

Scottish Government Early Learning and Childcare COVID-19 Update **No. 14 – May 2021**



Message from Clare Haughey, Minister for Children and Young People

I would like to introduce myself, I am Clare Haughey and I am absolutely honoured to have been nominated by the First Minister to be Scotland's Minister for Children and Young People.

My last appointment was Minister for Mental Health and it was my privilege to introduce access to counselling for pupils in every secondary school; recruit over 500 additional mental health staff in community – on track to make that 800; expand the Distress Brief Intervention programme; and improve perinatal mental health services.

As you will know, high quality childcare has the potential to transform children's and families lives across the country. I want to help children and young people thrive and reach their full potential regardless of their background. I want to help make Scotland the best place to grow up, building upon the great work by my predecessor Maree Todd.

I'm very much looking forward to my new ministerial role, working closely alongside you, the dedicated, passionate childcare workforce to provide the best possible outcomes for Scotland's children and families. I look forward to overseeing our expansion of free early learning and childcare provision, and to bring our transformative, life changing commitments to life.

Regards

Clare Haughey
Minister for Children and Young People

Introduction from Alison Cumming, Director for Early Learning and Childcare

Hello and welcome to our May update.

We are excited to be working with the new Ministerial team for the Education and Skills portfolio and to be delivering their priorities for early learning and all-age childcare.

Alongside Clare Haughey's appointment as Minister for Children and Young People, Shirley-Anne Somerville is now Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills and. The [full list of Ministerial appointments](#) is available on the Scottish Government website.

The current COVID guidance for childcare settings has been in place since February and we know that, as restrictions ease in wider society, we are being asked if we're also considering easing restrictions in the workplace guidance.

The First Minister has been clear that she will not keep any COVID-19 public health restrictions in place longer than necessary. The Chief Medical Officer's Advisory Sub-group on Education and Children's Issues regularly reviews the evidence, data and restrictions for the childcare sector. The Scottish Government also regularly engages with local authorities, the Care Inspectorate and the childcare stakeholder representatives to understand the impact of the workplace risk mitigations and carefully monitors cases and outbreaks in childcare settings.

The Advisory Sub-Group has agreed that, given the low number of cases and outbreaks in childcare settings, we can consider whether any of our current risk mitigations can be eased to reflect the protection levels in the strategic framework - in particular those that effect access to childcare and the quality of experiences for children. However, the priority is to keep children and staff safe and any decisions about easing will be informed by what we know about the impact of the mitigations on suppressing transmission. Those considerations will take a few weeks and will involve close engagement with representative bodies and public health experts.

We aim to issue new guidance in mid-June and will work the sector to agree a date for implementation that allows settings, practitioners and childminders time to understand the guidance and prepare for any changes.

We realise that the current risk mitigations in early learning and childcare settings, school age childcare settings and for childminders may start to feel at odds with the easing of restrictions in wider society. However, we are therefore asking the sector to continue to adhere to the workplace and the wider the public health guidance to keep staff safe, children safe and the childcare sector open to deliver important support to children and families.

We will keep you updated on progress and consider what engagement and support might be needed to help the sector understand any changes in the guidance.

Finally, we want to make sure that this Programme Update and our other comms products meet your needs so I'd be really grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete our [ELC Communications and Engagement Survey](#).

Take care

Alison Cumming
Alison.Cumming@gov.scot
Director, Early Learning and Childcare

[Find previous editions of the ELC Covid-19 update here.](#)

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 here.](#)**

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 here](#) and request to join [Early Learning and Childcare \(ELC\) Expansion Scotland: Local Authorities Knowledge Hub page.](#)

2. ELC Statutory Duty and the Expansion

It is now just a few months until the statutory entitlement to 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare for eligible children comes in to effect in August. We know just how much hard work has been and is taking place across the sector to make this happen, not just in meeting the challenges that this transformational programme brings, but doing so in the context of a global pandemic. Sixteen councils are now delivering 1140 hours in full, with the remaining 16 councils set to deliver between now and August. Our delivery assurance team is continuing to work with local authorities to offer support, where this is needed, in the final stages of preparation,

The most recent [ELC Expansion Delivery Progress Report](#), published on the Improvement Service Website in early April, underlines just how much progress has been made. The report shows that 114,222 children were reported to be receiving funded ELC following the return to wider access to provision in February 2021. Of these, 86% (98,474 children) were reported to be accessing more than the statutory 600 funded hours whilst 65% (74,096 children) were reported to be accessing 1140 funded hours. This represents an increase since August 2020 of 15,784 children accessing funded ELC, and 17,399 more children accessing 1140 hours funded ELC.

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](#) (first published on 30 July 2020) was updated on 24 March to provide clarity to the sector regarding the expectations for delivery of Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard from August 2021. This is in light of the sector's continued response to COVID-19 and the public health measures in place.

With the current focus on [Key question 5: How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?](#) within Care Inspectorate scrutiny of daycare of children services, we have been asked to clarify if evaluations on this theme will impact on settings' eligibility to deliver funded early learning and childcare.

Key question 5 was introduced at short-notice to promote children's health and wellbeing during the pandemic. It is important that services evaluate their practice to ensure children continue to experience safe, high quality care as we move through the pandemic. Where the Care Inspectorate identify serious concerns in respect of evaluations of Key Question 5, there is an expectation that settings will work to make the required improvements. The Care Inspectorate's enforcement powers apply to Key Question 5 in the same way as they do for other evaluation themes. This includes making recommendations or requirements, issuing an improvement notice or, in the most serious of cases, an application to cancel the service. Where the issues highlighted point to systemic issues across the service provision, the Care Inspectorate may also reduce other relevant quality themes.

However evaluations on Key question 5 are not included within the National Standard for funded ELC providers and evaluations on this theme alone will not be used to influence decisions about the funded status of settings.

