

Scottish Government Early Learning and Childcare COVID-19 Update **No. 10 – December 2020**

I think it really goes without saying now that 2020 has been a really challenging year for everyone, but Team ELC has truly gone above and beyond in supporting children and their families and each other. From the collective efforts to provide critical childcare, the continued focus on delivering the 1140 expansion as well as all of the creative projects and innovative ways of ensuring that nurture and play-based experiences for children remain at the heart of childcare delivery despite public health restrictions and creating a new wellbeing hub, so much has been achieved. After the difficult decision to pause the 1140 hours implementation I am delighted that we are now committed to ensuring that all children can access the expanded entitlement from August 2021. I want to say a heartfelt thank you on behalf of everyone in the Scottish Government ELC Team for all that you have done for Scotland's children and families and wish you a restful festive period.

As you'll be aware, we are replacing our monthly Programme Updates with regular COVID-19 newsletters for the duration of the pandemic response. We'll send these to you as often as we have news to share. Previous editions of this update can be found [here](#).

Take care

Alison Cumming
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Interim Director, Early Learning and Childcare

1. Key information, guidance and contact points

Throughout this update, we have provided links to the latest guidance and information. **As you will appreciate, the situation continues to change so please continue to check the Scottish Government's website regularly for the latest guidance and information – see <https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance/>**

If you have any questions or issues you would like to raise with the team, please use the contact details below and we will respond as soon as we can. Please email:

- ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot for enquiries about support for providers and parents;
- outofschoolcare@gov.scot for enquiries about school age childcare provision;
- ELCDeliverySupport@gov.scot if you work in a local authority team looking for advice or support about early learning and childcare, or contact your link person in the delivery team;
- outdoorELC@gov.scot for outdoor play and learning queries in ELC.
- ELCProgrammeOffice@gov.scot for any other queries.

To keep up to date with all the most relevant information and guidance, follow us on Twitter @ELCScotGov and @OSCSotGov or join the Knowledge Hub.

Local authorities can register on the Knowledge Hub at <https://www.khub.net> and request to join [Early Learning and Childcare \(ELC\) Expansion Scotland: Local Authorities](#).

2. ELC Statutory Duty and the Expansion

The ELC Joint Delivery Board commissioned an assessment of readiness to deliver the 1140 hours expansion to take place this autumn, taking account of capital, workforce, capacity and other risks. This was supplemented by an independent health check of the expansion programme. Having carefully reviewed all the evidence the ELC Joint Delivery Board recommended that the statutory duty to deliver 1140 hours of funded ELC should be reinstated with effect from August 2021. This recommendation has now been agreed by Scottish Ministers and COSLA Leaders and the Scottish Government will bring forward the associated legislation before the end of this Parliament.

On 14 December the Minister for Children and Young People, Maree Todd MSP, and Councillor Stephen McCabe, COSLA Spokesperson for Children and Young People issued a Joint Statement which you can read [here](#).

Our delivery assurance team will continue engagement to support councils in implementing their expansion plans. 14 authorities are now offering 1140 hours to all eligible children, and more will do so from January.

We look forward to working with the Scotland-wide Team ELC as we look ahead to 2021 to deliver the expansion by August. Collectively we can now focus on realising the transformational benefits the expansion will bring, including improved educational and development outcomes for children, enhanced family wellbeing and greater employment and training opportunities for parents and carers.

Contact info: Hannah Keates' Delivery Assurance Team at ELCDeliverySupport@gov.scot

Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard

Quality is at the heart of the delivery of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) entitlement. Interim Guidance on [the delivery of Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard from August 2020](#) was published on 30 July. As we now work towards implementation in August 2021, we will look to review this guidance as required.

Contact info: Euan Carmichael's Team at ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

3. COVID -19

Our priority is the safety of every individual in Scotland. The virus still exists and it is important that we continue to follow the guidance around physical distancing (where possible), increased hygiene measures and that you self-isolate if you or members of your household have any symptoms of coronavirus. More information can be found at [NHS Inform](#).

Scotland's Strategic Framework, available [here](#), sets out the strategic approach to suppress the virus to the lowest possible level and keep it there.

To best tackle the virus, and protect people, we have moved to a strategic approach to outbreak management based on five levels of protection.

A levels approach allows us to respond on a national basis if required, but also to avoid a 'one size fits all' approach if it is not. It will mean that one part of the country with low rates of infection does not have to live with the level of protective measures designed to suppress the virus in areas with much higher rates.

[Local protection levels](#) have been set for each local authority area across Scotland. Levels will be reviewed weekly in the light of the evolving situation to decide whether levels should be maintained, increased, or reduced.

What does this mean for the Childcare sector?

