 graduates working directly with children will be in place by 2018, with every local authority area set to increase graduate numbers. We are providing funding of £1.5 million to the Scottish Funding Council to increase teacher training and other ELC-related graduate places in the 2017-18 academic year.

- **We will continue to work with local authorities to produce guidance on implementation of the additional graduate commitment. Local authorities will be asked to submit action plans to show how they intend to deploy their additional graduates.**

As part of the expansion, and in order to improve health and wellbeing at this crucial stage in a child's development, we will provide free lunches for all children receiving their 1140 hours of entitlement, whether provided by the local authority or providers in the private and third sector delivering the funded entitlement. Our good design guidance, due to be published in June 2017, will include guidance on appropriate catering facilities.

6 Tackling Inequalities in The Early Years: Key messages from 10 years of the Growing Up in Scotland study, Scottish Government, 2015

7 Drivers and Barriers to take-up of Early Learning and Childcare amongst 2 year olds, Scottish Government, March 2017, http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/02/4813

Strengthening inclusion

ELC provision must ensure equality of access for, and account for the varying needs of, all children. These needs can vary depending on a number of factors, including whether a child is disabled or has additional support needs (ASN), is from an ethnic minority background, lives in a deprived area or has challenging family circumstances.

We will continue to support implementation of the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 (as amended), to ensure children's ASN are identified and provided for. That includes those who are identified from birth as having a disability and are brought to the attention of the education authority as needing additional support. We already have plans to revise and improve the statutory guidance on the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 Act, in particular by clarifying responsibilities.

Accessibility will be promoted in the design principles for new ELC infrastructure, recognising the impact of good design principles on children with ASN and disabilities, with good examples of sensory rooms and space to create relaxed, calm environments for children to be highlighted within the section about use of space.

- **We will create a fund that enables staff to support children with ASN or disabilities. This could cover funding for specialist training for ELC staff as well as funding for equipment for adaptations, providing sensory areas, or establishing equipment banks in local areas.**

- **We will improve the data collected on children with ASN to enhance our understanding of additional support needs of this age group, and the support plans in place for them.**

Access to outdoor learning, exercise and play

We know the benefits of outdoor learning, exercise and play for young children in terms of their health and wellbeing, physical and cognitive development. ELC settings have embraced Curriculum for Excellence's emphasis on a broader learning experience, including active learning and learning outdoors.

In 2016, the Care Inspectorate published guidance called *My World Outdoors*, which aims to act as a catalyst to encourage further development of high quality outdoor play. It highlights that the quality of children's experience is generally very positive. As well as the specialist outdoor-based provision, mainstream building-based services have improved children's outdoor play experience using both their own outdoor play areas and the natural environment locally.

Our good design guidance for all ELC settings, due to be published in June 2017, will promote well-designed outdoor space in all new-built and refurbished or extended ELC settings created as part of this expansion. We will build on the commitment to a minimum of one hour per week outdoors by encouraging all providers to have access to a stimulating outdoor play area for children, including daily opportunities to spend time outdoors and, for full-time children, part of their day should be spent outdoors.

Some of our delivery model trials focus on outdoor learning and play. One, in Edinburgh, is exploring the establishment of outdoor nursery provision through a nature kindergarten and another in Angus, involves the conversion of a small nursery to focus on outdoor learning. The potential to further develop outdoor ELC provision across the country is being considered as a key theme emerging from the trials programme.

We will also encourage early learning providers to organise a 'Daily Mile' run or age-appropriate equivalent activity for all children.

- **We will publish guidance on delivering the Daily Mile in ELC by autumn 2017.**

SECTION 2: CREATING THE CAPACITY AND SUPPORTING STRUCTURES FOR 1140 HOURS

A service model that guarantees quality and unlocks choice

Our policy vision will be underpinned by a more progressive service model, which prioritises and safeguards quality provision of ELC while offering parents a greater choice of settings.

Local authorities will continue to play a vital role in delivering ELC – as the primary guarantor of quality and the key enabler of flexibility and choice. Authorities will retain statutory responsibility for ensuring that funded ELC entitlement is available to all eligible children in their area.

Families across Scotland have the right to expect a consistent approach to service delivery reflecting national policy, but interpreted in light of local circumstances.

Our approach is fundamentally provider neutral – prioritising the settings that are best placed to deliver quality outcomes for children and supporting our ambition to close the attainment gap, regardless of whether they are provided by the public, private or third sectors.

We will work in partnership with local authorities to develop a Funding Follows the Child approach for national implementation in 2020. This approach will ensure financially sustainable provision, and deliver Fair Work practices, across all sectors.

Funding for delivery of the ELC entitlement of 600 hours is currently included within the general revenue grant provided to local authorities, but we know from our Financial Review that this funding doesn't always reach frontline delivery. The new funding model will ensure that funding provided for ELC directly supports our young children and their families, enabling and promoting a holistic approach to service delivery, while allowing local authorities to negotiate funding rates at local level which deliver national policy priorities.

We know from our Financial Review and responses to the *Blueprint* consultation that there are two key barriers to private and third sector providers delivering funded ELC: (1) the current partnership agreement process, which can be cumbersome and restrictive; and (2) the hourly rate offered by local authorities doesn't meet the costs of provision. The new service model will be underpinned by a more open, proportionate and consistent approach, which makes it more attractive for high quality providers to deliver funded ELC.

- **We will establish an ELC Service Models Working Group with local authorities to:**
  - **develop the details of the new Funding Follows the Child model; and**
  - **produce a national standard for a more open process to becoming a funded provider.**
- **Through our Quality Action Plan, we will work with stakeholders to define the quality dimensions of the national funded provider standard. This will draw heavily on existing quality standards used by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate. Our response to the Education Governance review will provide clarity on responsibilities for the overall monitoring of standards.**

There was some support from consultation respondents to the introduction of early learning and childcare accounts, through for example a system similar to that proposed by the Commission for Childcare Reform.[8] Such accounts would see parents and carers receive funding for ELC provision directly, which they can then spend at a provider of their choice. While we consider there to be some merit in this approach, including creating a wholly digital platform for administration, we recognise that more time would be required to

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8   The Commission for Childcare Reform: Final Report, June 2015, http://www.commissionforchildcarereform.info/

develop the necessary systems and data sharing arrangements and the focus for the next three years needs to be on building additional capacity to deliver expanded provision. To ensure that we are well placed to consider the introduction of ELC accounts at the appropriate time:

- **We will commission a feasibility study to explore the potential costs and benefits of introducing an Early Learning and Childcare Account in the future.**

Delivering more flexible provision

Responses to our consultation make clear that the level of flexibility offered by local authorities does not always reflect the expectations of the local community. It will be important that local parental demand remains the primary driver of local flexibility, but within a system which safeguards high quality provision.

Our new service models will ensure that parents have a greater choice of providers from which they can access funded ELC. We also need to consider the flexibility of provision offered by those providers and settings, building on the provisions in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The same Act places a duty on local authorities to consult with parents and carers, every two years, about how they would like to see the provision being delivered.

New and innovative models for delivering ELC which offer more flexibility are being explored in the ELC Delivery Model trials which commenced in January 2017. The Scottish Government is providing £1 million of investment to support this programme of trials.

- **We will consult on the legislative changes required to ensure that existing provisions on flexibility, including consultation requirements, remain appropriate to deliver our policy vision for 2020.**
- **We will publish guidance on delivering flexibility in early 2018, drawing on the operation of, and learning from, the ELC delivery model trials to help local authorities design their provision for 2020.**

Delivering 1140 hours

Delivering the expansion to 1140 hours will require additional resource, both revenue and capital, to support the necessary investment to increase both the workforce and the physical infrastructure. We will invest over £60 million in 2017-18 to support the first phase of capacity building.

We have launched an ELC expansion planning process to help local authorities produce robust implementation plans, supported by guidance on working through key questions on infrastructure, workforce and delivery models for 1140 hours. This will ensure that our national programme is built on local plans. Local authorities will work towards finalising these plans by the end of September 2017.

We will support the delivery of 14 trials of new service delivery models across the country over 2017-18 and will share the learning from these with local authorities and other partners on an ongoing basis, starting with an initial national event on 4 May 2017. Monitoring and evaluation of the trials programme will be embedded within an evaluation framework for ELC expansion.

To enable local authorities to deliver the capacity required for the full roll-out of 1140 hours from August 2020:

- **We will establish and provide delivery support to local authorities. This multi-disciplinary team, which has been co-designed with local authorities, will provide access to additional service innovation and redesign capacity and to professional and technical expertise on common and complex issues.**

Maximising the contribution of childminders

Childminders and community childminders have a key role in delivering the expanded entitlement, especially for younger children. This could be through, for example, increased use of 'blended models' which involve children spending time in both a nursery setting and with a childminder.

Childminders have played a relatively limited role in providing funded entitlement up to now, with SCMA reporting that of the 5,954 professional childminding services in Scotland only 118 are delivering funded ELC.[9] The expansion provides an opportunity for childminders to have an enhanced role in delivering funded ELC and to increase choice and flexibility; and achieve a good blend of home and external, and individual and group, provision.

Our programme of delivery trials will provide helpful learning on making optimum use of childminders in delivering funded provision, with 10 of the 14 trials involving childminders.

Building capacity within the early years workforce

As already highlighted, the most important driver of quality in ELC is a dedicated, highly-skilled and well-qualified workforce, whose initial and continued training enables them to fulfil and refresh their professional role. Scotland is already leading the way across the UK in its ambition to have a highly qualified and regulated workforce.

The expansion will see this workforce grow substantially, resulting in the creation of new positions across all grades providing employment opportunities for new entrants to the sector, as well as progression opportunities for existing staff.

To inform our strategic approach to expanding the workforce, we commissioned a Skills Investment Plan (SIP) for the sector from Skills Development Scotland (SDS). SDS has now published the SIP Prospectus,[10] with a detailed action plan to follow later in the year. Produced in conjunction with key partners and stakeholders, this provides a helpful reference point from which to take forward our actions to grow the ELC workforce.

We are providing local authorities with £21 million in 2017-18 to invest in the first phase of the workforce expansion – both increasing the size of the workforce and equipping existing staff with new skills. This local investment will be complemented by an increase in the number of places available on further and higher education courses in the 2017-18 academic year. The Scottish Funding Council will provide an additional 350 graduate-level places (which includes places to support the Additional Graduate commitment) and 650 places for practitioner-level qualifications across our further and higher educational institutions.

- **We will increase the number of ELC Modern Apprenticeships by 10% year on year up to 2020.**

- **We will review the financial contributions and eligibility criteria for ELC related apprenticeships for those over 25, to create new opportunities to join the ELC workforce.**

- **We will work with local authorities and delivery partners to develop recruitment and career pathways which assist in both attracting and retaining high-calibre candidates within the ELC workforce, and which also improve the gender balance across the sector.**

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9   A Summary Report on the current use of childminding services to deliver funded Early learning and Childcare to eligible 2 year olds – Scottish Childminding Association 2017

10 Skills Investment Plan: Prospectus – For Scotland's early learning and childcare sector, Skills Development Scotland (2017)

Valuing the ELC workforce

There are few more important jobs than caring for, and educating, our youngest children. Scotland already has a dedicated and highly qualified ELC workforce, but we know that we can do more to change perceptions about a career in ELC and to ensure it's an attractive and long-term career choice.

This will require the promotion of Fair Work practices across the sector, including ensuring that staff are fairly remunerated.

Public sector staff working in ELC already receive the Living Wage. It was disappointing, and concerning, that our Financial Review found that around 80% of practitioners and 50% of supervisors in private and third sector settings delivering the funded entitlement are paid below the Living Wage.[11] We want to see all childcare workers delivering the funded entitlement, across all sectors, paid at least the Living Wage from the introduction of the entitlement to 1140 hours in 2020.

As part of our reform of the funding model, we will provide sufficient additional revenue funding to allow local authorities to agree rates with funded providers in the private and third sectors that enables them to pay the Living Wage to care workers providing the funded entitlement. We will work with local authorities and delivery partners through our new Service Models Working Group to take forward this commitment.

We will also work with delivery partners to encourage the promotion of Fair Work practices, and payment of the Living Wage, across all of the ELC sector in Scotland. This will include encouraging ELC settings to offer flexible working arrangements for ELC staff.

Work is already underway to engage with schools and colleges to promote the sector to students. We are also working with the SSSC who already have ELC career ambassadors on the ground and engaging with schools and colleges. SDS are already developing online tools to show the range of opportunities available within the ELC sector.

- **We will launch a recruitment marketing campaign in autumn 2017. This will positively promote careers in ELC and the opportunities to transform the lives of our children.**
- **We will work with SDS to produce updated guidance on opportunities in ELC for careers advice organisations, ensuring that this reflects the range of roles available in the sector.**

Creating a more diverse ELC workforce

Our aim is for an ELC workforce that better reflects wider society. The benefits of a more balanced workforce are clear – diversity in the workforce brings a variety of approaches, outlooks and styles to working with children. In the same way that males can bring a different perspective to ELC, so can those from black and minority ethnic groups (who are also currently under represented), as well as those who have had careers in other areas. Those who wish to change career, whose employment circumstances may have changed, or who have retired, can bring fresh perspective and a range of experience to the workforce.

- **We will work with delivery partners, who already have excellent links to communities across Scotland, to raise the profile of a career in ELC amongst underrepresented groups. This will be complemented by our recruitment marketing campaign.**

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11 The Financial Review of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland: The Current Landscape, Scottish Government, September 2016, http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/09/8729

The ELC workforce remains overwhelmingly female, with men representing only 4% of the workforce. Recruiting more males to the workforce will, in time, provide a virtuous cycle where boys will have more male role models influencing them in the early years and therefore will view a career in ELC more positively in the future. Our consultation suggests that improved pay and conditions in the sector will help to attract more men into careers in ELC, and increasing the proportion of outdoor learning opportunities should do likewise. The proportion of males working in outdoor daycare is just over 9%, more than double the sector average. Our forthcoming recruitment marketing campaign will raise the profile of males in the workforce by using case studies, including outdoor examples, to illustrate the success and job satisfaction among men in ELC.

Building a high quality physical environment

Physical settings can have a direct impact on the quality of experience and learning for children. We have been working with partners, including the Care Inspectorate and Scottish Futures Trust, to develop new good design guidance for all ELC settings to ensure that we learn from best practice at home and internationally.

- **We will publish a new good practice design guide for ELC in June 2017, which will promote good innovative design for both indoor and outdoor space.**

- **We will commission the Scottish Futures Trust to produce an ELC infrastructure progress report to ensure we can learn and share lessons to inform the capital investment between now and 2020 and highlight the opportunities that this investment programme presents to support wider economic growth.**

Ensuring provision is accessible

As ELC delivery models become more flexible, it is vital to ensure that provision is accessible to all.

As part of the expansion, consideration will also be given to the availability of good quality Gaelic Medium provision, particularly in areas where there is high potential for continuity through to Gaelic Medium Primary Education. We expect to see evidence of this in local authority's expansion plans.

We are committed to further empowerment of ELC settings, and particularly where community empowerment could encourage and develop community-led provision, especially in remote and rural areas which face unique delivery challenges. As we consider the expansion of ELC we are open to innovative delivery approaches where they can add value. There may be specific opportunities to encourage expansion in the number of providers who are social enterprises, and to support our wider ambitions for the social enterprise sector.

We know that proximity of ELC provision to places of work or study can be important for some parents. A particular issue that has been raised is the extent of on-site provision within the Higher and Further Education estates. We are currently taking forward research to explore this issue in more detail.

- **We will publish an analysis of the extent of on-site childcare provision in Scotland's Higher and Further Education estates in early summer 2017.**

Ensuring provision is affordable

The expansion will almost double the number of free hours of ELC entitlement available to parents and carers, substantially reducing the childcare costs they face. The total average saving to families from 1140 hours of funded entitlement is estimated to be worth over £4,500 per child per year. However, there are other economic barriers to accessing ELC. In particular, upfront childcare costs – which can include deposits, administration fees and the payment of the first month's fees in advance – can create a barrier for some parents on low incomes who require hours beyond the entitlement.

Targeted support with childcare costs is available to certain groups, including students. The Review of Student Support, due to report in autumn 2017, will consider the effectiveness of the current student support system for childcare costs.

- **We will implement a programme of pilot approaches in 2017-18 to explore how additional support can be tailored to help reduce the burden of upfront childcare costs. The pilots will focus on trialling deposit guarantee schemes. We will set out more details in summer 2017.**

Phasing of the entitlement to 1140 hours

The expansion will require substantial levels of investment in workforce and infrastructure which will be phased in from 2017-18 onwards to ensure that the required capacity is in place by 2020 to enable full roll-out of the expanded entitlement. Given the transformative nature of the expansion, and the potential structural changes that could result in the sector, it is challenging to assume that the system would be able to move smoothly from providing 600 hours to 1140 hours overnight.

Local authorities will have flexibility to determine the most appropriate way to phase entitlement in their local area as they build the necessary capacity to deliver 1140 hours. We have made clear in the expansion planning guidance issued to local authorities that plans for phasing should reflect the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation to ensure that the families and communities who stand to benefit most from the expansion also benefit first.

Monitoring and evaluation

We are working with a range of key stakeholders to develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework for the ELC expansion. We recognise that this framework needs to remain flexible to adapt to changes in delivery, and we will ensure it remains proportionate, minimises duplication, costs and utilises existing data wherever possible. It is anticipated that the outputs from this evaluation will be published regularly, to ensure that we have an open and transparent approach, encompassing the views and shared vision of our stakeholders.

- **We will publish the first in a series of evaluation reports by the end of 2017. This will include an evaluation of the current expansion to 600 hours per annum as well as baseline indicators for monitoring progress towards the expansion to 1140 hours.**

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

1. We will produce a Quality Action Plan, by the end of October 2017, that sets out what more needs to be done to strengthen quality in ELC, and will use this as a driver for improving children's outcomes.

2. We will increase support for the M.Ed Early Years Pedagogue course at Aberdeen and Strathclyde Universities from the 2018-19 academic year.

3. We will improve the quality of data available on the graduate workforce, by supplementing the data on teachers with information on the number of staff with a relevant graduate level qualification working within the sector.

4. As part of our response to the Education Governance Review, we will ensure we have the right inspection arrangements in place for fair, transparent and consistent assessment of quality in ELC. In particular, we will consider how we can build on the positive work the inspectorates have undertaken in recent years to create a more streamlined and holistic system supporting quality improvement in ELC.

5. We will work with the Care Inspectorate and other partners to publish a new Learning and Development Pathway for childminders in September 2017.

6. We will work with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), the Care Inspectorate, the SSSC and other key delivery partners to consider, as part of the best practice standard for childminders, the potential for a requirement for those childminders delivering the funded ELC entitlement to be qualified to the same level as an ELC practitioner.

7. As set out in the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan, we will ensure that appropriate data on children's progress is shared between professionals working with children from the early years onwards. This should help to support transitions.

8. We will identify and share examples of how the Attainment Scotland Fund and the Pupil Equity Fund are being used to support transitions from ELC to primary school.

9. We will continue to explore options through UK legislation to enable the sharing of data by DWP and HMRC to allow local authorities to identify eligible families.

10. We will provide dedicated support to local authorities to help improve uptake amongst eligible 2 year olds.

11. We will continue to work with local authorities to produce guidance on implementation of the additional graduate commitment. Local authorities will be asked to submit action plans to show how they intend to deploy their additional graduates.

12. We will create a fund that enables staff to support children with ASN or disabilities. This could cover funding for specialist training for ELC staff as well as funding for equipment for adaptations, providing sensory areas, or establishing equipment banks in local areas.

13. We will improve the data collected on children with ASN to enhance our understanding of additional support needs of this age group, and the support plans in place for them.

14. We will publish guidance on delivering the Daily Mile in ELC in autumn 2017.

15. We will establish an ELC Service Models Working Group with local authorities to: develop the details of the new Funding Follows the Child model; and produce a national standard for a more open process to becoming a funded provider.

16. Through our Quality Action Plan, we will work with stakeholders to define the quality dimensions of the national partnership standard. This will draw heavily on existing quality standards used by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate. Our response to the Education Governance review will provide clarity on responsibilities for the overall monitoring of standards.

17. We will commission a feasibility study to explore the potential costs and benefits of introducing an Early Learning and Childcare Account in the future.

18. We will consult on the legislative changes required to ensure that existing provisions on flexibility, including consultation requirements, remain appropriate to deliver our policy vision for 2020.

19. We will publish guidance on delivering flexibility in early 2018, drawing on the operation of, and learning from, the ELC delivery model trials to help local authorities design their provision for 2020.

20. We will establish and provide delivery support to local authorities. This multi-disciplinary team, which has been co-designed with local authorities, will provide access to additional service innovation and redesign capacity and to professional and technical expertise on common and complex issues.

21. We will increase the number of ELC Modern Apprenticeships by 10% year on year up to 2020.

22. We will review the financial contributions and eligibility criteria for ELC related apprenticeships for those over 25, to create new opportunities to join the workforce.

23. We will work with local authorities and delivery partners to develop recruitment and career pathways which assist in both attracting and retaining high calibre candidates within the ELC workforce, and which also improve the gender balance across the sector.

24. We will launch a recruitment marketing campaign in autumn 2017. This will positively promote careers in ELC and the opportunities to transform the lives of our children.

25. We will work with SDS to produce updated guidance on opportunities in ELC for careers advice organisations, ensuring that this reflects the range of roles available in the sector.

26. We will work with delivery partners, who already have excellent links to communities across Scotland, to raise the profile of a career in ELC amongst underrepresented groups. This will be complemented by our recruitment marketing campaign.

27. We will publish a new good practice design guide for ELC in June 2017, which will promote good, innovative design for both indoor and outdoor space.

28. We will commission the Scottish Futures Trust to produce an ELC infrastructure progress report to ensure we can learn and share lessons to inform the capital investment between now and 2020, and highlight the opportunities that this investment programme presents to support wider economic growth.

29. We will publish an analysis of the extent of on-site childcare provision in Scotland's Higher and Further Education estates in early summer 2017.

30. We will implement a programme of pilot approaches in 2017-18 to explore how additional support can be tailored to help reduce the burden of upfront childcare costs. The pilots will focus on trialling deposit guarantee schemes. We will set out more details in summer 2017.

31. We will publish the first in a series of evaluation reports by the end of 2017. This will include an evaluation of the current expansion to 600 hours per annum as well as baseline indicators for monitoring progress towards the expansion to 1140 hours.

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A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland – Consultation Analysis Report

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A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland - Consultation Analysis Report

Linda Nicholson, The Research Shop, March 2017

Contents

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 provided for 600 hours of annual entitlement to free early learning and childcare (ELC) for all three and four year olds, and eligible two year olds. The Scottish Government considers that there is potential for the ELC system to do even more to support the ambitions towards closing attainment and inequality gaps and intends to increase the annual entitlement to free ELC to 1140 hours by 2020.

1.2 The Scottish Government published a consultation document, *Blueprint for 2020,* to seek views on the policy choices to be made in taking forward the ambition for expanded free ELC hours. The document was published on 15 October 2016 with views invited by 9 January 2017. In addition, a series of consultative events was held across Scotland to raise awareness of the consultation and to seek views of parents directly.

1.3 336 responses to the consultation were received, 208 from individuals and 128 from organisations. The largest body of response amongst organisations came from private nurseries. A summary of the key views provided in the responses follows.

Quality of ELC provision

Support at transitions

1.4 To ensure children are fully supported at the transition stages throughout their early-learner journey, respondents emphasised the need for clear transition plans. Parents/carers were identified as playing key roles in supporting children at the transition stages; effective partnership working between ELC and school settings was also identified as crucial. Child-centred approaches were advocated with allied professionals such as health visitors, and speech and language specialists, identified as having valuable contributions to make to smooth transitions.

1.5 A common view was that sufficient capacity is required within ELC settings to release staff to support transitions, in order to allow them to access appropriate training, and liaise with partner providers over transition issues.

Delivering high quality provision to two year olds

1.6 There was much agreement that the skillset for delivering provision for two year olds requires training and experience and is different to that required for older children. A common view was that the ELC workforce will need to refresh their learning to deliver high quality provision to this age group. Greater play-based learning was suggested along with more outdoor play opportunities.

1.7 Many respondents identified the need for higher staff to child ratios in ELC settings for two year olds, with greater need for input from health visitors, and speech and language specialists.

