

On 1 April 2011 a new independent
scrutiny and improvement body
replaced the Care Commission –
**Social Care and Social Work
Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS).**

Contact SCSWIS on **0845 600 9527**
or visit **www.scswis.com**

nationalcarestandards
for childcare agencies

revised march 2006

dignity —

privacy —

choice —

safety —

realising potential —

equality and diversity —





national **care** standards
for childcare agencies

dignity —

privacy —

choice —

safety —

realising potential —

equality and diversity —

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Introduction

national**care**standards
for childcare agencies

Introduction

Childcare agencies

Childcare agencies supply or introduce to parents a childcarer who looks after a child or young person up to the age of 16, wholly or mainly in the home of that child's parent or parents. They could include for example:

- nanny agencies; and
- home-based childcare services or sitter services.

These agencies may be managed by private, voluntary or local authority providers.

The supply or introduction of childcarers through a childcare agency is subject to regulation under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 ('the Act'). Sometimes parents enter into arrangements directly with a childcarer for babysitting or childcare in their home, without the involvement of a childcare agency. In these cases, the arrangements are not subject to regulation under the Act.

These standards do not cover childminding which is recognised as a separate type of care service and is defined in the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 section 2 (17) (18) and (19). The standards that apply to childminding are the national care standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16.

These standards do not cover au pair agencies which are not subject to regulation under the Act.

Where there is uncertainty, the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care ('the Care Commission') can provide further guidance on whether any childcare service requires registration and which standards apply.

The national care standards

Scottish Ministers set up the National Care Standards Committee (NCSC) to develop national standards. The NCSC carried out this work with the help of a number of working groups. These groups included people who use services, their families and carers, along with staff, professional associations, regulators from health and social care, local authorities, health boards and independent providers. Many others were also involved in the consultation process.

The starting point for the development of the childcare agencies standards was consideration of the review document, *Regulation of Early Education and Childcare – The Way Ahead*, published by the Scottish Executive. This outlined standards and guidelines used by local authorities to regulate childcare. Existing good practice and draft codes of practice for established sitter services and nanny agencies were also considered.

As a result, the childcare agencies standards focus on what the parent and child can expect when they receive childcare from a childcarer employed by, or introduced by, a childcare agency. They also describe what the parent and child can expect from the childcare agency.

The standards are grouped under headings that follow the person's journey through the service.

Before using the service (standards 1 and 2)

- 1 Information about the childcare agency
- 2 Agreeing the service

Using the service (standards 3 to 6)

- 3 Service arrangements
- 4 Quality
- 5 Management and staffing arrangements
- 6 Concerns, comments and complaints

Using the national care standards

If you are thinking about using the services of a childcare agency, you may want to refer to the standards to help you make a decision. The standards have been developed from the point of view of the user of the services – the child or the parent.

Childcare agencies will also use the standards to find out what is expected of them in offering home-based childcare services.

National care standards have been developed for all care services and provide the framework for assessing the service as a whole. The focus of the standards is on the quality of experience of the people using the service. The way in which the standards are to be met in a particular case will depend on the type of provision being inspected. The Care Commission has discretion to apply the standards flexibly, taking into account the nature of the service. The quality of the communication and monitoring systems will be an important way of making sure that childcare agencies can provide a service that allows the organisation to meet the national care standards against which it is inspected.

The principles behind the standards

The standards are based on a set of principles. The principles themselves are not standards but reflect the recognised rights that people enjoy as citizens. These principles are the result of all the contributions made by the NCSC, its working groups and everyone else who responded to the consultations on the standards as they were being written. They recognise that services must be accessible and suitable for everyone who needs them, including people from ethnic minority communities and children with disabilities. They reflect the strong agreement that your and your child's experience of receiving services is very important and should be positive.

The main principles are dignity, privacy, choice, safety, realising potential and equality and diversity. As a user of the service, you have a right to:

Dignity

- be treated with dignity and respect at all times; and
- enjoy a full range of social relationships.

Privacy

- have your privacy and property respected; and
- be free from unnecessary intrusion.

Choice

- make informed choices, while recognising the rights of other people to do the same; and
- know about the range of choices.

Safety

- feel safe and secure in all aspects of life, including health and wellbeing;
- enjoy safety but not be over-protected; and
- be free from exploitation and abuse.