Key question 5 is a temporary addition to the Care Inspectorate framework. When the Scottish Government receives advice that it is safe to ease the COVID guidance for [Early Learning and Childcare](#), [Childminding Services](#) and [School Aged Childcare](#) it will also consider whether and how risk mitigations should be retained as standard good practice. At that point, the Care Inspectorate will consider how any standard good practice can be incorporated into evaluations of 'quality of care and support', alongside existing infection prevention and control requirements. As this theme does form part of the national standard for funded providers, it will be through evaluations of 'quality of care and support' that we will set a longer-term expectation that funded providers demonstrate good practice in preventing the transmission of COVID.

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

Early Learning and Childcare Statutory Guidance

ELC Statutory Guidance was previously published in 2014 to reflect the changes introduced through the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Before the pandemic, work was underway to refresh the ELC statutory guidance to reflect substantial changes in the overarching policy framework since 2014 and to take the opportunity to make the document as accessible and as concise as possible.

Work is currently progressing to reflect on the [responses to the ELC statutory guidance public consultation](#) and policy changes since the [draft revised statutory guidance was published in December 2019](#). The final guidance will be published by early summer ahead of the full rollout of 1140 hours this August.

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

Early Learning and Childcare – Targeted Childcare for 2 Year Olds

Data Share

We are continuing to work with UK Government to establish a data sharing gateway that will provide local authorities with access to information on eligible households in their area.

We now have an established working group chaired by UK Government and including representation from Scottish Government, Social Security Scotland, DWP and HMRC to progress this work. Local authorities are being involved through COSLA and SOLAR. There is good progress to develop a safe and secure process for receiving and sharing the data and to ensure that the information being requested will be functional and meets the needs of local authorities.

We will provide a further update once we have confirmation on the timing of the consultation on draft Regulations that will provide the legal framework for the data share.

Changes to Income Thresholds for Qualifying Benefits (Universal Credit and Tax Credits)

There are changes to the income thresholds for relevant 'qualifying benefits' for the 2 year old offer. Because of the structure of the underlying Regulations (The Provision of Early Learning and Childcare (Specified Children) (Scotland) Order 2014, as amended), one updates automatically and the other two will require a change to Regulations.

The income thresholds for both universal credit and tax credits relate to the different ways 'income' is dealt with in each benefit. More information on what is regarded as 'income' for tax credits can be found on the gov.uk website: [How to claim tax credits: What counts as income - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/how-to-claim-tax-credits-what-counts-as-income)

For universal credit, we have presented a monthly 'take home pay' figure as this is how it is presented on the claim letter. The figure relates to Box 3 in this example claim letter: [Example of a UC monthly award notice.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/_documents/Example_of_a_UC_monthly_award_notice.pdf)

While we are aware local authorities must seek and follow their own legal advice on the scope and meaning of their legal duties, we are really happy to help talk through any questions about eligibility criteria and help you to consider what questions you may have.

Child Tax Credit Only

We have been informed by HMRC, that the uprating of certain Tax Credit benefits took effect from the 6 April 2021. For funded ELC for 2 year olds this means that those in receipt of **Child Tax Credit only** can now have earnings of **£16,480** or less. This increase from £16,105 automatically updates by UK Government and should take effect immediately. Our [My Gov website page](#) has been updated to reflect this new figure.

Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit & Child Tax Credit

From 1 April 2021, the National Living Wage (NLW) has increased from £8.72 to £8.91. The age in which an employee receives NLW has also reduced from those aged 25 years and over to those aged 23 and over.

The increase in the NLW impacts on those households in receipt of **both** Working Tax Credit **and** Child Credit, and; those in receipt of Universal Credit. As those receiving Working Tax Credits must work at least 16 hours per week, it is now no longer possible to qualify for Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and have an income at or under £7,320 (the current income threshold). Based on a 16 hour week at the National Living Wage, a person aged 23 and over would now have an annual income of around £7,500. For those in receipt of Universal Credit, monthly equivalent would be £625 (an increase from the current income threshold of £610 per month).

Changes to Regulations will be made as soon as possible and in the interim we request that local authorities consider any applications for funded ELC for 2 year olds carefully and take this information into account when making any decisions, particularly considering the scope of local authority discretionary powers. We will ensure that local authorities are kept informed of changes to Regulations and we will include further updates on K-Hub and through this ELC Programme Update.

We do not expect there to be a significant increase in the number of two year olds who are likely to become newly eligible as a result of any impending changes, as these are necessary to maintain eligibility and to keep pace with the standard of living.

Extending eligibility for two year olds with a parent who has experience of care

We are very grateful for the nominees from councils in each Regional improvement Collaborative area to work together on supporting the implementation of the commitment to extend eligibility for 2 year olds with a parent who has experience of care. We have retained the information at Annex C on this commitment.

Who Cares? Scotland will be supporting this work and we look forward to our first meeting in early June.

If you would like to raise any questions about Targeted Childcare for 2 year olds or if you would like to share any feedback or best practice, please contact: Kerrie.Harkness@gov.scot

3. COVID-19

COVID SAFETY

Guidance and accompanying resources

The suite of childcare guidance has been updated this week to include:

- an up-date to the section on singing, music and drama to allow singing in groups in some protection levels, following [further advice from the Advisory Sub-group on Education and Children's Issues](#).
- a link, in the section on temperature and ventilation, to an advice card that settings may want to display to remind staff on how to ensure effective ventilation.
- guidance on staff working or volunteering for other organisations/employer in the section on moving within and between settings.
- a new section on guidance on transition visits to primary school.

The guidance can be found by following the links below:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): early learning and childcare \(ELC\) services guidance](#), [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): childminder services guidance](#) and [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): school aged childcare services guidance](#)

Monitoring of cases and outbreaks in childcare settings

Please be reassured that we are carefully monitoring the impact of the resumption of childcare on cases and outbreaks in all childcare settings and discussing regularly with Public Health Scotland and other experts.

While we have seen cases and outbreaks in childcare settings, none of this gives us cause for concern. Numbers remain low in the context of the number of settings that are open and in the context of enhanced testing of staff through the twice-weekly asymptomatic testing offer and the move to testing of contacts as part of the wider public health response.