Making the ELC sector an attractive career choice

1.8 A common theme was that the ELC sector requires signficant overhaul to present it as an attractive, long-term career choice. Perceived inconsistencies across Scotland in pay and conditions, qualifications, opportunities for career progression, and promotion in schools and colleges were amongst the factors identified as creating instability and uncertainty in the workforce.

1.9 Many agreed that the sector had the image of "last resort" and was not highly valued. A recurring view was that the qualifications associated with the ELC sector were confusing and should be modernised and simplified.

Gender balance and diversity in the ELC workforce

1.10 A recurring view was that negative attitudes towards men in the ELC profession hampered efforts to achieve a gender balance in the workforce. Many ideas were put forward to address this, including large-scale marketing campaigns showcasing male role models, and case studies of men already working in the ELC profession. A dominant theme was that schools and colleges could do much to promote the ELC sector as a legitimate career choice.

1.11 An overarching view was that improving pay and conditions will have the biggest impact on increasing diversity of the ELC workforce by attracting men into the sector.

Encouragement of the Living Wage and wider Fair Work practices

1.12 Implementing payment of the Living Wage and wider Fair Work practices across the ELC sector received much support as contributing to improving the profile and value of the profession.

1.13 A prevailing view was that more funding will be needed to support higher wage costs and the costs associated with Fair Work practices.

1.14 Key approaches to ensuring comprehensive implementation of the Living Wage and Fair Work practices were identified as: introducing a national pay and conditions framework; and making Living Wage and Fair Work practices essential requirements of the procurement of partner provision by local authorities.

Actions to support increased access to outdoor learning, exercise and play

1.15 There was much support for increased access to outdoor learning, exercise and play with the proposal for a minimum of one hour per week considered low in ambition. Many respondents suggested that a "free flow" model be promoted with children having easy and constant access to outdoor play.

1.16 Some resistance to outdoor learning amongst parents and staff was identified, with a common view that this should be addressed to make outdoor learning the norm rather than an add-on.

1.17 Structural challenges to greater outdoor learning were identified such as old settings with limited outdoor space. New national guidance on design for outdoor

learning was welcomed with suggestions that risk assessment protocol be reviewed and simplified, and funding be made available for adaptations to facilitate more outdoor access.

1.18 Many suggestions were made for local, collobarative approaches to support increased outdoor learning such as linking with local sports and physical activity providers and engaging with local active school co-ordinators. It was suggested that greater focus on outdoor activities may make the sector more appealing to men.

Improving accountability arrangements for ELC

1.19 A common view was that the sector is tightly regulated with the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland being the two key regulators, and other national and local regulatory frameworks also applying. A dominant theme was the need to ensure accountability arrangements across these bodies are streamlined, with consistent standards and indicators applying. There was much support for combining the two main regulatory regimes into one.

1.20 Praise was given for the the current focus on outcomes in inspections, with this seen as contributing to systematic and robust inspection. A recurring view, however, was that lack of continuity between inspectors created inconsistency across inspections.

1.21 A theme emerged around the benefits of local and continuous regulation, involving local hub models of inspection; inter-agency partnership scrutiny models; self-evaluation and reflective local models. Local scrutiny frameworks were perceived to have the benefit of local knowledge whilst benefiting from national tools such as "How Good is our ELC"[1].

Flexibility

Factors to consider in delivering flexible ELC provision whilst maintaining quality

1.22 The predominant view was that the needs of the child should be central when considering the delivery of flexible ELC provision. Whilst support was expressed for parents being enabled to work or study more flexibly, there was concern over children being placed in ELC settings for long hours.

1.23 Some respondents felt that expanding to 1140 hours was challenging enough without also trying to extend flexibility of provision.

1.24 Many respondents cautioned that increasing flexiblity of provision could impact negatively on the ELC workforce who have their own work-life balance to achieve. Greater flexibility was also seen as presenting administrative challenges to ELC settings who, it was envisaged, will need to manage shift patterns, anti-social hours cover, different pay rates and constant requests from parents to

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[1] https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/frwk1hgioearlyyears.aspx

change hours of provision. Some respondents felt that parents expectations may also need to be managed.

1.25 Other challenges were identified, particularly for rural areas and where specific needs have to be catered for, such as additional support needs (ASN), or Gaelic-medium.

1.26 Suggestions to make greater flexibility work were put forward and included: blending packages at local level and involving local childminders within the package; encouraging employers and colleges to be more flexible with family-friendly policies; and increased funding from Scottish Government to cover higher rates of pay for unsocial hours and more ELC staff. Support for more flexible ELC provision was notably higher in the consultation events where attendees were predominantly parents.

Ensuring fair and sustainable funding for all providers

1.27 A common view was that fair funding involved increasing the current funding provision from the Scottish Government to a level sufficient to fund the expansion of ELC and associated costs.

1.28 Some concern was expressed over the accountability of local authorities in passing on funding to partner providers, with suggestions made for: ring fencing the allocation; implementing a national standard sum to be paid to all providers; making local authorities more accountable for how they have used the funds.

Promoting and supporting the involvement of childminders in the entitlement to ELC

1.29 There was much support for childminders being part of the entitlement to ELC, perhaps within blended models of provision. Many respondents considered that parents should be educated on the benefits of childminders and that this mode of delivery of free ELC is an option.

1.30 A national recruitment and publicity campaign focusing on childminders was recommended, with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and the Care Inspectorate both identified as important in promoting childminders as providers of the ELC entitlement.

1.31 The most frequently mentioned barrier to becoming a childminder was too much paperwork and bureaucracy. Other barriers included: cost of adaptations to home environments; low pay; fluctuating pay; and scrutiny processes. Respondents considered that childminders should be subject to the same rigorous and regular inspection regimes as other providers of ELC.

1.32 A recurring theme was that childminders should have more opportunities to access training using both formal and informal learning mechanisms, from mandatory courses, to sharing best practice across networks.

Accessibility

Ensuring that the voice of children and their families is heard

1.33 There was widespread agreement that the views of children and their families should be heard and taken into account throughout the planning of the expansion. Some respondents emphasised that the views of future users of ELC services should also be sought, and also efforts should be made to ensure the voices are heard of people with disability; minority ethnic communities; those in rural areas; and those on low incomes.

1.34 A key theme was that running alongside consultation should be a programme of education to promote the expansion of free ELC provision. Both national and local promotion initiatives were envisaged.

1.35 On-going consultation rather than one-off initiatives were called for. There was general recognition that extra measures may need to be taken in the case of ensuring children's voices are heard, such as using specialists to gather their views, to ensure they are able to contribute effectively.

Ensuring equality of access for all children

1.36 There were mixed views on whether children with severe disabilities and ASN should be included in mainstream ELC, with the majority view in favour of inclusion, supported by additional, specialist help in dedicated settings.

1.37 Barriers in accessing ELC for children with disabilities and ASN were identified and included: unsuitable physical infrastructure; inadequate staffing levels; lack of awareness of families of their child's needs and the help available; and delayed identification of the child's needs.

1.38 Actions were identified to address such barriers. These included: additional funding for extra ELC staff, their training, and adaptations to the physical structures; greater access to specialist staff; review of current ELC setting infrastructure to ensure this is fit for purpose; consideration of transport issues alongside future planning of expansion of ELC hours.

Supporting higher take-up rates amongst eligible two year olds

1.39 A common view was that entitlement for eligible two year olds should be promoted via many different channels. Health visitors were identified most frequently in this regard, with GPs and social workers also mentioned often.

1.40 Some respondents considered that health visitors, Department of Work and Pensions, and inter-agency working, could all contribute to identifying those to whom the entitlement applies.

Encouraging more social enterprises and third sector providers to enter the ELC sector

1.41 A recurring view was that entering the ELC sector could be challenging for social enterprises and third sector providers, in terms of resourcing, fluctuations in

the need for ELC, attracting volunteers, ensuring suitable premises, and ensuring legislative requirements are fulfilled.

1.42 A common response was that sustainable and appropriate levels of funding will be needed to encourage more social enterprises and third sector providers into the sector. This was viewed as enabling longer-term planning, and supporting growth and quality provision.

1.43 Respondents considered that social enterprises and third sector providers could be supported with guidance on protocols, dedicated local authority officers, free training, business advice and by simplifying procedures such as the tendering model. Sharing resources and buildings was also identified as potentially helpful.

Governance arrangements supporting more community-led ELC provision

1.44 There was general agreement that the regulatory regime is demanding for community volunteers who may not have appropriate training, but are nonetheless required to meet rigorous regulations with associated responsibilities.

1.45 Common suggestions were for national and regional bodies to provide support and professional guidance to community-led ELC providers in order to facilitate their working within the current governance arrangements.

1.46 Amendments to current regulations were suggested to accommodate this sector, including Care Inspectorate, Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and health and safety requirements.

Improving the broader system for promoting, accessing and registering for a place in an ELC setting

1.47 There was agreement that systems for accessing and registering for a place need to be made simpler, more streamlined and less confusing. Consistency in approach across and within local authorities was called for.

1.48 Health visitors, in particular, were identified as playing a key role as providers of information, in addition to GPs, local and national television and printed and social media.

1.49 Whilst the benefits of accessing entitlement and registering for a place online were acknowledged, many felt that other routes to registration should be offered to accommodate those without digital access.

1.50 A repeated view was that the current Nursery Administration Management System (NAMS) should be developed to make it fit for purpose for the demands of the expanded hours entitlement.

Affordability

Barriers to accessing support with the costs of ELC provision and ensuring additional hours are affordable

1.51 A common view was that the tax and social security systems, which could provide help to those facing financial barriers, are complex and difficult to understand. Many considered that awareness raising, and help with understanding the financial assistance on offer, would support parents in accessing ELC provision beyond funded entitlement.

1.52 Three key ways to ensure additional hours are affordable were put forward: Scottish Government to subsidise costs by providing greater funding to ELC providers; making it easier for parents to pay by permitting flexible payment models including payment directly from salary/benefits; and subsidising some of the hidden costs such as free transport and lunches.

Encouraging private and third sector providers to extend capacity

1.53 A recurring view was that quality of provision should not be compromised in efforts to expand quantity of provision.

1.54 The most common view, expressed across a wide range of sectors, was that to encourage private and third sector providers to extend their capacity, more funding will be required for these providers, e.g. for increased staffing, paying Living Wages, training, capital investment in adaptations to premises.

1.55 Another significant theme was for such providers to work in partnership in clusters, to plan future needs and provision strategically, making best use of available local resources and facilities, such as under-used school facilities outwith school terms.

Financing and delivering the expansion

Funding model options

1.56 Amongst those respondents who provided a clear view, most supported a demand-led model of funding, whereby funding follows the child, parents and carers choose the provider and the funding follows, whilst still being administered by local authorities.

1.57 This model of funding was identified as the best approach to supporting the vision for high quality and flexible ELC, which is accessible and affordable for all. Other key advantages identified included providing parents with real choice over ELC provision, and avoiding local authorities using allocated ELC funding elsewhere. The main drawbacks envisaged were that too much flexibility could result in parents changing their needs frequently, leading to uncertainty of take-up and fragility of settings, particularly in rural areas.

1.58 Some respondents favoured a model of funding dependent on delivery, with funds routed through the local government block grant. Key advantages identified were ensuring a co-ordinated and sustainable approach; the model is already well understood; able to cope with changes in demand. Drawbacks were also envisaged, such as limiting parental choice; bureaucratic; and uncertainty over how much funding will be allocated.

1.59 Early learning and childcare accounts received some support as a potential funding option with benefits including giving parents choice and reducing bureaucracy. Drawbacks included lack of certainty for private providers and local authorities; and risk of parents using funds for other things.

Phasing of the expanded hours

1.60 A common view was that the expansion will require detailed planning to ensure the necessary physical and workforce infrastructures are in place to support additional hours.

1.61 Many respondents emphasised the need for early information on funding for the expansion to help long-term planning.

1.62 Regarding approaches to phasing in the expanded hours, most support was expressed for local targeting of expanded provision, depending on local circumstances. Priorities for early expanded entitlement were identified as: deprived areas; expansion across a variety of settings, including childminders; working parents; and by age of child (either oldest to youngest or vice versa).

2. Introduction

2.1 The Scottish Government's aim is to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up, and to give all children in Scotland the best possible start in life.

2.2 The early years are crucial in every child's life and evidence shows that access to high quality early learning and childcare[2] (ELC) is important to improving children's outcomes, and a cornerstone to closing attainment and inequality gaps.

2.3 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 provided for 600 hours of annual entitlement to free ELC for all three and four year olds, and eligible two year olds. The Act also made it a legal requirement for all local authorities to consult parents in order to increase flexibility over how funded hours are accessed. This was a significant milestone in marking, for the first time, the statutory right to more flexible options for childcare.

2.4 The Scottish Government considers that there is potential for the ELC system to do even more to support the ambitions towards closing attainment and inequality gaps, and to transform children's lives. To this end, they intend to almost double the annual entitlement to free ELC to 1140 hours by 2020 for all three and four year olds, and eligible two year olds. Their vision for the expansion is to deliver high quality, flexible ELC which is affordable and accessible for all.

2.5 In expanding the ELC entitlement, The Scottish Government proposes that actions will be built upon the following high level themes:
- Quality
- Flexibility
- Accessibility
- Affordability

2.6 It is acknowledged that this is a pivotal movement in developing the policy approach to implementing this ambition. Information about what is working well regarding current provision has been published in the *Financial review of early learning and childcare in Scotland: the current landscape,* (Sept, 2016). The Scottish Government is also reviewing the system of ELC and school education as part of *Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve Excellence and Equity in Education – a Governance Review.*

2.7 Alongside these reviews, the Scottish Government published a consultation document, *Blueprint for 2020,* to seek views on the range of policy choices faced in taking forward the ambition for 1140 hours of free ELC by 2020. The consultation was published on 15 October 2016 with views invited by 9 January 2017. 20 open-ended questions were posed with views sought on policy choices; funding models; and phasing of provision. Responses were invited via Citizen Space or by emailing a dedicated mailbox. Emailed responses directly to the Scottish Government policy

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[2] Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) refers to the learning journey that takes place from birth, and reflects EU and OECD recommended models of integrated education and care.

team were also accepted. A series of consultative events was also held across Scotland to raise awareness of the consultation and to seek views of parents directly.

2.8 This report presents the analysis of views contained in the responses to the consultation. The views from the consultative events are also summarised and presented in this report.

Consultation responses and analysis

2.9 The Scottish Government received 336 responses to the consultation. Table 2.1 shows the distribution of responses by category of respondent. A full list of respondents is in the Annex. The respondent category applied to each response was agreed with the Scottish Government policy team.

Table 2.1: Distribution of responses by category of respondent

Category	No.	%
Private Nurseries	33	10
Local Government	29	9
Third Sector and Voluntary Organisations	23	7
Further Education and Higher Education	8	2
Local Government Nurseries and Schools	6	2
Third Sector and Voluntary Providers	6	2
Parent Representative Bodies	5	1
Unions	5	1
National Inspection and Improvement Bodies	5	1
Others	8	2
Total organisations	**128**	**38**
Individuals	208	62
Total	**336**	**100**

NB Percentages do not add to 100% exactly due to rounding.

2.10 62% of responses were submitted by individuals; 38% came from organisations. The largest category of respondent amongst the organisations was private nurseries comprising 10% of all respondents. Amongst the individual respondents many defined themselves as: parents; ELC practitioners; private nursery employers and employees; teachers, ex-teachers; and childminders.

2.11 Most respondents provided a response to all or most of the questions using the Citizen Space online system. The Citizen Space content was then exported onto an Excel database by the analyst to enable comparison of views between respondents and across respondent sectors. In total, 181 respondents requested that their views remain anonymous. A further 55 respondents requested that they did not wish their response to be published. These preferences are respected in this report, for example, in the selection of quotes to illustrate specific points.

2.12 The Scottish Government held seven consultative events with parents across Scotland to facilitate discussion on the key topics in the consultation. Scottish Government officials took detailed notes from the events from which summaries were compiled by the analyst and are inserted under each question in the report, where relevant.

2.13 The structure of this report follows that of the consultation document. Chapter 3 focuses on views on quality of provision (Questions 1 – 7); Chapter 4 presents responses to questions 8 – 10 on flexibility of provision; Chapter 5 addresses issues of accessibility and summarises views in response to questions 11 – 16; Chapter 6 presents responses to questions 17 and 18 on affordability; and Chapter 7 relates to questions 19 and 20 on financing and delivery of the ambition.

3. Quality of ELC Provision

> **Transitions**
>
> Children face a number of transitions throughout their early-learner journey. For example, from the home to ELC, across different ELC settings, within those settings, and into school. The system must ensure that these transitions support continuity, coherence and progression.

Question 1: How do we ensure children are fully supported at the transition stages throughout their early-learner journey? What support should be provided to ensure that the ELC workforce and teachers have the skills, knowledge and capacity to support transitions?

3.1 305 respondents (91%) answered this question.

Views on ensuring children are fully supported at the transition stages

3.2 Views revolved around the following themes:

Need to establish structured transition policies and plans

3.3 An overarching theme across several sectors was the need for ELC settings to establish clear plans relating to transition stages and "settling in" periods. Planning and implementing structured programmes of actions were viewed as ways to facilitate smooth transitions to support children.

3.4 "Transition policies" and "settling in" policies were both mentioned in responses, with some respondents providing specific examples of practice which had worked well in their setting, for example, "Stay and Play" sessions whereby parents/carers are encouraged to attend ELC sessions with their child to ease their integration into the ELC setting, whilst also benefiting from getting to know staff and the ethos of the setting, and meeting other families.

3.5 A few respondents emphasised the need for promoting awareness and understanding of such policies amongst the ELC staff and parents.

Need to involve parents/carers in supporting transition

3.6 Many respondents, particularly individuals and local government bodies, identified parents/carers as having a key role to play in supporting children at the transition stages. It was suggested that parents/carers should be educated in ways to do this, and the significance of the transitional stages impressed upon them. The phrase, "transition starts a home" was used.

3.7 A common theme was the need for effective partnership working between ELC and school settings and parents/families. Respondents from a wide range of sectors emphasised the need for strong communication between ELC staff and

parents, time dedicated to engagement with families, and the importance of ELC staff and schools building up a picture of each child's home and family life, in order to support them best at transition stages.

Involving other practitioners
3.8 Several local government bodies and individuals in particular suggested that professionals outwith the key ELC and teaching sectors should also be involved in ensuring smooth transitions. Childminders, health visitors and speech and language specialists were identified as having potentially valuable contributions to make in preparing children for transition, and providing key background information to help in planning their transition.

Adopting individualised approaches
3.9 Within the context of an overarching transition policy, individualised approaches to meet the needs of each child were recommended by respondents from a range of sectors. One individual referred to this as "one-to-one transitioning". To support children best, suggestions were made for flexible approaches, at the child's pace, gradual, in short phases.

3.10 It was highlighted by a few respondents that children will go to school from a variety of different nursery settings, with some attending more than one pre-school setting, demonstrating the need for individualised approaches to settling them into their new environment.

3.11 A small number of respondents (private nursery and individuals) considered that the decision on when to move children from one stage to another should be made jointly between parents and ELC staff.

3.12 The need to introduce more flexibility into timing of transitions was suggested by a few respondents across four different sectors. In particular, there was support for moving away from age-led criteria for starting school, to either delaying this age, or focusing more on readiness to start school.   One respondent recommended exploring the benefits of a flexible "deferral" system in which delayed starting school for some children is viewed positively.

Support from key people through transition
3.13 A common theme was that a way of supporting children through ELC transitions is to ensure they have a dedicated supporter with them throughout. Depending on context, parents/carers, key workers, and named persons were all identified as having a role to play.

3.14 Key workers were considered to be important in being able to plan ahead, provide information to make the transition smoother, liaise with workers at the next stage, attend the next setting with the child, and provide appropriate support until the child is settled.

Transition visits and meetings

3.15 Many respondents recommended planned programmes of visits for children in preparation for moving to the next stage of their ELC journey. The importance of building these into transition plans was emphasised. One individual described a "buddy scheme" whereby children from the new setting visit those preparing to move on, as part of the transition process.

3.16 A common view was that visits should be phased and gradual, building up time spent at the new setting, and supported throughout by key and familiar people, to help children accommodate the change.

3.17 Another recurring suggestion was for planned programmes of meetings and engagement between key members of the workforce at the old and new settings in order to exchange information. It was acknowledged that this may involve many different personnel, for example, where children from a variety of ELC settings move on to primary school. Some respondents envisaged regular meetings leading up to transition, between nursery staff, primary school staff and parents; a local government nursery school described how the nursery teacher made visits to local playgroups each term to support transition.

Challenges

3.18 A number of key challenges were identified which respondents flagged as requiring careful planning and handling to ensure children are supported appropriately:

- Children who have ASN.
- Children whose first language is not English.
- Where there are several private nurseries feeding into a primary school or nursery and where additional time will be required to ensure adequate liaison and engagement prior to, and during, transition.

Views on the support to be provided to ensure that the ELC workforce and teachers have the skills, knowledge and capacity to support transitions

3.19 Views on ensuring that the ELC workforce and teachers have the skills, knowledge and capacity to support transitions revolved around the following themes:

Level of staffing

3.20 A common view across a wide range of sectors was that ELC workforce and teacher staffing levels should ideally be such that there is capacity for practitioners to devote time to focusing on transitions, to work in partnership with families and other practitioners on transitions, and to undertake the relevant continued professional development to ensure their skills and knowledge are kept up-to-date:

> "There must be capacity across all providers to ensure high quality transition from home, between providers and to primary school. This means that settings and schools must have more staffing than the bare minimum required for pupil contact time. There must be clear expectations about, mechanisms for and understanding of transition practices. This should include protected time for nursery staff, health

visitors, etc to properly engage with transition processes" (Representative Body).

3.21 Another recurring view was that ratios of staff to children should allow for staff to get to know each child individually, and thereby gain more knowledge in how best to support the child through transitions.

3.22 A few respondents suggested that what they perceived to be increasing amounts of paperwork in the ELC sector, limited the capacity of the ELC workforce and teachers to spend time on supporting transitions. Other challenges mentioned less frequently were staffing to support the transitions of children with ASNs; ensuring workforce capacity and appropriate ratios in rural areas; maintaining adequate levels of support assistants and support specialists, particularly in primary schools; and coping with what some perceived to be constantly changing ELC policies and protocol which took time to adjust to.

Remuneration for ELC practitioners
3.23 A small number of respondents, largely individuals, identified issues of pay for ELC staff as needing to be addressed in order to enable practitioners to support children through their early-learner journey effectively. Their key concerns were:
- For ELC staff to devote additional time to upskilling for transitions, there should be some financial gain, as training is done largely in their own (unpaid) time.
- For ELC staff to be motivated to go on to undertake professional qualifications, there should be a financial benefit.
- To facilitate partnership working with other professionals working in this field, there should be greater equity in pay across sectors.
- Additional Scottish Government funding is required in order that private nurseries can pay salaries commensurate with those paid in local government establishments and reflective of the qualifications of the staff.

Effective partnership working
3.24 A common view across many sectors was that closer collaborative working with strong communication between practitioner settings is essential to ensuring that the ELC workforce and teachers have the knowledge to support transitions. Several respondents emphasised that such partnership working should be underpinned by transition policies, with time allocated to execute the plans.

3.25 Many respondents across a range of sectors emphasised the need for shared understandings, values, ethos, expectations and ambition regarding children's ELC transitions, and suggested a key way to engender this as joint training across sectors. In particular, some specified that childminders should be enabled to attend joint training, and the importance of involving private nursery practitioners with others.

3.26 A few local government and individual respondents suggested that clear, cross-sectoral guidelines on the importance of transitions and their management could be very useful in promoting joint working and understandings.

3.27 A few respondents, including representative bodies and individuals, commented that practitioner respect for others across different settings is essential in order to gain maximum benefit from collaborative working. For example, a representative body remarked that private and third sector settings often had much experience from managing children's transitions from an early age.

Sharing of information
3.28 The need for ELC and teaching sectors to share relevant information about children to aid transitions was a common theme across several sectors. Some respondents emphasised the requirement for good quality, detailed information, and suggested ways to ensure consistency, such as standard documents to be used across settings, "transition profiles", a "universal document" and the like. One individual requested systems to be in place for community/third sector groups to share the useful information they have on children and their families.

Training
3.29 A common theme was that the ELC workforce and teachers should be supported with appropriate training to equip them with the skills and knowledge they require to guide children through transition stages. Many respondents made general comments regarding the need for highly qualified staff, with the necessary skills to work in this field.

3.30 A few respondents urged that qualified teachers are deployed within ELC settings, and that there should be funding available for nursery staff to embark on under-graduate courses of relevance.