Realising potential

- achieve all you can;
- make full use of the resources that are available to you; and
- make the most of your life.

Equality and diversity

- live an independent life, rich in purpose, meaning and personal fulfilment;
- be valued for your ethnic background, language, culture and faith;
- be treated equally and to be cared for in an environment which is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination; and
- be able to complain effectively without fear of victimisation.

The Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care

The Act set up the Care Commission to register and inspect all the services to be regulated taking account of the national care standards issued by Scottish Ministers. The Care Commission has its headquarters in Dundee, with regional offices across the country. It assesses applications from people who want to provide registered services. It inspects the services to make sure that they are meeting the regulations and in doing so takes account of the national care standards. You can find out more about the Care Commission and what it does from its website (www.carecommission.com).

The Scottish Social Services Council

The Act created the Scottish Social Services Council ('the Council') which was established on 1 October 2001. It also has its headquarters in Dundee. The Council has the duty of promoting high standards of conduct and practice among social services workers, and in their education and training. To deliver its overall aims of protecting service users and carers and securing the confidence of the public in social services, the Council has been given five main tasks. These are: to establish registers of key groups of social services staff; to publish codes of practice for all social services staff and their employers; to regulate the conduct of registered workers; to regulate the training and education of the workforce; to undertake the functions of the National Training Organisation for the Personal Social Services. The Council has issued codes of practice for social service workers and employers of social service workers. These describe the standards of conduct and practice within which they should work. The codes are available from the Council website (www.sssc.uk.com).

How standards and regulations work together

The Act gives Scottish Ministers the power to publish standards that the Care Commission must take into account when making its decisions. It also gives Ministers the power to make regulations imposing requirements in relation to care services.

The standards will be taken into account by the Care Commission in making any decision about applications for registration (including varying or removing a condition that may have been imposed on the registration of the service). All providers must provide a statement of function and purpose

when they are applying to register their service. On the basis of that statement, the Care Commission will determine which standards will apply to the service that the provider is offering.

The standards will be used to monitor the quality of care services and their compliance with the Act and the regulations. If, at inspection, or at other times, for example, as a result of the Care Commission looking into a complaint, there are concerns about the service, the Care Commission will take the standards into account in any decision on whether to take enforcement action and what action to take.

If the standards were not being fully met, the Care Commission would note this on the inspection report and require the service manager to address this. The Care Commission could impose an additional condition on the service's registration if the provider persistently, substantially or seriously failed to meet the standards or breached a regulation. If the provider does not then meet the condition, the Care Commission could issue an improvement notice detailing the required improvement to be made and the time scale for this. Alternatively, the Care Commission could move straight to an improvement notice. The Care Commission would move to cancel the registration of any service if the improvement notice does not achieve the desired result. In extreme cases (i.e. where there is serious risk to a person's life, health or wellbeing) the Care Commission could take immediate steps to cancel the registration of any service without issuing an improvement notice.

Regulations are mandatory. In some cases not meeting a regulation will be an offence. This means a provider may be subject to prosecution. Not meeting or breaching any regulation is a serious matter.

Decisions by the Care Commission on what to do when standards or regulations are not met will take into account all the relevant circumstances and be proportionate.

You can get copies of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Scottish Statutory Instruments relating to the Act from the Stationery Office Bookshop. You can also see them on-line (see Annex B for the address).

Terms used

To help you understand the standards, here is an explanation of some of the terms used:

- you is used to refer to the parent, parents, child or children, separately or together;
- childcarer includes any person supplied or introduced to parents by a childcare agency to look after a child wholly or mainly in the parent's or parents' home or homes. Childcarers could be volunteers, self employed or paid employees;
- manager is the person responsible for the day-to-day management of the service.

Other key definitions can be found in the Glossary.

Comments

If you would like to comment on these standards you can visit our website and send a message through our mailbox:

www.scotland.gov.uk/health/standardsandsponsorship

You can also contact us at:

Care Standards and Sponsorship Branch
Community Care Division
Primary and Community Care Directorate
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Tel: 0131 244 5387

Fax: 0131 244 4005

1-2

Before using the service

- 1 Information about the childcare agency
- 2 Agreeing the service

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Before using the service

As a service user you must have proper information about the childcare agency to help you reach a decision about using the service. You can expect the information which is provided for you by the agency to be up to date and reliable, in a format and language that you can easily understand and keep.