Each level has different impacts for regulated childcare outlined in the table below:

Strategic Framework		 Scottish Government Riaghaltas na h-Alba gov.scot			
	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Informal Childcare	Permitted in line with household/numbers restrictions (See Socialising)	Permitted in line with household/numbers restrictions	Permitted in line with household/numbers restrictions	Permitted in line with household/numbers restrictions	Essential worker informal childcare only. In line with household/numbers restrictions, children only may enter other households
ELC/Formal Childcare	Open - with standard protective measures in place	Open - with standard protective measures in place	Open - with standard protective measures in place	Open - with enhanced protective measures in place	Open , subject to targeted intervention which may impact on capacity

As set out in the Strategic Framework and as stated by the Deputy First Minister, keeping childcare and schools open is a priority across all levels. As part of the review of the suite of guidance for the childcare sector we have worked with local authorities, the Care Inspectorate, representative bodies and other stakeholders to understand the guidance in practice. We have also sought further expert public health advice and scientific evidence from the COVID-19 Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children’s issues. The guidance has also been updated to reflect the Strategic Framework.

The updated guidance took effect from Monday 2 November, with further minor updates published on 14 December following the UK wide change to requirements for people to self-isolate (now for 10 days; previously 14 days) if identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for Covid 19. The documents can be found here:

- [Guidance for early learning and childcare services](#)
- [Guidance for childminding services](#)
- [Guidance for school aged childcare services](#)

The evidence from the expert public health and scientific group can be found here:

- [Evidence from the COVID-19 sub-group on Education and Children’s issues](#)

Registered Childcare - Outbreak Monitoring Group

The ‘Registered Childcare - Outbreak Monitoring Group’ meets every 2 weeks with representatives from Scottish Government (including childcare policy, outbreak management and analysts), Care Inspectorate, Public Health Scotland, and a representative from Directors of Public Health.

The purpose of this group is to look at a range of data and intelligence on attendance, infections and closures within registered childcare (ELC and school age childcare) in order to inform any national level activity required e.g. updates to guidance.

The local response to COVID-19 is well established and individual settings should follow the process as set out in guidance. The first point of contact for any public health incidents in registered childcare remains the same. We have published flow charts for the notification process, linked below.

The Scottish Government childcare policy team will pick up any incidents of national note through these usual routes.

Care Inspectorate Christmas Provider Notice

Care Inspectorate published an updated provider notice on 15 December: '[Supporting you to operate in a safe environment during the festive period \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/Supporting-you-to-operate-in-a-safe-environment-during-the-festive-period)'.

This includes information on action services will need to take to support Test and Protect during any period of closure:

It is anticipated that over the festive period some ELC services including childminders and out of school care services will close for some or all of the period. During this period it is expected that Test and Protect will require to contact services to establish close contacts of any staff member or child who is confirmed as having COVID-19.

As the Test and Protect service depends on Health Protection Teams being able to look back 48 hours from the time a positive case had symptoms, in order to identify close contacts, we are requesting all registered services have an emergency contact for their service that families and staff can pass to Test and Protect during any closure period.

Emergency contacts may reflect centralised arrangements for providers of services over multiple settings, for example in Local Authorities where emergency contact processes may be in place

Guidance Infographics

We have created infographics to complement the ELC guidance, childminder guidance and school age childcare guidance. These visually outline what to do if there is a suspected outbreak, information on physical distancing and face coverings and flow charts on what to do if a staff member or child becomes ill. You can share these with colleagues and families and it may be useful to have copies in your setting.

You can find the infographics through the links below and these can be found on each of the guidance pages under 'supporting files' on the right hand side.

[ELC Graphic 9 Dec 2020 \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

[Childminder Graphic 9 Dec 2020 \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

[SAC Graphic 9 Dec 2020 \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

Frequently Asked Questions

The frequently asked questions section will be updated in line with the updated guidance and published shortly.

We hope that this will support providers in utilising the guidance, and assist parents who may have queries relating to how settings will operate.

Care Inspectorate - Supporting you to operate in a safe environment during the festive period

The Care Inspectorate have released and sent out a document for all early learning and childcare settings on supporting you to operate in a safe environment during the festive period.

The document links to our latest guidance and outline measures and suggestions that may assist staff to provide a safe, festive and exciting environment including cleaning, Christmas trees, decorations, singing and more.

You can find the document here: [ELC guidance during festive period - final.pdf](https://www.careinspectorate.com/ELC-guidance-during-festive-period-final.pdf) ([careinspectorate.com](https://www.careinspectorate.com))

If you have any questions on this document, please email enquiries@careinspectorate.com

Organised activities for children

On 24 September 2020 the Scottish Government released [guidance](#) for organised unregulated activities and services provided indoors and outdoors for children and young people, babies and toddlers. This includes voluntary, third sector, parent or peer led or unregulated providers delivering a service or activity directly to children under 18.

The guidance covers training, working environment, risk assessments, infection prevention and control, and includes advice about maximum numbers of adults and children involved.

The guidance was updated on 12 November to include maximum numbers and organised activities permitted at each level in line with the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Scotland's Strategic Framework](#). This includes advice that no indoor organised children's activities are permitted in areas at Level 4.

This guidance will continue be updated in line with ongoing public health advice.