3.31 A recurring theme was that training should be viewed as career-long, needing regularly updated, continued professional development being key. In-house training was envisaged as part of this, with capacity needed to release staff from frontline duties for this purpose.

3.32 A repeated view was that training should be relevant and involve a range of approaches such as shadowing and visits to gold standard establishments to observe effective practice. A few respondents suggested that colleges and other training providers review their course content to ensure up-to-date relevance, focusing on the outcomes and competencies around transition. Latest research was identified as potentially informing course content and generating valuable lessons on transitions. Several respondents suggested that best practice on transitions could be usefully shared as part of learning.

3.33 Several respondents across a variety of sectors recommended specific topics for training, listed below from most to least frequently mentioned:
- Transition support
- Child development/developmental stages
- Attachment
- Play-based learning
- Additional support needs and transition support

3.34 There were a few suggestions, largely from individuals, for teachers to have more training in early years, including placements in early years' settings.

Views relating to Question 1 emerging from consultative events

3.35 The overarching views to emerge related to ensuring consistency for children and for parents/carers. Emphasis was placed on minimising the number of transitions taking place, particularly for vulnerable children. For families with more than one child requiring ELC, a holistic view to planning transitions was required, with emphasis on siblings provided for in one setting. Consistency across local authorities in supporting children at the transition stages was requested.

Question 2: What support is required to ensure that the ELC workforce have the skills, knowledge and capacity to deliver high quality provision for two year olds? How can the ELC sector best meet the specific learning, developmental and environmental needs of two year olds? What approach should be taken on the transition for these children when they turn three?

3.36 297 respondents (88%) answered this question.

Views on ensuring the ELC workforce have the skills, knowledge and capacity to deliver high quality provision for two year olds

3.37 There was overarching agreement that the skillset for delivering provision for two year olds is specialist, requires training and experience, and is different to that required for older children.

3.38 The most common response across sectors was that the ELC workforce will require to upskill and refresh their learning in order to deliver high quality provision for two year olds. Relevant training, tailored to provision of care for two year olds, was viewed as crucial, with many respondents identifying knowledge of pre-birth to three national guidance and Building the Ambition[3] as fundamental to all those working with this age group. A small number of respondents recommended a clear training framework to aid consistency in approach.

3.39 A few individual respondents suggested relevant training should be made mandatory. Others, from a range of sectors, gave their view that workforce leaders, such as nursery managers and headteachers, should also be required to undertake such training. A small number of respondents across different sectors considered that the training of childminders working with two year olds should be addressed as a priority, with joint training across sectors and settings suggested.

3.40 A few respondents, largely individuals, called for qualified teachers to be within all ELC settings delivering provision to two year olds.

3.41 There was some demand for more accessible and affordable learning opportunities, underpinned by more resources, particularly for private sector

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[3] http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf

nursery staff. Suggestions were made for varied outlets such as online learning; local opportunities for training; and in-service and in-house training; and peer monitoring.

3.42 A common theme was that private nurseries and third sector/community settings already have a wealth of experience in delivering ELC provision to two year olds and this expertise could be usefully harnassed for training purposes. Suggestions were made for placements in such settings; observations; shadowing; and sharing good practice.

3.43 Some respondents specified topics for training which they considered important for this age group. The most commonly mentioned are listed below from most to least mentioned:

- Child development; social and emotional development
- Nurture/attachment
- Mental health/autism
- Play
- Providing for children with ASN

Views on how the ELC sector can best meet the specific learning, developmental and environmental needs of two year olds

3.44 A common view, largely from individuals, was that ELC staffing levels will need to increase to ensure ratios of staff to children are more suited to this younger age group. Several respondents commented on how resource-intense provision for two year olds has to be to cater for their needs.

3.45 Higher staffing levels were also seen as necessary in order to enable staff to build relationships with parents and families and also other professionals such as health visitors, and speech and language specialists, who may be more involved at this age.

3.46 The notion of supporting parents and children together, helping with parenting skills and involving parents in ELC care, was put forward by a few, with a local authority and some individuals suggesting further development of family learning centres and hubs. A few respondents envisaged ELC staff making regular visits to children's homes to facilitate closer working with parents and carers.

3.47 It was generally agreed that provision for two year olds would be play-based with opportunity for art, movement, dance, singing, sensory play, and story-telling all expected to be key elements. A few respondents, largely individuals, emphasised what they perceived to be the need for outdoor play opportunities.

3.48 A repeated theme was that the ethos should be one of nurturing the child, adopting an individualised approach based on time spent with the child, observing them and gradually understanding their preferences and abilities.

3.49 Many organisations, from across different sectors, emphasised the need for adapting current premises to ensure suitable provision for two year olds in terms of: toileting and nappy changing areas; rest areas; space for feeding; and space for carefully selected age-appropriate play equipment.

3.50 A few respondents suggested that provision should be made for more "stay and play" opportunities for parents and carers.

3.51 A small but significant body of respondents (largely individuals) expressed concern over children of this age entering into local authority ELC settings before they are ready. What some perceived to be the benefits of childminders over ELC nursery settings were outlined, with some suggestions that childminders could be utilised more within ELC settings to help children settle, and to work with small clusters of children.

Views on what approach should be taken on the transition for these children when they turn three

3.52 Views overlapped to some extent with those provided in response to the previous question. The most common view expressed was that timing of transition should be based on readiness rather than age. Rather than a one-off event, respondents viewed transition to be an on-going process with gradual preparations made to equip each child for the next stage.

3.53 The need for continuity between the original and the receiving setting was emphasised, with suggestions made for key people to make the transition with the child, and stay for a "settling" period.

3.54 Effective communication and partnership working between the original and receiving settings, in addition to close working with relevant support professionals such as health visitors, were viewed as essential for smooth transitions. A well structured transition plan was also identified as important.

3.55 A key emerging theme was that efforts could be made to minimise transitions for children of this age. Ideas for this included: adopting a two to five year approach; using a childminder throughout; ensuring new builds include appropriate accommodation for two year olds; and ensuring the child stays with the same provider throughout their early years. It was highlighted by several respondents (individuals and private nurseries in particular) that private nurseries already make provision for two to five year olds, therefore their transitions do not involve movement between settings.

Views relating to Question 2 emerging from consultative events

3.56 Participants in one event identified a greater role for childminders working with this age group. This was also viewed as avoiding stigmatising vulnerable two year olds.

3.57 A need for an expanded and diversified workforce was identified to address the increased requirement for provision for this age group. Some participants, however, expressed concern that this may reduce the level of experience of the

workforce overall, with one idea being to limit the number of trainees in any one setting.

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A highly qualified and diverse ELC workforce

The delivery of a quality ELC experience will continue to be driven by the dedicated and highly skilled and qualified ELC workforce. The expansion will see this workforce grow substantially, resulting in the creation of new positions across all grades providing employment opportunities for new entrants to the sector, as well as progression opportunities for existing staff.

The Scottish Government considers it vital that as part of the expansion, the skills and qualifications profile of the ELC workforce is raised, diversity is increased, and there is greater gender balance in the workforce.

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Question 3: How can the qualification routes and career paths that are open to ELC practitioners be developed to ensure that the ELC sector is seen as an attractive long-term career route?

3.58 292 respondents (87%) answered this question.

3.59 There was widespread, cross-category agreement that the ELC sector required significant overhaul to present it as an attractive, long-term career route. Of particular concern was what was viewed as current inconsistencies across Scotland, local authority areas, and providers, in: pay and conditions; routes into the sector; opportunities for upskilling and career path progression; qualifications required; and promotion through schools and colleges. Such inconsistencies were perceived to create instability and uncertainty in the workforce and inhibit long-term career aspirations.

3.60 A new national framework was supported for pay and conditions; and a national training strategy was called for to streamline and clarify routes into the sector, and opportunities once in post.

3.61 A summary of the main themes follows.

Views on perceptions of the sector

3.62 It was generally agreed that sector is not currently valued highly, particularly in relation to the teaching profession, with relatively low pay one main contributor to the image of a "Cinderella" or "last resort" profession.

3.63 A dominant view was that pay should at least represent a living wage and should incentivise those taking further qualifications and gaining more experience, by rewarding them accordingly. Low pay was viewed by many as off-putting to men in particular, who otherwise might consider this sector for a career. The prevalence of short-term contracts was also a major drawback for those seeking a reliable income and a job for the future. One respondent commented:

"As a parent, I don't want to participate in a system where the people who look after my children have to be amongst the lowest paid in society" (Individual).

3.64 A recurring view, across private sector nurseries in particular, was that more funding is required from the Scottish Government to enable them to pay staff higher salaries. Many considered that without this the current inequity in pay between the private and the local authority sectors will continue, resulting in instability in the workforce as practitioners migrate to more lucrative posts.

3.65 A common view was that the increasing expectations and demands placed on the sector, for example from the Care Inspectorate, were not matched by increased financial gain, leading to low morale and perceptions of being under-valued.

3.66 There were many calls for greater alignment with the teaching profession as a means to achieve higher status. Ways to do this were suggested and included: greater respect for the BA in Childhood Practice as a credible qualification on par with the BA in Education; terms and conditions in line with those offered in the teaching profession; clear career progression which includes routes into teaching; greater fluidity between professionals moving between the two sectors; and respect for skills and input of leaders in the ELC sector as with leaders in the teaching profession.

3.67 Several respondents identified the terminology of ELC as potentially hampering its portrayal as a legitimate, long-term career option. A repeated view was that "practitioners" was frequently used to cover a wide variety of roles of different stature, diminishing their individual value, and not respecting and valuing each of their contributions. A common view was that greater clarity and consistency are required in terminology of the roles and responsibilitites of the different ELC posts in order to attract newcomers to the sector.

3.68 A recurring view was that school careers advisors and training colleges have a key part to play in promoting the sector as an attractive option and a credible choice for those looking for a long-term career. A few respondents suggested that work needs to be done to overturn the image of ELC as "women's work". An example given was that of Ayrshire College where a course "Men into Care" is offered.

3.69 There was support across sectors for a dedicated marketing campaign to promote the value and credibility of the sector for long-term career prospects.

Views on ELC career path and qualifications

3.70 There was general agreement that currently there is no clear career path to aspire to in the sector. Inconsistency within and across different local authority regions was seen as contributing to this, for example, qualified teachers being removed from nurseries in some areas and re-instated elsewhere. Calls were made for transparency in career options; several respondents requested a nationally recognised plan or map of the ELC career pathway, incorporating relevant qualifications and timeframes. A few respondents suggested that more information should be available on entry points to the sector.

3.71 Childminders were referred to by a few respondents, across different categories, as requiring special attention regarding their career path. One representative body remarked that not much is known about their choices in career, their progressions and their options, yet they represent a valuable and integral aspect of delivering ELC.

3.72 A common view was that the qualifications associated with the ELC sector are confusing and should be modernised. A repeated request was for simplification and streamlining and for the current qualifications to be reviewed to assess their fit for purpose. For example, a few respondents identified the BA Education as offering expertise in teaching and learning but limited in terms of content on childhood; the BA in Childhood Practice was seen as focused on leadership and management but not strong on child pedagogy and curriculum.

3.73 A few respondents emphasised the need for nationally recognised qualifications which would be acknowledged in other jurisdictions in cases of transfer.

3.74 A small number of respondents, including a few local authorities, suggested that relevant qualifications should be included in the school curriculum at national 4 and 5 level.

Views on facilitating routes in and career paths

3.75 Many respondents recommended innovative approaches to facilitating routes into the profession such as free access to training for older returners; family-friendly policies to enable the children of ELC workers to be catered for; expansion of apprenticeship schemes in secondary schoools; and greater opportunity to progress through training once in the sector, with options such as distance learning, on-the-job training, paid attendance at courses, and chances to pursue specialist interests such as speech therapy.

Views relating to Question 3 emerging from consultative events

3.76 General views were that the sector is not highly valued at present, with low pay and long hours contributing to this image. There was support for an increased profile for the BA in Childhood Practice. The terminology used to describe the profession was identified as requiring review in order to present greater appeal.

3.77 Participants identified capacity of the workforce as challenging, with suggestions for ways to recruit more personnel into the profession. Calls were made for innovative ways to broaden pathways into the workforce and career paths once within the profession. Parents of children receiving ELC and those working in ELC in a voluntary capacity were identified as potential candidates for the future paid workforce.

Question 4: How can we increase the diversity of the ELC workforce, in particular increasing the gender balance in the sector?

3.78 270 respondents (80%) answered this question.

3.79 By far the most common response was that improving pay and conditions would have the biggest impact on increasing diversity of the ELC workforce by attracting more men into the sector. Longer-term contracts and greater flexibility in hours were also identified as key factors.

3.80 Another recurring theme was the need for a large-scale promotion of ELC as a respected and valuable profession with significant impact on the long-term development of children.

3.81 A number of more specific approaches to attracting greater numbers of men into the ELC workforce were suggested, with the most frequently mentioned listed below:

- Well publicised progression/career structure within the profession.

- Large-scale marketing campaign aimed at men, showcasing case studies and examples of men already working in the profession; identification of "champions" or "ambassadors" to portray the sector in a positive way using images and information which men will relate to.

- Opening up a variety of routes into the profession in addition to the traditional approaches. For example, apprenticeships; engaging men to deliver sessions in sport, gardening, creative subjects, as a first step in. Encouraging men into childminding roles, perhaps with partners, as a taster, and opportunity for initial experience.

- Being much more specific in distinguishing between, and defining the different roles on offer within the ELC workforce. Re-branding some to make them more attractive to men (for example, "Centre manager" was suggested).

- Changing the focus of promotion of ELC from "nurturing" to "adventure" with outdoor space and play to appeal to men's interests and strengths.

- Valuing qualifications in fields such as outdoor learning and sports development as potentially useful to the ELC sector.

- Ensuring men who commence the route into the sector are supported by buddying and mentoring schemes involving other men.

Views on challenges to attracting more men into the ELC workforce

3.82 Negative attitudes towards men in the ELC profession were identified by many respondents as hampering efforts to achieve a gender balance in the ELC sector. Respondents identified cultural stereotyping of women as those who look after children, and described societal suspicion of the motives of men who choose to enter the sector:

"Significant attitudinal change is required within society as a whole to counteract the myth that caring, nurturing roles, including those with children, are the domain of women" (Representative Body).

Views on more general actions to promote diversity

3.83 A recurring theme was that schools and colleges could do much to promote the ELC sector as a legitimate career choice. A few respondents suggested that more use be made of placements within ELC settings; work experience; apprenticeships in the sector; and addressing stereotypes of ELC being women's work.

3.84 A small number of respondents advocated positive action to target groups under-represented in the ELC sector, for example, targeted job adverts; balancing the gender ratio in FE/HE recruitment onto courses; running men only training courses; providing bursaries and grants for men only; advertising certain posts in minority languages in minority community settings.

3.85 Some respondents identified what they had experienced as successful initiatives aimed at increasing the number of men in the profession. Men in Childcare and Glasgow City Council's "Approved by Dads" were mentioned, as was the organisation, Men in Childcare.

3.86 A small number of respondents across several different categories suggested that there is much to learn from other countries who have managed to increase diversity in their childcare workforce. They also recommended examining relevant research and building on positive approaches from this.

Views relating to Question 4 emerging from consultative events

3.87 There was agreement that there can be stigma attached to men entering the ELC profession, with more acceptance of men within primary and secondary schooling, rather than in pre-school settings. Suggestions were made to address this, such as schools and colleges promoting ELC as a profession for men, using role models from within the ELC sector to promote to other men, and including examples of men within ELC in case studies.

3.88 The current pay for the ELC workforce was viewed as off-putting and not appropriate for a main wage-earner within a family.

3.89 Participants at one event highlighted older people as potential recruits to the ELC sector, and suggested that accessibility to training should be made easier to facilitate older people's entry into the ELC workforce.

Living Wage and Fair Work practices

To make a career in ELC a more attractive long-term proposition, the Scottish Government considers that Fair Work practices should be encouraged across the sector. This includes ensuring that workers within the sector are appropriately remunerated, and that they have an ability to combine work with their own family commitments.

The Scottish Government is committed to promoting Fair Work practices across all sectors, and their aspiration is that all workers should be paid at least the Living Wage.

Question 5: How can payment of the Living Wage and wider Fair Work practices be encouraged across the ELC sector?

3.90 249 respondents (74%) addressed this question.

3.91 There was almost universal agreement that payment of the Living Wage and wider Fair Work practices should be implemented across the ELC sector. Introducing these practices was viewed as part of improving the profile of the workforce, valuing its contribution and respecting the importance and potential impact of the profession. Many respondents, particularly those in the public sector, reported that they already operated under these practices.

3.92 Whilst payment of the Living Wage and introducing wider Fair Work practices were supported, a dominant theme across several categories of respondent was that this cannot happen across the entire ELC sector until the true costs of operation are examined and long-term funding established. A recurring view was that a strategic approach should be adopted to planning the expansion and development of ELC, within the framework of Living Wage and wider Fair Work practices. Barriers and incentives should be part of the planning, which should take into consideration the different geographical context of ELC providers, particularly those in rural areas.

3.93 Many respondents envisaged significant benefits from the introduction of the Living Wage and wider Fair Work practices. Some suggested that the Scottish Government and/or local government take the lead in promoting these across the sector. Road shows, guidance, and sharing best practice were mentioned. A few respondents identified improved staff well-being, morale, flexibility, more opportunities to migrate across sectors, greater equity across sectors, less absenteeism, and better staff retention, as benefits.

Views on funding the Living Wage and wider Fair Work practices

3.94 The prevailing view was that more funding will be needed to support higher wage costs and the costs associated with wider Fair Work practices, such as increased staffing to allow for greater flexibility in work patterns. Local government respondents, in particular, emphasised the need for the Scottish Government to provide them with more funding to procure providers who are paying staff the Living Wage.

3.95 A few suggestions were made on funding these practices within current budgets:

- Ring-fencing early years' funding within local authorities.
- Asking parents to pay more for childcare.
- Lowering business rates for ELC providers.

- Lowering or removing VAT rating for childcare.
- Provision of free training for the ELC workforce.

Views on implementation and enforcement

3.96 Two main approaches to ensuring comprehensive implementation of the Living Wage and Fair Work practices were identified repeatedly as:

- Introducing a national pay and conditions framework in order to produce a level playing field with national benchmarks and a national, standardised structure across all sectors.
- Make Living Wage and Fair Work practices key requirements within the procurement of partner provision of ELC.

3.97 There was also some support, particularly amongst individual respondents, for making these practices mandatory through legislation.

3.98 A small number of respondents, largely individuals, identified the need for regular monitoring and inspecting/regulating the exercise of these practices across settings.

Views on incentives

3.99 Many respondents identified the broad, longer-term benefits, outlined in 3.93 above, as positive outcomes which should encourage providers to introduce these practices. In addition, a few suggested immediate, more tangible incentives including accreditation; national recognition; acclaim from the Care Inspectorate; and certificates to mark the achievement.

Views relating to Question 5 emerging from consultative events

3.100 Prevailing views were that offering a Living Wage would go some way to attracting men into the profession and also raise the profile of the ELC sector as a potential career option.

ELC settings designed to maximise the experience for children

ELC will take place in physical environments, indoors and out, designed to maximise the experience for children and improve the quality of learning.

To ensure that world class settings for delivering high quality ELC are delivered, the Scottish Government is working with partners, including the Care Inspectorate and Scottish Futures Trust, to develop new, good design guidance for all ELC settings, which will be published by summer 2017.

Question 6: What actions should be taken to support increased access to outdoor learning, exercise and play?

3.101 293 respondents (87%) addressed this question.

3.102 There was widespread agreement across respondent sectors on the importance of taking actions to increase access to outdoor learning, exercise and

play, in terms of physical health and opportunities for play and learning. Many providers described how they were already promoting outdoor access and activities. Childminders in particular, reported daily outdoor experiences.

3.103 The encouragement for ELC providers to ensure children have a minimum of one hour per week outside was viewed by many respondents as low in ambition. A recurring view, across several sectors, was for a minimum not to be stipulated, but instead the notion of "free flow" to be promoted, with children having free choice whether to play outdoors or in. A few respondents requested consistency in message across Scotland, and across related policies, for example, the physical activity strategy.

Views on challenges to increased outdoor access

3.104 A common view was that attitudes towards outdoor learning need to be addressed, with resistance identified amongst some parents and staff. Respondents emphasised the need for outdoor learning to be considered the norm, not an optional extra, to take place whatever the weather, and outdoors to be a place where learning can take place.

3.105 Other challenges frequently raised were:

- Old ELC settings in run-down buildings with limited outdoor space.
- Limited funding to make adaptations for outdoor learning, such as safety adaptations and equipment.
- Inadequate staff to child ratios to accommodate outdoor learning.
- Lack of appropriate clothing (staff and child).
- Poor transport links.
- Particularly in urban areas, lack of close access to safe outdoor environments such as parks and farms.
- Health and safety issues and risk assessments.

Views on frameworks to overcome challenges

3.106 Many respondents envisaged a "holistic" approach to overcoming challenges and promoting increased outdoor access. This involved securing "buy in" from staff, parents and local community; mainstreaming the notion of outdoor learning into all future planning and design, structure of the day, staff and parent education, and promoting outdoor learning, exercise and play as a part of home and ELC life.

3.107 Creating the future framework for outdoor learning was seen as involving a number of drivers, the most frequently mentioned being:

- Provision of national guidance and design as an early priority (acknowledged that this will be published by the Scottish Government in summer 2017); on staffing ratios; on risk assessments. Some organisations referred to existing guidance such as "My World Outdoors" and guidance on the National

Improvement Hub and Care Inspectorate website as particularly useful. National organisations such as Play Scotland were also identified as having a guidance role. National Care Standards were referenced as requiring to provide a consistent message.

- Revised risk assessment protocol to reflect "managed" but not "controlled" risk. Simplify the risk assessment process.

- Increased funding (including capital funding) for adaptations to facilitate outdoor access (such as changing windows into doors to the outdoors); grants for equipment such as wellies, play equipment, specialised buggies; funding for initiatives. The Big Lottery Fund example of the Play Ranger Model for Street Play sessions was given.

- Increased funding for higher staffing ratios with consideration given to the especial circumstances of children with disabilities.

- Enhanced opportunities for staff training in outdoor learning and Forest School training.

- Introduction of relevant modules into undergraduate and college courses to ensure that new staff come with a background knowledge in outdoor learning.

- Leadership from regulatory bodies with organisations such as the Care Inspectorate seen as having a role in raising expectations, for example, by including outdoor learning as a registration requirement.

- Local leadership from local authority "champions" or "outdoor learning officers".

Views on local approaches to supporting increased access

3.108 Respondents provided numerous practical suggestions, some based on experience, for how to support increased access to outdoor learning, exercise and play. Most frequently mentioned are below:

- Partner with local sports and physical activity providers to deliver activity in-house, to train staff, or to facilitate visits to local facilities.

- Engage with local active school co-ordinators.

- Educate and involve parents at every opportunity; encourage them to walk/cycle to the ELC setting and continue the outdoor approach at home.

- Ensure a supply of communal outdoor clothing for children and staff so no child is left out and provision is always at hand.

- Make outdoor space attractive and fun (e.g. playground paint; soft surfaces).

- Set up regular outdoor regimes – the "Daily Mile" was referenced; 10 minutes of outdoors after breaks; daily walks, and so on.

- Share facilities with other settings and with the community.

- Engage with community groups who can offer outdoor experiences such as allotment groups; farms; gardening clubs.

- Share good practice with others; hold joint training days across settings.

- Negotiate with local councils and community partnerships over subsidised transport to local outdoor facilities.

Views relating to Question 6 emerging from consultative events

3.109 There was much support for actions to be taken to increase access to outdoor learning, exercise and play, although challenges were identified, such as lack of space in urban areas. Mention was made of practical issues which could be addressed, such as making outdoor areas safer and ensuring the necessary equipment is available and staff are suitably trained to facilitate outdoor learning.

3.110 One group commented that outdoor activities may appeal more to a male workforce and could be a way of diversifying gender.

National Quality Standards and Inspection

The Scottish Government considers it important that accountability and scutiny arrangements are joined-up where possible to reduce unnecessary scrutiny. The two inspectorates, the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland, have worked ever more closely together over recent years, conducting shared inspections, developing their Quality Frameworks to be more holistic in nature and collaborating on areas such as the inspection of childminders.

In the light of extension of funded ELC entitlement by 2020 it is timely to consider how to build on the work of the inspectorates to create a more streamlined and holistic system supporting quality improvement in ELC.