To ensure that we are aware of all outbreaks in childcare settings, it is essential that settings notify their local health protection team and the Care Inspectorate when they have two or more confirmed cases of COVID within 14 days. The infographic below provides a useful reminder and can be found at the following links:

[Early Learning and Childcare Guidance Infographic](#)

[Childminder Guidance Infographic](#)

[School Aged Childcare Guidance Infographic](#)

Call for top tips and COVID practice examples

We would like to share some examples of how settings have approached implementing the Covid-19 guidance locally. Do you have any useful or innovative examples or tips that we can share more widely?

For example:

- How you are helping staff to implement/follow risk mitigations? This could include examples of useful training resources, visual reminders or helpful changes to the setting or the daily routine that make it easier to comply.
- How are you helping parents and carers to follow risk mitigations? This could include structural changes at transition points, visual reminders and other forms of communication and engagement.
- How are you helping children to understand the changes?

Please share any other tips that you think other settings would benefit from.

Please contact Stephen.Edgar@gov.scot with any suggestions.

Letter from Jason Leitch, National Clinical Director of NHSScotland

[Jason Leitch wrote a letter to all parents/carers of children returning to ELC and P1-3](#) on 19 February. The letter includes the evidence and advice used for the return to ELC and school, information of reducing the risk at schools and ELC settings, reducing the risk at home and support and advice.

Informal childcare

Our [Parent Club website](#) details all of our advice to families around using informal childcare as safely as possible.

Informal childcare can continue at all levels but it's important to consider the risks associated with this and take measures to reduce risks where possible.

Level 0-2

Parents in an area in levels 0-2 can have their friends or family look after their children. In order to reduce risks it is important to continue to follow the rules on indoor socialising. Remember that indoors, children under 12 don't count towards the number of people that can be together, but they do count towards the number of households.

Level 3

For areas in level 3, friends and family members can still look after children. The friend or family member can look after the child in the child's home, or their own. However, it is best to only use informal childcare in level 3 if the parent or child have to. For example:

- the parents needs childcare to enable you to work (this can include working from home)
- the parent needs to attend medical appointment for themselves or another child
- the parent or their children have on-going regular health or social care needs
- illness or health issues mean the parents can't look after them or they need additional support to do so
- respite care for children with disabilities.

Level 4

No area is currently in level 4, however informal childcare should only be used in essential circumstances, details of which can be found on Parent Club.

You may find it helpful to signpost parents to the website which details further advice around travel, precautions that can be taken and other practicalities.

Link: [Your guide to childcare on the Parent Club website.](#)

Organised activities for children

Revised guidance for organised children's activities has now been published [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): organised activities for children - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

The updates include:

- Removing the maximum numbers who can attend using a 'cap' – this will now be set by space available in the venue, using the physical distancing calculation guidance [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): calculating physical distancing capacity in public settings - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- Updates on singing – this is now permitted outdoors/indoors for under 8's from level 3, outdoors for adults (and older children) from Level 2 (with under 12s indoors) and indoors for adults from level 1 (so links to parent/baby groups) based on the updated Advisory Sub group guidance [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues – advice on physical education and expressive arts - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

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

Access to testing for childcare staff

All staff working in settings that are registered with the Care Inspectorate in the day care of children category, now have access to asymptomatic, Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing via the childcare testing programme. The testing programme is voluntary but we continue to encourage all staff to take up the offer of at home testing for the wellbeing and reassurance of their setting community.

Childminders can now access this same testing via the offer of [universal access to LFD testing](#). There are some key messages for those undertaking testing that we'd be grateful for your support in communicating to colleagues:

- **Please ensure that all test results, whether positive, negative or void, are reported using the [digital portal](#) or telephone service (119).** Reporting test results can be done from mobiles, online or by phone, and should be completed straightaway. Reporting not only supports contact tracing in the event of a positive case, but assists our collective understanding of rates of infection in communities and schools, childcare and other settings across the country. If we only record positive results, the level of COVID-19 cases may look worse than they really are. Collectively, health professionals can use the information to spot patterns and outbreaks more quickly and accurately, and ensure better targeting of responsive and preventative action; helping reduce the risk of future lockdowns.
- **Please ensure that, if you have a positive LFD result, you self-isolate immediately, report it and book a confirmatory PCR test.** Self-isolation is vital to help limit the potential spread of the virus in your setting and wider community. Taking a PCR test is really important - PCR tests are more accurate than LFD tests, and can help identify whether your positive result is incorrect (a false positive). If the PCR test is negative, in most cases you and your contacts will be able to end self-isolation subject to further advice from Test and Protect.
- **Please report any faulty test kits, to help us ensure the testing programme remains safe and effective.** Individual users can do so by calling 119 or by using the [MHRA Yellow Card reporting system](#) if there have been adverse incidents as a result of problems with test kits. Settings can do so by calling the **NSS Helpline** on **0800 028 2816** or emailing nss.Covid19TestingSupport@nhs.scot.
- **There is now guidance available in a range of different formats.** These include: (i) a [How To Test video with BSL and subtitles](#); and (ii) [Instructions for Use in languages other than English](#).

NHS Scotland Testing Helpline

This is now the main port of call for delivery issues, as well as **all** other matters arising for settings. Please use the following phone number or e-mail address to log any issues relating to the programme.

The helpline number is: **0800 008 6587**.

The e-mail address is: nss.Covid19TestingSupport@nhs.scot

Self-ordering of test kits

An online portal which will allow settings to order test kits, when required, will be live from the 27th May. Arrangements and guidance for reordering kits will be made available on Objective Connect ahead of the system going live.

4. Information for parents and carers

1140 and Parental Communication

For ELC settings and any other organisations that work with/communicate with parent and carers, we ask for your support in sharing the compliance messaging.

- Please follow Parent Club on social media and share relevant messages/videos with families.
- A1 waterproof posters are being distributed to ELC settings to highlight the key steps that parents and carers should take.
- An online toolkit was shared via the Care inspectorate, with social media content, SMS/Whatsapp copy and posters. Parent Club have also shared this directly with their partners/distribution network. If you have not received this and would like to, please let us know.