If you have any questions about the organised activities for children, please contact COVID-19MaternityandChildHealth@gov.scot

4. Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues - evidence on children, schools, early learning and childcare settings and transmission from COVID-19 - summary report

On 18 November 2020 the Scottish Government released a [report](#) of the evidence on children, schools, early learning and childcare settings and transmission from COVID-19.

The paper provides a summary of the latest evidence regarding the interactions between Covid-19 and school / early learning and childcare (ELC) settings. Specifically, it sets out our understanding of: the role of children in transmission of COVID-19; the risks to children and young people from COVID-19 or from being out of school; workplace-associated risks to staff from COVID-19; the approach to reducing risks in schools; and data on attendance and absences.

There is a need to continue to consider the balance of risks and harms in light of any new trends in data, evidence and scientific advice, including the potential direct health risks to children and staff from COVID-19; the wider impact on community transmission of schools reopening; and the direct risks to mental health, wellbeing, development, educational attainment and health outcomes from school closures.

5. Access to testing for childcare staff

We wrote to all local authorities and childcare providers on Monday 24 August to highlight the change to Testing and set out the options for ELC or childcare, including school age childcare, staff to access testing for COVID-19. This letter can be found [here](#).

It addresses the circumstances where testing is essential as well as situations where staff who are concerned that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 may consider accessing testing. At the present time access to this testing route is not available for childminders.

6. Quarantine

The Scottish Government's Chief Medical Officer, Chief Nursing Officer and National Clinical Director wrote to all childcare providers on 19 August with a note outlining that those self-isolating after recently returning from countries not exempt from quarantine should not go out to work, childcare, school or visit public areas. This note can be found [here](#).

They asked that all Childcare providers familiarise themselves with the information and guidance around self-isolating on the return from non-exempt countries. The note also asked that providers ensure safeguarding measures are in place and that they communicate and engage these requirements immediately to all families to ensure adherence to the legal requirements.

The relevant guidance can be found here <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-health-checks-at-borders/pages/overview/> and the list of exempt countries is available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-health-checks-at-borders/pages/exemptions/>.

7. Information for parents and carers

[Parent Club](#) continues to be updated regularly to give parents and carers updated information relating to Covid-19 restrictions or changes. If you work with parents and carers, you might find the FAQs helpful, and/or may wish to share them directly with parents.

The website has also been updated this week with [more information for parents and carers](#) about the 1140 hours expansion date. This includes information on eligibility, the benefits of early learning and childcare, the different settings in which funded childcare can be provided, and links to individual local authority pages for application information.

Key links for sharing social media:

- <https://www.facebook.com/ParentClubScotland> - Parent Club Scotland Facebook page
- <https://www.instagram.com/parentclubscotland> - Parent Club Instagram page

We are planning a smaller ELC campaign in early 2021 and we are working with The Union marketing agency again.. We will be using the 'This Much' campaign materials that worked well earlier this year and received very positive evaluation. Aisling and colleagues from The Union will be in touch with local authorities to consider what materials might be helpful to you.

As of 26 October, the **families.scot** website is no longer live and will redirect to Parent Club. We have been working with local authorities that used this website, to ensure they have alternative channels for communicating with families.

Specific resources have been created for parents to support understanding of outdoor learning, and to support families to take up outdoor play opportunities. Please see below section on outdoor learning for more information and links.

Please **contact Katherine Tierney's ELC: Access and Parental Communications team through the ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot** mailbox with further suggestions for the Parent Club FAQ or other parental communication.

8. Provider Survey – Partnership working

Partnership working, we want your views!

Are you interested in attending future proceedings of the Early Learning and Childcare Partnership Forum or Forum supported events? The Forum was established by the Scottish Government, together with COSLA, in 2018, but is looking now at how it can best serve your needs.

As a result, they would like to find out:

- about your interest in the future of the Forum proceedings
- if you'd like to take part in future (virtual) meetings or supported events

Some of you may have already applied before, but records are somewhat dated, and COSLA and the Scottish Government want to ensure that the contact information they hold on you or your setting/s is accurate.

So, whether you are an existing member or wish to express interest in becoming one, please complete the following short survey, choosing either single or multiple setting:

[Single setting survey](#)

[Multiple setting survey](#)

Please respond **by 23 December 2020** and take time to complete all of the questions. The more information you are able to provide the better it will help shape the future of the Forum and its supported events.

Contact info: For more information please contact ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

9. Extension of the Nursery Rates Relief Scheme

The Scottish Government announced on 4 December that the Nursery Rates Relief Scheme will be extended until at least June 2023.

The Nursery Rates Relief Scheme provides 100% relief on non-domestic rates (NDR) for premises used only as a day nursery or mainly as a day nursery. The Scheme was introduced in April 2018 and was initially due to end on 31 March 2021.

The extension will allow for a full evaluation of the impact of the Scheme on providers, parents and carers – which was a recommendation of the Barclay Review of non-domestic rates.

More information can be found [here](#).