Before agreeing the service you can be confident that the childcare agency will provide you with information which shows that it has policies and procedures in place, which take account of relevant legislation and guidelines. You must also be made aware of what would happen if the childcare agency were to close, or if there was an emergency that changed the way the service was delivered or prevented the service from being delivered.

Information about the childcare agency

Standard 1

You receive full information about the childcare agency and the services that it provides.

- 1 You have an information pack which is well presented and in a language and format that is easy to understand. The information includes:
 - the aims of the childcare agency;
 - who it is for;
 - confirmation that the agency is registered with the Care Commission;
 - the level and type of service that can be provided, this may include a procedure for emergency requests;
 - contact names and phone numbers, including, where appropriate, 24-hour contact information;
 - the charging policy, any service costs and any contractual arrangements;
 - information on the agency's other policies and how you can access them. These should include:
 - child protection;
 - health and safety, infection control and child health;
 - confidentiality;
 - managing risk and recording and reporting accidents and incidents;
 - recruitment and selection procedures for childcarers, including volunteers;
 - comments, suggestions and complaints;
 - equal opportunities;
 - smoking, alcohol and substance use or misuse;
 - 'whistle-blowing';

- outings;
 - harassment and bullying; and
 - racial equality.¹
- 2 You can ask to see and be given a copy of the most recent Care Commission inspection report on the childcare agency. Reports are also available from the Care Commission direct (see Annex B for address details).

¹ The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (see Annex B for more details).

Agreeing the service

Standard 2

You will receive a written service agreement that clearly defines the service provided to meet your needs. This will set out the terms and conditions including payment arrangements, if appropriate, and arrangements for changing or ending the agreement.

- 1 You will be fully involved with the childcare agency in developing a written agreement, and in any later reviews.
- 2 You will receive a copy of this agreement in a language and format that you can understand. It will be signed and dated by both you and a representative of the childcare agency.
- 3 Your written agreement will include details about:
 - your rights and responsibilities as someone using the service;
 - communication arrangements between you and the childcare agency;
 - who will receive copies of the written agreement and any later reviews;
 - any fees that may be charged and the payment arrangements;
 - appropriate insurance arrangements covering employers or public liability or both;
 - how to vary or end the agreement;
 - how and when the childcare agency will inform you if it can no longer provide the service;
 - arrangements that will be made if the childcare agency closes or there is a change of ownership; and
 - arrangements that the agency will make for sickness cover or other staff emergencies.

3-6

Using the service

- 3 Service arrangements
- 4 Quality
- 5 Management and staffing arrangements
- 6 Concerns, comments and complaints

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Using the service

These standards reflect the way in which you can be assured that the childcare agency is acting in line with the service agreement and in the best interests of those receiving the service.

The standards relating to **service arrangements** make it clear that you can expect to be fully consulted about the service provided.

The standards relating to **quality** will help you to have confidence in the service being provided and describe how the childcare agency will check if you are satisfied.

The standards relating to **management and staffing arrangements** set out what you can expect of the childcarers who are supplied or introduced to you by the childcare agency. It also includes what can be expected of the agency staff.

The standards relating to **concerns, comments and complaints** are very important as they allow you to influence and contribute to how services are delivered.

You can express your views directly to the agency or through an independent representative or interpreter.

Service arrangements

Standard 3

You are provided with a childcare arrangement which meets your identified needs.

- 1 You can be confident that the childcare agency has a prompt and effective system for responding to requests for a service.
- 2 You know that the childcare agency will communicate effectively with you to obtain details of your needs, including when you need the service, where it is to be provided, how long you need the service for and whether your child has any additional needs. The childcare agency will also tell your childcarer about these needs.
- 3 You will be consulted to make sure that the most suitable childcarer is provided for each childcare arrangement.
- 4 If you want, the childcare agency will, as far as possible, make sure that you are supplied with the same childcarer.
- 5 You can ask for a review of your childcare arrangement with the childcare agency at any time.
- 6 You can be confident that the childcare agency will regularly check with you to make sure that the childcare arrangements are still suitable and that any new arrangements are agreed.
- 7 You can be confident that the childcare arrangement will be monitored and regularly reviewed as appropriate by the childcare agency.
- 8 You know that the childcare agency keeps accurate records, showing:
 - your identified needs;
 - that you have been consulted on the suitability and continuity of the childcarers;
 - the results of any reviews of the childcare arrangement; and
 - that the childcare arrangement has been monitored and evaluated.

