

## **Scottish Government Early Learning and Childcare COVID-19 Update** **No. 12 – March 2021**

Hello and welcome to our early March update.

I am delighted that children under school age have now been able to return to childcare from Monday 22 February. The decision to prioritise the return to ELC reflects the crucial role that ELC plays in supporting children's development. I am sure children, parents and carers are happy to be back and to see children reuniting with their friends and the brilliant staff that look after them. We've certainly really enjoyed seeing so many smiling faces in your social media posts!

It will also be fantastic to see all primary school age children able to return to childcare from Monday 15 March, unless there's a significant change in current progress in suppressing the virus. We recognise that the school age childcare sector have been faced with challenges as they have been able to open only to key worker children and priority groups.

We have updated our suite of guidance for early learning and childcare, childminders and school age childcare to make sure that staff safety and wellbeing are at the very forefront. The guidance reinforces the importance of risk mitigations, explaining how you will be supported to work as safely as possible and what you should expect from the colleagues you work with. We will be sharing helpful frequently asked questions and answers relating to the reopening and the updated guidance on our social media and wider communications shortly.

We have now just passed the 6 months to go milestone ahead of delivery of 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare in August 2021. We are looking forward to hearing your excellent progress and promoting the great work that you are all achieving to make this transformational work happen.

I would like to extend my thank you and appreciation for everyone in early learning and childcare including practitioners, childminders and school aged childcare colleagues for all of your hard work and dedication that they continue to provide for children and families in Scotland.

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

Take care

Alison Cumming  
[Alison.Cumming@gov.scot](mailto:Alison.Cumming@gov.scot)  
Interim Director, Early Learning and Childcare

### **1. Key information, guidance and contact points**

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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](mailto:ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot) for enquiries about support for providers and parents;
- [outofschoolcare@gov.scot](mailto:outofschoolcare@gov.scot) for enquiries about school age childcare provision;
- [ELCDeliverySupport@gov.scot](mailto: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](mailto:outdoorELC@gov.scot) for outdoor play and learning queries in ELC.
- [ELCProgrammeOffice@gov.scot](mailto: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 @OSCScotGov 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**

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Following the [joint statement from the Minister for Children and Young People and COSLA](#) on 14 December 2020 in relation to all eligible children benefiting from 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare by August 2021, the legislation to reinstate the duty was laid in the Scottish Parliament on 22 January and is expected to be agreed by Parliament imminently, following consideration by the Education and Skills Committee.

This legislation places a duty on education authorities to make available 1140 hours of funded ELC to all eligible children from August 2021. This legislation reconfirms the Scottish Government's ambition for every single one of Scotland's children to grow up in a country where they feel loved, safe and respected, and able to reach their full potential. It is this ambition that is at the heart of the Scottish Government's commitment to expanding the funded ELC entitlement. This will help secure positive outcomes for children across Scotland.

Our delivery assurance team will continue engagement to support councils in implementing their expansion plans. 15 authorities are now offering 1140 hours to all eligible children.

**Contact info: Hannah Keates' Delivery Assurance Team at [ELCDeliverySupport@gov.scot](mailto: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 review this guidance.

**Contact info: Euan Carmichael's Team at [ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot](mailto:ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot)**

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

### Timing and scope of commitment

Reflecting the focus on the immediate response to COVID-19 during 2020, Scottish Government work on supporting local authorities with implementation of [this commitment](#) was not progressed. COSLA Leaders agreed in December 2020 that full implementation would be aligned to the new date for implementation of 1140, from August 2021.

This followed discussion at ELC Finance Working Group meetings in March and October 2020 where it was agreed that local authorities:

- will use their discretionary powers to provide access to places for these families;
- using a wide definition of 'care experience', in line with the findings of The Independent Care Review, published in The Promise;
- and with a pragmatic, sensitive approach to establishing eligibility.

We are aware local authorities may not have been in a position to progress work to fully establish this criteria within 2021-22 enrolment processes. As local authorities and their partners already work to identify and refer families to the 2 year old offer throughout the year, we anticipate they will be in a position to accommodate new families in time for August 2021, if they are not already doing so.