Contact info: Euan Carmichael's Team at ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

10. Transitional Support Fund for Day Care of Children Services

The Transitional Support Fund closed to applications on 9 October and local authorities have now made all payments to eligible services.

The Transitional Support Fund was launched to help day care of children providers in the private, voluntary and not-for profit sectors, including out-of-school care providers, meet the extra costs incurred to comply with [public health guidance](#) in response to COVID-19. The Fund has provided one-off grants to eligible services.

Contact info: Euan Carmichael's Team at ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

11. Extension of the Childminding Workforce Support Fund

The Childminding Workforce Support Fund was initially launched on 16 July 2020 to provide support to childminders who are facing hardship and, in particular, who have not been able to access financial support through other routes.

The Fund, which was initially jointly funded by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), made £60,000 of support available. There was significant demand for the fund and a first round of grants were paid following closure to new applicants on 17 July 2020.

The Scottish Government has provided additional funding of £390,000 to the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) to extend the Childminding Workforce Support Fund. This includes covering the costs of administering the fund up to £60,000. The funding has provided grants of £350 to eligible childminders who have been unable to access support through other routes.

The second phase of the Childminding Workforce Support Fund [closed for new applications](#) on 19 October, and following completion of the assessment process further grant payments to successful applicants are currently being made.

Contact info: Euan Carmichael's Team at ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

12. Our Commitment to Childminding - Action Plan

Thank you to all who supported us in the development of a Childminding Action Plan to capture our commitments to childminding in Scotland. This is almost ready for publication and we will be sharing this in the early new year.

Contact Info: Luke McPherson at Luke.McPherson@gov.scot

13. Other Financial and Business Support for childcare providers

A range of financial and business support measures have been made available by the UK and Scottish Governments since March. Information about the different schemes that may be available to private and third sector providers and childminders is available on the Scottish Government's website and updated regularly at:

[Information for private and third sector childcare providers about business support](#)
[Information for Childminders about business and financial support](#)

It was announced on the 5 November that the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which is a UK Government Scheme, will now operate until 31 March 2021. Further information on this extension be found [here](#).

Please continue to share your questions with Euan Carmichael's Team through the ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot mailbox. We are working through them as quickly as we can.

14. Childcare Sector Working Group

At the last full meeting of the ELC and Childcare Sector - Working Group (Sector Recovery Group) on 13 September, the group concluded that its work could be paused. This decision was reached as the work of the group had focussed primarily on helping to shape guidance and formulate support to the childcare sector in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and to best prepare the sector to reopen and respond to the ongoing public health restrictions in the recovery context. That work is largely complete. However, an option remains in place to re-form the group quickly, if required.

While standing down the Sector Recovery Group, the group was also keen to establish a dedicated cross-sector group with similar membership as no such platform exists currently. Sector Recovery Group members felt that the valuable lessons and experiences of working together on matters of mutual interest would be beneficial to retain in another form. The new Childcare Sector Working Group will have its first meeting on 17 December to discuss terms of reference and membership.

Contact info: For more information please contact ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

15. Primary 1 deferral and ELC eligibility – SSI laid before Parliament and pilot authorities announced

In October 2019, the Scottish Government committed to legislate in this parliamentary session, to ensure that all children who defer their primary 1 start are able to access funded ELC.

On 7 December 2020, we laid a Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) before the Scottish Parliament, to ensure that this would become legislation in the current parliamentary session.

The SSI ([The Provision of Early Learning and Childcare \(Specified Children\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Order 2020](#)) is subject to the affirmative procedure in Parliament and will set August 2023 as the date that the obligation comes into force.

For now, there is no change in the rules around ELC for children who defer. All children who are still 4 years old at the start of the school year can be deferred and start primary one the following year. Children with a birthday in January or February who defer school entry are automatically entitled to another year of funded ELC.

For children with a birthday between the school commencement date in August and December, parents continue to have an automatic right to school deferral, but local authorities decide whether another year of funded ELC will be made available. Local authorities may wish to communicate locally about their policy to help parents and carers understand their options in the interim.

Pilot Authority Approach to Deferral Implementation

On 16 December 2020, we announced that the Scottish Government has committed £3 million to support five local authorities to pilot early implementation of the new deferral legislation in 2021-22.

These pilot authorities will be: Angus; Argyll and Bute; Falkirk; Scottish Borders; and the Shetland Islands. The Scottish Government intends to increase the number of pilots in August 2022, prior to full implementation of the policy from August 2023. More information is set out in the Scottish Government and COSLA Joint Implementation Plan.

The pilots will provide us with a better understanding of likely uptake of the entitlement, and a Working Group of the pilot authorities will be established in January 2021 to monitor and evaluate their progress.

If you have any questions on this work please contact Fran Iwanyckyj at:

Francesca.Iwanyckyj@gov.scot

16. Analysis and Evidence

A new [PHS survey is now live, aimed at parents and carers of 2-7 year olds](#). It is intended to gather up to date evidence about the impact of the pandemic on children and families. We would be grateful if you could share locally via social media. The survey can be found on [Twitter](#) and on the [Public Health Scotland website](#).

