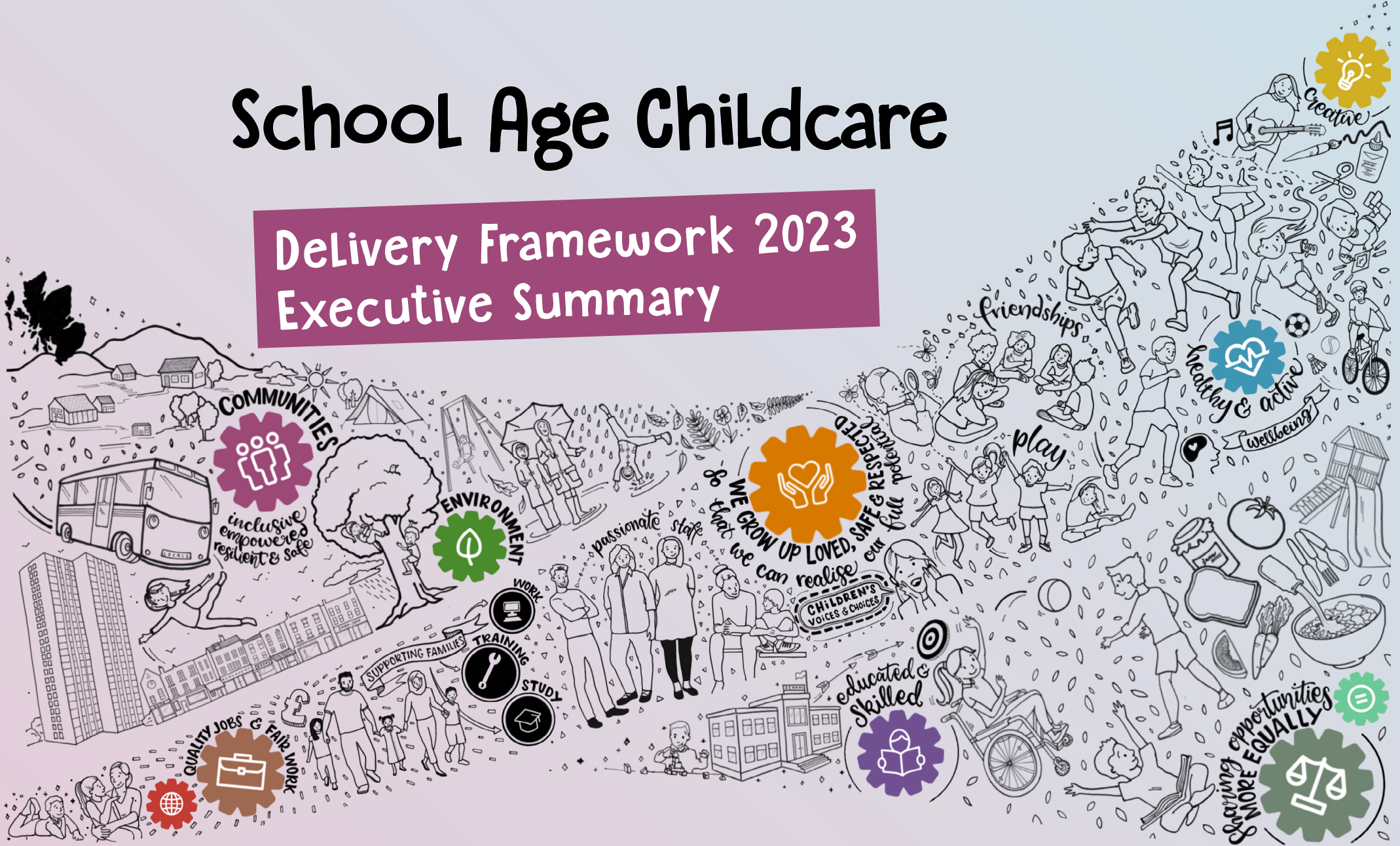


# School Age Childcare

## Delivery Framework 2023 Executive Summary



# Executive Summary



School age childcare services play a vital role within our communities, offering a variety of options which families can rely on to support childcare needs, before and after school, and during the holidays.

In [Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022-26](#), we have committed to building a system of school age childcare where those on the lowest incomes will pay nothing. An expanded childcare offering for school age children is crucial to our national mission to tackle child poverty, to promote family wellbeing, help parents and carers to access study, training and employment, drive greater gender equality and to #Keep The Promise to our care experienced children.

We know that funding school age childcare alone won't deliver the wider societal outcomes we seek. That's why we are working closely across a range of policies and partners to understand and maximise the benefits of a funded school age childcare offer. Our action areas recognise this complexity and our people-centred and place-based approach focuses on tailoring local systems to meet the needs of the children and families within their communities.