Question 7: How could accountability arrangements for early learning and childcare be improved?

3.111 222 respondents (66%) addressed this question.

3.112 A common view was that the sector is currently tightly regulated with the Care Inspectorate and Eduation Scotland comprising the two key regulators, and many national and local regulatory frameworks also applying, such as Environmental Health, National Care Standards and local authority protocol.

3.113 A dominant theme was the need to ensure accountability arrangements in future are streamlined, with consistent standards and indicators applying. Many respondents considered the merits of combining the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland into one regulatory mechanism. The benefits of this were identified as: avoiding duplication; providing value for money; ensuring a consistent approach; minimising confusion; reducing bureaucracy; being proportionate; saving time; reducing pressure and stress; and being in-keeping with the intergrated model of provision.

3.114 In total, 38 respondents (including 20 local government respondents) clearly suggested taking the opportunity to combine the two regulatory regimes into one.

3.115 Several respondents referred simply to better streamlining of the separate regimes; 10 respondents (including the two regulatory bodies, a union and two

FE/HE establishments) specifically mentioned maintaining separate but complementary roles for the two key regulatory bodies in the future.

Views on current inspections

3.116 There was praise for the current focus on outcomes in inspections, in particular those by the Care Inspectorate. This was seen as ensuring systematic and robust inspection.

3.117 A recurring view, however, across several sectors was that lack of continuity between inspectors created inconsistency in views, with greater transparency and consistency requested. A few respondents suggested that those inspected should be able to hold the regulators to account for their inspections.

3.118 A view held by a small number of organisations, across a range of sectors, was that inspectors should be very highly qualified to do their job, including having relevant frontline experience. A few of the local government respondents proposed that joint inspections take place, involving local authority staff with local knowledge. Two respondents emphasised the need for Gaelic-speaking inspectors for Gaelic-medium schools.

3.119 There were mixed views on the frequency of inspections, with a small body of respondents suggesting that more frequent inspections should take place. A few requested more informal approaches whereby inspectors could be contacted inter-inspection for advice, or to showcase effective practice or improvements.

Views on local regulatory regimes

3.120 A recurring theme emerged around the benefits of local and continuous regulation. Local government respondents, in particular, highlighted possibilities of greater involvement in local hub models of inspection; inter-authority partnership scrutiny models; self-evaluation and reflective local models; and perhaps local childcare panels bringing children and parents together. Local scrutiny frameworks were viewed as having benefits of local knowledge and local tailoring of scrutiny, whilst taking advantage of national tools such as "How Good is our ELC".

3.121 A few respondents suggested greater involvement of parents and practitioners in providing open, honest feedback and being encouraged to raise concerns.

3.122 A small number of respondents considered that sharing good practice across local settings would help to cascade high standards of practice. Several individual respondents identified national structures such as a pay and conditions framework as setting common standards of practice as part of regulation.

3.123 The case of childminders was raised by a few respondents with the common view that they should be encompassed within the regulatory regime and should be assessed, as is the case for any other ELC provider.

Views relating to Question 7 emerging from consultative events

3.124 Participants requested greater stability in accountability arrangements, with some describing how changes in protocol create a burden of red-tape for local providers, who have to change their systems accordingly. Some perceived there to be a lack of consistency between local authorities in accountancy arrangements.

3.125 There was a call for more partnership and collaboration between local authorities and the third sector over accountability, with some form of an "alliance-contract" suggested.

3.126 A proposal emerged from one group for a ELC Centre of Excellence, with a remit for independent research, policy development and identification of what works.

4. Flexibility

A wider range of choice and options for parents and carers

Improving access to affordable ELC helps reduce barriers to participating in the labour market which parents and carers face. Building on existing and current flexible models of provision the expansion will support parents and carers in work, training or study. This will require patterns of provision that are better aligned with working patterns and diverse family needs.

Question 8: What factors must be considered in delivering flexible ELC provision, while continuing to ensure a high quality service? To what extent could funded ELC support parents and carers with non-standard working hours, such as working shifts and weekends?

4.1 291 respondents (87%) answered this question.

4.2 The predominant view was that the needs of the child should be at the centre when considering the delivery of flexible ELC provision. Whilst there was much support for enabling parents and carers to work or study, facilitated by more flexible ELC arrangements, the overarching view was that this should be balanced by ensuring that children are not disadvantaged through spending long hours in ELC settings. A few respondents considered that greater flexiblity of provision correlated with lower quality of ELC; some questioned whether increasing ELC flexibility to suit working parents and carers would contribute to giving children the best start in life:

> "The premise of this question puts the provision of childcare ahead of the needs of children" (Union).

4.3 Respondents generally associated flexible ELC with longer hours in ELC settings for children, and expressed concerns including:

- Children need stability in the ELC workforce to form attachments, but personnel will change due to shift changes over extended hours.
- Routines will be fragmented over longer hours, with children and workforce coming and going.
- By evening, children will be too tired to learn; quality of learning experience will be diminished.
- Long hours in ELC settings risks institutionalising children.
- Children are better off in their own homes in the evening, with childcare delivered there.

4.4 Several organisations suggested that expanding to 1140 hours comprises sufficient challenge without also trying to provide greater flexibility of take-up of

hours. One private nursery commented that attempting this was akin to "running before you can walk".

4.5 A small number of respondents, both organisations and individuals, considered that the aims of increased and greater flexibility of hours should be looked at alongside the ethos of giving children the best start in life, in a strategic fashion. They suggested questions should be asked such as, what is the overall aim?; how will increased and flexible hours achieve this?; will both learning and childcare functions be met?; and what will the ELC workforce look like to deliver what is required?

4.6 Several respondents requested that national limits are set on the number of hours and the level of flexibility which can be offered to parents, in order to safeguard the child and also to promote consistency across local authority areas.

Views on factors to be considered in delivering flexible ELC provision

4.7 In addition to concerns over children's wellbeing, offering flexible ELC was envisaged as potentially impacting on the **ELC workforce** in the following ways:

- Reducing work-life balance due to having to work hours no longer suited to their own family life.
- Undermining Fair Work practices.
- Reducing opportunities for group training.
- Lowering staff morale.
- Increasing staff turnover.
- Lowering the status of the job with focus shifting away from early learning to caring.

4.8 Many respondents envisaged challenges for **ELC settings**:

- Administratively: managing different shifts; anti-social hours cover; different pay rates for routine and premium hours; changing requests of parents working different weekly patterns.
- Some ELC providers rent space in buildings used for other purposes and will be unable to increase hours and flexibility.
- Parents' expectations of ELC flexibility may need managing as every family cannot have individually tailored provision.
- Staffing will need to increase to cover all hours offered and longer shifts.
- Provision will need to focus more on care in terms of quality sleeping and eating areas and nutritional meal content. More toileting facilities may be needed.
- Increasing flexibility for parents will impact negatively on the flexibility which can be offered to ELC staff.
- Greater flexibility over drop-off and collection times is disruptive and will be expensive and difficult to manage.

- Hard to find economies of scale and savings in the context of offering more flexibility of provision.

- Staff need to have safe and reliable transport to get to and from the ELC setting outwith usual daily hours and this could prove difficult using public transport.

4.9 **Other challenges** were identified with the most frequently mentioned being:

- Rural areas, where respondents stated that it was challenging to procure providers for standard hours, never mind increased and flexible hours. Communities are scattered; transport sometimes limited; and parents have longer travel to work time.

- Where children have specific needs, these will need to be catered for within the flexibility package, with Gaelic-medium provision and ASN both identified in this regard.

- Patterns of childcare and parent/carer working, set up using increased and flexible provision, will be disrupted when the child goes to school.

- Parents will have to be charged higher rates for some hours; they may end up committing to and paying for hours they then do not need if their working pattern changes, for example if they are on variable hour contracts.

Views on how funded ELC could support parents and carers with non-standard working hours

4.10 Despite much concern over the perceived challenges to the proposal, many respondents provided views on how best to make it work. The following suggestions were most common:

Blended package at local level

4.11 Most of those who commented envisaged more flexible ELC combining group and individual setting provision within a local community, with childminders mentioned frequently as having the experience and flexibility to contribute to the overall package. Nannies and family members such as grandparents were also identified as potentially contributing, in a paid capacity.

4.12 This model was viewed as providing consistency and stability at group setting level (benefitting the child and the ELC provider) whilst injecting individually tailored flexibility through childminding services (benefiting the child and the parents).

Employers/Colleges to be more flexible

4.13 There was some support for employers to be more responsible for promoting family-friendly policies so as to reduce the need for parents/carers to require such flexibility in ELC. Standard working patterns with good notice of change and standard hour contracts were suggested as helping parents plan their requirements. Greater provision of distance and e-learning by FE/HE establishments was envisaged as helping to reduce need for flexible ELC.

4.14 A few respondents suggested that large employers, such as NHS hospitals, should consider workplace ELC provision tailored around the needs of their workforce.

Increased Scottish Government funding

4.15 A common view was that increasing ELC flexibility will require increased funding for this sector from the Scottish Government to cover: higher rates of pay for unsocial hours; more staff; adaptations to premises, e.g. for more bathrooms, eating areas; more meal provision; inefficiencies inherent in such provision, such as over-staffing at times.

Review pay and conditions frameworks for ELC workforce

4.16 Many respondents considered that pay and conditions will need reviewed in order to accommodate more regular requirements for different shift patterns including non-standard hours, weekends and school holiday periods.

4.17 Some respondents identified teacher and janitorial staff as also potentially affected should school premises be deployed for flexible hour provision, with the need for their terms and conditions to be reviewed accordingly.

Nature of staffing

4.18 A few respondents suggested that the profile of staff required to work within the context of more flexible ELC provision may change to reflect more mature and experienced personnel, and increasing ratios of experienced staff to less experienced. It was also suggested that longer and more flexible hours may put more focus on outdoor learning and also attract more men into the profession, due to the higher and more stable wage on offer.

Learn from others

4.19 Respondents considered that lessons could be learned from current private and third sector providers who already operate flexibly; from research and experience in other countries; and from listening to parents and finding out from them what their needs are and barriers to accessing provision.

Help with administration from Scottish Government

4.20 Suggestions were made that the Scottish Government could develop electronic management systems purpose-made for logging workforce hours and invoicing.

Views relating to Question 8 emerging from consultative events

4.21 There was much agreement that currently parents are not offered much flexibility from ELC settings, particularly from local authority providers, to meet their needs around work and study. One impact of this is children receiving ELC across different settings within one day, which was not perceived as beneficial for child or parent. Support for more flexible ELC provision was notably higher in the consultation events where attendees were predominantly parents.

4.22 Some participants welcomed more flexible provision in their local area, such as school breakfast clubs, which had enabled them to have earlier work start times.

Question 9: How can we ensure fair and sustainable funding for all providers offering the ELC entitlement?

4.23 239 respondents (71%) answered this question.

4.24 A common view was that fair funding involved increasing the current funding provision from the Scottish Government to a level sufficient to fund the expansion of ELC and costs associated with this, such as adaptations.

4.25 Most of those who commented considered that levels of funding for individual establishments should reflect local and provider circumstances, including extra costs of rural settings; providing for ASN; deprivation; different levels of rental rates; and so on. A recurring comment was, "No one size fits all".

4.26 A repeated view, particularly amongst local government respondents, was that funding for partner providers should depend on their commitment to paying the Living Wage to their workforce. Some respondents suggested building in other requirements to the provision of funding to partner providers, such as developing outdoor space, or providing Gaelic-medium.

4.27 There was some concern over the accountability of local authorities in passing on funding to partner providers with suggestions for: ring fencing this allocation; implementing a national standard sum (perhaps re-introducing the previous Advisory Floor) to be paid to all providers; and making local authorities more accountable for how they have used the funds for ELC.

4.28 An emerging theme amongst private and third sector providers and individuals was for funds to "follow the child" and be given directly to parents, possible in voucher form, for purchase of ELC provision.

4.29 A small number of respondents, largely private sector providers, suggested that funds for ELC provision come directly from Scottish Government to providers.

4.30 There was some appetite, largely amongst individual respondents, for national pay scales across all providers.

4.31 Several respondents, including unions, considered that fair and sustainable funding for providers offering the ELC entitlement would be more likely if there was a universal service of provision, state run, in the not-for-profit sector.

4.32 A few respondents considered that guidance would be helpful on procuring ELC services; others suggested learning from other jurisdictions or closer to home, from the recent national Care Home contract.

4.33 A few respondents, largely private sector providers, re-iterated their proposal for reduced VAT and business rates in order to free up funding for Fair Wages.

Views relating to Question 9 emerging from consultative events

4.34 Very little discussion related directly to this question. There was some concern in one group, however, that local authorities are not passing on adequate funding to partner providers from their allocation for ELC.

Question 10: What more can we do to promote and support the involvement of childminders in the entitlement to ELC? What are the barriers, if any, to becoming a childminder? How can we ensure quality while preserving the unique value of home-based care?

4.35 237 respondents (70%) answered this question.

Views on what can be done to promote and support the involvement of childminders in the entitlement to ELC

4.36 There was much cross-sector support for childminders being involved in the entitlement to ELC.

4.37 In terms of **promotion of childminders**, many considered that parents, in particular, needed to be educated on the benefits of childminders and that this mode of delivery of ELC is an option. A small number of respondents suggested that local authorities may also need educating on this.

4.38 A national recruitment and publicity campaign focusing on childminders was recommended by several individuals and a few local government respondents. Information distributed locally on childminders and the services they provide was suggested by a small number of individuals.

4.39 It was envisaged that the SCMA and the Care Inspectorate could both play a part in promoting childminders within the context of the entitlement to ELC.

4.40 To **support the involvement of childminders** the most common view across a range of sectors, was that they should be part of a blended model of ELC provision, linked to local early years' establishments, and benefiting from joint training opportunities and support from both local authority and partner provider organisations.

4.41 A few individual respondents suggested that under a "funding following the child" model of funding, parents may be more likely to deploy childminders when choosing a package of ELC for their children.

4.42 To further support childminders, local government respondents in particular were in favour of the creation of support networks, such as peer group childminding networks, and the introduction of childminder support officers within local authorities.

Views on the barriers to becoming a childminder

4.43 The most frequently mentioned barrier was too much paperwork and bureaucracy.

4.44 Other common barriers identified were:

- Costs of adaptations to home environment/start-up costs/registration costs.

- Low pay; fluctuations in pay; late payers.

- Scrutiny process (although this was mentioned by local government more than childminders themselves).

4.45 Other barriers less frequently mentioned were: accessing training; poor status in society; isolation; loss of space in family home; and poor transport in rural areas.

Views on how to ensure quality

4.46 Views revolved around ensuring quality by:

- Inspection regimes.

- Registration and accreditation.

- Training opportunities and qualifications.

Inspection regimes

4.47 A common view was that childminders should be subject to the same rigorous and regular inspection regimes as other providers of ELC. The Care Inspectorate was mentioned as appropriate in this regard, with respondents from a range of sectors envisaging standards and performance indicators being applied to childminders, just as they are to others.

4.48 A national inspection and improvement body made reference to "How good is our early learning and childcare?[4]" framework for self-improvement, with a local authority emphasising the need to promote self-evaluation materials amongst childminders.

Registration and accreditation

4.49 A common view across sectors was that childminders should be required to register with the SSSC.

4.50 It was noted by national inspection and improvement bodies that Education Scotland is working with stakeholder organisations, including the Care Inspectorate and SCMA, to develop a quality assurance model for childminder settings where children's entitlement to ELC is being delivered.

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[4] https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1_NIHedit Self-evaluationHGIELC/HGIOELC020316Revised.pdf

4.51 One individual, who identified as being a childminder, requested a structure of accreditation which could demonstrate learning and experience, to help differentiate between the expertise of different childminders.

Training opportunities and qualifications

4.52 A recurring theme focused around creating more opportunities for childminders to train and learn. Accessibility, affordability and provision of relevant courses were all raised as challenges. Both formal and informal learning mechanisms were identified as important, from mandatory training modules, to sharing best practice across networks.

4.53 An example was provided of Ayrshire College which, with support from North Ayrshire Council, was delivering twilight classes for childminders.

4.54 A common view to emerge across several sectors was that childminders should be expected to have gained an appropriate qualification, but agreement was needed on the level of this. One third sector and voluntary organisation respondent remarked that childminders will be more likely to stay in the sector once they have invested in achieving a qualification.

Views relating to Question 10 emerging from consultative events

4.55 Various challenges for childminders were identified such as too much paperwork; onerous regulatory regimes; inconsistent income; set up and running costs; access to training; complex and time-consuming procedures, such as initial PVG clearance.

4.56 It was felt that childminders should be subject to the same regulations and standards as other ELC practitioners.

4.57 Many benefits of childminders were identified for the ELC sector, such as: provision of continuity for children; provision of wraparound care; suitable for blended models of provision; and expertise in providing ELC for two year olds.

5. Accessibility

The Scottish Government considers that ELC provision must be delivered in a way that ensures equality of access and accounts for the varying needs of all children. These needs can vary depending on a number of factors, including whether a child is disabled or has ASN, is from an ethnic minority background, or lives in a deprived area.

Question 11: How do we ensure that the voice of children and their families is heard as we plan this expansion?

5.1 291 respondents (87%) answered this question.

General views

5.2 There was widespread agreement that the views of children and their families should be heard and taken into account throughout the planning of the expansion. A recurring view was that the views of future users of ELC services should also be sought; one respondent emphasised that the ELC workforce should also be encouraged to provide views.

5.3 Many respondents across several sectors highlighted what they saw as the need for special efforts to be made to ensure the voices are heard of those with communication difficulties; people with physical disabilities; minority ethnic communities; those living in rural areas; people on low income; and not the usual suspects, nor only those who shout loudest.

5.4 A key theme was that running alongside consultation should be a programme of education and information, so that parents, current and future, are informed about the expansion and its implications and relevance for them. Promotion via national TV and radio, media (including social media), Baby Boxes, campaigns, publications including leaflets; posters; and allied professionals such as health visitors, were identified as having potential to inform and educate.

5.5 Whilst some respondents clearly envisaged national programmes of consultation and communication, others foresaw local consultative initiatives taking place, with local views sought on local needs and provision. Accordingly, some respondents considered that the Scottish Government would take the lead in seeking views; others perceived local authorities or regulators would have this responsibility; and many respondents clearly envisaged consultation taking place within settings, undertaken by providers or visiting professionals.

5.6 A few respondents identified current frameworks and guidance within which the voices of children and families should be heard. Several commented that there is a legal requirement for local authorities to consult parents in order to increase flexibility and choice over how funded hours are accessed; one national inspection and improvement body highlighted community empowerment legislation and standards as underpinning community consultation; a third Sector and voluntary organisation respondent suggested that the Scottish Government should add a

core activity to its 1140 expansion programme – national, on-going and independent engagement with children and their families.

5.7 A clear expectation emerged of continuous consultation with children and families rather than one-off exercises. Frameworks to facilitate this were identified: partnership working across ELC settings between providers and families; opportunities for open dialogue between parents/carers and providers; close working between allied professionals such as health visitors, social workers, and providers; and frequent visits to settings by regulatory and inspector bodies.

Suggestions for consultative mechanisms

5.8 Numerous suggestions were made for ways to seek views of families. The most commonly mentioned were:

- "Consultation".
- Ongoing, informal dialogue within ELC settings between parents/carers and providers; face-to-face communication.
- Questionnaires/surveys.
- Using social media (Twitter; Facebook; Survey Monkey; online surveys; online forums).
- Focus groups.
- Local parent panels; workshops; meetings; information sessions; local childminder forums.
- Through feedback from trials of different delivery models (such as the current trials).
- A user-friendly version of consultations like this one.
- Allied professionals such as health visitors to serve as conduits to providing information and collecting information.
- Officials to spend time in ELC settings, observing and communicating with children and families.
- Community-led events involving third sector organisations; Local Health and Social Care Partnerships.

Views on how best to hear children's voices

5.9 There was general recognition that whilst children's voices should be heard in planning the expansion, extra measures may need to be taken to ensure they are able to provide views effectively.

5.10 A few respondents suggested topics on which children's views are particularly helpful: planning and use of outdoor space; mealtimes; play time; boundaries and relationships with other children.

5.11 A small number of respondents remarked that childminders are adept at hearing children's voices, regularly seeking their input and acting on this. Others suggested a variety of approaches to ensuring the voice of children is heard:

- Mosaic approach (established multi-method approach) to listening to young children
- Using specialists to gather the information required
- Get advice from organisations such as "Investors in Children"
- Using and analysing video footage
- Games and puppets
- Mind maps
- Deploying trusted people such as key workers to listen to children and record views
- Leave it to the inspectors

Views relating to Question 11 emerging from consultative events

5.12 This topic was not covered in depth in consultative events. Only one group identified a need for early engagement with parents, perhaps through health visitors.

Question 12: How can we ensure equality of access for all children? What barriers do children with disabilities and ASN currently face in accessing ELC? What further action is required to address these barriers?

5.13 261 respondents (78%) answered this question.

5.14 Views focused largely around barriers faced in accessing ELC and action required to address these. Overall, respondents associated greater barriers and the need for further action with partner providers rather than amongst local authority providers.

5.15 There were mixed views on whether children with severe disabilities and ASN should be included in mainstream ELC. The majority view was in favour of inclusion, although there was also support for blended models of provision, whereby children have additional specialist help in dedicated settings, perhaps with regular visits to mainstream ELC settings.

Views on barriers children with disabilities and ASN face in accessing ELC

5.16 Many respondents, across a wide range of sectors, identified what they perceived to be current barriers:

Barriers relating to infrastructure/physical environment

- Inadequate physical accessibility (e.g. steps down to poorly lit basement).
- Geographical access/poor transport .

Barriers relating to staffing

- Ratios of staff to children inadequate.

- Declining numbers of specialist staff, e.g. speech therapists.
- Lack of knowledge amongst staff.
- Lack of availability of appropriate training.
- Lack of funding for upskilling staff.

Barriers relating to knowledge

- Lack of awareness in families of their child's needs and the help available.
- Lack of detail available on future funding models for local authorities.

Barriers relating to administration

- Delayed identification of child's needs.
- Inadequate cross-border communication and working.
- Lack of continuity from pre-school to primary school settings.
- Time needed to put the required measures in place.

Others

- Conflict of interest with commercial decision-making process.
- Additional costs for parents in finding the appropriate specialist care.
- Additional issues if parents also have disabilities.
- Additional issues if English is not the parents'/child's first language.

Views on further action required to address the barriers

5.17 Four actions were identifed most frequently:

Additional funding

5.18 The most frequently identified action to address the barriers envisaged was extra funding for greater levels of staffing; adaptations to physical structures; specialist equipment; and staff training.

Additional staffing

5.19 Respondents identified the need for much higher staff to child ratios, and one-to-one provision in some circumstances, in order to support the needs of children with disabilities and ASN.

5.20 Specialist staffing was also viewed as crucial, with speech therapists mentioned most frequently, but also physiotherapists, educational psychologists and personnel skilled in working in this field.

Specialist training for staff

5.21 A common theme was that the ELC workforce will require specialist training in order to provide support for children with disabilities and ASN.

5.22 Topics for training were suggested and included: how to identify ASN and disability; inclusion and anti-discriminatory practices; attachment; medication; dietary requirements and nutrition; coping with seizures; British Sign Lanuage; dealing with cathetors; and autism.

5.23 A few respondents from different sectors considered that staff who attend courses and gain experience in this field should be recognised with some form of accreditation to distinguish them and incentivise their progress.

Changes to ELC setting infrastructure

5.24 There were repeated calls for the infrastructure of ELC settings to be reviewed to ensure they are fit for the purpose of admitting children with disabilities and ASN. Many respondents suggested that changes will be needed such as the installation of ramps for wheelchairs and wider doorways.

5.25 Local Government respondents in particular identified the need to consider transport access within future planning. Several respondents considered that specifications for provision for children with disabilities and ASN should be integral to the design for all new build provision.

5.26 Actions identified less frequently were:

- Positive action and outreach work to raise awareness of entitlement to free ELC hours amongst families with children with disability and ASN. GPs, Health Visitors, charities and support groups were all mentioned as possible avenues.
- Strengthen multi-disciplinary working between local authorities, partner providers, parents and support professions such as health, social work, education.
- Streamlining the identification of needs; making the process more efficient and timely.
- Establishing equipment "banks" from which specialist equipment can be borrowed by providers then returned when no longer needed.