The **COVID-19 Childcare Monitoring survey** continues and your participation in this is much appreciated. The survey should be completed by all childcare providers, although some local authorities have opted to provide data on behalf of their local authority run services (namely: Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Midlothian, Perth & Kinross, Stirling, West Lothian). A link to the survey is circulated by the Care Inspectorate each Tuesday as part of their daily update email and is also available [here](#).

We are currently waiting on agreement of a break for the survey over the Christmas holidays, potentially from w/c 21 December to w/c 11 January, and will notify you of this as part of the Care Inspectorate update email.

Please also ensure that you complete the **Care Inspectorate COVID-19 notification regarding staff absences** each Tuesday. This return should be completed by all childcare providers (excluding childminders).

Some of the information from the survey and information received from the Care Inspectorate on which settings are open is published and is available [here](#) as part of a dashboard on schools and childcare provision.

We are continuing to use this information to update Ministers and the Education Recovery Group weekly on the current situation in childcare services, so please understand the value of this information. The usefulness of this information will increase if we manage to improve the response rate to the survey, **so please do provide the information required, or encourage your members or colleagues to complete these returns.**

The [Scottish Study of Early Learning and Childcare \(SSELC\) Phase 3 report](#) was published on 2 December. The SSELC is a research project established to evaluate the expansion of early learning and childcare (ELC) in Scotland. Phase 3 collected data on a representative sample of three-year-old children in their first term of 600 hours of funded ELC provision. This phase also followed up the same group of eligible two-year-old children from Phase 1 of the study after they had experienced a year of 600 hours of ELC.

Key findings include that the majority of three-year-old children had 'on schedule' development for four of the five developmental domains, indicating that no concerns were identified in these areas. Two thirds of children also had 'close to average' scores for social, emotional and behavioural development. Boys were more likely to have some developmental or behavioural difficulties identified than girls. The report also found that the year of funded ELC the 'eligible 2s' had already received appears to have helped them improve on measures of development. There were also some small changes in employment prospects for parents. However, comparing outcomes for the two groups of children showed that the development of those who were eligible for funding at age two was not as advanced as the development of those in the nationally representative sample.

Work on this year's **ELC census** data continues and you can find the publication [here](#). Your involvement in this important data collection is much appreciated.

17. SEEMiS Early Years

The **SEEMiS Early Years project** is continuing to progress, working towards the system delivery date of end of March 2021 and a roll out date of July 2021. Information continues to be added to the restricted local authority SEEMiS Early Years Knowledge Hub site, and more information on go live and training plans will be provided once dates have been finalised. A virtual event for local authority resource managers and ELC leads was held on 10 December to give an update on progress and discuss local preparation requirements ahead of system roll out.

18. Workforce and Professional Learning

HNC Childhood Practice Placements for 2020-21

In recognition of the challenges that childcare settings experienced around re-opening over the Summer, and with implementing the national guidance on safe operation in the context of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, for this academic year, we indicated to colleges that HNC Childhood Practice placements shouldn't commence until after the October break.

To support colleges and childcare settings to commence offering placements from that point onwards, SSSC published on 16 October a joint national position statement with SQA, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Government on placements for the childcare sector, which stressed the importance of time on placement for HNC students, and encouraged centres and placement providers to work together to offer placements to students, making clear the importance of taking forward full risk assessments when doing so. <https://news.sssc.uk.com/news/hnc-work-placements>

SSSC have now published an Employer Toolkit to provide further information to support placement providers, students and centres to support the safe return of students to placements.

The toolkit provides guidance and links to more information to support the safe completion of the placement element where possible. It also contains links to risk assessment tools, current national guidance, frequently asked questions and an example contract. [Read the toolkit here.](#)

If you wish to discuss issues around HNC placements, please contact Kathryn Chisholm, Workforce Team Lead at kathryn.chisholm@gov.scot

Funded Advertising for Private and Third Sector Settings on myjobscotland

In acknowledgement that childcare employers in the private and third sectors have faced barriers to carrying out recruitment in 2020 due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, we have worked closely with COSLA and myjobscotland to agree an extension to our existing arrangement.

This means that until 31st March 2021, private and third sector colleagues will continue to be able to advertise their posts on myjobscotland for free, and with the added benefit of also appearing on other job boards that they have relationships with.

You can follow a complete "How-to" guide here:

<https://myjobscotland.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360022732133-Early-Learning-and-Childcare-Complete-How-to-guide>

If you have questions about accessing or using this free service, please contact the myjobscotland Team at advertising@myjobscotland.gov.uk

Induction Resource Review

The National Induction Resource for ELC has been refreshed to reflect the most recent updates in policy and best practice, including changes relating to COVID-19. With thanks to our partners for their contributions, the refreshed content offers support to newly employed ELC staff during the initial months of their induction period, providing a range of supporting information and advice including links to leading partner's information, a tool to support reflective practice, and resources for continued learning and progression opportunities.