**Figure 1:** How the School Age Childcare policy vision and drivers contribute to the National Performance Framework outcomes

# What we'll do and how we'll do it



Our approach to designing and building a system of school age childcare will be people-centred and place-based. This means that the people of Scotland are supported and empowered to actively participate in the definition, design and delivery of their public services.

We will deepen our understanding of how the school age childcare system works by understanding people's experiences of it, whether those people are using school age childcare services, providing services, or supporting them. We expect that the needs of families, and the resources available to meet those needs, will differ between communities in Scotland. By taking an approach which delivers the outcomes which are important to particular communities, we recognise that co-design may lead us to distinct school age childcare systems and services in different places.



Our 'Plan on a page' outlines how we will build and deliver a system of school age childcare:

**Our vision**  
 A rights based, dynamic school age childcare offer for children and young people, which supports choice and growth, enabling families and communities to reach their full potential.

**Realising our vision - What our programme will deliver**  
 "Scotland will have a system of accessible and affordable school age childcare providing care before and after school and during the holidays for primary school children from low income households. Children will be able to access healthy and nutritious food as part of this offer."


**Why are we doing it?**

**Tackling Child Poverty**  
 Parents from targeted families are able to access childcare that supports them to take up, sustain and/or increase their hours of work. Reducing barriers to employment by improving access to childcare for targeted families.

**Improving outcomes for children**  
 Reducing inequalities which exist in access to a wide range of activities for children from targeted families. Improving family wellbeing by supporting and increasing access to integrated childcare, food and activities.


**What will we do?**

**Action Areas**



**Building the system**  
 Creating the national infrastructure to underpin growth and expansion

- Legislative requirements
- Designing a delivery mechanism
- Regulation and registration
- Qualifications



**Testing the change**  
 Exploring the delivery of services and their impacts in different communities

Early adopter communities, testing:

- Specialist Services
- Food Provision
- Assessing year round capability and demand
- Targeting funding
- Rural provision

**Who will it help?**


Our work is focused on supporting low income families, particularly those within the six priority family groups most likely to be living in poverty.

✓ Minority Ethnic families	✓ Mothers aged <25
✓ Large families (3+ Children)	✓ Families with a disabled adult or child
✓ Families with a baby (aged < 1)	✓ Lone Parents


**How will we do it?**

We will design our school age childcare system around people's needs and what's important to communities.

**Place based**



**People Centred**



# Our Action Areas

Building a system of school age childcare involves designing both school age childcare services and the system structures which support and connect the services together.

By '**Building the system**', we will make sure that the national system structures which support delivery of a funded school age childcare offer meet the needs of those who use school age childcare, and those who provide it. We will:

- Consider any legislative requirements which may be necessary.
- Identify possible options for getting a future funded school age childcare offer to families.
- Continue to scope possible options for delivering a future school age childcare offer to families, looking closely at the benefits of different delivery models and how they fit with what families have told us would work best for them.
- Consider what a robust regulatory framework for school age childcare, that supports quality, innovation and growth within the sector, should look like.
- Ensure the qualification framework for school age childcare is fit for purpose, embeds quality, is responsive to the needs of all school age children, and will ensure a sustainable workforce across the sector over the longer term.
- Conduct an eligibility review to develop a consistent approach to determining eligibility for any future funded school age childcare offer.
- Consider where improvements can be made to the existing system, in particular ensuring that parents, carers and providers can easily access information about school age childcare.



By **Testing the change**, we are already commissioning and funding work in communities to provide school age childcare to families who need it most to learn from what works at a local level and identify the changes needed at a national level.

- Work has already begun in these areas to understand childcare needs and we have already begun delivering funded school age childcare services for families who would otherwise struggle to afford it. We will:
- Consider how best to design and deliver sustainable services which can support families **all year-round**.
- Utilise existing research and experience, from those accessing and delivering high quality **specialist services**, to be clear about the funding, staffing models and high-quality environments required to deliver a school age childcare offer for children, whatever their needs.

- Monitor and evaluate the demand for **food** and the outcomes for children and families to address food insecurity in a rights-based, dignified and stigma-free way.
- Develop and test solutions that support the sustainability of essential school age childcare services within rural and island communities.