A 1 page summary document of the campaign will also be translated into the following languages: Polish, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Urdu, Easy Read, BSL, Audio. They will be available for download from the FTP or dropbox link below or you can contact emma.o'brien@gov.scot in Scottish Government Marketing team to request them.

[The Parent Club website](#) 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.

Key links for sharing social media:

- [Parent Club Scotland Facebook page](#)
- [Parent Club Instagram page](#)

We have been working with local authorities to share the existing 'This Much' promotional materials around the 1140 offer. We would welcome any feedback on these resources before we start planning for 2021/22. We are now taking an opportunity to review the Parent Club webpages (www.parentclub.scot/ELC). We are always pleased to receive feedback about Parent Club and suggestions for content that would be useful. Please contact Luke.McPherson@gov.scot if you have any feedback.

We are also developing new case study content. If you are aware of any specific case studies that you think would be useful – to help us to showcase a diverse range of families and the diverse range of ELC settings/patterns – please let us know.

Following the First Minister's announcement of further easing of Covid restrictions in most local authorities, we would like to share some new resources that have been created to encourage safe behaviours by families, and to help parents and carers to understand the steps that they can take to reduce the risk of Covid transmission.

The [toolkit](#) has a number of resources that can be printed and displayed in settings. Most of these were shared recently via the Care Inspectorate weekly update on our behalf, but the toolkit now contains translations of all PDF documents in the following: BSL, audio, easy read, Arabic, Gaelic, Chinese (Simplified), Urdu, Punjabi, Polish, Romanian.

These can be accessed at the following links:

Wetransfer - [Download Return to School Assets via WeTransfer here](#)

Dropbox - [Download Return to School Assets via DropBox here](#)

FTP - [Download Return to School Assets via FTP site here](#)

If you are unable to access the PDFS please just get in contact with Luke.McPherson@gov.scot who will be able to send them individually.

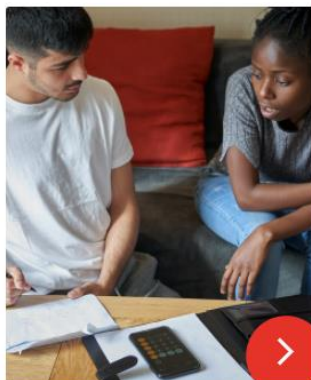
Please **contact Katherine Tierney's ELC: Access and Parental Communications team through the ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot mailbox** with further suggestions for the Parent Club FAQ or other parental communication.



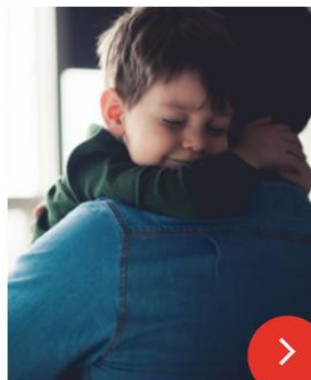
LATEST INFORMATION ON CORONAVIRUS



Play outdoors



Your guide to finding support



Supporting your child's mental health during coronavirus



Coronavirus guidelines for children

Scottish Child Payment

[The Scottish Child Payment is now open for applications](#) and parents and carers can apply online, by phone or by post. The payment helps towards the costs of having a child and is a weekly payment of £10 for every child who's under 6 years of age. The Scottish Child Payment does not affect any other UK or Scottish Government benefits that families currently get.

It's up to the parents or carers to choose what to spend the money on and can be used for things like travel costs, nappies and other essentials, childcare and family days out.

The payment was designed to support families and tackle poverty and will make a big difference to low-income families with children under 6. Please share this and make aware the families that you care for to make sure that everyone who is eligible has the opportunity to apply.

If you have any questions, please contact

NationalEngagementandPartnershipTeam@socialsecurity.gov.scot

5. Outdoor Learning

Out to Play Improvement Practicum

Work on the Improvement Practicum, ran by colleagues in the Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative, begins on 25 May with 7 setting teams from across Scotland.

Teams will participate in 6 workshops between May and November 2021, with the aim of improving access to the outdoors for all children in their setting. Case studies and improvement models will be shared widely upon completion of the programme.

New Out to Play Chapters

We are pleased to announce the publication of 3 new chapters of Scottish Government's Out to Play document on 17 March 2021. These chapters provide targeted support and guidance on creating outdoor experiences for the wider ELC sector, including childminding settings, out of school care services and practitioners who work with ASN children.

These documents are currently available online only (no printed formats) using the links below:

- [Out to Play - Section 11 - Practitioners supporting children with additional support needs - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)
- [Out to Play - Section 10 - Out of School Care Providers - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)
- [Out to Play - Section 9 - Childminding Settings - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

If you have any questions on this section, please contact Sophie Finlayson at

sophie.finlayson@gov.scot

6. Financial Sustainability Health Check

We are currently undertaking a Financial Sustainability Health Check of the childcare sector in Scotland. The Health Check will gather evidence of the impact of COVID-19 on the sustainability of all types of childcare providers, and will assess the impact of financial support which has been made available.

It will also help to inform any future support for the sector and, as indicated in the updated [Interim Guidance on Funding Follows the Child](#) published in March 2021, any updates to the guidance on setting sustainable rates for providers delivering funded Early Learning and Childcare.

To help inform the Financial Sustainability Health Check the Scottish Government launched surveys for day care of children services and for childminding services.

The surveys closed at midnight on Thursday, 20 May. We are very grateful to providers who have been able to spare their time in order to complete the survey.

Our analytical team are currently processing the responses and we will share the key findings with the sector during the Summer.

As part of the Financial Sustainability Health Check exercise we have also asked local authorities to provide updated information on the hourly rates that they pay to their funded providers, the process they have undertaken to set sustainable rates, and any support offered to funded providers during the pandemic. This will help to update a similar exercise that was undertaken in 2019 and, as we did previously, we will make the information collected through this exercise available to the sector (again during the Summer).