The Induction Resource is promoted via our Twitter pages with a dedicated video message from Maree Todd, Minister for Children and Young People, and includes supporting quotes from members of the ELC workforce: <https://twitter.com/ELCScotGov/status/1313395601443352581>

It is accessible in both PDF and HTML versions from our website:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/early-learning-childcare-national-induction-resource/>

If you have any questions on this work please contact Sarah Guy at: Sarah.Guy@gov.scot

Free Continuous Professional Learning (CPL)

Our suite of free online CPL modules continue to be available, including '*Understanding the social factors which may impact on children's outcomes in the early years*' which has a specific focus on how a range of social factors, relationships and environments can impact children's early brain development, health, wellbeing, and behaviour. It also considers the importance of relationships and attachment-led practice, and how practitioners can build on the unique assets and strengths of each family to further support the child. This may be of particular interest due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Further work is also underway to develop modules focusing on the curriculum and transitions.

Full details about our suite of CPL modules and access to the courses is available from our website:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/training-modules-for-all-elc-practitioners/>

These modules are also accessible from [Directory of CPL for ELC](#), alongside a wide range of flexible and part-time further learning opportunities and development which are accessible before, after and while professionals pursue formal qualifications. The Directory is accessible from the Care Inspectorate Hub at:

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/resources/directory-of-continuous-professional-learning-for-early-learning-and-childcare/>

The SSSC has also recently developed a [new system for CPL](#) - formally referred to as Post Registration Training and Learning (PRTL). Through the new system you can record learning in a way which suits you, and a MyLearning App is available to support this.

Full details for workers and employers about the new CPL process, including an easy step guide, can be found on the SSSC website at:

<https://www.sssc.uk.com/supporting-the-workforce/continuous-professional-learning/>

Trauma Training

The Scottish Government has made a commitment to supporting a trauma informed workforce and services through investment in our National Trauma Training Programme, led by NHS Education for Scotland (NES). This is part of a wide range of actions to support prevention of adverse childhood experiences and trauma across the life-course; and to develop trauma-informed responses to support children, young people and adults affected by adversity and trauma.

The programme provides key trauma training resources available for all sectors of the Scottish Workforce, categorised under 4 Practice Levels.

Due to ELC workers possibly working alongside or serving people who may be affected by trauma, the ELC sector overall is categorised as Level 2: 'Trauma Skilled'. Full details relating to Trauma Skilled workers – including managing their own wellbeing - can be found on the NHS NES website at:

<https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/resources/develop-your-trauma-skilled-practice/>

Further resources are available from the [UK Trauma Council](#), including a dedicated section on the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. Full details can be found on their website at:

<https://uktraumacouncil.org/resource/signs-and-symptoms-of-trauma-in-children-and-young-people>.

If you have any questions on this work please contact Sarah Guy at: Sarah.Guy@gov.scot

Wellbeing Support for Childcare Staff

To support the wellbeing of the childcare workforce during these challenging times, the ELC Directorate has worked with Early Years Scotland to develop a new **#TeamELC Wellbeing Hub** which launched on 7 July. The Hub hosts a wealth of information and practical advice on managing wellbeing and features a function which allows practitioners and childminders to be connected with others in the sector. Alongside the website, a series of free online wellbeing events took place throughout July. Feedback from the events has been hugely positive with many finding the practical tips on how to manage personal wellbeing, really useful. So much so that a further series of wellbeing events has now been scheduled. You can book a place on one of those via this link:

<https://teamelcwellbeinghub.org/events>

One of the previous sessions was recorded and has been uploaded to the website, so staff can access the session at a time that suits them. We would encourage everyone to take some time to visit the site and look after themselves and each other at this difficult time.

<https://teamelcwellbeinghub.org/>

We would also welcome good practice examples from local partners showcasing measures that have been put in place to support the wellbeing and professional learning of staff during these challenging times.

If you have any questions on this work please contact Scott Sutherland at:

Scott.Sutherland@gov.scot

Education Scotland

Education Scotland is working remotely with practitioners across Scotland to support recovery. Many opportunities are being offered at local level, in collaboration with local authorities, and details of these are being shared through targeted communication.

Links to national webinars and 'blethers' can be found on the [National Improvement Hub](#). Over the next few months these include a strong focus on outdoor learning and using digital resources to support both communication and learning.

Support for using Realising the Ambition during recovery is also available on the [National Improvement Hub](#). In early December this will be complemented by a webinar to help practitioners gain a deeper and shared understanding of the key messages contained in Realising the Ambition: Being Me.

This professional learning session is aimed at all practitioners and leaders who support children in their early years - in local authority, private, voluntary and independent sector ELC settings (including childminders) and schools. This session will be repeated on a number of occasions and at different times. Details can be found [here](#).

In addition to Education Scotland's live webinars and 'blethers', a number of sessions have been recorded and are available to watch on demand.