### Support for implementation

We are now keen to explore with local authorities how best to support them, if required, in extending the offer to funded ELC for these families. We understand some local authorities are already progressing this work. We would be keen to hear from anyone who either already offers places, or who is working towards doing so, on the basis of a parent having experience of care. While we develop this work further, we have provided some information at Annex C that will support local authorities with their own application processes.

**If you would like to raise any questions or comments about this commitment or share your good practice, please contact: [Kerrie.Harkness@gov.scot](mailto:Kerrie.Harkness@gov.scot)**

## 3. COVID-19

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On 16 February [the First Minister confirmed that children in early learning and childcare settings \(which includes nurseries, playgroups, and family centres\) can re-open to all pre-school children from 22 February](#), following a continued suppression of the coronavirus figures.

We wrote a [provider notice to all childcare providers](#) through the Care Inspectorate with an update on the reopening news.

The decision to reopen ELC to all preschool aged children was taken following a detailed review of the evidence on transmission and infection in Scotland, as well as on the transmissibility and severity of the new variant of the Coronavirus in relation to children and young people. Careful consideration was also given to the impact of restricted access to ELC on children's wellbeing and development.

The Coronavirus (COVID 1) Advisory Sub-group on Education and Children's Issues also considered whether the risk mitigations for the sector should be strengthened and advised that, while there is no need adjust the key mitigations, there should be greater support for implementation and understanding among staff, parents and providers of what is required.

This week (1 March) the Advisory Sub-group advised that school-aged childcare provision can recommence at the same time as schools move to phase 2, as long as the appropriate public health mitigations are in place. The most recent [advice of the Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues](#), which carried out the review, was published on Wednesday 3rd February.

On 2 March, [the First Minister announced Phase 2 of schools return](#) from 15 March. From that date, unless new evidence or new circumstances arise, all children in primary 4 to 7 will go back to school on a full-time basis and all primary school children will be able to return to regulated childcare. This includes regulated school age childcare, including breakfast and after-school clubs, for primary pupils.

Childminders have continued to be able to remain open throughout the stay at home restrictions and there is no change to that position as a result of this announcement.

On 23 February, [Scottish Government published a Strategic Framework update](#) setting out the plan to restore, in a phased way, greater normality to our everyday lives. It updates the [original Strategic Framework](#) to take account of important developments, including new and highly infectious strains of the virus and progress with the vaccination roll-out.

The decision to prioritise these children for return to in-person ELC in all settings reflects the crucial role that ELC plays in supporting children's development, and the challenges of delivering this support remotely. It has also been informed by the evidence that younger children are less susceptible to acquiring and transmitting the virus than adults and older children, and the low risk to staff of ELC associated transmission and outbreaks, when appropriate mitigations are put in place and community prevalence is low, including risks associated with the new variant.

The following table summarises the childcare that provision that is available from 22 February to 14 March. From 15 March all children of below school age and of primary school age can return to regulated childcare settings.

<b>Child's Age</b>	<b>Childcare provision</b>
All children under school age	<p>All children under school age can return to ELC/ childcare, in their normal settings including childminders.</p> <p>Only essential informal childcare is permitted. Only children, and not their parents, should enter the home of another household.</p>
School-aged children	<p>Children of key workers and children in other priority groups can continue to access childcare.</p> <p>All other school-aged children can access formal childcare with a childminder caring for fewer than 12 children. These are the only registered settings where formal childcare for these children is permitted.</p> <p>Only essential informal childcare is permitted. Only children, and not their parents, should enter the home of another household.</p>

## Updated guidance

The suite of childcare guidance - [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](#) has now been updated, in partnership with the Care Inspectorate, stakeholder representative bodies, and local authorities, to reflect the latest evidence and public health advice, and also to support implementation.

Key changes in the latest guidance are:

- The need to refresh risk assessments in light of re-opening.
- Staff induction and training on appropriate mitigations.
- Reminders and reinforcements around public health measures such as consistency in staff groupings, physical distancing, reducing bottlenecks and the use of face coverings.
- Clarification on blended placements.