5.27 Actions mentioned by only a few respondents included:

- Make disability and ASN provision by partner providers part of the commissioning and registration process.
- Make use of valuable projects, initiatives and guidance such as "ENABLE U"; and the Enquire website provided by Children in Scotland.
- Consider hub provision across a local area with clusters of providers sharing specialist help.
- Change the mindsets of the ELC workforce to one of inclusion and mainstreaming.
- Consider developing specialist childminders to be part of blended models of provision for children with disabilities and ASN.

5.28 Participants considered that children with disabilities and ASN and their families may need more support from ELC staff which will require more investment to ensure higher ratios of staffing to children. Greater investment was also identified for specialised adaptations and equipment.

Question 13: How can we support higher take-up rates amongst eligible two year olds and other groups less likely to access entitlement?

5.29 266 respondents (79%) answered this question.

Views on the promotion of the entitlement

5.30 The most common response was that the entitlement should be promoted widely using many different channels. Health visitors were identified by over a quarter of respondents who addressed the question as key to informing families about the entitlement and how to access it. Both social workers and GPs were also identified frequently as having important roles in promoting the entitlement. Other possible avenues mentioned by at least four respondents were: social media; voluntary and other related organisations; Department for Work and Pensions; allied professionals such as the health servivce; information in Baby Boxes; in testimonials from those who have taken up the entitlement successfully; and in leaflets handed out to parents/carers at schools.

5.31 A recurring theme was for the production and distribution of simple guidance on the entitlement, in plain English, with reassurance about issues which may concern potential users, such as whether they will lose other benefits if they take-up the entitlement.

5.32 A few respondents across several different categories suggested that consultation with parents/carers should be undertaken to identify potential barriers to take-up.

Views on identifying those to whom the entitlement applies

5.33 Some respondents addressed the issue of how parents/carers within scope for the entitlement could be identified. The following suggestions were made in order from most to least mentioned:

- Health Visitors to identify.
- Department of Work and Pensions to identify and share data.
- Through inter-agency working, including across local authority boundaries.

Views on ensuring a holistic approach is achieved

5.34 Many respondents supported the concept of provision of holistic delivery models, which support families as a whole in family learning and childcare. Family Learning Centre models were welcomed as providing the opportunity to co-locate

ELC with other support services such as community learning, adult education, and parenting classes.

5.35 A repeated theme was that for children of such young age, greater flexibility over encouraging parents/carers to "stay and play" should be promoted, with drop-in days involving entire families and other family-oriented initiatives supported.

5.36 Practical ideas for encouraging families to take up the entitlement were suggested with the most frequently mentioned being: greater flexibility over hours of provision; help with application form filling; help with transport to centres (particularly if they are centralised in hubs); and provision of free meals.

Views on promoting equity of provision

5.37 One theme emerging largely from individuals and third sector organisations was that the entitlement should be universal, rather than targeted at vulnerable two year olds. The word "vulnerable" was suggested as possibly stigmatising, with some requesting that the entitlement be re-branded to avoid this.

5.38 A recurring theme was that with greater funding from Scottish Government, a universal entitlement could be promoted across all providers, not just local authorities.

Views opposing the proposal

5.39 A small but significant number of respondents stated their opposition to the proposal on the grounds that children of this age would be better supported at home or in very small groups.

5.40 Some respondents, including a mix of individuals and organisations, suggested that childminders could be explored as viable options for delivering the entitlement, particularly in rural areas where they may offer more local solutions. Others considered that parent and toddler groups, and blended home and small group settings, may be more appropriate for vulnerable two year olds than larger, institutional settings.

Views relating to Question 13 emerging from consultative events

5.41 Some concern was expressed over the appropriateness of two year olds spending long hours in ELC settings.

5.42 Questions were raised over rules of eligibility and suggestions made that parents/carers may find it difficult to understand whether their child is eligible, particuarly if they are illiterate and/or are not in contact with a health visitor. It was considered that the eligibility criteria may need to be reviewed to meet needs more appropriately.

5.43 One parent already receiving the entitlement described the stigma attached to taking up the provision.

Question 14: How can more social enterprises and third sector providers be encouraged to enter the ELC sector?

5.44 182 respondents (54%) answered this question.

5.45 A recurring view, particularly amongst local government respondents, was that entering the ELC sector could be challenging for these bodies, in particular in terms of resourcing; fluctuations in the population and in the personnel required; attracting volunteers; ensuring suitable premises; and ensuring legislative requirements are fulfilled. It was expected that the same standards of quality and staff qualifications would be required as of any other sector.

5.46 By far the most common response was that sustainable and appropriate levels of funding for social enterprises and third sector providers will be needed in order to encourage them to enter the ELC sector. Revenue and capital funding were identified as needed for start-up adaptations to premises and longer term running costs. Sustainable funding was viewed as enabling longer-term planning and supporting growth and quality provision.

5.47 A few respondents suggested "incentives" with a few specifying tax incentives as a means of encouragement.

5.48 Whilst a some respondents recommended that broad "support" is required to encourage more social enterprises and third sector providers into the ELC sector, others were more specific about the support needed:
- Clear guidance on protocols such as how to register; regulations; and so on, with bodies such as the National Day Nurseries Association providing information and support.
- Local authorities to support through dedicated officers who provide guidance.
- Training support, perhaps free, perhaps in conjunction with other providers.
- Business support, with advice on business models; setting up; accountability; plans.
- Reduction in bureaucracy; simplifying procedures such as the tendering model.

5.49 Another theme was that by promoting the value of ELC provision and the potential for social enterprises and third sector providers within this sector, this would serve as a carrot to encourage these bodies into the ELC sector. Local government and individual respondents in particular suggested much more awareness raising, using evidence from existing examples and pilots, supported by publicity and sharing of good practice.

5.50 Greater strategic and joined-up planning and operation were suggested by several respondents across a range of sectors. Many suggestions were made for sharing resources across providers; co-locating social enterprise and third sector provision with schools; integrating planning of provision by these sectors within overall Community Planning.

5.51 Opposition to expansion of ELC using social enterprises and third sector providers came from unions and further and higher education establishments in particular, who considered that local authorities may be better placed to deliver expanded hours whilst ensuring quality of provision.

Views relating to Question 14 emerging from consultative events

5.52 Participants envisaged an increased role for the third sector in entering the ELC sector. Access to training was identified as a challenge with one group suggesting Intermediate Labour Market projects as relevant, which support and mentor people into careers in the ELC sector.

Question 15: How can the governance arrangements support more community-led ELC provision particularly in remote and rural areas?

5.53 167 respondents (50%) answered this question.

5.54 There was general agreement that the regulatory regime is demanding for community volunteers who may not have appropriate training, but are nonetheless required to meet rigorous regulations with associated responsibilities. An example was provided of management group meetings for community-led providers gradually shifting in emphasis from fundraising to concentrating increasingly on regulations and employment issues.

5.55 Two key themes emerged: providing professional support to community-led enterprises; and relaxing governance arrangements to accommodate this sector.

Views on providing professional support

5.56 Many respondents envisaged models of provision whereby national and regional bodies provide support and professional guidance to community-led ELC providers to facilitate their working within the current governance arrangements.

5.57 Suggestions focused around dedicated officers, perhaps based within local authorities and/or umbrella organisations, providing tailored advice and support to local groups. The Care and Learning Alliance was mentioned in this respect, as was One Parent Families Scotland and Early Years Scotland. The possibility of more established providers supporting several inexperienced, local, community-led providers was put forward.

5.58 Areas in which support could be of significant benefit were identified as: employing and managing staff; accounting; leading and contributing personnel at management group meetings. Committee meetings were mentioned frequently as challenging in terms of ensuring the continuing presence of suitably experienced and knowledgeable members, due to parent volunteers moving on as their children get older, and lack of expertise.

5.59 The potential for use of peripatetic professional managers was raised by a few respondents, as was enlisting the involvement of local business and enterprise bodies.

Views on relaxing governance arrangements

5.60 Many suggestions were made for amendments to current regulations in order to facilitate the establishment and sustainability of community-led ELC provision. Respondents requested the following be reviewed:

- The period of operation before organisations can apply for partner-provider status.
- Regulations on minimum number of children eligible for funded ELC.
- Number of funded places local authorities can offer.
- Categories of care service (suggested that these no longer represent modern ways of providing ELC).
- Care Inspectorate requirements.
- SSSC requirements.
- Health and safety requirements.

5.61 A local authority suggested that external inspectors will need to gain understanding of the wide variety of provider models in local communities; an individual emphasised their view that inspections should be proportionate to the size of the service.

Other relevant views

5.62 A few respondents (unions and local government) opposed the emphasis on community-led ELC provision within the context of expansion of ELC entitlement.

5.63 A small number of respondents, across a range of sectors, envisaged a wide variety of provision emerging, including mobile delivery of ELC, greater use of childminders working independently or in clusters, and forest nurseries, with governance needing to keep abreast of such developments, in terms of relevance and flexibility.

Question 16: How can the broader system for promoting, accessing, and registering for a place in an ELC setting be improved? Please give examples of any innovative and accessible systems currently in place.

5.64 179 respondents (53%) answered this question.

5.65 There was a wide variety of view reflecting varied levels of understanding of current systems and practices. Overall, however, there was agreement that systems needed to be made simpler, more streamlined, and less confusing for parents/carers. A few organisations called for greater consistency in approach across and within local authorities.

5.66 Views on how best to **promote** ELC provision overlapped considerably with those given in response to question 13. In particular, health visitors were identified repeatedly as potential providers of information, in addition to GPs, local and

national television and printed and social media. The notion of a comprehensive, online source of information on providers (a "one stop shop" concept) was suggested by a few respondents. The websites of the National Childcare Information Service and SCMA, in addition to Education Scotland's Parentzone Scotland website, were identified as useful for promotional purposes.

5.67 There were mixed views on the appropriateness of **accessing** entitlement and **registering** for a place online (suggested in the consultation document). Whilst benefits were envisaged for some parents, many respondents felt uneasy about relying on this without offering other avenues such as face-to-face and hard copy forms for those without digital access. A recurring view was that some parents will need direct help with form filling, with health visitors and social workers identified as assisting in this task.

5.68 A few respondents across several sectors suggested that multiple pathways to registering should be offered, using different settings and modes. Several local authorities, whilst welcoming this approach, emphasised that this should be supported by a centralised system of allocating entitlement, for monitoring purposes and to keep track of uptake and trends.

5.69 A repeated view was that NAMS should be developed to make it fit for purpose for the demands of expanded hours entitlement. Several respondents identified the need for national systems of both data storing and automatic triggering of alerts, to highlight families coming within scope of the entitlement. For this to happen, it was envisaged that data-sharing protocols should be addressed to enable key data such as dates of birth and contact details to be shared across relevant bodies. A few respondents proposed that special requests, such as the need for Gaelic-medium provision, could be attached to databases, to be included in automatic alerts.

5.70 The theme of family-centred, as opposed to service-centred approaches, emerged amongst private sector providers and third sector and voluntary organisations in particular:

> "The system should be parent/family centred, not service centred. Currently local authorities generally make an offer with their own provision and use partner provider settings to meet any shortfalls expecting parents to fit in with the offer, rather than parents designing the ELC package that meets their child and family needs." (Third Sector and Voluntary Organisation)

5.71 The notion of "ELC brokerage officers" was put forward by a few respondents, envisaging brokers matching families and places on an individual basis to meet needs. Alerting and placing children by age and stage rather than by fixed entry dates in ELC settings was proposed as another measure centred around the child. A few respondents expressed their support for a move towards ELC accounts which they considered would be transformational for parents, giving them real choice and control over their child's ELC provision, simplifying the registration process and reducing administration costs for all.

5.72 Various practical measures were suggested for improving the current systems. These included all-year entry and registration to avoid peaks in form-filling activity at set times of the year; wider and more accessible provision of registration forms at places frequented by families, such as GP surgeries, parent and toddler groups; open days at ELC settings in which families with children coming up to eligibility can access face-to-face help with filling in hard copy forms; greater involvement of local support organisations, to provide clear information to families. The Glasgow Family Information Service was identified as a good example in this regard.

5.73 There was support from across several sectors for ensuring linkages between relevant electronic systems. In particular, it was suggested that the system for applying for ELC entitlement should be linked with the school place application system; ELC accounts should link with broader social security processes; and NAMS could usefully link with broader invoicing systems.

Views relating to Question 16 emerging from consultative events

5.74 Very little comment was made relating to this question. One group suggested that local authorities should stop capping places in their own settings and ensure funding is passed on to partner providers so that they can offer provision. Participants considered that parents need more choice in accessing provision in locations to suit their requirements.

6. Affordability

The two key aspects to affordability are: the costs faced by parents and carers; and the costs to the public sector of delivering the overall system.

On top of the free hours to ELC entitlement, parents may require additional hours from their ELC provider. For some on low incomes, costs such as initial deposits and administration fees, can provide a barrier to participating in the labour market or in further or higher education.

Question 17: Do parents and carers face any barriers in accessing support with the costs of ELC provision (beyond funded entitlement)? What more can we do to ensure additional hours are affordable?

6.1 238 respondents (71%) answered this question.

General views

6.2 Many respondents identified challenges to parents in funding additional hours, with much reference made to the situation of low-income working families, who may not be entitled to various benefits, yet still face costs of additional hours and sometimes inflexible childcare provision which do not fit with their working patterns.

6.3 A few respondents identified the wider context of welfare reform and pay and conditions of the workforce as playing major roles in promoting affordability of ELC provision.

Views on accessing support with the costs of ELC provision beyond funded entitlement

6.4 The most common view was that the tax and social security systems which could provide help to those facing financial barriers, are complex and difficult to understand. Many respondents, from a wide range of sectors, considered that awareness raising, and help with understanding the financial assistance on offer through the tax and social security systems, would support parents in accessing ELC provision beyond funded entitlement.

6.5 Students in further and higher education were highlighted by a few respondents as requiring specific advice on what financial support is available and how to access it.

6.6 A few respondents from the third and voluntary sectors commented that some parents do not take up benefits and tax credits for fear of subsequent claw-back.

6.7 Other relevant suggestions included the need to make the tax credit scheme more efficient to avoid what some had experienced as delays following application; and fine-tuning entitlement to financial support for specific cases such as travelling

communitites; carers; parents whose children have disabilities and/or ASNs; and childminders whose own children take up their places.

Views on what more can be done to ensure additional hours are affordable

6.8 Three main actions were identified: charge less; charge the same, but make it easier to pay; charge the same but provide help with associated costs.

Views on ways to charge less

6.9 The key way to charge parents less for additional hours was seen as the Scottish Government subsidising costs by providing greater funding for ELC to local authorities and this being passed on to partner providers. Individual respondents and private sector providers expressed most support for this. It was considered that by reducing ELC costs, parents would be more incentivised to take up work, thereby reducing costs to the benefit system in due course.

6.10 A few respondents supported the introduction of means-testing as a way to establish costs for additional hours in a more equitable manner.

6.11 A small number of respondents considered that a fee cap on additional hour costs based on a proportion of the household income could work to make additional hours more affordable.

6.12 A recurring view was that discounts should be given where many additional hours were required, or where several children from the same household were in need of additional hours.

Views on ways to make it easier to pay

6.13 It was commonly felt that allowing flexibility into the payment schedule for the deposit and regular payments would go some way to helping with budgeting for costs.

6.14 Several respondents from a range of sectors considered that paying for additional hours directly from salary or benefits would help prevent families using funds meant for ELC for other things.

6.15 The notion of funds for ELC being amalgamated into ELC accounts attracted some support from a few organisations. This was seen as simplifying payments for parents in helping them to budget.

Views on ways to provide help with costs

6.16 The additional, sometimes hidden costs of ELC provision, were identified and included: transport to the provider; outdoor clothing; meals and snacks; and so on. Individual respondents, in particular, suggested that help could be provided to parents in the form of subsidised or free transport, lunches and clothing grants.

6.17 A few organisations re-iterated previous comments about providers adopting strategies to ensure equitable access to their facilities, such as providing outdoor clothing such as wellies to avoid additional costs for parents.

6.18 A recurring view was that employers and further and higher educational establishments could do more to support parents with ELC costs, for example, through childcare vouchers.

Views relating to Question 17 emerging from consultative events

6.19 Discussion focused around low paid work and the challenges this created to affording ELC provision. One participant welcomed the help that working tax credits had given her in this regard.

6.20 Some participants suggested that greater funding from local authorities to partner providers would help with affordability.

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the ELC sector

It is vital that the overall ELC sector is sustainable over the long-term, has appropriate capacity, and allows for diversity in providers across the public, private and third sector, as well as a wide range of innovative delivery models.

Question 18: How can ELC providers, particularly private and third sector providers, be encouraged to extend capacity?

6.21 216 respondents (64%) answered this question. A recurring view was that quality of provision should not be compromised in efforts to expand quantity of provision. Another repeated view was that some provision cannot be expanded, for example, where premises are shared with others and are at maximum capacity already.

6.22 The most common view, expressed across a wide range of sectors, was that to encourage private and third sector providers to extend their capacity, more funding will be required for these providers. Whilst many respondents identified "funding" as needed, others specified the need for sustainable, longer-term resourcing for increased staffing; paying Living Wages; additional training; and capital investment for adaptations to premises and new builds. A few respondents envisaged grants with 0% interest to support expansion; others identified financial "incentives" as important, with some mentioning reductions in business rate tax, for example.

6.23 Several respondents remarked that without longer-term security of funding, inward investment and loans from financial institutions would be harder to achieve. Several local authorities emphasised the need for early clarity on funding and timescales for the expansion, in order to assist with planning.

6.24 Another significant theme was the need for providers in clustered areas to work in partnership, collaboratively, strategically, using local information on current and future needs to come up with joint solutions for expansion. Local authorities in particular, favoured this strategic approach which they felt would make best use of resources and avoid duplicated effort. A few third sector and voluntary organisations considered that greater use could be made of currently under-used school facilities outwith school term time, in addition to boosting provision of workplace nurseries.

6.25 The theme of joint working was furthered with suggestions from respondents across a range of sectors for a partnership and shared approach to training the workforce, to ensure suitably qualified ELC workers are in place to accommodate the expanded hours.

6.26 Other signficant views put forward by several respondents were:

- Care Inspectorate standards and requirements may need re-visited to ensure they are not acting as barriers to expansion. The time required for applying for a variation was cited as a current obstacle, particularly for childminders who wish to increase their capacity.

- Support from local authorities over planning applications and building regulations could go some way to helping private and third sector providers through the planning application process.

- Private and third sector providers may benefit from help with business planning and development. Professional advice was viewed as important in order to help such providers secure loans from banks.

Views relating to Question 18 emerging from consultative events

6.27 Potential was identified for expanding capacity amongst private and third sector providers, in collaboration with other partners, possibly in blended models. It was considered that extending the premises of primary schools offered opportunity to provide more ELC capacity in this way.

6.28 The view emerging from one group was that space currently used for training purposes and meeting parents, should not be compromised by using it for extending ELC capacity.

7. Financing and Delivering the Expansion

Funding Model Options

Funding for delivery of the ELC entitlement of 600 hours is currently included within the general revenue grant provided to local authorities.

Additional resource, both revenue and capital, will be required to fund the expansion in entitlement to 1140 hours and this must be delivered efficiently whilst ensuring that a high quality service is provided.

There are a range of potential approaches being considered to funding the provision of ELC in future. They range from predominantly supply-side models where funding is directed through providers, to demand-led approaches where funding is directed through parents and carers.

Four broad funding models under consideration are:

Option 1: Funding Dependent on Delivery – funding to continue to be routed through the local government block grant route.

Option 2: Funding Follows the Child – more demand-led where parents and carers choose the provider and the funding follows, whilst still being administered by local authorities.

Option 3: Early Learning and Childcare Accounts – demand-led system where parents and carers receive the funding.

Option 4: A hybrid approach – a model with similar principles to the self-directing care approach, where parents and carers choose how their child receives their ELC support, e.g. this could be determined by the local authority; parents and carers could choose their provider and then the money follows; or parents receive the funding (this could also be in the form of an Early Learning and Childcare Account).

Question 19: What funding model would best support our vision for high quality and flexible ELC provision, which is accessible and affordable for all?

7.1 196 respondents (58%) answered this question.

Preferences for funding model

7.2 97 respondents provided a clear indication of their preference for one of the funding models proposed. Table 7.1 overleaf gives a summary of their preferences.

Table 7.1: Summary of funding model preferences

Funding models	Number of respondents
Option 1: Funding dependent on delivery	32
Option 2: Funding follows the child	37
Option 3: ELC accounts	23
Option 4: A hybrid approach	5

7.3 Option 2, a model whereby funding follows the child, was identified most frequently as the preferred funding model to best support the vision for high quality and flexible ELC, which is accessible and affordable for all.

7.4 Seven respondents did not support any of the four options in particular, but expressed their support for funding to go directly to providers, in either a ring-fenced or voucher-style model of funding. Ten respondents, including three unions, provided support for an alternative model whereby local authority provision is expanded in a universal model of equitable provision for all, free at point of use. Several individual respondents suggested funding focused on enabling families to look after their children in their home setting.

Option 1: Views on advantages

7.5 Those in favour of Option 1 were largely local government respondents, one of whom argued that this option cannot be classed as wholly supply-led when it offered a responsive service, adapting to changing needs. Views were mixed on whether funding under this option should be ring-fenced or not.

7.6 The main advantages to this option were viewed as:

- Ensures a co-ordinated, predictable and sustainable approach.
- Already well understood with systems in place such as quality assurance; performance management.
- Will be ready to cope with increased demand within the timescale for expansion.
- Ensures protection for vulnerable families; families in deprived areas.
- Benefits from economies of scale; efficient; represents Best Value.
- Ensures continuity and investment in developing staff.
- Will result in quality standards being maintained.
- Safer for partner providers as more guaranteed income.

Option 1: Views on drawbacks

7.7 The main drawbacks to this option were viewed as:

- Limits flexibility and choice for parents who may not be offered the ELC setting of their choice.
- Bureaucratic; excessive paperwork.
- Uncertainty regarding how much funding will be allocated by local authority.

Option 2: Views on advantages

7.8 Those in favour of Option 2 were largely private sector providers and individual respondents, some of whom envisaged the return of vouchers within this model, possibly in the form of online "e-vouchers".

7.9 The main advantages to this option were viewed as:

- Gives parents real choice in ELC provision.
- Provides flexibility – can be used for 52 weeks of the year; more in school holiday periods.
- Gives parents with particular requirements, such as Gaelic-medium provision, greater likelihood of securing this.
- Avoids post-code lotteries.
- Cuts down provider administration.
- Avoids local authorities using allocated funding for other things.
- Providers receive payment quicker.

Option 2: Views on drawbacks

7.10 The main drawbacks to this option were viewed as:

- Too much flexibility results in parents chopping and changing, which is not good for children.
- Uncertainty of take-up and business, leading to fragility of settings, particularly in rural areas.
- Market forces risks, such as providers undercutting others, reducing staff wages, laying off staff when child numbers are lower.
- Difficult for providers to plan which will deter investment in staff and infrastructure.
- Markets may not respond quickly enough to expanded demand, with parents left without provision.
- Providers may opt out of delivering minimum standards and choose to be outwith the funding model, resulting in parents unable to use their funding to access free places.
- Parents may overspend their entitlement and run out of funds.
- Relies on parents being fully aware of the choices on offer and how to manage their funds.

Option 3: Views on advantages

7.11 Those in favour of Option 3 were also largely private sector providers and individual respondents.

7.12 The main advantages to this option were viewed as:

- Gives the best choice for parents.
- Funds can be spread over school holidays.

- Reduces bureaucracy.

- Parent power will drive up standards.

- Removes cross-boundary issues where, for example, parents live in one local authority and they require childcare in another.

- Helps parents to understand the scope and limits of the "free" provision.

Option 3: Views on drawbacks

7.13 The main drawbacks to this option were viewed as:

- Lack of certainty regarding funding for private providers and local authorities alike.

- Not predictable, may not work for rural communities, increasing fragility of provision.

- Administration could be complicated and parents may not understand the system.

- Parents may use funding for things other than ELC.

- Relies on there being provision to choose from, which may not be the case.

Option 4: Views on advantages

7.14 Those in favour of Option 4 included individuals, a private sector respondent and a local government respondent.

7.15 The main advantages to this option were viewed as:

- Flexible approach.

- May encourage creative solutions from parents.

- Reduces the administrative burden on providers.

Option 4: Views on drawbacks

7.16 The main drawbacks to this options were viewed as:

- Not all parents will have the capacity to manage this funding model which may require much administration by parents.

- Lack of certainty over sustainable funding for local authorities and partner providers.