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

7. 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.

[You can read the news about the Nursery rate relief extended until 2023 here.](#)

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

8. Temporary Restrictions Fund for Childcare Providers

Round 3 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund (TRF) closed to applications on 4 May 2021.

Local authorities are continuing to process grant application forms.

Round 3 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund was targeted at all school age childcare providers in the light of prolonged restrictions on their services due to coronavirus.

Under round 3 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund:

- all open school age childcare services were able to access a support grant for each week in which they were open over the period 1 March to 26 March. The size of the grant varied depending on the registered capacity of settings and how many weeks the setting was open;
- all registered school age childcare services, whether open or closed, were also able to claim a one-off additional restart grant based on their capacity, to support reopening following the end of restrictions. This includes settings with combined ELC and SAC services and larger childminding settings (12 or more children) which also remained restricted until 15 March 2021.

Contact info: ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

9. Support for Childminders

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 has now been published and can be found at [Our commitment to childminding: report](#).

Contact Info: Haylay Forbes at Haylay.Forbes@gov.scot

10. 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](#)

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which is a UK Government Scheme, [will now operate until 30 September 2021](#).

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.

11. Strategic Framework for School Age Childcare

We remain committed to further developing our policy on School Age Childcare (following our consultation on a [School Age Childcare draft framework](#) in 2019), in collaboration with providers and the wider public. We were due to publish our strategic framework by the end of March 2021. However, recognizing the challenges which the Covid-19 pandemic has presented for both children and families and providers of school age childcare, we have decided to delay the publication of the full framework. We feel that it is best to support the sector through the current period and to take the time to fully understand the impacts of the pandemic and how this influences our final strategic framework.

On 19 March we published our [School Age Childcare Progress Report](#) which reiterates our commitment to school age childcare. The report highlights the key themes from our [draft framework](#) consultation response, considers the impacts of Covid-19, outlines the wider policy landscape, and details the actions we will take over the coming months as we work towards a final framework. The report also provides case studies from critical childcare provision, our Access to Childcare Fund projects and details three new pilot projects which we will work with over the next year to better understand what families need from a future school age childcare policy. These pilot projects are: Ayr United Football Academy; SCMA; and Mull & Iona Community Trust.

We would like to thank all who have contributed to the development of the progress report – we will keep you updated of our steps as we work towards a full, final framework on school age childcare.

For more information please contact Christian.Barry@gov.scot

12. Childcare Sector Working Group (CSWG)

The latest meeting of the CSWG took place on 20 May 2021 with a focus on the current picture with recruitment and retention challenges for the sector, Fair Work implementation challenges and opportunities, and future priorities for professional learning. The note of meeting for this will be available in the Knowledge Hub in due course along with the archive of past meetings. The ELC and Childcare Sector Recovery Working Group (SRG) will also continue to meet on a needs basis to provide sectoral advice and to support and inform the ongoing recovery of the childcare sector. The last meeting took place on 13 May.

For more information please contact ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

13. Primary 1 deferral and ELC eligibility

Education authorities will be under a legal obligation to provide an additional year of funded ELC to all children who defer their primary 1 start from August 2023. For now, there is no change in the rules around ELC for children who defer.

[Information for parents and carers about their current rights to defer](#) their child's Primary 1 entry and access to ELC entitlement is available on the Parent Club website.

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 pilots will provide us with a better understanding of likely uptake of the entitlement and we intend to increase the number of pilots in August 2022.

Deferral Working Group

A Deferral Working Group has been established to monitor and evaluate the progress of implementation of the new obligation. The purpose of the group is to guide the pilot approach and evaluation to prepare and plan for full implementation of the deferral legislation in August 2023. Membership consists of Scottish Government ELC officials, local authorities and quality and improvement bodies. Other relevant individuals and organisations are being invited to attend the group on an ad hoc basis to provide further support and advice. An initial meeting was held in March, and more recently, the second meeting took place on 7 May. Discussion so far has included the group's Terms of Reference, pilot evaluation planning and the nature and timing of parental comms.

If you have any questions on this work please contact Debbi Ramsay at:

debbi.ramsay@gov.scot

14. Analysis and Evidence

Public Health Scotland would like to increase participation in the **COVID-19 Antibody Survey of education Staff (CASS)**. CASS began in September 2020 and is open to all adults working in a school or Early Learning and Childcare settings in Scotland. This survey helps us to assess the extent to which staff working in education settings have been affected by COVID-19. It involves completing a short survey and providing a finger-prick blood sampling to identify who has been infected with Coronavirus in the past. By testing people throughout the year, the study has been able to track if this is changing over time.

Participation is open to staff in a range of roles, including teachers, ELC practitioners, support staff, administrative staff, catering staff, cleaners, janitorial staff and classroom or playground assistants, and other people who work in our schools and ELC settings. We would be very grateful if you could use your communication channels to encourage the sector to sign up to the survey.

To participate, please access the survey here [COVID19surveys.publichealthscotland.scot](https://www.covid19surveys.scot.nhs.uk) and enter the registration code **478416** if you're not taken directly to the survey information page.

For further information, please contact phs.covid-19@phs.scot

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.

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).

You can find [some of the information from the survey and information received from the Care Inspectorate on which settings are open is published](#) 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.

We recently published an [Early Learning and Childcare Equalities Data Slidepack](#). This resource brings together data from the ELC Census, Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), breaking down data for children and staff by key equality characteristics.

Please note that we have published some minor corrections to our reports on the **Scottish Study of Early Learning and Childcare**. Figures for parental SWEMWBS scores and some figures for use of 'other childcare' have been revised. This did not reflect errors in the underlying data or in any other results in the publications. We apologise for any inconvenience caused. The revised reports can still be found at the previous urls, along with more explanation of the corrections: [Phase 1 report](#) ('eligible 2s'), [Phase 2 report](#) (ELC Leavers) and [Phase 3 report](#) (3 year olds). Please contact Catriona Rooke if you have any questions: catriona.rooke@gov.scot.