- 9 You know that you will be informed of the qualifications, training and experience of childcarers in order that you can have confidence in the individual childcarer.
- 10 You can be confident that wherever possible, you will be able to introduce your child to the childcarer in advance of the childcare arrangement being finalised.

Quality

Standard 4

You can be confident in the quality of the childcare arrangements.

- 1 You know that the childcare agency will:
 - have written policies, procedures and guidance in place to help promote an environment of mutual respect, trust and open communication between you, the childcarer and the agency;
 - abide by the Scottish Social Services Council's code of practice;
 - provide a childcarer who will interact effectively and enthusiastically with your child or children and who will make use of the resources available to allow the child or children to experience and choose from a range of activities. These activities will take account of the individual needs of the child or children, including their cultural, language and communication, and religious needs, and any safety issues;
 - work with you to provide continuity of childcare, take account of your family routines and preferences, including any cultural, language and communication and religious needs; where appropriate they will keep up other childcare or community service links (or both) which you have made;
 - notify you at the earliest opportunity if your usual childcarer is unavailable or will be late;
 - have a system in place to consult with you and to monitor and evaluate the quality of the childcare arrangement;. the findings will be recorded, and will include feedback on any action that needs to be taken to put things right; the timescales for achieving this will be agreed by you; and
 - notify you without delay in the event of any mishap during the childcare arrangements or if the childcarer has any concern for the welfare of your child.
- 2 You can be confident that the childcarer will be able to provide identification confirming that he or she has come from the childcare agency.

Management and staffing arrangements

Standard 5

You can be confident that the childcare agency provides a consistent standard of service.

- 1 You can be confident that the service is managed properly, in line with relevant legislation and guidelines.
- 2 You know that the childcare agency will carry out a detailed assessment with you of the service required and agree with you what needs are to be met.
- 3 You can be confident that the manager or anyone responsible for placing childcarers will demonstrate a high level of professional competence and skill and a thorough understanding of childcare issues.
- 4 You know that the manager demonstrates effective leadership qualities, communication skills and fosters effective working relationships between you, the childcarers and the agency.
- 5 You can be confident that the childcare agency places childcarers who:
 - are qualified where appropriate, and have the knowledge, skills, personal attributes and experience to meet your individual needs;
 - will fulfil the childcare arrangement as agreed; and
 - have a working knowledge and understanding of the agency's policies and procedures.
- 6 You can be confident that the childcare agency interviews and selects childcarers, volunteers and office staff through a process that takes account of safe recruitment practices and the codes of practice issued by the Council. These include:

- enhanced disclosures from Disclosure Scotland;^{2,3}
 - medical references;
 - checks with previous employer;
 - taking up references;
 - verification of relevant qualification certificates where these are held;
 - cross referencing to the register of the Scottish Social Services Council or other professional organisations;
 - verification of the right to work, checked in line with relevant legislation;⁴ and
 - international criminal records checks, where possible.
- 7 You know that the childcare agency keeps accurate records of the education and work history of the childcarers, including relevant qualifications, skills, personal attributes and experience.
- 8 You can be confident that the childcare agency keeps up-to-date records of the continuing learning and development undertaken by each childcarer. It has policies, procedures and systems in place to assess and monitor the childcarer's performance and development needs.

² A new Disclosure Bureau has been established within the Scottish Criminal Record Office for the purposes of issuing certificates under Part V of the Police Act 1997. This new service is known as Disclosure Scotland and is responsible for issuing three levels of certificates to be known as Basic disclosures, Standard disclosures and Enhanced disclosures.

³ The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 provides for Scottish Ministers to establish a list of persons unsuitable to work with children. An enhanced disclosure will disclose whether a person is on the list.

⁴ Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 and the Immigration (Restrictions on Employment) Order 1996.

Concerns, comments and complaints

Standard 6

You can raise any concerns about the quality of the service and these will be dealt with.