Our collective responsibility is to enable all staff to feel confident when returning to the workplace. As settings plan to welcome back children and families and staff, staff wellbeing must be protected. Staff will need time to re-connect, to meet, talk and 'check in' with each other. We've added specific sections to the guidance which give advice on ensuring staff safety and wellbeing on their return to work. These include:

### Risk Assessments

- Further guidance on risk assessments and a requirement that these be refreshed in the context of the reopening of ELC to all children.
- A reminder that risk assessments are updated appropriately for the autumn/winter period, to consider issues around ventilation and heating/warmth.

### Staff induction and training

- A requirement that inductions for new staff must include guidance on the setting's approach to ensuring distancing by adults as well as routines to ensure good infection prevention and control.
- An emphasis on the need for clearly defined training sessions for staff on the risk mitigations set out in this guidance.

### Staff adhering to public health measures

- A new section to encourage settings to maintain as much consistency as possible in the staff who work together when planning working patterns.
- A reminder that the requirement to physically distance applies during breaks and outside of the work environment, as well as while staff are on duty.
- A suggestion that, where there are identified bottleneck areas within the setting, signage may be used to remind staff to wear a face covering when passing through these areas to reduce transmission risk.
- Further reinforcement of the guidance on the use of face coverings, to reduce the risk of adult to adult transmission.

## Blended Care

We know that sometimes children and families need to access different types of childcare, and different patterns. However, we know that to support suppression of the virus, it is important to limit interactions where we can. We are asking everyone to continue to limit the number of settings their child attends, ideally attending one setting only.

Blended placements can take place, where supported by an up to date risk assessment that has been undertaken in collaboration with parents and all providers involved in the care of the child, and there is agreement that the arrangement is be required to ensure access to high quality ELC and to meet childcare needs. Where blended placements do take place, parents and providers must consider measures in the guidance around risk assessment, hygiene, and physical distancing. More information about blended care can be found within the suite of guidance documents.

### **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](mailto: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.

## 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.


[Early Learning and Childcare Guidance Infographic](#)

[Childminder Guidance Infographic](#)


[School Aged Childcare Guidance Infographic](#)

# EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF THERE IS A SUSPECTED OUTBREAK?


 A suspected outbreak is when you have 2 or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in your setting within 14 days. It may also be when there is a rise in absence rates from suspected cases of COVID-19.

### STEP 1




If you suspect you have an outbreak, contact your local NHS Board Health Protection Team immediately. They will help you and tell you what to do next.

### STEP 2




Continue to follow the guidance for your setting type. Test and Protect will inform close contacts of the positive case, children and adults, if they need to self-isolate. In some cases a whole setting may be asked to self-isolate at home.

### STEP 3




In some situations, your local Health Protection Team may send in an Incident Management Team to support you with the outbreak.

### STEP 4



The Incident Management Team will help you manage the outbreak situation. They will look at your policies and practices and help you try to make changes to stop another outbreak.


### STEP 5



Use eforms to notify the Care Inspectorate of an outbreak. You can find the eforms on the Care Inspectorate website.

**FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION AND TO FIND YOUR LOCAL  
HEALTH PROTECTION TEAM**

**VISIT: [WWW.HPS.SCOT.NHS.UK](http://WWW.HPS.SCOT.NHS.UK)**

 Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

Space to record local health protection team contact number.

## **Joint Statement from Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Directors of Public Health on the re-opening of schools and other educational settings**

On 15 February, [Public Health Scotland posted a joint statement with the Scottish Directors of Public Health](#) highlighting their support for all early learning and school children returning to face to face learning as soon as is practical. Given the current prevalence levels and evidence of the wider harms and educational impact of the current measures on children, young people and their families, they jointly welcome the Scottish Government's ongoing commitment to returning children and young people to childcare and education as soon as possible.

Their advice is based on ongoing evidence from PHS that shows; education settings are not high-risk transmission settings for children and young people, and education staff, when mitigations are closely adhered to; children diagnosed with COVID-19 continue to be in areas with higher community prevalence; teachers are not at increased risk of being hospitalised for COVID-19 compared to the population as a whole; teachers have a lower risk of having severe COVID-19 compared to the population as a whole; and; crucially, that the evidence indicates that transmission occurs predominantly outside of school, in social and household settings.

### **Informal childcare**

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

It is recommended under Level 4 restrictions and in the current stay at home guidance that informal childcare from friends, family members, or babysitters only be used where essential. This may include to support parents working from home, parents with new babies, or for children with additional support needs. We also include advice to families who may be using nannies.