Equity and Excellence Leads: Report on The Care Inspectorate Special Inspection Focus and Update on Development of the Role

The Care Inspectorate included a 'specific Focus Area' for the inspection year April 2019 to March 2020, which gathered information on the role of Equity and Excellence (EE) Leads. This aimed to understand how the commitment was being implemented and supported, and how well the roles were understood by staff.

Inspections and data collection were stopped in March 2020 due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and associated restrictions. Scottish Government has worked with The Care Inspectorate to report on the findings and provide an update on the development of the role. We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of the report.

You will find the report here: [Equity and Excellence Leads: Report on The Care Inspectorate Special Inspection Focus and Update on Development of the Role.](#)

If you have any questions on this work, please contact Marie McQuade at Marie.Mcquade@gov.scot.

15. SEEMiS Early Years

The **SEEMiS Early Years project** is continuing to progress, although roll out to local authorities is now expected to be after August 2021. The project team are working closely with local authority contacts to identify a new date when the system will go live. 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.

16. Workforce and Professional Learning

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 in Summer 2020. 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.



Support your Wellbeing

Find a range of practical support on all aspects of your Wellbeing; from mindfulness and meditation to practical tips to reduce anxiety and stress.



Connect with others

Sharing experiences with others in the sector is very powerful. Let us connect you with colleagues across Scotland.



Celebrating you

The amazing work you do makes a difference in the lives of Scotland's youngest children and their families.



Events

Sign up for a free online event to hear why your Wellbeing is so important!

We would encourage everyone to take some time to visit the site and look after themselves and each other at this difficult time.

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

Care Inspectorate - Improvement Support, ELC Improvement Programme

The ELC improvement programme have been working remotely with services throughout the pandemic. They have reconnected with identified services to provide targeted support. This has included:

- Establishing three on-line learning communities providing support and advice on improvement methodology which has been offered to 131 services throughout Scotland.
- Providing on-line learning session for each of the learning communities. Each community will have six learning sessions.
- Providing project clinics between each session. These offer drop-in opportunities for services to ask advice, as well as share information with Improvement Advisors and peers.
- Providing individual support to services within the programme when requested or identified as needed.
- Preparing an Open Badge for the community learning session to allow individuals to be recognised for their learning within the session.
- Working collaboratively with local authorities and Regional Improvement Collaboratives to share information on the improvement support available.

The team are also liaising with ELC inspection colleagues to keep them informed and aware of the improvement programme and services taking part. In addition the team are working towards developing further bite size sessions on Personal Plans and Working within Covid 19 levels.

For more information about our programme please contact Vicky Lamb, Senior Improvement Advisor at ELCimprove@careinspectorate.gov.scot

HNC Childhood Practice Placements for 2020-21

In recognition of the challenges that childcare settings experienced around re-opening over the period of Summer 2020, 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. [You can find information on HNC Social Services and HNC Childhood Practice – starting work placements here.](#)

SSSC worked with SQA, the Care Inspectorate to develop 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 HNC Social Services and HNC Childhood Practice toolkit here.](#)

We are grateful to employers from across the sector for opening up opportunities for students to take up placements since the full reopening of settings from late February. ELC Directorate are working with SSSC and the College Development Network to monitor numbers of students who are not able to complete placements before end-June, and will work with the sector to ensure any students in this position are supported to access placements as early as possible in the new academic year.

If you wish to discuss issues around HNC placements, please contact Kathryn Chisholm, Workforce Team Lead at kathryn.chisholm@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; Supporting Parents to Further Engage in their Child's Development;
- Supporting the development and progression of children's early language and literacy;
- Building confidence in identifying and responding to additional support needs; and
- Staff skills, knowledge and confidence in delivering learning in STEM subjects.

Further work is also underway to develop modules focusing on 'Developing understanding of curriculum rationale' and 'Tracking and monitoring of children's learning to ensure continuity and progression, including during key transition stages'. Full details about our suite of CPL modules and access to the courses can be found on the Scottish Government website: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/training-modules-for-all-elic-practitioners/>

These modules are also accessible from the Directory of CPL for ELC in the Care Inspectorate Hub, alongside a range of other flexible and part-time further learning and development opportunities: <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/resources/directory-of-continuous-professional-learning-for-early-learning-and-childcare/>

The SSSC has developed a new system and [SSSC 'MyLearning' App](#) to support staff record learning - formally referred to as Post Registration Training and Learning (PRTL). Full details for workers and employers about the new CPL process, including an easy step guide, can be found on the SSSC website: <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: <https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/resources/develop-your-trauma-skilled-practice/>

Further resources are available from the [UK Trauma Council website](#), including a dedicated [section on the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic](#).

If you have any questions on this work please contact Sarah Guy at: Sarah.Guy@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 of the professional learning sessions can be found on the website 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 this website for updates.](#)

If you have any questions on this work please contact Sian Neil at: Sian.Neil@educationscotland.gov.scot

CALA Free E-Modules and Consulting with our Youngest Children Toolkit

Care and Learning Alliance have a number of [free e-modules](#) that are open to all in their e-learning zone. The free modules include Understanding the Child's Plan, Supporting Activity and Wellbeing (SAC) and Healthy Body Image and Body Confidence. Each course has a description, what to expect and who is this course for section. The courses are full of high quality videos, documents, links and interactive elements for a rewarding learning experience. End of course quizzes help consolidate your learning, the courses work on mobile devices and you will get a certificate if you pass the quiz.

The Highland Child Protection Committee, Keeping Children Safe and Care and Learning Alliance have launched the [Consulting with our Youngest Children Toolkit](#). The tool is free to everyone. As part of Scotland's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) every child in Scotland has the right to have their views heard and taken into account in decisions affecting them and to be protected from harm.

Consultation with young children is more than just asking their views, it is about really listening to and responding to them.

It's also about facilitating their ability to influence things that affect them and help adults to know and understand their concerns or worries through the child's eyes enabling adults to help protect them from harm.