New opportunities are continually being added in response to practitioner demand, so if you are looking for professional learning please check for [updates](#).

If you have any questions on this work please contact Sian Neil at:

Sian.Neil@educationscotland.gov.scot

19. Outdoor Learning

Virtual Nature School Programme: Winter Play

We are very pleased to announce that funding of £81,440 has been granted to Living Classrooms to deliver a winter programme of the Scottish Virtual Nature School.

This 3rd cohort will be aimed at supporting outdoor nature based play over the winter months, when the weather can be more challenging and practitioners often less confident in providing outdoor opportunities. Settings who take part in the programme will receive 6 weeks of guided support to improve and develop their winter outdoor learning practices from 14 January 2021. As in previous cohorts, the programme requires a daily commitment from practitioners to engage with the training videos (streamed over YouTube) and weekly pedagogical discussions with Virtual Nature School staff and learning community.

Setting teams from across the early learning and childcare sector were invited to apply for a place on this fully funded training course, with applications open from Saturday 5 December until Tuesday 15 December.

All applicants will be contacted on 18 December to confirm space allocations.

National Conversation and Improvement Practicum

On 17 November, the Scottish Government ran an online National Conversation event to provide an overview of, and promote, the Outdoor Learning Improvement Practicum. Over 400 practitioners noted their interest in the event, with places allocated to just under 200. A summary of the events discussions will be shared shortly from colleagues at the Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC).

The Improvement Practicum, beginning February 2021, will coach teams in the use of improvement methodology to support quality development in aspects of their outdoor ELC practice. Applications have now closed and all teams will be notified in January 2021.

Outdoor Play Marketing Campaign

We have commissioned a marketing campaign with colleagues from across Scottish Government to encourage children and families to play outdoors over the winter months. The campaign, which is now live, features videos and activity ideas to support parents with all-weather play.

The campaign promotes outdoor experiences, not only as a restriction compliant way for children to be with their friends, but as a fun activity for the whole family.

Activity cards and information can be found at: <https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/play-outdoors>

The videos are currently being shared on social media:

<https://twitter.com/parentclubscot/status/1327237213814464514?s=20>

Inspiring Scotland: Outdoor ELC videos

The Scottish Government grant funded Inspiring Scotland to support the development and promotion of outdoor play as a key component of the early learning and childcare (ELC) expansion. As part of this work, films were commissioned to capture and showcase the experience of outdoor play in ELC from the perspective of the parent, child and practitioner.

We are pleased to share these with you below:

- Outdoor ELC for Parents; why do parents choose an outdoor nursery experience for their child?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b01cgoM-RKA&feature=youtu.be>
- Outdoor ELC for Children: What do children think of their outdoor nursery?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkpEajokull>
- Outdoor ELC for Practitioners: What's it like working in a fully outdoor nursery?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmLrG5DuZwE>

If you have any questions on this section, please contact Sophie Finlayson at sophie.finlayson@gov.scot

20. Targeted Childcare and Family Wellbeing

We hosted an event '*Creating inspiring learning communities: making work thrive for under 3s*' on Thursday 30 January at The Scottish Storytelling Centre in Edinburgh. At this event we explored how we can all play a part in creating spaces for sharing and working together in person and online, harnessing the creativity an, skills and knowledge across Scotland.

We could never have imagined how much would change over the following 2 months. We have all had to adapt and come up with innovative ideas to communicate more effectively. We have seen the whole sector rise to the challenge of how to engage, collaborate, ask questions and to support one another during this time.

To kick start our own contribution to creating spaces for sharing, our pages on the Knowledge Hub are being updated and will include the 'lightening talk' videos from our Fire Starter Event. Colleagues in the Early Years Teams in North Ayrshire, West Lothian and the Pan Lothian Group all gave a super account of the work they had been doing to improve uptake and awareness of the two year old offer.

In addition, we would encourage you to use this space to share the ups and downs of the last year, particularly in relation to our terrific twos. Has anything changed for the better? What are the issues that you keep getting stuck on? Maybe someone out there has the answer... Please also feel free to drop in links to any sites, groups or collaboration tools that you think would be of wider benefit.

We are also very much looking forward to sharing more of the learning and best practice from the two year old improvement practicum in the new year. So keep checking back!

If you have any questions, please contact Kerrie Harkness at Kerrie.Harkness@gov.scot

21. Fairer Scotland action plan: progress report 2020

The Fairer Scotland Action Plan Progress Report details the achievements and ongoing work in relation to the Fairer Scotland Action Plan, published in 2016, and an update on the actions taken in relation to two reports published by the Independent Poverty and Inequality Advisor, Shifting the Curve and the Life Chances of Young People in Scotland This report follows similar reports published in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

The report can be found [here](#).

22. Scottish Government COVID-19 Children, Young People and Families Evidence Summary

A summary of Scottish and UK evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on the wellbeing of children and young people was published [here](#) on 24 November. The briefing summarises the current evidence from Scotland and the UK on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the wellbeing of children, young people and families, including those with vulnerabilities and those experiencing disadvantage or discrimination.