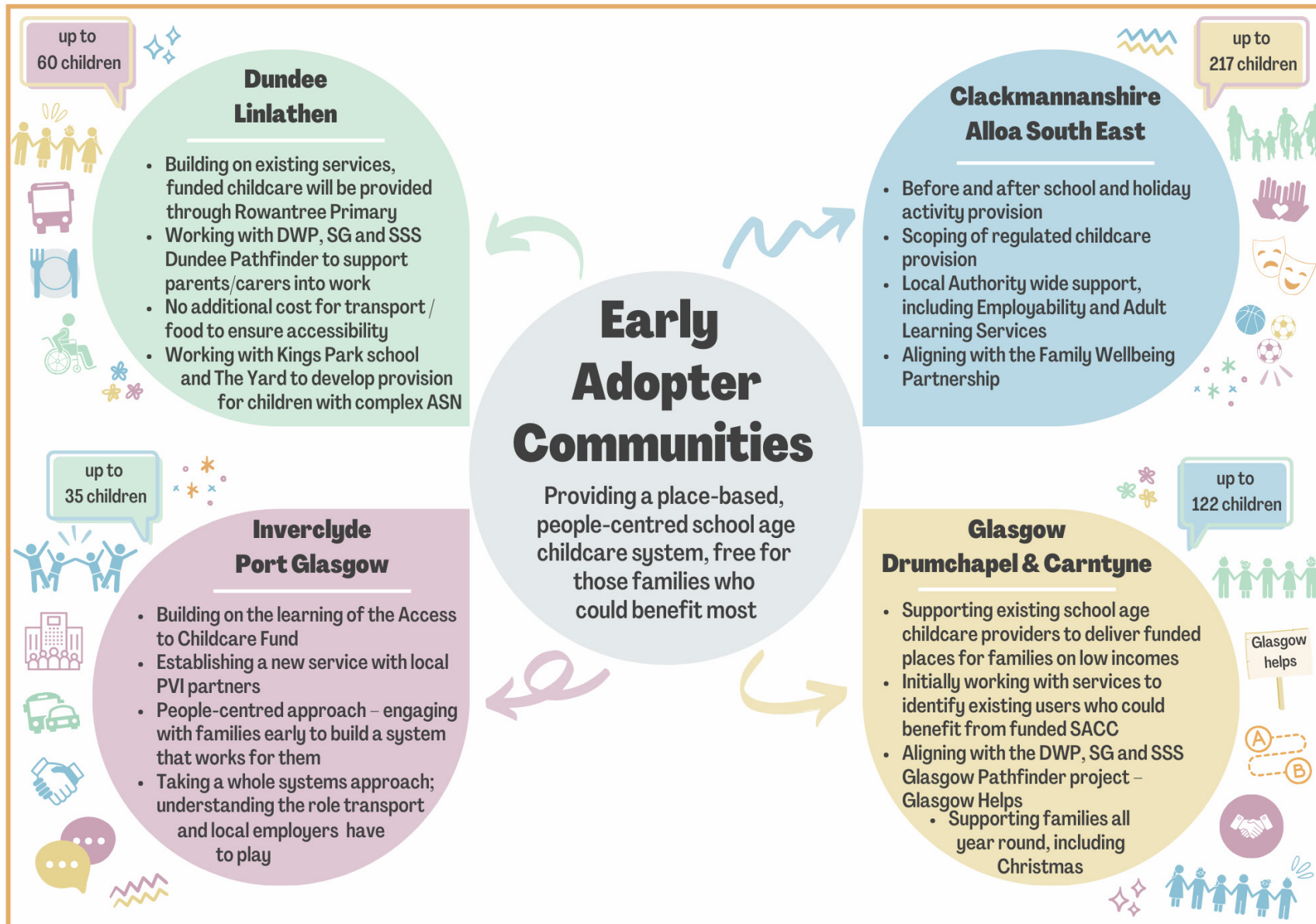


Figure 2: Existing School Age Childcare Early Adopter Communities





## Next steps

In 2023, we will undertake a series of engagement events for local authorities and providers with a focus on clarifying our approach as well as communicating the expectations of the Scottish Government as we move towards realising our school age childcare commitment. Building on this engagement, and on the contribution providers have already made to co-design as People Panel participants, we will develop plans for dedicated provider co-design work in 2023. In addition, we will engage with Scottish Social Services Council, the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland, as well as the national organisations (including the Scottish Out of School Care Network and the Scottish Childminding Association) that represent the school age childcare sector, to raise awareness of the approach we are taking and their role in the supporting delivery of our action areas.

In 2023-24 we will invest further in our **test of change** projects, by continuing to support our Early Adopter Communities and Access to Childcare Funded services. In addition to the four existing Early Adopter Communities in Clackmannanshire, Dundee, Glasgow and Inverclyde, we will expand into new areas in Fife and the Shetland Islands.

In 2025-26, we will develop a more detailed delivery plan setting out what a school age childcare offer will look like for families within communities and providing a clear timescale for delivery.

We would like to thank the children, parents, carers, providers of school age childcare, and the many other stakeholders who we have already spoken with, who have helped to shape our vision and actions areas for the future. We would also like to thank everyone currently working to provide school age childcare for families across Scotland – you are providing the vital services which support children and families within your communities now and into the future.



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