This tool will support you to engage in a fun playful way to enable young children to:

- share their ideas and make choices
- share their thoughts, feelings, likes, dislikes and worries
- recognise their views matter
- know they are listened to
- support their sense of belonging
- develop confidence and self-worth
- develop their communication skills

17. Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme

The Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme will replace the existing UK Nursery Milk Scheme for regulated pre-school childcare settings in Scotland from 1 August 2021.

The offer of the Scheme was highlighted in the previous update and can be reviewed on the [Scottish Government website](#).

We are keen to ensure that children in childcare settings continue to receive milk and are not disadvantaged by the transition from the previous Scheme which will no longer operate in Scotland from 31 July 2021. ELC settings will not be able to claim to the UK Nursery Milk Scheme for milk provided after this date. As such changes to existing contracts will need to be considered if settings plan to remain with the same supplier.

Eligible childcare settings are strongly encouraged to ensure that they register in plenty of time for the new Scheme to ensure that they can access the agreed funding to provide milk and healthy snack from 1 August 2021.

Contact info: The Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme at SMHSS@gov.scot

18. Family Learning Scotland Programme

The Scottish Government committed to use the opportunities presented by the expansion of funded early learning and childcare to establish a Family Learning Scotland Programme.

The Family Learning Scotland Programme aims to:

- help parents to improve and enrich the home learning environment
- support the [Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan](#) by equipping parents with skills and qualifications which can help them move out of poverty.

People were commissioned to fulfil the Family Learning Scotland Programme by offering training and support to 432 practitioners in the Peep Learning Together Programme, the Peep Progression Pathway and in the implementation of both.

Despite the many challenges of the past 15 months, the Family Learning Scotland programme is rolling out successfully and families across the whole country are benefitting from delivery of the Peep Learning Together Programme and Progression Pathway.

Please see below some of the highlights of the past year:

- Following the challenges brought about by COVID-19, Peep reconfigured their training to be delivered online. Rapid digital upskilling was necessary for practitioners and trainers alike. Since September 2020, over 300 new practitioners have been trained in the Peep Learning Together Pathway through the Family Learning Scotland (FLS) Programme, with the remainder due to be offered training by the end of June 2021.
- Practitioners have been delivering Peep in creative and innovative ways, often targeted 1:1 with families, including Beach Peep, Doorstep Peep, Bedtime Peep, Zoom Peep and Sway Peep.
- A series of 'Peep in Practice' sharing sessions have been planned and delivered including sessions on Family Engagement, Outdoor Peep, and Transitions.
- A well-supported community of practice has been created through social media where practice and resources are widely shared and peer support given.
- The Peep Progression Pathway is being delivered via Sway, this allows Peep to ensure that all 432 training places will be offered by December 2021.
- Every local authority has a mentor from the Peep FLS team to offer support in planning, implementation and embedding of the programme.
- As a result of the success of the FLS Programme, and the value placed on the training by local authority partners, a number of authorities have purchased further LTP training places and/or Peep resources to further support the strategic roll-out of the FLS Programme.
- Finally, Violet and Chiara have shared their experience of the Learning Together Programme in South Lanarkshire to help to recruit families to the programme. This shows clearly the value of the FLS and the practitioners who deliver it: [Violet and Chiara PEEP video.mp4 - Dropbox](#).

If you have any questions on this work, please contact Marie McQuade at Marie.Mcquade@gov.scot

19. Using Cyber Security To Protect Your Setting

The Scottish Government and partners have been working with the National Cyber Security Centre to develop advice for practitioners on using cyber security to protect your settings. As we become increasingly reliant on technology, it is more important than ever to take steps to protect the devices we use, and the data stored on them, from accidental damage or from online criminals. [Advice on how Early Years Practitioners can use cyber security to protect settings can be found here.](#)

Please pass this information on to anyone working in your service and help protect your settings.

If you have any questions on this advice, please contact Scott Sutherland – Scott.Sutherland@gov.scot

20. Early Learning and Childcare Engagement Survey

The Scottish Government Early Learning and Childcare Communications and Engagement team have created an [Engagement Survey for ELC here](#). This opened on 25 of May and will close on 15 June at midnight. You can find our Communications and Engagement Manager promoting the survey on our [in a video on our Twitter page here](#).

The purpose of the survey is to ask all childcare providers for their feedback on our communications, with questions on messaging, the Care Inspectorate provider notice, the monthly programme update, social media and parental communications. There are yes and no questions as well as open text boxes to give your feedback. We really do want to hear your views to help us shape our communications to you so please fill in the survey by 15 June to have your say.

21. Summer Programme 2021

The Deputy First Minister recently announced a [£20 million commitment to a summer programme](#) to help restore children's health and wellbeing recognising the impacts of the last year of COVID-19 restrictions.

This will consist of a £15 million programme which will be delivered by local authorities, working with local partners, and targeted at those children who will benefit most from support to access a range of activities over the summer period.

Guidance for local authorities has been published [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on summer activities for children and young people - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#).

In addition, £5 million will be invested directly through national partners to enhance opportunities for all children and young people to participate in activities and experiences this summer. This investment will help provide some free or low cost access to activities for children and young people within their local communities.

Annex A – Forward Look Calendar

May 2021	Event	Information	Link
15 June	Early Learning and Childcare Engagement Survey closing date	The Scottish Government Early Learning and Childcare Communications and Engagement team have created an Early Learning and Childcare Engagement Survey to ask childcare providers for their feedback on our communications.	ELC Communications and Engagement Survey
18 May	Delivery Steering group	<p>The aim of the 1140 Delivery Steering group is to ensure partnership working takes place across the education and ELC sectors whilst we are reinstating the statutory entitlement of 1140 hours. The remit of the group is to inform the work of the delivery assurance team on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress on the delivery of 1140 since Covid-19; • the reinstatement of the 1140 statutory duty; • report to the ELC Joint Delivery Board to evidence any decision and recommendations; and • co-ordination of thematic and targeted support on delivery. 	