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**

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.

In relation to the First Minister's announcement on the 19 December, [supplementary guidance was issued for organised activities for children from 5 January 2021.](#)



At Level 4, outdoor organised activities for children aged 12-17, that do not fall under any other guidance, are not permitted at this time unless the group contains no more than 2 people from two different households, including the facilitator/service provider.

At Level 4, outdoor organised activities for under 12s can continue where there are no more than 2 adults at any one time and the overall group size, including facilitators, is no more than 15. This permitted where the work cannot be carried out by working at home and the gathering restrictions for this age group.

At Level 4 Parent/baby and toddler groups, where parents are expected to attend, can continue outdoors where there are no more than 7 adults present at any one time and the group is for children under 5. Facilitators are included in the adult numbers. There is no restriction on the number of under 5s who can attend these groups.

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](mailto:COVID-19MaternityandChildHealth@gov.scot)**

### **Access to testing for childcare staff**

On Friday 19 February, two Provider Notices were issued. [One provider notice to childminders](#) and another [provider notice to all day care of children settings](#) registered with the Care Inspectorate. These notices set out the testing being made available to all childcare staff.

As of 22 February, settings attached to schools will be included in phase one of the asymptomatic testing programme consisting of routine at home twice weekly Lateral Flow Device tests.

We are currently working to ensure this testing offer is rolled out to all standalone local authority and PVI led settings, whether or not they are funded partners, as soon as possible. The Provider Notice sets out how this will be undertaken and what settings should expect.

The provider notice for childminding services explained that a different type of testing would be made available to them. This is the ability to access on demand asymptomatic PCR testing at a test site, or with a test kit posted to their home, that testing is now available to all staff working in childcare and can be accessed through the normal NHS Testing Portal as essential workers.

**If there are questions about the delivery of testing you can contact the ELC testing team at [childcaretestingprogramme@gov.scot](mailto:childcaretestingprogramme@gov.scot)**

### **University of Edinburgh Young Children and Families Covid-19 Survey**

The University of Edinburgh has created [an online survey researching how young children \(under 6 years\) and their families are coping with the COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) pandemic.](#)

Dr Karen Goodall, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology at the University of Edinburgh, is leading this research.

The purpose of the study is to:

- Understand the different types of experiences young children and families are having
- Understand how young children are coping with the changes
- Understand how caregivers are coping and supporting their children during this time
- Learn how to better support young children and families during and after COVID-19 and other large-scale community events (e.g. natural disasters).

This information will help them learn how to better support families over the next 12 months as well as during other unusual or extreme events in the future.

**If you have any questions, please contact Dr Hope Christie at [hchrist5@ed.ac.uk](mailto:hchrist5@ed.ac.uk)**

#### **4. Information for parents and carers**

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We have been working closely with Parent Club and schools colleagues on messages for parents and carers to support the wider return of ELC and lower primary school pupils from 22 February. Our messaging has been focused on both reassuring parents and carers that the ELC environment is low risk for children, and on encouraging compliance with wider Covid-19 restrictions. For example, it might seem contradictory to parents that children can be playing with their friends all day at ELC/school, but that indoor playdates aren't allowed right now. Jason Leitch wrote to all to explain the rationale for this.

Other resources being shared either via settings or via Parent Club are:

- A template letter that settings may wish to use to share any local steps you are taking, and to reinforce some of those messages.
- New videos being recorded for social media with experts sharing key messages about safety and compliance
- Radio adverts to reassure parents and send them to Parent Club for more info
- Adverts being recorded for social media with reassuring messages about sticking to the rules.
- Re-release of previous Parent Club videos from James McTaggart and Dr Punam Krishan about preparing young kids for the return to ELC/school

Parent Club have also created a package of resources that is being distributed to ELC settings.

- Posters x 2 (one with text only) – (A4 and A3)
- Social media content – Images and suggest copy
- SMS/WhatsApp copy – Useful for those who may not be able to access online guidance
- 1 page summary document of the campaign

The 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](mailto:emma.o'brien@gov.scot) in Scottish Government Marketing team to request them.