- 1 You enjoy clear and open communication with the childcare agency and know that it will deal with your comments, suggestions or complaints properly and quickly and tell you the findings.
- 2 You know that the childcare agency has a written policy and procedure in place for comments, suggestions and complaints which is easily available and understandable, and keeps accurate records of all the comments, suggestions and complaints it receives.
- 3 If you have an independent representative, you know that the childcare agency will listen to what she or he has to say on your behalf.
- 4 You know how to make a complaint or comment to the service. You are also aware of the procedure for making complaints directly to the Care Commission.

Annex A

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Annex A

Glossary

Au pair

A single person aged between 17 and 27 who comes to the United Kingdom to study English and:

- lives for up to two years as a member of an English-speaking family; and
- helps in the home for up to five hours a day with at least two full days off a week, in return for a reasonable allowance and their own room.

Disclosure Scotland

A new Disclosure Bureau has been established within the Scottish Criminal Record Office for the purposes of issuing certificates under Part V of the Police Act 1997. This new service is known as Disclosure Scotland and is responsible for issuing three levels of certificates to be known as Basic disclosures, Standard disclosures and Enhanced disclosures. The aim of the new Disclosure Scotland service is to enhance public safety and to help employers and voluntary organisations in Scotland to make safer recruitment decisions.

Enhanced disclosures

Enhanced disclosures are the highest level of disclosures and are available for positions which involve a greater degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults. This type of disclosure is available for various appointments, including:

- those who apply for work that regularly involves caring for, training, supervision or being in sole charge of those aged 18 or under; and
- applicants for registration for childminding and day care.

Independent representative

A person independent of any aspect of the service or of any of the statutory agencies involved in purchasing or providing the service, who acts on behalf of, and in the interests of, the person using the service. An independent representative can be helpful if a person feels unable to represent him or herself.

Interpreter

A person who translates orally from one language into another.

Nanny

A nanny provides childcare in the child's home. A nanny can either live with the family or come in on a daily basis, either full or part time. A trained nanny can provide high quality professional childcare.

Parent

Includes guardian and any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities (within the meaning of section 1(3) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) (see Annex B) in relation to, or has care of a child or young person.

Service agreement

An agreement between the childcare agency and the service user about the terms of business, communication and childcare arrangements and how the agreement can be ended.

Volunteer

A childcarer or a person who works for a childcare agency but receives no payment in cash or in kind for delivering the service. However, they may receive out-of-pocket expenses.

'Whistle-blowing'

The disclosure by an employee (or professional) of confidential information which relates to some danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the workplace, be it of the employer or of fellow employees. (Lord Barrie QC 1995).

Annex B

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Annex B

Useful reference material

Legal

The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996

An Act to amend and supplement the Immigration Act 1971 and the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993; to make further provision with respect to persons subject to immigration control and the employment of such persons; and for connected purposes.

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995

The Act puts children first. Each child has the right to:

- be treated as an individual;
- form and express views on matters affecting him or her; and
- be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Parents and local authorities have rights and responsibilities in achieving the balance of care.

The Data Protection Act 1998

The Act covers how information about living, identifiable people is used. All organisations that hold or process personal data must comply.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

This wide-ranging Act, which came into force in 1996, makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in employment, access to goods, services, transport and education.

Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 (as amended)

The Regulations place a responsibility on employers for carrying out risk assessments in relation to premises. The risk assessment is a means of providing fire precautions for the safety of people using the premises.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

The Act is the basic piece of health and safety law that covers everyone who is affected by work activity. It places the burden of legal responsibility for health and safety at work with the employer.

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Act incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into Scots and English law in relation to the acts of public bodies. Its purpose is to protect human rights and to maintain and promote the ideals and values of a democratic society. The Articles of Convention include:

- freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- freedom of expression;
- freedom of assembly and association;
- the right to have respect for private and family life; and
- the right to marry.

The Immigration Act 1971 (as amended)

Together with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 and the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993, these Acts cover the process of entry into and stay in the United Kingdom by way of immigration or asylum.

The Immigration (Restrictions on Employment) Order 1996

Under Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, an employer will commit an offence if he employs a person subject to immigration control who has attained the age of 16 if the employee has not been granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, or if his leave is not valid and subsisting or is subject to a condition precluding him from taking up the employment. The Order sets out certain exemptions to Section 8, describes the documents which an employer can use in his defence; and specifies the manner of copying or recording these documents.