28 May	Covid Recovery Group	<p>The aim of the Covid Recovery Group is to ensure close engagement and partnership working with stakeholders as we adapt regulated childcare in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The remit of the group is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the experience and views of all sectors of the ELC workforce are reflected in decisions about how childcare policy responds to the COVID pandemic. • Provide feedback to the Scottish Government on staff confidence and safety within the sector during the pandemic and advise on how to maintain this. • Help to provide feedback on draft COVID guidance for the sector to ensure that it is clear and comprehensive. • To identify any additional support that the sector needs to help promote understanding and compliance with the guidance. 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider policy and operational issues relating to the provision of critical childcare when this is necessary, particularly with regard to the sufficiency and scope of provision. • To anticipate and resolve policy and operational issues relating to moving to recovery for childcare and future ELC Expansion 	
W/C 31 May	Joint Delivery Board	The Early Learning and Childcare Joint Delivery Board is jointly chaired by the Minister for Children and Young People, and Councillor Stephen McCabe, COSLA Spokesperson for Children and Young People. The purpose of the group is to provide overall governance of the ELC expansion programme, to manage and monitor progress against the key milestone plan to ensure that the Scottish and local Government deliver the ELC expansion on time and within budget.	Early Learning and Childcare Joint Delivery Board - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
June 2021	Event	Information	Link
01 June	International Froebel Society Conference	The International Froebel Conference is on Tuesday 1 June at 2pm, postponed from June 2020. This will take place	Register Now: IFS 9th Biennial Conference (Online, 1-4 June 2021) IFS: The International Froebel Society (ifsfroebel.com)

		<p>on Zoom and is being organised jointly by the University of Edinburgh and the Edinburgh Froebel Network.</p> <p>The theme of the conference is: Froebel 2021: Visions of Social Justice, Equity and Integrity in the Year of Childhood. The conference will take place over 4 days with delegates and presenters from 6 continents-reflecting on the conference theme.</p>	
07 June	Event: The Real Living Wage In Early Learning And Childcare	<p>Living Wage Scotland are hosting a second online event dedicated to the real Living Wage in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC).</p> <p>The free virtual event will take place on Monday 7th June 2021, 10.00am to 11.00am, and will be hosted on Zoom.</p> <p>Speakers will include representatives from the Scottish Government, Early Years Scotland, and Living Wage accredited ELC employers. Living Wage Scotland will present a summary of the real Living</p>	<p>Event: The real Living Wage in Early Learning and Childcare - Living Wage Scotland (scottishlivingwage.org)</p>

		Wage, the Living Wage movement in Scotland, and the benefits of accreditation. Our speakers will offer their views and insights into the need for the real Living Wage in ELC and what more could be done to demonstrate the value of the ELC workforce.	
14 June	Delivery Steering group	<p>The aim of the 1140 Delivery Steering group is to ensure partnership working takes place across the education and ELC sectors whilst we are reinstating the statutory entitlement of 1140 hours. The remit of the group is to inform the work of the delivery assurance team on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress on the delivery of 1140 since Covid-19; • the reinstatement of the 1140 statutory duty; • report to the ELC Joint Delivery Board to evidence any decision and recommendations; and • co-ordination of thematic and targeted support on delivery. 	
25 June	Covid Recovery Group	The aim of the Covid Recovery Group is to ensure close engagement and partnership working with stakeholders as we adapt regulated childcare in	

		<p>response to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The remit of the group is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure that the experience and views of all sectors of the ELC workforce are reflected in decisions about how childcare policy responds to the COVID pandemic.• Provide feedback to the Scottish Government on staff confidence and safety within the sector during the pandemic and advise on how to maintain this.• Help to provide feedback on draft COVID guidance for the sector to ensure that it is clear and comprehensive.• To identify any additional support that the sector needs to help promote understanding and compliance with the guidance.• To consider policy and operational issues relating to the provision of critical childcare when this is necessary, particularly with	
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		<p>regard to the sufficiency and scope of provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To anticipate and resolve policy and operational issues relating to moving to recovery for childcare and future ELC Expansion 	
W/C 21/28 June	Joint Delivery Board	<p>The Early Learning and Childcare Joint Delivery Board is jointly chaired by the Minister for Children and Young People, and Councillor Stephen McCabe, COSLA Spokesperson for Children and Young People. The purpose of the group is to provide overall governance of the ELC expansion programme, to manage and monitor progress against the key milestone plan to ensure that the Scottish and local Government deliver the ELC expansion on time and within budget.</p>	<p>Early Learning and Childcare Joint Delivery Board - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)</p>

Annex B – Publications

Date Published	Document Link
06/04/2021	Early learning and childcare animation and guidance
06/04/2021	School age childcare animation and guidance
24/03/2021	Funding follows the child and the national standard for early learning and childcare providers: interim guidance - update March 2021
24/03/2021	Equity and excellence leads: Care Inspectorate findings
17/03/2021	Out to Play - creating outdoor play experiences for children: practical guidance - new chapters
17/03/2021	Nature-based early learning and childcare - influence on children's health, wellbeing and development: literature review
15/03/2021	Early Years providers helped to take first steps with with cyber security - National Cyber Security Centre
15/03/2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19): updated school aged childcare services guidance
05/03/2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19): updated childminder services guidance
05/03/2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19): updated early learning and childcare (ELC) services guidance
17/03/2021	Nature-based early learning and childcare - influence on children's health, wellbeing and development: literature review
15/03/2021	Early Years providers helped to take first steps with cyber security - National Cyber Security Centre
03/02/2021	Coronavirus (COVID19): Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues – advice on phased return to in-person learning in schools and early learning and childcare (ELC) settings
21/01/2021	Our commitment to childminding: report
13/01/2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19): childcare provision for January 2021
22/12/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): support to childcare sector
22/12/2020	Scottish Government Outdoor Clothing Fund - Inspiring Scotland
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
21/01/2021	Our commitment to childminding: report
13/01/2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19): childcare provision for January 2021
22/12/2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): support to childcare sector
22/12/2020	Scottish Government Outdoor Clothing Fund - Inspiring Scotland
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