Over the last month, there has been a tightening of restrictions in response to a rise in COVID-19 cases and hospital admissions. At the same time, many children and young people are adjusting to changes in school and childcare settings. This briefing is the fourth in a series of high-level evidence summaries on the impact of COVID-19 on the wellbeing of children and families in Scotland, drawing on wider UK research where appropriate. As with previous briefings, the scope is fairly broad to cover a wide range of policy interests.

This month, there are some new Scottish studies relating to particular groups of children and young people which will be of interest, including: children and families living in poverty; black and minority ethnic (BME) young people; and families impacted by disability.

23. Survey on how young children and their families are coping with the COVID-19 pandemic

The University of Edinburgh are currently running an online study to greater understand the impact of lockdown and the COVID-19 pandemic on families with young children (aged 1-5 years old). Any families that are currently living in the United Kingdom that have children between the ages of 1 – 5 years old living in the house are eligible to take part.

This is a longitudinal study, which means the parents will be contacted again at 3-, 6- and 12-month time points. However, participating parents are welcome to opt out of the study at any time. Please note that children who are five years old at the beginning of participating in the survey are still eligible to participate if they turn six by the follow-up time points.

The survey is hosted on the Qualtrics platform, which can be accessed here: https://edinburgh.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d5V5ggXlfNLzizX?fbclid=IwAR25GTHXHxyRZVLe bAL_Cr6HDNvYgawZJ-8O1NPUBhmsPoc2wn4ZIBjej5s

This is part of a larger project, with participating research groups in Australia, Netherlands, America, Spain, Turkey and Cyprus. We hope the findings of this project will inform parents and caregivers on how best to respond to their young children during this uncertain time, as well as expanding our limited understanding on how young children themselves cope and respond to stressful events.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Dr Hope Christie at hchrist5@ed.ac.uk

DECEMBER 2020			
23 December	Final date to fill in provider survey on partnership working	If you are interested in attending future proceedings of the Early Learning and Childcare Partnership Forum or Forum supported events please complete the survey, choosing either single or multiple setting.	Single setting survey Multiple setting survey
APRIL 2021			
24 April	SCMA Annual Conference	Unfortunately due to COVID-19 the SCMA Conference scheduled for this year has been postponed until April 2021. The theme for the conference will be “Making a Difference,” with a particular focus on wellbeing and full details can be found in the link attached.	https://www.childminding.org/news/scma-annual-conference-2020-important-update
MAY 2021			
15 May	EYS Annual Conference	Unfortunately due to COVID-19 the EYS annual Conference scheduled for this year has been postponed until May 2021.	https://earlyyearsscotland.org/about-us/eys-annual-conference

Annex B – Publications

Date Published	Document Link
25/11/2020	The impact of COVID-19 on children and young people - 2-4 year olds
24/11/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): impact on children, young people and families - evidence summary October 2020
18/11/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues - evidence on children, schools, early learning and childcare settings and transmission from COVID-19 - summary report
30/10/2020	Coronavirus (COVID19) Early Learning and Childcare Services
30/10/2020	Coronavirus (COVID 19) Childminder Services Guidance
30/10/2020	Coronavirus (COVID 19) School Age Childcare Services Guidance
24/10/2020	Halloween and Bonfire Night - Advice on safe and enjoyable celebrations
23/10/2020	Scotland's strategic framework
24/09/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): organised activities for children
11/09/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020 - version 3
24/08/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): public health measures at borders (international travel)
23/08/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): local advice and measures
21/08/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reopening early learning and childcare services - frequently asked questions
21/08/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on re-opening school age childcare services - frequently asked questions
30/07/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reopening early learning and childcare services
30/07/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): childminding services guidance
30/07/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reopening school age childcare services
30/07/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): fully outdoor childcare providers guidance
30/07/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues – advisory note on physical distancing in early learning and childcare settings (ELC)
30/07/2020	Funding follows the child and the national standard for early learning and childcare providers: interim guidance
03/07/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19) Phase 3: guidance on reopening school aged childcare services
24/06/2020	Further route map detail announced
15/06/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19) Phase 3: guidance on reopening early learning and childcare services
01/06/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): fully outdoor childcare providers guidance
01/06/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): childminder services guidance
26/05/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): schools, early learning and childcare settings - scientific evidence
21/05/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision
15/05/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): physical distancing in education and childcare settings
31/03/2020	Joint statement issued by Ms Todd and Cllr McCabe on the 1140 hours revocation
31/03/2020	Social distancing in education and childcare settings guidance

30/03/2020	Childcare providers: closure information
30/03/2020	Information for private and third sector childcare providers about business support
30/03/2020	Information for Childminders about business and financial support
30/03/2020	Childcare closures and emergency provision
24/03/2020	Implementing social distancing in education and childcare settings
24/03/2020	School and ELC closures - guidance for key workers
20/03/2020	Guidance on critical childcare and learning provision for key workers