- Local authorities will need to follow up on the creative solutions identified by parents.

General views

7.17 Many respondents re-iterated or made reference to points they had made in response to earlier questions. In particular, there was much support for setting and enforcing minimum standards of provision, whatever the funding model; and for national pay scales with more funds available to ensure Living Wages are paid.

7.18 Several respondents emphasised their view that childminders and other community solutions should form part of the options under the different funding models.

7.19 Option 2 (funding following the child) and Option 3 (ELC accounts) received most support in consultative events as offering most flexibility for families which could address challenges such as cross-border issues. One group suggested that under Option 3, parents could work together to lobby for local provision, such as workplace ELC.

7.20 Two groups posed the question of whether unused entitlement in a community could be re-allocated where needed.

Phasing of the expansion

The expansion will require sustantial levels of investment in both the workforce and in infrastructure. The investment will be phased over a 3 – 4 year period to ensure that the required capacity is in place by 2020 to enable full roll-out of the expanded entitlement.

The Scottish Government considers that an approach to smoothing the transition from 600 to 1140 hours entitlement is to phase in the additional entitlement for some children as additional capacity (both infrastrucuture and workforce) becomes available. There are a number of options for phasing in entitlement, for example:

Option 1: Incremental increase in the level of entitlement made available (e.g. at some point between now and 2020 the entitlement could increase from 600 hours to, for example, 800 hours, as a step towards 1140 hours).

Option 2: Allow local authorities to expand entitlement incrementally as increased capacity becomes available.

Option 3: Expanded entitlement offered to cover a range of cohorts, geographic areas and providers.

Question 20: If it were possible for aspects of the entitlement to be phased in ahead of the full roll out by 2020, how should this be implemented?

7.21 207 respondents (62%) answered this question.

7.22 A common view was that the expansion will require detailed planning to ensure the necessary physical and workforce infrastructures are in place to support additional hours. A recurring theme was that quality should not be compromised in the expansion.

7.23 Amongst the respondents to the question were many who expressed their opposition to the expansion. Despite their concerns, however, several respondents still provided constructive comments on phasing the expansion.

7.24 A recurring view amongst local government and individual respondents in particular was that information will be needed, as soon as possible, on capital and

revenue funding available for the expansion. This was seen as crucial for long-term planning and to enable providers in different settings to work towards expanding capacity according to their means.

7.25 Many respondents across a range of settings identified workforce planning as another key pre-requisite to expanding provision in an equitable and strategic manner. This included detailed discussions with Skills Development Scotland, Business Gateway, and colleges and universities, over providing relevant and accessible training to support the future ELC workforce.

7.26 Another recurring theme was that the 2017 trials will provide lessons to be shared; and that new trials should be designed to fill gaps, for example, in specific settings or locations.

7.27 A small number of respondents, across a range of settings, considered that phasing would happen naturally and organically, as infrastructure gradually developed, staffing levels increased, and current under-used capacity is identified and utilised.

Views on the options suggested in the consultation

7.28 Of the three options suggested, Option 3 received the greatest explicit support. Around 80 respondents, from a wide range of sectors, provided commentary which suggested that they supported Option 3. One respondent remarked:

> "There is no 'one size fits all' approach to phasing. In some areas, it may make sense to target provision at areas of deprivation. In some areas, the best group might be parents who need childcare for work, and are on lower incomes. Remote areas with no other forms of childcare might also be a good place to start. This might be better planned on a local level to meet the needs of each community context." (Local Government)

7.29 Emerging from the supporters of this option were many perceived priorities for early expanded entitlement, the most frequently mentioned being:

- Deprived areas
- Trials across all settings which included childminders
- Working parents
- By age (both oldest to youngest and vice versa mentioned)

7.30 Support for Option 1 and Option 2 was approximately equal, with around 20 respondents explicitly identifying each as their preferred approach.

7.31 Those providing rationale in favour of Option 1 suggested that a universal, phased approach would avoid a post-code lottery and would encourage settings across the board to put in place infrastructure in readiness for the next phase.

7.32 Those favouring Option 2 suggested that local authorities could work pragmatically, stepping up entitlement in line with developments in capacity and as

funding is released to them. A few respondents considered that local authorities would focus on areas of deprivation initially.

Views relating to Question 20 emerging from consultative events

7.33 Only one group addressed this question with support given for a phased approach to increasing entitlement, perhaps to 900 hours in the first phase.

Annex: List of Respondents

FE/HE = 8

Ayrshire College
CELCIS
Child's Curriculum Group
New College Lanarkshire
School of Education, University of Strathclyde
The Open University
University of Aberdeen
West Lothian College Workforce Development Further Education College - SVQ
SSCYP Assessors

Local Government = 29

Aberdeen City Community Planning Partnership
Aberdeenshire Council
ADES Early Years Network
Angus Council
Argyll and Bute Council
COSLA
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Early Years Team City of Edinburgh
East Ayrshire Council
East Lothian Council
East Renfrewshire Council: Education Department
Falkirk Council
Fife Council
Glasgow City Council
Inverclyde Education Services
Midlothian Council Early Years Education team
Moray Council Education and Social Care Senior Management Team
North Ayrshire Council
North Lanarkshire Council
Orkney Islands Council
Perth and Kinross Council
Renfrewshire Council, including representation from ELCC partner providers
Scottish Borders Council Early Years Team
Scottish Local Authorities Directors of Finance
SEStran (Statutory Regional Transport Partnership covering eight local authorities in the South East of Scotland).
Shetland Islands Council
The Highland Council
West Dunbartonshire Council
West Lothian Council

Local Government Nurseries and Schools = 6

Cowdenbeath Primary School
Crail Primary School, Nursery Team
Dunbar Primary School
Milton Nursery (Highland)
Tillicoultry Nursery
Whalsay School

National Inspection and Improvement Bodies = 5

Care Inspectorate
Education Scotland
NHS Health Scotland
Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)
Skills Development Scotland

Parent Representative Bodies = 5

Comann nam Pàrant (Nàiseanta)
Cunningsburgh school parent council
Hamnavoe Primary School Parent Council
Lenzie Meadow Primary School and Early Years Centre Parent Council
Sandwick Junior High School Parent Council

Private Nurseries = 33

ACE Place Nursery & Out of School Care
Blackhall Nursery
Bright Horizons Family Solutions UK
Burns Bairns Under 5s
Busy Bees Childcare
Cairellot Nursery
Cheeky Monkeys
Edzell Nursery
Enterprise Childcare
First Adventures Nursery
First Class Day Nursery
Flying Start Nursery
Highland Fling Childcare
Jacaranda Nursery
Kidstore Childcare Ltd
Kinderhouse Services
Les Enfants Nursery
Little Voices Nurseries
Lullaby Lane Nursery
Meadows Nursery School
Mulberry Bush Montessori Killearn & Yorkhill
North Edinburgh Childcare
Pear Tree Nursery

Priestfield House Nursery
Shetland Partner Providers
Smart Cookies Childcare
Step by Step Private Nursery, Cumbernuald
Step by Step Private Nursery Ltd
Stepping Stones Nursery School Airdrie Ltd
Tinies Glasgow Ltd
The Bearsden Nursery Ltd and Hillfoot Nursery Ltd
The Croft Nurseries Ltd
Woodland Outdoor Kindergartens

Third Sector and Voluntary Organisations = 23

Aberlour Child Care Trust
Barnardo's Scotland
Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Care and Learning Alliance
Children in Scotland
Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) in Scotland
Early Years Scotland
Enable Scotland
Guide Dogs Scotland
Highland & Moray Accredited Training Services
Mindroom
National Day Nurseries Association
One Parent Families Scotland
Parenting across Scotland
Peeple
Royal National Institute of Blind People, Scotland
Save the Children
Scottish Childminding Association
Scottish Out of School Care Network
The Big Lottery Fund in Scotland
The Children's Food Trust
Working Families
Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust

Third Sector and Voluntary Providers = 6

Blairdardie Out of School Service
Coldstream Playgroup
Cumberland & Kilsyth Nursery & Out of School Care Service
Haugh of Urr Nursery
Toybox Children's Centre
Summerston Childcare

Unions = 5

Association of Headteachers and Deputes in Scotland
Educational Institute of Scotland
National Union of Students Scotland
UNISON
Voice Scotland

Other = 8

A1 School Leadership Solutions
Council – (no further information provided)
Fair Funding for our Kids
First Aid Training Co-operative
Food for Life Scotland (Soil Association Scotland)
Mindstretchers
Reform Scotland
Scottish Women's Convention

Individual Respondents = 208

208 individual respondents including several representatives from Lecropt Nursery, Old Doune Road Nursery and childminders.

Scottish Government
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Skills Investment Plan: Prospectus

For Scotland's early learning and childcare sector

Foreword

The ambition to increase free early learning and childcare (ELC) entitlement in Scotland to 1,140 hours per year by 2020 provides a clear set of challenges and opportunities for the ELC sector. The Skills Investment Plan: Prospectus for Early Learning and Childcare sets out skills evidence and a clear direction of travel to ensure the sector has the workforce to fuel this expansion, and provide high quality, flexible and accessible ELC across the country.

The sector is well positioned to cope with the increase in demand. In recent years we have seen the qualification levels of the 39,030 people working in ELC steadily increasing. New workers are entering the profession, with the number of Modern Apprenticeships, college students and university graduates offering a steady talent pipeline. In addition, the new Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services: Children and Young People introduced by Skills Development Scotland allows pupils to develop their skills while still at school, giving them vital experience and knowledge that can be carried through to a full-time career.

But the demand for workers won't be met by those coming from school and college alone. This report clearly shows that as a sector, recruitment remains a challenge. We know that many employers are finding it tough to recruit suitable new employees.

Attracting a more diverse workforce is therefore a strong theme running through this report. All of us must look not only at retention and up-skilling, but how we can attract a wider range of workers. There is a need to focus on making the sector a more attractive proposition for people changing careers, those returning to work and minority ethnic communities by promoting routes into the sector and pathways through the sector. There is a challenge too in bringing men into the sector; the workforce remains overwhelmingly female at 97 per cent.

The aim is for the sector to be recognised as a positive and rewarding place to work and that the skills, qualifications and qualities of the workforce are valued. Getting this right will be good not just for the sector but for the Scottish economy as a whole. The sector plays an important role in giving Scotland's children the best possible start in life, proven to support attainment and tackle poverty. Greater flexibility in ELC provision will help to support more parents and carers to work, train, or study.

In this report we have set out a clear mission statement and strategic objectives, but recognise it will take close collaboration to achieve these aims.

Our next step is continued engagement with the sector, key stakeholders and partners to develop a full Skills Investment Plan including a detailed action plan for Scotland's Early Learning and Childcare Sector.

All stakeholders, partners, and providers of early learning and childcare services must pull together to ensure we can offer the support children and their families need to get the best possible start in life.

Early Learning and Childcare Skills Steering Group

1

Purpose of the report

This is the first skills report for the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) sector.

Its purpose is to provide the skills evidence base for the sector and support the workforce to fuel its expansion and provide high quality, flexible and accessible childcare across Scotland. The report:

- describes the scale and characteristics of the sector and the types of provision within it

- provides a profile of its workforce and how it varies between private, voluntary and public providers

- presents the skills challenges and issues facing the sector in light of the drivers affecting change, most notably the expansion of free entitlement to early learning and childcare

- creates direction and brings focus to the responses required by the public and private sector skills systems, and employers to address the skills priorities identified

- provides a framework for investment and targeting of resources to develop responsive skills provision that meets the needs of this rapidly changing sector

- sets a clear direction of travel for skills development for the period to 2020 when the entitlement to free early learning and childcare increases to 1,140 hours per year for all three and four year olds and eligible two year olds.

This Prospectus presents a strategy and high level action plan to attract a more diverse workforce in to the ELC sector and ensure the current and future workforce have the skills required to provide quality care and impact positively on the outcomes for Scotland's children. It aims to contribute to the professionalisation of the workforce and encourage positive perceptions of the sector as a career destination offering development and progression opportunities.

It builds on the positive working relationships between partners on the skills supply side and those on the demand side, including employers and organisations that represent their interests. It recognises that in recent years, the qualifications levels of ELC staff have increased sharply and have never been higher.

The development process involved gathering and analysing a range of primary and secondary data. Specifically, it involved:

- an analysis of data to define the sector and profile the employers within it

- data analysis to determine the scale and characteristics of the workforce and any gaps in the current skills and in terms of future skills requirements

- a review of the existing education, learning and skills development provision and the extent to which it is fit for purpose

- consultations with key contributors, including employers, to validate the evidence, understand the factors that are bringing about change in the sector, assess the nature and scale of the likely impacts of these changes and consider potential responses and actions

- consultations with training, learning and education providers to assess the scope to meet the potential increase in demand, challenges and processes for planning provision

- workshops with national organisations such as the Scottish Government, the Scottish Funding Council, the Scottish Social Services Council and sector-specific organisations and bodies

- creation of a steering group to guide the development of this report and provide strategic direction on skills issues in the sector.

This report is an important step in planning collaboration between all partners to ensure that the sector can meet the needs of children, parents, and carers as well as enhance the skills, qualifications and working practices of the workforce. The next step is to develop a full Skills Investment Plan for the sector including a detailed action plan to guide investment in skills development and provision.

2
Characteristics of the Early Learning and Childcare sector in Scotland

As well as being a major employer in its own right and contributing to the economy, the ELC sector enables parents and carers to participate in work and learning.

It also has a very important role to play in giving Scotland's children a good start in life, closing the attainment gap and tackling poverty. The sector is made up of a highly skilled and qualified workforce.

Sector definition
For the purposes of this report and to ensure consistency with the work of key partners and the use of data sources, we have adopted the definition used by the Scottish Government. It captures the number of services registered with the Care Inspectorate and workforce data produced by the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC). There are two main sub-sectors in the definition adopted, provided in Table 1.

Business base
At the end of 2015 there were 9,316 ELC services in Scotland. Figure 2.1 shows that almost 60% of these are childminders who are all self-employed and in the private sector. At 46%, the public sector provides almost half of the 3,744 day care of children services whilst the private and voluntary sectors account for 30% and 24% respectively.

The pattern across local authority areas varies considerably which is important in planning how skills development is supported and shortages addressed. Illustrating this, in East Ayrshire, childminders account for 76% of all services in the area and the corresponding figure for Glasgow is 34%.

Patterns also vary in terms of the extent of private, voluntary and public sector provision with the highest proportions of private sector provision (excluding childminders) in Edinburgh, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire. Islands communities tend to have the highest proportion of public sector providers.

Whilst the number of day care settings has declined by 2% since 2010, overall capacity in the sector has increased, pointing to a move towards a smaller number of larger providers.

Table 1: Sub-sector workforce definition for Early Learning and Childcare

Sub-sector	Definition
Childminding	A childminder is a person that looks after at least one child (up to the age of 16 years) for more than a total of two hours per day. The childminder looks after the child on domestic premises for reward but not in the home of the child's parent(s). A parent/relative/foster carer of the child cannot be regarded as his/her childminder
Day care of children	A service which provides care for children on non-domestic premises for a total of more than two hours per day and on at least six days per year. It includes nurseries, crèches, after school clubs and play groups. The definition does not include services which are part of school activities. Nor does it include activities where care is not provided such as sports clubs or uniformed activities such as Scouts or Guides.

Fig 2.1: Early Learning and Childcare employers in Scotland by sub-sector, 2015
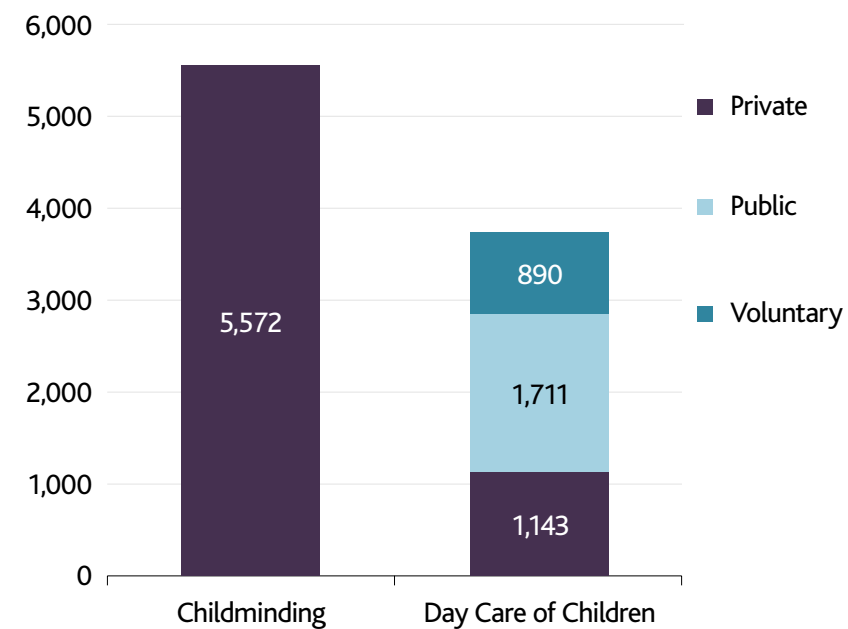
Source: SSSC Workforce Data, 2016: Figures may not sum due to rounding

2

Characteristics of the Early Learning and Childcare sector in Scotland continued

The workforce

In contrast to the decline in the number of services, the number of people employed in ELC has risen by 5% since 2010, largely accounted for by an increase of 1,900 staff in day care of children in the period. This increase is thought to be driven by the previous expansion from 475 hours to 600 hours for 3 and 4 year olds.

There were 39,030 people working in the ELC sector in December 2015,the majority of whom are employed in day care of children services which accounts for 86% of the total. Almost half of the workers are employed in the private sector although this is somewhat skewed because the 5,570 childminders are included. Of the 33,460 employed in day care of children services, 41% work in the private sector, 39% in the public sector and 20% in the voluntary sector. Aberdeen, Edinburgh (both 55%) and Renfrewshire (52%) have the highest proportions of ELC workers in the private sector. Eilean Siar (71%), Orkney and Clackmannanshire (both 67%) have the highest proportions in the public sector.

As expected, Glasgow and Edinburgh account for the biggest numbers of ELC workers, 4,320 and 3,960 respectively, excluding childminders and 4,510 and 4,350 including them. Areas with relatively low proportions of workers in day care of children services are East Ayrshire and Orkney, where there are correspondingly higher proportions of childminders.

The majority of staff (73%) working in day care of children services are practitioners[1]. Managers account for 9% of the total workforce and support workers comprise the remaining 18%.

The workforce is overwhelmingly female (97% are women) and relatively young, although the age profile varies between sectors. Private sector employees in day care of children services have an average age of 28 years while the average age of their public sector counterparts is 43. This reflects the leakage of staff in to the public sector to access better terms, conditions and career development opportunities.

Staff in day care of children services need to be registered with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) or another regulatory agency such as General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). They must either hold or be working towards a relevant qualification for their role. As at September 2015, over 70% of the day care of children workforce registered with SSSC held the required qualification, accounting for 84% of all practitioners and 28% of all managers. The low level for managers is partly explained by recent changes to the qualifications requirements for their role, meaning they could currently be completing their qualification.

A significant proportion of managers are also registered with GTCS i.e. nursery settings within schools where the head teacher is usually the manager. For both roles, the proportions of qualified staff are significantly higher in local authority settings than in private and voluntary provider settings.

Childminders have no specific qualification requirements but must be registered with the Care Inspectorate. The Care Inspectorate is developing a learning and development pathway for childminders which is expected to help childminders in their career journey. By setting out a framework for quality childminding this will also serve as a tool for registered childminders to help develop their service, encourage reflective practice and enhance their own learning and development.

Employment in ELC

Childminders are more likely to work full time than staff in day care of children services (71% and 49% respectively). Areas with a high proportion of part time workers in day care of children are Shetland, Eilean Siar (80% each) and Highland (75%). Lowest levels are in North and South Lanarkshire (42%) and Glasgow (41%). What is not clear is the extent to which local patterns of working hours are driven by a lack of full time or part time opportunities. Regardless of the reasons, working hours may have implications for the ability of members of the current workforce to access learning e.g. if they work part time, it may be more difficult to participate.

Table 2: The Early Learning and Childcare workforce, 2015

Sub-sector	Number of staff (headcount)	%of Childminders and % of DCC services
Childminding of which:	5,570	14%
Self-employed	5,570	100%
Day Care of Children of which:	33,460	86%
Private	13,780	41%
Public	13,140	39%
Voluntary	6,540	20%
Total	**39,030**	

Source: SSSC Workforce Data, 2016; Figures may not sum due to rounding

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[1] The SSSC registers staff by their job function: Managers, Practitioners and Support Workers. Managers/lead practitioners are workers who hold responsibilities for the overall development, management and quality assurance of service provision including the supervision of staff and the management of resources. Practitioners in day care of children services are workers who identify and meet the care, support and learning needs of children and contribute to the development and quality assurance of informal learning activities and/or curriculum. They may also be responsible for the supervision of other workers. Support workers in day care of children services are workers who have delegated responsibility for providing care and support to children. More information is available from: www.sssc.uk.com/definition-of-register-parts-for-day-care-of-children-services?task=document.viewdoc&id=198

2
Characteristics of the Early Learning and Childcare sector in Scotland continued

The type of contract can also influence the training and learning that workers can access and 21% of employees (not childminders) do not have a permanent employment contract e.g. they are on temporary or fixed term contracts or work as sessional, relief or bank staff. SSSC data indicates that around four-fifths of the wider sector were employed in a permanent contract in 2015, and this is largely replicated across all sub-sectors including ELC.

It is well recognised that terms and conditions for ELC staff are more attractive in the public sector than in the private and voluntary sector. It is estimated that around 80 per cent of practitioners and 50 per cent of supervisors in partner settings are paid less than the Living Wage. These differentials in pay and conditions means that staff from private and voluntary sector are attracted to join the public sector. Managers in local authority settings earn an average annual salary of £58,000 (although this includes salaries of head teachers in primary schools). Their counterparts in private sector, partner provider services earn £23,000 and in the voluntary sector they earn £22,000. The corresponding average earnings for practitioners is £28,000, £15,000 and £16,000 respectively[2].

Fig 2.2: Full-time and part-time split of employment in Childminding and Day Care of Children, 2015
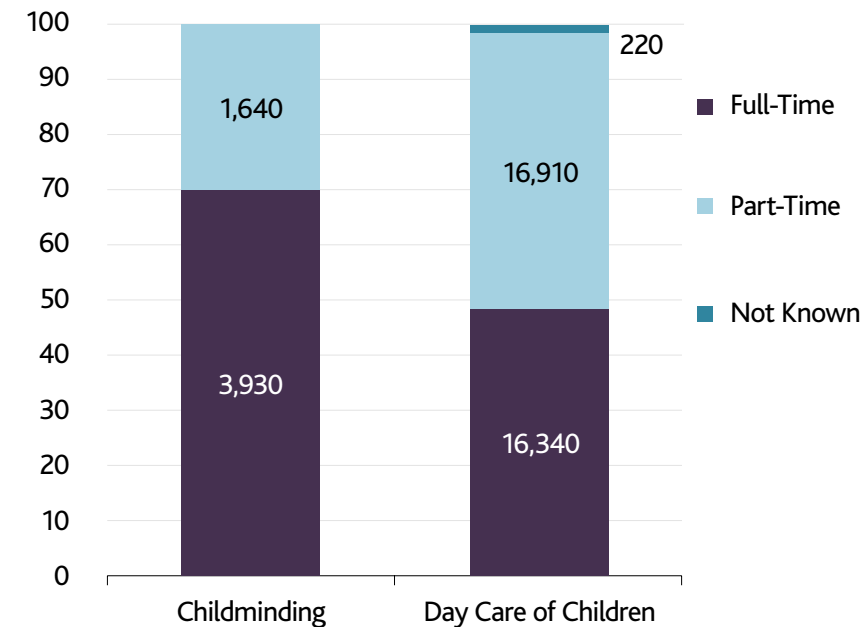
Source: SSSC Workforce Data, 2016: Figures may not sum due to rounding
Part-time employees are those who work 30 hours per week or less.
Full-time employees are those who work more than 30 hours per week.
This is consistent with the definition developed by OECD.

Table 3: Contract types in the Day Care of Children workforce, 2015

Contract type	%
Permanent[3]	79%
Temporary	7%
Sessional	3%
Casual/Relief	3%
Trainee	3%
Fixed Term	2%
Bank	1%
Other	1%
Scotland	**100%**

Source: SSSC Workforce Data Report, 2016, p.33; Figures may not sum due to rounding

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[2] Scottish Government (2016) Financial Review of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland: The Current Landscape

[3] Includes 1% on No Guaranteed Hours contracts, a type of zero-hours contract

3
Skills demand

Research and consultations identified a number of challenges and opportunities for the ELC sector in Scotland.