In addition to this, Parent Club will be distributing weatherproof railing banners directly to all primary schools from Wednesday 24 February to Tuesday 2 March, and a A1 weather proof posters via Local Authority ELC contacts on Wednesday 24 February and Thursday 25 February.

Parent Club will also be placing stencils on pavements/walls in close proximity to large schools and ELCs to encourage parents to stay 2 metres apart.

**NPFS** (National Parent Forum Scotland) hosted a Q&A for ELC/P1-3 parents last Thursday. Simon Mair and Sian Neil were there to answer questions about the steps being taken to support a return to ELC. The recording is available online at: [NPFS Q & A Panel Early Learning and Childcare, Primary 1 to Primary 3 - YouTube](#)

[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 are continuing to work with local authorities to share promotional materials around the 1140 offer, as for many parents we are aware that this is the time when they will be thinking about their August 2020 application.

For families with children at home, we have created [a new page on Parent Club to share resources that might be helpful](#). Parent Club are also sharing useful videos – e.g. from Dr Janet Goodall – that we would encourage you to share with families.

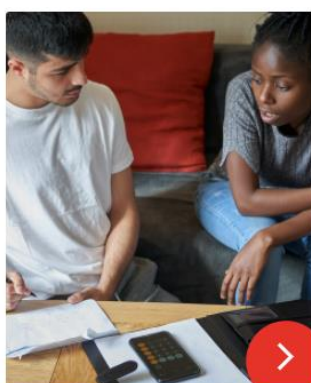
Specific resources have been created for parents to support understanding of outdoor learning, and to support families to take up outdoor play opportunities. Please see below section on outdoor learning for more information and links.



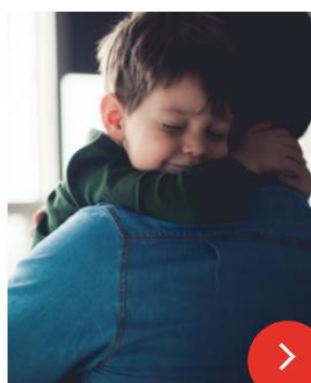
## LATEST INFORMATION ON CORONAVIRUS



**Play outdoors**



**Your guide to finding support**



**Supporting your child's mental health during coronavirus**



**Coronavirus guidelines for children**

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

## 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](mailto:NationalEngagementandPartnershipTeam@socialsecurity.gov.scot)



Social Security Scotland  
Teairainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Scottish Child Payment is £40 every 4 weeks for families with children under 6 who receive tax credits or certain benefits.

Applications are open now.

Decision letters will be sent out after February 15



## 5. 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](mailto:ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot)**

## 6. Temporary Restrictions Fund for Childcare Providers

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Applications for Round 1 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund (4-29 January) closed on 1 March 2021.

Round 2 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund (TRF) covering the four week period from 1 February – 26 February 2021 will open to applications on **5 March 2021**. Childcare providers will be able to apply through the [Temporary Restrictions Fund application site](#).

In Round 2 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund:

- Eligible services can claim for each of the weeks they remained open in February (over the four week period 1 February – 26 February)
- If settings were previously closed and have decided to reopen during February they will be able to claim a pro-rated grant for each of the weeks they were open, including w/c 22 February
- This includes ELC settings, regardless of the fact that from 22 February those settings can reopen to all children under school age.

### Additional Support Grant

We recognise that this is a very difficult time for all childcare providers. We also know that not all settings have been able to claim support through the Temporary Restrictions Fund, as they remained closed during the two months of restrictions.

That is why, in the light of anticipated unused funding from the Temporary Restrictions Fund, all day care of children's services, out of school care providers, and childminders registered as caring for 12 or more children at a time will be able to apply for the Additional Support Grant.

**This additional one-off support grant will be available irrespective of whether childcare providers were able to open in February or not.**

Making the Additional Support Grant available to all providers in this way allow us to use all of the estimated unspent funds from the current fund and provide some support also to those services which cannot yet open.

Childcare providers will be able to apply for the Additional Support Grant through Round 2 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund (TRF) application form once it opens on 5 March 2021.

Further information is provided on the Scottish Government's [information pages on the financial support](#).