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

The Act is the main law for drug control in the UK. It prohibits the possession, supply and manufacture of medicinal and other products except where these have been made legal by the *Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1985*. The legislation is concerned with controlled drugs and puts these into five separate schedules. Anyone who is responsible for storing or administering controlled drugs should be aware of the content of the *Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1985* and the *Misuse of Drugs (Safe Custody) Regulations 1973*.

The Police Act 1997

Part V of the Police Act 1997 provides for the Scottish Criminal Record Office to issue criminal record information certificates to individuals and organisations.

The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003

The Act provides for Scottish Ministers to establish a *List of individuals unsuitable to work with children*, in either paid employment or as unpaid volunteers. The fact that someone is on the list will be released in Scotland as part of a check carried out under Part V of the Police Act 1997 for posts that involve access to children.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

The Act protects workers who ‘blow the whistle’ about wrongdoing. It mainly takes the form of amendments to the Employment Rights Act 1996, and makes provision about the kinds of disclosures which may be protected; the circumstances in which such disclosures are protected; and the persons who may be protected.

The Race Relations Act 1976

The Act makes racial discrimination unlawful in employment, service delivery, training and other areas.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The Act makes racial discrimination unlawful in public activities that were not previously covered. It puts a general duty on public organisations to promote race equality.

The Act also requires all public authorities (and those bodies who discharge a function on behalf of a public authority) to identify policies and functions which have relevance to the general duty and review the operation and outcomes of such policies for their differential impact on ethnic minority communities.

The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001

The Act establishes a new system of care regulation covering the registration and inspection of care services against a set of national care standards. The Act also creates two new national, independent bodies, the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care, to regulate care services, and the Scottish Social Services Council, to regulate the social service workforce and to promote and regulate its education and training.

You can visit these websites for information:

- Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001

www.scotland-legislation.hms.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2001/20010008.htm

- Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 Statutory Instruments

www.scotland-legislation.hms.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/s-200201.htm

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of sex or marital status in recruitment, promotion and training. The Act also covers education, the provision of housing, goods and services and advertising.

Policy

Aiming for Excellence: Modernising Social Work Services in Scotland

The White Paper sets out the proposals to strengthen the protection of children and vulnerable adults and to make sure high quality services are provided. The Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care is an independent regulator set up for this purpose.

The Way Forward For Care

The Scottish Executive Policy Position Paper of July 2000 develops the proposals set out in *Aiming for Excellence*. It includes proposals for regulating independent healthcare.

Regulation of Early Education and Childcare – The Way Ahead

This paper was published in 2000, and set out the Scottish Executive's conclusions on the future regulation of childcare and early education. It can be viewed on-line at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/library2/doc15/reec-00.asp

It followed the Executive's March 1999 consultation paper, *Regulation of Early Education and Childcare*, which can be viewed at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/library/documents-w8/rec-00.htm

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention is not a law but a code that the Government signed up to in 1991. It recognises that young people under 18 in Scotland do have rights. These rights must be given fairly, and children and young people must be kept safe and well, and able to take part in society.

Other useful references

The Care Commission

Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY.

Phone 01382 207100

Website www.carecommission.com

Central Registered Body Scotland

The Central Registered Body in Scotland was established by the Scottish Executive to provide free disclosures (police checks) for volunteers in the voluntary sector working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The CRBS is based within Volunteer Development Scotland at Stirling.

The CRBS is the only source of free disclosures for volunteers in the voluntary sector in Scotland. Website <http://www.crbs.org.uk/>

Childcare Information Services website

www.childcarelink.gov.uk

Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit

You may be able to apply for the costs of childcare arrangements through the Government's Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. These are the new types of support for families with children and for households on a low income. Further information from:

Helpline (open from 8 am-8 pm seven days a week): 0845 300 3900
(textphone 0845 300 3909)

www.taxcredits.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/Home.aspx

National care standards: Early education and childcare up to the age of 16

Copies of these standards are available from:

Blackwell's Bookshop

53 South Bridge

Edinburgh

EH1 1YS

You should also be able to see a copy at main libraries or online at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/health/standardsandsponsorship

The Scottish Social Services Council

Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY

Phone 01382 207101

Website www.sssc.uk.com

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