The increase in free entitlement to ELC by 2020 presents both challenges and opportunities particularly as the sector has to grow and invest in the workforce. The expansion will also require substantial levels of investment in infrastructure development. There is a clear need for the sector to be able to respond to the expansion by increasing provision and the number of people employed in it. However, this cannot be at the expense of quality. A key factor in ensuring quality is having staff with the right skills, attitudes and expertise.

Expansion demand
The Scottish Government provisionally estimated up to 20,000 additional workers may be required for the expansion to 1,140 hours for 3 and 4 year olds and eligible two year olds comprising practitioners, managers and support workers. The modelling for the estimations is an ongoing process and will evolve as new data becomes available and if policy assumptions change.

Research shows that partner providers expressed mixed views on how confident they felt about their ability to accomodate the planned expansion of government funded hours; while half were very or fairly confident 41% were not very or not at all confident.[4]

Skills levels
It is difficult to provide a robust assessment of the overall skills levels of the ELC workforce other than using qualifications as a proxy. To ensure high quality care, the ELC workforce requires a set of essential skills, attributes and attitudes but these are not easily measured.

Evidence from the consultations indicates that sometimes people entering education and training do not have the required essential skill set such as literacy, numeracy, personal presentation and verbal and non-verbal communication. There is also anecdotal evidence from colleges consulted in the research that students lack the required digital literacy skills and that science must be a key part of nursery provision but, is a skills and knowledge gap in students coming on to ELC courses.

People employed in ELC must be registered with the SSSC or any other regulatory agency and must hold a suitable qualification or be working towards one. Staff have five years to achieve the appropriate qualification for their role.

Over 70% of the current workforce have the relevant qualification and this is shown in table 4. The lowest proportions of qualified practitioners are in non-funded private and voluntary settings. These significant differences in the various settings signal a need for non-local authority providers to be better able to recruit, train and retain qualified staff.

Data on the qualification levels of childminders is not currently available but from 2017, it will be collected and published. It is well recognised that childminders can find it difficult to take up training opportunities because of the cost. Added to this, if they are in training during working hours, they are not able to provide a service resulting in a loss of income and a lack of continuity of service.

Skills shortages and mismatches
There are additional skills shortages in the ELC sector aside from those that are expected to flow from expansion demand. Evidence suggests that while partner providers are broadly optimistic about retaining existing staff, they are less positive about the ease of recruiting appropriately qualified new staff – 63% report finding it very or fairly difficult to recruit suitable new employees.[5]

There are particular challenges in recruiting and training ELC staff in rural and remote areas where the pool of potential workers is smaller. Compounding this, access to training and learning opportunities for new and existing employees can be more complex in rural communities as local provision is likely to be more limited.

In areas with a competitive labour market, attracting and retaining staff in ELC can be particularly difficult as employers are competing with other, potentially more attractive employment opportunities.

For example in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire there has historically been an issue in encouraging staff to work in ELC; however, anecdotal evidence suggests that the downturn in the oil and gas industry may mean that it is easier to recruit to other sectors, including ELC.

The Scottish Government intends that childminders will form an integral part of the funded ELC workforce but the evidence shows that they are currently a largely untapped resource. Only 11 of the 32 local authorities currently work with childminders as ELC partner providers and within the areas that do, only 402 of the 5,336 SCMA members are included within commissioning strategies and only 84 are actually delivering to eligible two year olds and four childminders are delivering to three and four year olds.[6]

Sector's views on opportunities and challenges for ELC
A persistent challenge is recruiting and retaining people to work in ELC and to diversify the workforce in terms of age, ethnicity, gender and disability. Continuing to attract people into the sector is a priority and there is a need to broaden approach to recruitment. Attracting people from a BME background, career changers and returners to the sector also offer potential solutions to the workforce shortage.

[4] Scottish Government (2016) Costs of Early Learning and Childcare Provision in Partner Provider Settings: Technical Report

[5] Scottish Government (2016) Costs of Early Learning and Childcare Provision in Partner Provider Settings: Technical Report
[6] SCMA (2016) Early Learning and Childcare: Current use of childminding services to deliver funded ELC to eligible two year olds.

3
Skills demand continued

The sector is often perceived by potential recruits as an unattractive employment destination offering low status, gendered assumptions about the nature of the work and employment terms and conditions.

A concerted effort is needed to address the lack of clear understanding amongst potential recruits, schools, parents and other influencers about career development and progression opportunities within the sector.

Stakeholders agreed that the current education and training content should fully reflect the changing needs of the workforce, and recognise the changes that have occurred in working practices or developments in the sector. Examples of changes include more flexible roles, working in the community, health related tasks and working with families and dealing with the needs of eligible two year olds in an early learning setting.

Consultation with universities, colleges and private training providers reported that although they have the capacity to respond to an increase in demand for training, its content may require a refresh based on evidence of need. There is a view amongst some stakeholders that there is scope to develop new qualifications, for example work based learning at SCQF 9 (degree level). Those studying the BA in Childhood Practice are experienced practitioners and study part time.

Stakeholders also reported that as part of this overall review, consideration should be given to the modules and topics that are essential to developing an effective ELC workforce, and should therefore be mandatory. An example provided in the research with stakeholders is the Childhood Development module.

There was also a strong view that all training and learning for the ELC workforce should continue to incorporate practical work experience in an ELC setting.

Another challenge for the sector is to make sure that the various routes into and within it the sector, such as work-based learning, Modern Apprenticeships, and Childhood Practice Awards, are clearly articulated and communicated to potential recruits and existing staff. Currently, it can be a confusing landscape for individuals as well as employers and there can be a lack of guidance and support for the best solution, tailored to need.

Developing the ELC workforce is not simply about driving up the numbers, but developing a high quality workforce that has the capacity to deliver ELC and contribute to the outcomes and attainment levels for Scotland's children. In addressing the skills challenges, the key question has to be how to attract the right people with the right potential to the sector and then invest in them to develop their skills throughout their career.

Table 4: Proportion of registered workforce qualified, Sept 2015

	Setting				Total
	Local Authority settings	Partner Provider settings	Non-funded (LA)	Non-funded (Private &Voluntary)	
Managers	57%	27%	27%	19%	**28%**
Practitioners	95%	79%	78%	70%	**84%**
Support Workers	56%	25%	43%	26%	**37%**
Total	**88%**	**66%**	**63%**	**50%**	**70%**

Source: SSSC Workforce Data, 2016; Numbers may not sum due to rounding

4

Current skills provision

A wide range of provision is in place to support the development of skills for the ELC sector including apprenticeships, college and university provision and work-based learning. This chapter examines current provision and capacity of education and training.

There are a range of qualifications which can be undertaken by people in different roles in the ELC sector. They have different purposes and are applicable to individuals in different settings and at different levels.

The key types of qualifications are:

- **Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)** – providing practical, vocational work-based learning for people already in employment in the sector or are looking to enter it. SVQs are provided by colleges, training providers, and, in some cases, by employers. Previous research by SSSC indicates that in 2014/15 there were approximately 3,000 SVQ registrations for those working in children's sector, out of which just over 1,100 enrolments were in colleges, suggesting that almost two thirds of SVQ provision in the sector is delivered through non-college providers

- **Higher National Qualifications (HNQs)** – providing the practical skills and theoretical knowledge required by the sector. Achieving some HNQs allows learners to articulate to second or third year Higher Education

- **apprenticeships** – enabling employers to develop their workforce and staff to work towards qualifications whilst in paid employment. They include Modern Apprenticeships, Technical Apprenticeships and Professional Apprenticeships. Recently, students in secondary education have started to be offered Foundation Apprenticeships in subjects relevant to ELC

- **Professional Development Awards** – providing employees in the sector with a route to enhance their skills through a variety of learning mechanisms including taught learning, self-directed study, research and practice-based learning. PDAs at the same SCQF level as degrees are accepted by SSSC for manager and lead practitioner roles

- **degrees and post-graduate options** – relevant degrees are a requirement for some occupations in ELC such as managers and lead practitioners. Post-graduate options include, for example, Postgraduate Certificates, taught Masters programmes and research Masters

- **awards, other qualifications and non-accredited training** – a range of largely stand-alone work-based accreditations, qualifications and CPD courses.

Table 5: Education and training definitions

Education	Definition
College Provision (includes HE provision)	Child Care Services
Modern Apprenticeship[7]	Social Services (Children & Young People)[8] Social Services (Children & Young People) Technical
University Provision	Childcare Training teachers – nursery BA Childhood Practice (where not elsewhere included)

Source: SSSC Workforce Data Report, 2016, p.33; Figures may not sum due to rounding

[7] A Technical Apprenticeship in Childhood Practice at SCQF Level 9 (PDA in Childhood Practice) is also available
[8] Children's Care, Learning & Development is the predecessor to MA Social Services (Children & Young People)

4

Current skills provision continued

College provision

Twenty three colleges in Scotland[9] deliver a range of ELC-related learning to employers, existing and prospective ELC staff. Enrolments (headcount and SUMS) and credits rose sharply between 2012/13 and 2014/15 and in 2014/15, 8,313 students were enrolled in ELC-related subjects. The sector is female dominated and the age profile is relatively young and getting younger. Over two-thirds of those enrolling on ELC-related college provision in 2014/15 were aged under 25 and this represents a 21% increase since 2012/13. Over the same period, there was a decrease in the number of those aged 25 and over (-17%) enrolling.

The three largest college providers (in terms of the numbers of enrolments) are West College Scotland, New College Lanarkshire and Ayrshire College.[10]

College learners studying for qualifications related to the ELC sector are studying for a variety of qualifications, with 29 different qualification aims recorded in the SFC data. These can be coded to the SCQF levels. There has been a decrease in the proportion working towards SCQF levels 1-4, 6 and 7-12 over the past three years, with a corresponding increase in those working towards SCQF 5.

In terms of destinations for HNC qualifiers in early education and childcare from colleges, 69.6% entered in to a positive destination. Out of this 38.1% went in to employment and 31.5% moved in to further study.

Colleges consulted during the research were confident that they could increase provision in line with an increase in demand but highlighted provision of placements as a challenge and the anticipated loss of European Social Funds.

Modern Apprenticeships

The number of Modern Apprenticeship starts in ELC related frameworks has increased. In 2015/16, there were 1,439 starts, up by 13% from 1,273 starts in 2014/15 as shown in table 8. The majority of starts of starts in 2015/16 were on Social Services (Children and Young People) Framework which accounted for 90% of all ELC related starts. A further 10% (150 individuals) were in Social Services (Children and Young People) Technical Apprenticeship framework. At 94%, the vast majority of registrations were female.

For the 1,203 MA leavers of the three ELC-related frameworks at the end of March 2016, there was an achievement rate of 73%, three percentage points below the all-framework achievement rate of 76%. Data from MA Outcomes Survey shows that 81% of MAs Social Services (Children and Young People) were still working 6 months post completion. Furthermore 90% were either in work or education.

Table 6: College enrolments on qualifications relating to Early Learning and Childcare – Enrolment, SUMS and Credits data

	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		% change
	No.	% of total	No.	% of total	No.	% of total	
Enrolments	6,882	2%	7,169	2%	8,313	3%	21%
SUMS	62,109	3%	62,448	3%	74,908	4%	21%
Credits	52,606	3%	56,014	3%	67,557	4%	28%

Source: SFC, 2016

Table 7: College enrolments on Early Learning and Childcare-related courses, by level, 2014/15

	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
No Qualifications	155	2%	147	2%	346	4%
Other Qualifications	1,760	26%	1,834	26%	2,141	26%
SCQF 1-4 (e.g. NCs and NPAs)	1,050	15%	837	12%	1,101	13%
SCQF 5 (e.g. National 5)	1,116	16%	1,433	20%	1,908	23%
SCQF 6 (e.g. Highers)	1,377	20%	1,480	21%	1,348	16%
SCQF 7-12 (e.g. HNC, SVQ 3 and above)	1,395	20%	1,410	20%	1,455	18%
Total	**6,853**	**100%**	**7,141**	**100%**	**8,299**	**100%**

Source: SFC, 2016

[9] Including the colleges that UHI comprises
[10] Source Scottish Funding Council 2016

4
Current skills provision continued

Foundation Apprenticeships

Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) were developed to provide better recognition of work-based learning and as a response to the challenge of skills shortages. In 2014/16, 13 young people were undertaking a FA in Social Services (Children and Young People). Over time, the number and geographical spread of people participating in FAs and the number of frameworks, including ELC-related frameworks, has increased.

In 2015/17, 56 young people started a FA in Social Services (Children and Young People) and for the year 2017/19 it is expected that 236 young people will commence their FA in Social Services (Children and Young People). Successful completion of the FA will allow young people to gain entry to Modern Apprenticeship in the sector, continue studies at college or university or go straight in to a job in the children's social service sector.

University provision

HEIs are important providers of ELC education and training and there are seven universities in Scotland that deliver relevant provision. In 2014/15 there were just over 1,369 enrolments in ELC related courses. The University of the West of Scotland accounts for 27% of all enrolments (First Degree, Other Undergraduate and Post Graduate) and the University of Glasgow and the University of Stirling each account for 16%.

For undergraduate degrees, Childhood Practice accounted for the largest proportion of enrolments in 2014/15 (51%). Childcare degrees account for the vast majority (83%) of postgraduate degrees in the sector.

First degrees in training nursery teachers accounted for around 12% of ELC-related university provision in 2014/15 representing a total of 168 enrolments. A further 32 people enrolled in postgraduate training nursery teachers degrees.[11]

Students in ELC subjects at HEIs tend to be older for example in nursery teacher training, 96% of students are aged over 25 years. In Childhood Practice 90% of students are aged 25 and over and the corresponding figure for Childcare is 74%. This reflects that students need to demonstrate experience and appropriate qualifications in the sector before undertaking the course. The proportions aged 19 and under is very small and has been decreasing in the last few years, contrasting with the trend in FE and HE provision at colleges.

The vast majority (96%) of university leavers in these subject areas move in to employment on completing their degree. Of these, 36% enter the education sector and 14% enter human health/social care. A further 30% take up jobs in public administration and 5% take up further study.

The Open University (OU) in Scotland had 231 enrolments in 2014/15. However, it is understood that from October 2016 the OU introduced a new suite of ELC qualifications and in delivering these qualifications have moved away from observed and assessed practice, and on that basis do not meet SSSC's criteria and principles for registration. The OU has indicated that the inclusion of assessed practice in future awards is being explored.[12]

Table 8: Provision of apprenticeships in Early Learning and Childcare, 2015/16

	No. of starts	% F	% M
Social Services (Children and Young People) (Level 3)	1,288	96%	4%
Social Services (Children and Young People) Technical Apprenticeship (Level 4)	150	94%	6%
Children's Care, Learning & Development (Level 3)	1	100%	0%
Total	**1,439**	**90%**	**10%**

Source: SDS, 2016

Table 9: Modern Apprenticeships: apprentices in training, leavers, and achievements at end of March 2016

	No of Leavers			In Training			Achievements			Achievements as % of All Leavers		
% of All Leavers	F	M	Tot.	F	M	Tot.	F	M	Tot.	F	M	Tot.
Childrens Care, Learning & Development	182	5	187	6	0	6	162	4	166	89%	80%	89%
Social Services (Children and Young People)	967	35	1,002	1,553	74	1,627	683	23	706	71%	66%	70%
Social Services (Children and Young People) Technical apprenticeship	13	1	14	147	8	155	2	0	2	15%	0%	14%
Total	**1,162**	**41**	**1,203**	**1,706**	**82**	**1,787**	**847**	**27**	**874**	**73%**	**66%**	**73%**

Source: SFC, 2016

[11] Source: SFC data 2016
[12] SSSC currently accept the Early Years Developing Practice (OU Module E100) for registration as a Support Worker in Day Care of Children settings. SSSC also continue to accept for registration those who present the predecessor award, the Early Years Developing Practice.

5 Key Challenges and Priorities

The increase in free entitlement to ELC by 2020 presents both challenges and opportunities particularly as the sector has to grow and invest in the workforce.

This chapter sets out the key challenges and priorities arising from the research and consultation sessions. These form the basis for the development and identification of strategic objectives and priority actions for the sector.

Perception and sector attractiveness

Making the ELC sector a more attractive prospect for potential employees remains a significant challenge. The sector is often perceived as offering limited career progression opportunities with low status and pay. A concerted effort is required by all partners to change this attitude and break the perceived barriers to jobs and careers in early learning and childcare.

Awareness and understanding of careers in the early learning and childcare sector needs to be increased. The wide range of entry routes and progression pathways in to and through the sector needs to be communicated to a range of audiences.

Key to this is changing and informing perceptions of career influencers (including for example parents, carers and teachers) who play an important role in supporting decisions related to qualifications and careers.

Research collated during the development process highlighted the need for good quality career related information to be further developed and shared on a regular basis to keep influencers abreast of the increase in demand for skilled workforce in the sector. Existing resources such as Skills Development Scotland's web service My World of Work, SSSC's Ambassador's Scheme and information on A Career in Care will continue to help raise awareness of careers in the sector.

Recruitment and retention

There is consensus that the principal challenge facing the sector is recruiting and retaining an adequate, high quality, diversified and committed workforce to meet current and projected need. Underpinning this is the perceived barriers that make the sector unattractive for new entrants. However, the focus cannot simply be on getting enough people in to the sector to provide the places, it has to be on attracting the right people to work in it. In addition to building on recruitment from school and college, workers must come from a diverse range of backgrounds including career changers, returners and older workers – that is people who want a career in ELC and have the attitudes, skills and aptitudes to pursue it.

The sector must also be able to keep experienced staff and support them to develop their skills and adapt to changes. SSSC experimental statistics show that staff retention in day care of children services was 82.9% between 2013/2014 although it varied from 90% in local authority settings to 78% in private providers. As a comparison, average retention rates across all industries in the UK was 88.4% in 2015.

5

Key Challenges and Priorities continued

Diversify the workforce and address gender imbalance within the sector

If the sector is to meet the Scottish Government's commitment of expanding free provision of ELC to 1,140 hours by 2020, and ensuring that it is flexible, high quality, accessible and affordable, then it cannot continue to principally recruit from the traditional pool – namely young women, often school leavers.

This means a potential loss of talent to the sector. Appropriate interventions are needed at all levels to encourage a diverse workforce. A targeted and focused approach is needed to dispel myths, and tackle negative perceptions and stereotypes associated with the sector. More men and people from diverse backgrounds must be encouraged to enter and remain in the sector. Some good examples of positive action across the college sector include initiatives such as Men in Childcare, which offers free access courses to men with an opportunity to progress in to HNC or SVQ 3 level qualification. More needs to be done to understand the barriers that exist to diversifying the workforce and potential pool of applicants. Employers should also be encouraged to broaden their approach to recruitment.

Expansion of childminders as partner providers

At present the proportion of childminders delivering funded ELC in partnership with local authorities is low as compared to other partner providers. When local authorities contract with childminders they do so within their own quality assurance frameworks. Part of the issue reported by childminders appears to be perceptions held by local authorities about the suitability of childminders as partner providers. Changing perceptions may be more difficult in the absence of data on the qualifications held for childminders. This is being addressed by the Care Inspectorate and data should be available and regularly gathered from 2017.

There are also barriers to childminders wanting to provide funded places. These are primarily around the processes required to become a partner-provider and the fee rates which are often below earnings that would be provided by non-funded care. The findings from the ELC trials which is testing a variety of approaches including a blended delivery model by making additional hours available through local childminders will enable further understanding of the challenges faced by childminders and help identify potential solutions.

Education and training

Access to learning and training is often more difficult for childminders, which is why understanding the local profile of providers and where the workforce is employed is important. The time and costs associated with investment in learning and training as well as geographical barriers to accessing training, particularly in remote/rural areas, can be prohibitive to those wishing to enter the sector. Anecdotally, it is also easier for employers in the public sector to organise and pay for staff to train, including backfilling their position when they are participating in training.

The skills system is broadly meeting the needs of the sector although there are specialist/technical skills requirements which present particular challenges. This includes a focus on meeting the needs of eligible two year olds and enhancing digital/ICT skills reflecting the demands of a changing workplace.

Essential skills and specialist provision

Employers felt that it is important that staff have an appropriate level of literacy, numeracy, digital skills and science-related knowledge. They must also be good communicators, both written and verbally, to enable them to communicate with children, parents, carers, their team, wider community and other organisations as needed.

High quality work placements in a range of settings are vital to help potential entrants develop the skills that employers seek. This reflects the changing nature of the sector, the roles within it and the expectations of parents, carers and partner organisations.

The consultations found that trying to recruit for specialist provision such as Gaelic-speaking ELC staff can add an extra layer of difficulty. Whilst demand for Gaelic medium education, including ELC, has been growing, more needs to be done to understand the impact on the demand for specialist provision.

Leadership skills

Leaders and managers must have the skills required to manage changes and to respond to the requirements of families as well as the commitments made by the Scottish Government for quality, accessible, flexible and affordable ELC. Leaders and managers are in the frontline of contributing to achieving the best outcomes for Scotland's children and they must be equipped to work with their team towards this. Existing resources such as SSSC's 'Step into Leadership' offers social services staff the opportunity to develop effective leadership skills at all levels. It aims to help staff find the leadership information and resources relevant to their role in social services. Partners agreed that there is a continued need to develop and promote opportunities for networking and mentoring in the sector to drive leadership.

5

Key Challenges and Priorities continued

Evidence based planning

Given the steep increase in the number of staff that will need to be employed by 2020 and the fact that they will be required to hold or be working towards a relevant qualification, a challenge is not just establishing an adequate skills pipeline. There will also need to be management of the flow of workers in to the sector, as well as the planning and implementing of necessary training and learning.

This will be driven by the method by which the Scottish Government decides to introduce its programme of expanded hours. The skills evidence base generated through the existing resources such as SSSC's Workforce skills report and Prospectus will support expansion planning at local and regional levels.

6 Mission and action plan

To drive the development of the sector and guide skills resource planning, partners in the steering group have discussed and agreed a Mission Statement, a set of five strategic objectives and priority action areas.

These aim to tackle the challenges and maximise the opportunities in ELC by providing a framework for stakeholders to work together to ensure there is a skilled and knowledgeable workforce to fuel expansion and provide high quality services. There is also a commitment to making the sector attractive and rewarding in which to work.

Mission Statement:
"Attracting, nurturing and retaining a diverse early learning and childcare workforce to support children, their families and communities to ensure the best possible start in life."

The overarching themes that guide the development of strategic objectives and the action plan are:

• **ensuring continued high quality**

• **contributing to closing the attainment gap**

• **recognising and valuing the workforce.**

The strategic objectives to achieve this mission and address the themes are:

• **raise the profile and attractiveness of the sector and actively increase diversity**

• **better promote routes in to and pathways through the sector**

• **ensure take up opportunities for progressing, re-skilling and upskilling the workforce**

• **engage Early Learning and Childcare employers**

• **fulfilling immediate needs of the expansion plan.**

Table 11 is a summary of the strategic objectives, action areas and expected outcomes. The Steering Group will continue to engage with partners and stakeholders to shape the priority action areas into a detailed action plan, with a view to identifying lead partners and measures of success against each action. This is central to the next phase of the work, which will focus on developing a full Skills Investment Plan.

Table 11 Strategy Map – Summary

Overarching Themes Ensuring continued high quality		Contributing to closing the attainment gap	Recognising and valuing the workforce	
Strategic Objective 1	**Strategic Objective 2**	**Strategic Objective 3**	**Strategic Objective 4**	**Strategic Objective 5**
Raise the profile and attractiveness of the sector and actively increase diversity	Better promote routes into and pathways through the sector	Ensure take up opportunities for progressing, re-skilling and up-skilling the workforce	Engage Early Learning and Childcare employers	Fulfil immediate needs of the expansion plan
Action Areas				
• Deliver a high profile recruitment campaign to attract a diverse workforce • Ensure high quality careers information, advice and guidance • Commission specific materials to attract under-represented groups	• Develop essential skills within schools and colleges and promote careers in early years • Showcase alternative routes to careers (work based learning, college, university) • Promote flexibility in pathways • Remove barriers that inhibit part-time or accessible learning	• Support continuing professional development • Promote leadership development opportunities at all levels • Promote models of work based learning to meet needs of employers and learners • Promote full range of flexible and part-time learning and development opportunities	• Promote expansion plan to employers • Ensure awareness of support available for learning and development • Encourage participation in regional networks and activities • Encourage and promote Fair Work practices • Promote the need for ELC experience within school leadership teams	• Promote a locally based infrastructure to support expansion across all sectors • Develop and implement a communications strategy to all partners • Develop and implement a proportionate and appropriate Inspection and Quality Assurance framework • Promote awareness of all available funding routes
Expected Outcomes				
• Increase in the attractiveness of the sector as a career of choice • Improved recruitment and retention rates • A more diverse talent pool and workforce • Improved understanding of the sector and skills pathways, qualification / training amongst potential entrants, influencers and employers • Increased access to development opportunities across the sector • Alignment of skills provision with evolving employer and employee needs to meet the needs of expansion				

7
Next steps

This document presents a robust evidence base for the ELC sector and presents an agreed direction of travel to fulfil the ambitions of the expansion of free entitlement to 1140 hours.