**Contact info:** [ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot](mailto:ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot)

## 7. Support for Childminders

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### **Childminding Business Sustainability Fund – increased support for childminders**

A [funding package of £3.2 million](#) has been made available to ensure that all childminders registered with the Care Inspectorate will receive a flat-rate payment.

Grants of £750 will be paid to all registered childminders in Scotland in order to secure the sustainability of their businesses. The application process to receive this grant will be simple and will not require evidence of need to be presented.

Work is now underway to finalise the details of the scheme, and further information on how to apply will be published shortly.



**Contact info:** [ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot](mailto:ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot)

### **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.](#)



## **Our Commitment to Childminding in Scotland**

**Contact Info:** Luke McPherson at [Luke.McPherson@gov.scot](mailto:Luke.McPherson@gov.scot)

## **8. Other Financial and Business Support for childcare providers**

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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 17 December that the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which is a UK Government Scheme, will now operate until 30 April 2021](#).

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

## **9. Strategic Framework for School Age Childcare**

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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.

We will publish a progress report which reiterates our commitment to school age childcare. This will highlight the key themes in our draft framework consultation response, the wider policy landscape, and will detail the actions we are taking. We would like to thank all who have contributed to this work so far - we'll continue to engage key stakeholders over the coming weeks as we finalise our progress report.

**For more information please contact [Christian.Barry@gov.scot](mailto:Christian.Barry@gov.scot)**

## **10. Childcare Sector Working Group (CSWG)**

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The third meeting of the CSWG will take place on Thursday 18 March 2021. At the inaugural meeting the terms of reference, the group's objectives and membership were agreed. More information on the CSWG is available in the Knowledge Hub.

The ELC and Childcare Sector Recovery Working Group (SRG) has also continued to meet in response to the latest restrictions, and to support and inform the ongoing recovery of the childcare sector.

**For more information please contact [ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot](mailto:ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot)**

## **11. Primary 1 deferral and ELC eligibility**

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On 3 February, the Scottish Parliament approved the order we laid in December to extend the obligation on education authorities to provide an additional year of funded ELC to all children who defer their primary 1 start from August 2023. The final Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) ([The Provision of Early Learning and Childcare \(Specified Children\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Order 2021](#)) has now been published online.

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. All local authorities will continue to have discretion to deliver funded ELC in a deferred year, and the wellbeing of the child should remain at the centre of these decisions.

[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.

### **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 has been established to monitor and evaluate their progress. The first meeting took place on Monday 1 March. All pilot authorities will attend the group, and each Regional Improvement Collaborative has also been invited to nominate a local authority to participate. Further information is now available on the deferral page of the Parent Club website – please share this resource with practitioners and parents.

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

[francesca.iwanyckyj@gov.scot](mailto:francesca.iwanyckyj@gov.scot)

## **12. Analysis and Evidence**

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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).

**WEEKLY MONITORING RETURNS**

**WE NEED EVERY CHILDCARE SETTING IN SCOTLAND TO HELP US GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**

By completing the monitoring returns form every Tuesday, you are helping us build the current picture of childcare use and health in Scotland.

The information you give us on attendance and absence is used to make data driven decisions about your area.

Without this information, it is difficult for us to understand exactly how the virus is affecting childcare services near you.

**COMPLETE THE SURVEY EVERY TUESDAY HERE:**  
[WWW.SMARTSURVEY.CO.UK/S/JFG3EG/](http://WWW.SMARTSURVEY.CO.UK/S/JFG3EG/)

gov.scot

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.**

### **13. 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.

## 14. Workforce and Professional Learning

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We recognise that the current measures have resulted in increased anxiety and concern for many of those working in childcare at this time.

For that reason we have developed a series of communications to the sector which set out the existing evidence and why that evidence shows that, where appropriate safety measures and mitigations are put in place, ELC settings remain low risk environments. Following a series of tweets on the topic (links below), we released a video by National Clinical Director, Jason Leitch which seeks to provide staff working in childcare with reassurance, from a clinical perspective, about the risk in their settings.

### Tweets from 6 January:

[ScotGov Childcare tweet that Current arrangements for childcare settings are in place as a precautionary measure in light of developments in the virus and levels of community transmission](#)

[ScotGov Childcare video from National Clinical Director Jason Leitch for all childminders and ELC workers](#)

### 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 these events at the Team ELC Wellbeing Hub Event page.](#)



#### 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!

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.