Further development work will be underpinned by Scottish Government's ELC policy blueprint for 2020. SDS will continue to coordinate this activity, and work with the Steering Group to develop a full Skills Investment Plan for the ELC sector in Scotland.

The next phase of our work will focus on:
- further development and refinement of the action plan

- identifying and securing the resources and support required for the delivery of the action plan

- reviewing progress against actions

- ensuring that clear and consistent messages are communicated to the sector and stakeholders about the SIP priorities and actions – and more generally about the importance of skills to achieving their ambitions

- building and strengthening links with relevant national, regional and local groups.

Appendices

Appendix 1: References informing the Early Learning and Childcare Skills Investment Plan: Prospectus development

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SSSC (2014) Workforce Skills Report 2013-14: Qualification and training provision in the social service sector in Scotland

SSSC (2016) Experimental Statistics: Staff Retention in the Scottish Social Service Sector (not published)

SSSC (2016) Registration Data (not published)

SSSC (2016) Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2015 Workforce Data

SSSC (2016) Scottish Social Service Sector: Social Service Workforce Data Spreadsheets 2015

SSSC (2016) SVQs in the Scottish Social Services Sector

Appendix 2: ELC Steering Group

Members and contributors	Organisation
Sheila Sansbury (LA - Aberdeen)	ADES Early Years Network
Dawn Archibald (LA – Angus)	ADES Early Years Network
Caroline Amos (LA – North Ayrshire)	ADES Early Years Network
Valerie Gale and Fiona Morrison	Care and Learning Alliance
Sybil Lang	College Development Network
Kathy Cameron and Laura Caven	COSLA
Evelyn Johnson and Brian Wallace	Department of Work and Pensions
Jean Carwood Edwards	Early Years Scotland
Jane Mair	National Day Nurseries Association
Anne Condie	Scottish Childminding Association
Sharon Drysdale and Alison Malcolm	Scottish Funding Council
Thirza Wilson and Helen Pilkington	The Care Inspectorate
Ann McSorley and Alison Precup	Scottish Social Service Council
Euan Carmichael, Scott Sutherland, Manuel Proemel	Scottish Government
Paul Zealey and Mili Shukla	Skills Development Scotland

Appendix 3:
Evidence tables

Table A3.1: Number of Early Learning and Childcare employers by type in Scotland (SSSC), Dec 2015

Area	Childminding	Day Care of Children			
	Total	Private	Public	Voluntary	Total
Aberdeen City	161	60	69	38	167
Aberdeenshire	322	61	101	57	219
Angus	169	27	49	32	108
Argyll & Bute	83	16	50	17	83
Clackmannanshire	67	6	18	4	28
Dumfries & Galloway	140	27	46	25	98
Dundee City	172	39	30	20	89
East Ayrshire	207	11	33	21	65
East Dunbartonshire	142	33	21	22	76
East Lothian	135	18	33	31	82
East Renfrewshire	155	27	20	7	54
Edinburgh, City of	388	170	105	102	377
Falkirk	217	16	54	27	97
Fife	506	42	169	37	248
Glasgow City	189	141	120	105	366
Highland	315	43	141	59	243
Inverclyde	59	9	20	11	40
Midlothian	84	20	28	29	77
Moray	125	22	22	22	66
Na h-Eileanan Siar	25	1	21	5	27
North Ayrshire	187	21	44	15	80
North Lanarkshire	365	54	95	25	174
Orkney Islands	36		20	3	23
Perth & Kinross	190	41	61	23	125
Renfrewshire	90	63	37	16	116
Scottish Borders	132	23	46	29	98
Shetland Islands	18	5	22	3	30
South Ayrshire	122	11	43	12	66

Table A3.1: Number of Early Learning and Childcare employers by type in Scotland (SSSC), Dec 2015

Area	Childminding	Day Care of Children			
	Total	Private	Public	Voluntary	Total
South Lanarkshire	311	65	78	31	174
Stirling	130	20	32	13	65
West Dunbartonshire	53	17	22	11	50
West Lothian	277	33	61	38	132
Outwith Scotland	-	1	-	-	1
Total	**5,572**	**1143**	**1711**	**890**	**3744**

Source: SSSC Workforce Data, 2016

Table A3.2: Employment in Early Learning and Childcare (SSSC) by sub-sector and employer type, Dec 2015

Area	Childminding	Day Care of Children						ELC
	Private	Private		Public		Voluntary		Total
Aberdeen City	160	880	55%	460	29%	250	16%	1,590
Aberdeenshire	320	820	46%	620	34%	360	20%	1,800
Angus	170	260	36%	240	33%	220	31%	720
Argyll & Bute	80	150	34%	170	39%	120	27%	440
Clackmannanshire	70	70	26%	180	67%	20	7%	270
Dumfries & Galloway	140	260	38%	250	37%	170	25%	680
Dundee City	170	520	50%	340	33%	180	17%	1,040
East Ayrshire	210	100	17%	330	56%	160	27%	590
East Dunbartonshire	140	370	49%	220	29%	170	22%	760
East Lothian	140	250	39%	220	34%	170	27%	640
East Renfrewshire	160	290	45%	320	49%	40	6%	650
Edinburgh, City of	390	2,190	55%	880	22%	890	22%	3,960
Falkirk	220	220	28%	430	55%	130	17%	780
Fife	510	520	27%	1,190	61%	240	12%	1,950
Glasgow City	190	1,650	38%	1,630	38%	1,040	24%	4,320
Highland	320	460	35%	600	45%	270	20%	1,330
Inverclyde	60	100	21%	280	60%	90	19%	470

Table A3.2: Employment in Early Learning and Childcare (SSSC) by sub-sector and employer type, Dec 2015

Area	Childminding	Day Care of Children							ELC
	Private	Private		Public		Voluntary			Total
Midlothian	80	250	36%	190	27%	260	37%	700
Moray	120	220	45%	120	24%	150	31%	490
Na h-Eileanan Siar	20	0	0%	100	71%	40	29%	140
North Ayrshire	190	200	36%	290	52%	70	13%	560
North Lanarkshire	360	630	40%	800	50%	160	10%	1,590
Orkney Islands	40		0%	60	67%	30	33%	90
Perth & Kinross	190	450	48%	370	40%	110	12%	930
Renfrewshire	90	700	52%	440	33%	200	15%	1,340
Scottish Borders	130	210	36%	200	34%	170	29%	580
Shetland Islands	20	40	25%	100	63%	20	13%	160
South Ayrshire	120	160	29%	300	54%	100	18%	560
South Lanarkshire	310	910	49%	730	40%	200	11%	1,840
Stirling	130	250	42%	280	47%	60	10%	590
West Dunbartonshire	50	220	37%	310	52%	70	12%	600
West Lothian	280	420	34%	480	38%	350	28%	1,250
Scotland	**5,570**	**13,780**	**41%**	**13,140**	**39%**	**6,540**	**20%**	**39,030**

Table A3.3: Role profile of the Early Learning and Childcare workforce, 2015

	No of Staff (Headcount)	Admin., Support and Ancillary Workers		Class 2/3 Care Workers		Class 4 Care Workers		Managers, Directors & Chief Executives		Not Known	
Childminding	5,570	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	5,570	100%
Day Care of Children	33,460	1,910	6%	26,080	78%	1,690	5%	3,330	10%	220	<1%
Scotland	**39,030**	**1,910**	**5%**	**27,770**	**67%**	**1,690**	**4%**	**110**	**9%**	**5,790**	**15%**

Source: SSSC Workforce Data, 2016; Figures may not sum due to rounding

Table A3.4: College enrolments on qualifications relating to Early Learning and Childcare – Enrolment, SUMS and Credits data

	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		% change
	No.	% of total	No.	% of total	No.	% of total	
Enrolments	6,882	2%	7,169	2%	8,313	3%	21%
SUMS	62,109	3%	62,448	3%	74,908	4%	21%
Credits	52,606	3%	56,014	3%	67,557	4%	28%

Source: SFC, 2016

Table A3.5: College enrolments on qualifications relating to Early Learning and Childcare – Largest providers, 2014/15

College Region	Enrolments	% of Early Learning and Childcare
West College Scotland	1,115	13%
New College Lanarkshire	1,039	12%
Ayrshire College	884	11%
South Lanarkshire College	624	8%
Dundee and Angus College	555	7%
Glasgow Clyde College	553	7%
Glasgow Kelvin College	491	6%
Edinburgh College	460	6%
West Lothian College	453	5%
Others	2,139	26%
Total	**8,313**	**100%**

Source: SFC, 2016

Table A3.6: College enrolments on Early Learning and Childcare-related courses – Qualification aims, 2014/15

Qualification aim	No. of enrolments	% of Early Learning and Childcare total	Change 2012/13 - 2013/14
Other Non-Advanced Certificate or equivalent	1,191	12%	61%
Highest level of study (course or unit) Intermediate 2	1,135	12%	73%
HNC or Equivalent	1,053	11%	10%
Course not leading to recognised qualification (including most non-vocational courses)	918	10%	-3%
Highest level of study (course or unit) Intermediate 1	776	8%	18%
SVQ: Level 3	538	6%	10%
Higher (Group Award)	460	5%	10%
Intermediate 2 (Group Award)	460	5%	127%
Highest level of study (course or unit) Higher	438	5%	-21%
SVQ: Level 2	227	2%	-3%
Any other recognised qualification	23	0%	-47%
Other	2,388	25%	16%
Total	**9,607**	**100%**	**22%**

Source: SFC, 2016

Table A3.7: Provision of apprenticeships in Early Learning and Childcare, 2014/15 and 2015/16

Framework	2014/15	2015/16
Early Years Care Education	0	0
Children's Care, Learning and Development	0	1
Social Services (Children and Young People)	1,254	1,288
Social Services (Children and Young People) Technical Apprenticeship	19	150
Total	**1,273**	**1,439**

Source: SDS, 2016

Table A3.8: Enrolments on courses at Scottish HEIs relating to Early Learning and Childcare

Course by Degree Level	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	% of total	% change
First Degree					
Childhood Practice	286	443	501	51%	75%
Childcare	227	329	321	32%	41%
Training teachers – nursery	130	154	168	17%	29%
Other Undergraduate					
Childcare	363	136	84	67%	-77%
Childhood Practice	133	39	42	33%	-
Postgraduate					
Childcare	105	142	217	83%	107%
Childhood Practice	-	7	14	5%	-
Training teachers – nursery	35	31	32	12%	-9%

Source: SDS, 2016

Table A3.9: Enrolments on courses at Scottish HEIs relating to Early Learning and Childcare, 2014/15

HEI	First Degree	Other Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total
University of the West of Scotland	321	6	52	379
University of Glasgow	168	-	46	214
University of Stirling	-	61	152	213
University of the Highlands and Islands	158	28	-	186
University of Dundee	137	31	13	181
University of Strathclyde	138	-	-	138
University of Edinburgh	68	-	-	68
Total	**990**	**126**	**263**	**1,379**

Source: SFC; Note: due to the nature of university provision (single, joint, triple honours) it is not possible to analyse broad subject areas by HEI

Appendix 4: SSSC benchmark qualifications

Benchmark qualifications for managers and lead practitioners

- BA Childhood Practice
- BA (Honours) Childhood Practice (Strathclyde University)
- Graduate Diploma Childhood Practice (the University of the West of Scotland)
- SQA Professional Development Award Childhood Practice (360 credits at SCQF Level 9)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Childhood Practice
- Master of Education Childhood Practice, Glasgow University and Dundee University

All entrants on programmes are expected to hold or be willing to undertake a suitable practice award.

Benchmark qualifications for practitioners

- HNC Childhood Practice (at SCQF Level 7)
- SVQ Social Services Children and Young People at SCQF Level 7

Benchmark qualifications for support workers

Any qualification in the Practitioner in Day Care of Children services category.

OR

One of the following practice qualifications

- NC in Early Education and Childcare at SCQF Level 6
- SVQ Social Service (Children and Young People) at SCQF Level 6

Children and Families Directorate
Joe Griffin, Deputy Director, Creating Positive Futures

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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T: 0131-244 1030 F: 0131-244 1030
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Local Authority Chief Executives
Local Authority Directors of Finance
Local Authority Directors of Education

Copy to:
Jane O'Donnell, COSLA
Vicki Bibby, COSLA
Lesley Gibb, ADES Early Years Network

Dear Colleagues

**EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (ELC) – 1140 HOURS EXPANSION
2017-18 FUNDING ALLOCATIONS**

The 2017-18 Scottish Budget allocates over £60 million of new investment to expansion of ELC to 1140 hours by 2020. Local authorities will receive £21 million in revenue and £30 million in capital funding, with the remainder of the budget deployed to support additional training places including supporting delivery of the additional graduate commitment, national recruitment activity, and the creation of a delivery support function to provide authorities with access to additional capacity and specialist expertise.

The distribution methodology to be used for the capital and revenue funding for this initial phase of the expansion programme has been agreed by the Scottish Government and COSLA Leaders. This funding is to be protected for investment in expansion to 1140 hours and a proportionate reporting and monitoring framework will be put in place via forthcoming ELC expansion service delivery plans.

Revenue allocations

The Scottish Government will allocate £21 million of revenue funding to local authorities in 2017-18 to invest in workforce development and expansion for 1140 hours. The primary purpose of this funding is to enable local authorities to begin to increase the size of the workforce and to equip existing staff with new skills. The 2017-18 investment is to take account of the principles which underpin Scottish Ministers' *Blueprint for 2020*: quality, flexibility, accessibility and affordability.

Funding can to be applied to the following purposes, with an expectation that local authorities will prioritise investment in ELC services by reference to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation:

Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
www.gov.scot

ISO14001 at V.Q.   EMAS CERT. NO. 3045G
BSI REGISTERED   NATIONAL ACCREDITATION OF CERTIFICATION BODIES
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE   POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

- extended opening hours for existing ELC settings, or opening new settings to build capacity for 1140 hours, including revenue implications of any capital expenditure;
- developing or expanding the involvement of childminders in the provision of ELC, including "blended" models involving provision in both group and domestic settings;
- enhanced provision for children with additional support needs;
- implementing or expanding innovative models of workforce deployment and training, both in local authority and partner providers;
- developing, introducing or expanding outdoor nursery provision; and
- supporting delivery of the additional graduate commitment by providing backfill for staff requiring day release for study towards the BA in Childhood Practice.

In planning for use of this funding, local authorities are asked to engage with colleges and other partners on workforce development issues, including ensuring adequate provision of training placements for those undertaking college based learning.

As agreed with COSLA leaders, authorities will be required to demonstrate that funding has been applied to the purposes specified above, in accordance with the reporting arrangements set out below. An adjustment will be made to future year allocations in respect of any underspends recorded against the total allocation.

This funding will be allocated to local authorities on the basis of pre-school education grant-aided expenditure (GAE).

The **Annex** to this letter details the allocations for revenue for 2017-18 for each local authority.

Funding will be provided by way of a ring-fenced grant and will be separate to the Local Government settlement. Grants will be paid in a single instalment in June 2017.

Capital allocations

The Scottish Government will allocate £30 million of capital funding to local authorities in 2017-18 to invest in infrastructure developments which will expand capacity in the provision of ELC.

This funding is to be applied to the following purposes, with an expectation that local authorities will prioritise investment in ELC services by reference to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation:

- initiatives that have the potential to realise additional capacity for 1140 hours through making best use of the existing public sector estate such as the extension, remodelling or refurbishment of existing ELC settings or other public assets to enable extended opening hours and / or additional capacity;
- initiatives that support the development of ELC settings which seek to embrace the Curriculum for Excellence's emphasis on a broader learning experience through active learning and learning outdoors; and

- providing capital grants to delivery partners, including third sector and private providers, in furtherance of these purposes.

This funding will initially be allocated to local authorities on the basis of pre-school education grant-aided expenditure (GAE). In recognition of the lead-in time for planning and implementing capital investments, authorities are invited to formally confirm acceptance, in full or in part, of the indicative allocation set out in the **Annex** to this letter. Capital allocations which cannot be utilised will be reallocated to other authorities to maximise the benefits of this capital investment to the expansion programme as a whole. Such unutilised allocations will be reallocated to authorities seeking additional funding, in proportion to the additional sums sought.

Capital funding provided for 2018-19 onwards will be adjusted to take account of any reallocation of funding in 2017-18, in order to ensure equity over the life of the programme. Funding will be provided by way of a ring-fenced grant and will be separate to the Local Government settlement. Grants will be paid in a single instalment in June 2017.

Monitoring and reporting arrangements

Authorities should set out plans for utilising capital and revenue allocations for 2017-18 within their forthcoming ELC Expansion Service Delivery Plans.

Authorities will be required to submit a short report on outturn against these plans to the Scottish Government by the end of May 2018, providing evidence as to how funding has been applied in furtherance of the purposes set out in this letter with specific reference to:

- FTE additional staff recruited and / or trained in-year;
- Additional hours provided as a result of the funding;
- Demonstrating how the investment in 2017-18 will contribute to high quality delivery of 1140 hours by 2020; and
- Learning from new approaches that can be shared with other authorities.

Next Steps

You are now invited to confirm if you:

- accept this allocation in full, and if so how much you could spend in addition to the indicative level of allocation set out in the Annex to this letter;
- accept this allocation in part; or
- do not wish to draw down the allocation for 2017-18.

I would be grateful if you could respond to the above points by Friday 28 April 2017. You will receive written notification of your final capital allocations for 2017-18, including any reallocated funds, by Friday 19 May 2017.

In the meantime should you have any further queries please direct them to Alison Cumming – ELC Programme Director on 0131 244 0540 or alison.cumming@gov.scot.

Yours sincerely

Joe Griffin
Deputy Director for Creating Positive Futures

Allocation of additional funds for Early Learning and Childcare - 2017-18

Local Authority	Pre-School Education GAE %age	Revenue allocation £m	Indicative capital allocation £m
Aberdeen City	3.5%	0.725	1.035
Aberdeenshire	5.9%	1.242	1.774
Angus	2.1%	0.450	0.643
Argyll & Bute	1.6%	0.346	0.494
Clackmannanshire	0.9%	0.194	0.277
Dumfries & Galloway	3.0%	0.638	0.912
Dundee City	2.7%	0.566	0.809
East Ayrshire	2.3%	0.482	0.688
East Dunbartonshire	1.9%	0.391	0.558
East Lothian	2.1%	0.432	0.618
East Renfrewshire	1.8%	0.377	0.538
Edinburgh	8.3%	1.752	2.504
Eilean Siar	0.6%	0.130	0.186
Falkirk	3.1%	0.653	0.933
Fife	7.1%	1.488	2.126
Glasgow City	10.0%	2.104	3.006
Highland	5.1%	1.074	1.535
Inverclyde	1.3%	0.269	0.384
Midlothian	1.8%	0.370	0.528
Moray	1.9%	0.405	0.579
North Ayrshire	2.5%	0.519	0.741
North Lanarkshire	6.2%	1.297	1.852
Orkney Islands	0.5%	0.099	0.142
Perth & Kinross	3.0%	0.621	0.887
Renfrewshire	3.0%	0.639	0.913
Scottish Borders	2.3%	0.482	0.689
Shetland Islands	0.6%	0.132	0.188
South Ayrshire	1.8%	0.388	0.555
South Lanarkshire	5.8%	1.220	1.743
Stirling	1.9%	0.406	0.580
West Dunbartonshire	1.8%	0.370	0.528
West Lothian	3.5%	0.739	1.055
SCOTLAND	**100.00%**	**21.000**	**30.000**

Summary of the current infrastructure expansion proposals/possibilities including the key risks associated with each site/property

Capital Project Proposals				
Proposed Site / Existing Asset Conversion	**2-3**	**3-5**	**Key Risks**	
Larkfield Children's Centre - Extension	15	24	Building	Refurbishment risk due to existing building conversion / extension. Current allowance within SEMP model (£250K) for minor upgrade post demolition of remainder of Sacred Heart building.
			Programme	Demolition will not be possible until SEMP programme completed circa summer 2019 which will dictate programme for any extension - unlikely to be fully implemented until 1st/2nd Quarter 2020.
Grieve Road Community Hall - Demolish & New Build or Conversion & Extension	15	40	Consultation	Use of existing community facility. Requires to be declared surplus. Amendment required to Inverclyde Leisure lease agreement. Formal arrangements required for alternative venue(s) for current users.
			Building	Feasibility studies to be undertaken to confirm viability of conversion. New build option on same site also being considered.
			Site	Possible relocation of existing community play equipment required subject to feasibility proposals.
St Joseph PS - Adaptations for Nursery Class	15	56	-	No significant risks - 2017/18 project currently at design stage.
Former St Ninians PS Site - New Build	15	48	Consultation	Concerns as to further development impacting Kirn Drive congestion - Proposals involve small facility with minimal impact. When declared surplus it is possible preferred site for community garden – site is large enough to accommodate both uses as complimentary developments and is being explored as part of the on-going feasibility studies.
			Site	Potential site abnormal costs (mine workings / low level contamination).
Binnie Street Children's Centre - Outdoor Learning	-	16	Building	Existing building constraints. Insurance considerations for placement of external classroom structure (likely timber construction).

Summary of the current infrastructure expansion proposals/possibilities including the key risks associated with each site/property

Proposed Site / Existing Asset Conversion	2-3	3-5		Key Risks
Blairmore EYLC - Conversion	20	-	Building	PPP change notice required including consideration of up-front payment of future lifecycle costs as part of capital outlay due to nature of contract/facility - low risk as working within existing footprint.
Crawfurdsburn Community Centre - Demolish & New Build or Conversion & Extension	15	96	Consultation	Use of existing community facility. Requires to be declared surplus. Amendment required to Inverclyde Leisure lease agreement. Formal arrangements required for alternative venue(s) for current users.
			Building	Feasibility studies to be undertaken to confirm viability of conversion. New build option on same site also being considered.
St Francis PS - Adaptations for Nursery Class	15	24	-	No significant risks - 2017/18 project currently at design stage.
Park Farm Community Centre - Demolish & New Build or Conversion & Extension	-	64	Consultation	Use of existing community facility. Requires to be declared surplus. Amendment required to Inverclyde Leisure lease agreement (NB no current use - vacant).
			Building	Feasibility studies to be undertaken to confirm viability of conversion. New build option on same site also being considered.
			Site	Available land around building is limited / constrained by community MUGA and play area location (play area may require relocation). Overall external space availability may be an issue subject to the outcome of the on-going feasibility studies.
Kilmacolm PS – Expansion within school grounds	-	32	Site	Separate access may be required via new road including provision of additional staff parking. Any new building would be small scale in line with domestic properties adjacent. Risk of objection via formal planning process.

Summary of the current infrastructure expansion proposals/possibilities including the key risks associated with each site/property

Proposed Site / Existing Asset Conversion	2-3	3-5	Key Risks	
Dempster Street Site (Cowdenknowes) - New Build	-	96	Consultation / Titles	Due to open space amenity nature of the ground public consultation will be required. Consideration of provision of small MUGA may be required to address public / sportscotland concerns over loss of amenity (NB: ground is former blaes pitch now gone to seed. Council's Leisure Strategy investment and School Estate Management Plan investment has addressed significant sports pitch provision in the area).
			Site	Ground is adjacent to Cowdeknowes dam, possible site abnormals subject to full survey / investigation.
Wemyss Bay Community Centre - Extension & Upgrade	0	40	Site	Possible relocation of existing community play equipment required subject to feasibility proposals.
			Consultation	Centre is well used by the Community. Proposal is to extend and retain community part. Early Years facility could potentially utilise the community hall and kitchen. Requires consultation with current users and alteration to Inverclyde Leisure lease. Upgraded facility would benefit all users.