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](mailto:Scott.Sutherland@gov.scot)

### **Care Inspectorate Improvement team**

The Care Inspectorate's ELC Improvement team have been working remotely with services during the pandemic. They have recorded a range of universally accessible sessions to support services in making improvements, sessions include:

- 4 bite size sessions supporting services in the completion of their Key Question 5 self-evaluation
- 5 'quick win' bite size sessions to support services with best practice on the topics of medication, safe recruitment, SSSC registration, notifications and quality assurance calendars.
- 4 bite size sessions introducing basic quality improvement methodology in an ELC context.
- A short introduction to our approach on scrutiny and assurance during the pandemic.

[These can be found on the Care Inspectorate's HUB.](#)

The team look forward to re-connecting with identified services to provide targeted support. This will include establishing National learning communities to encourage peer learning and the sharing of practice ideas to support improvement.

**For more information about our programme please contact Vicky Lamb, Senior Improvement Advisor at** [ELCimprove@careinspectorate.gov.scot](mailto: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 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 HNC Social Services and HNC Childhood Practice toolkit here.](#)

ELC Directorate are working with college representatives, SQA and the SSSC to identify solutions for any students who are not able to complete placements within this academic year, to ensure they are not disadvantaged in terms of future employment or study opportunities. We will ensure we engage with employers across the sector as this work develops.

If you wish to discuss issues around HNC placements, please contact Kathryn Chisholm, Workforce Team Lead at [kathryn.chisholm@gov.scot](mailto: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 31 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 on how to register as an Early Learning and Childcare Advertiser.](#)

If you have questions about accessing or using this free service, please contact the myjobscotland Team at [advertising@myjobscotland.gov.uk](mailto:advertising@myjobscotland.gov.uk)

### **Free Continuous Professional Learning (CPL)**

Our suite of free online CPL modules continue to be available, including ‘Supporting Parents to Further Engage in their Child’s Development’ which considers the crucial role of parents as educators and how they can support their child’s development; often through day-to-day activities. The module also looks at ways in which practitioners can effectively communicate with, engage and involve parents in their child’s development – particularly relevant at this time. Further work is also underway to develop modules focusing on ‘Developing understanding of curriculum rationale’ and ‘Tracking and monitoring children’s learning’. 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-elc-practitioners/>

These modules are also accessible from the Care Inspectorate Hub Directory of CPL for ELC, 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 also recently 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](mailto:Sarah.Guy@gov.scot)**

## **Invitation to complete a short survey on Trauma Informed Practice as part of the National Trauma Training Programme**

Traumatic events and experiences are more common in our population than was previously recognised and we all have a role to play in understanding and responding to people affected by psychological trauma.

The ambition of the Scottish Government and many other partners across Scotland, is for a trauma-informed and trauma-responsive workforce, with a recognition that we all have a role to play in understanding and responding to people affected by psychological trauma. The aim is to ensure that services are delivered in ways that prevent further harm or re-traumatisation for those who have experienced psychological trauma or adversity at any stage in their lives and support their unique recovery journey.

We would very much appreciate your support in completing this 5 minute [anonymous survey on trauma informed practice](#) which will help us understand more about current levels of understanding of psychological trauma across the workforce, and to what extent trauma informed practice is currently embedded and where additional support may be required in future.

### **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](mailto:Sian.Neil@educationscotland.gov.scot)

## **15. Outdoor Learning**

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### **Outdoor Winter Clothing Fund in ELC**

On 22 December we announced a new £1 million Outdoor Clothing Fund as part of the wider £100 million Winter Support Package.

The fund will enable providers of funded early learning and childcare to purchase outdoor winter clothing for the children in their settings who need it most. By providing appropriate outdoor clothing, to children who do not currently have access to these items, we hope to reduce inequalities and improve access to outdoor experiences in ELC.

The fund is open to all early learning and childcare providers delivering universal funded ELC, who have children in their settings with identified winter clothing needs. The targeted nature of this fund means that it cannot be used to purchase clothing for general use, or for children who have not been identified as facing barriers or inequalities to accessing outdoor play in ELC.

The fund opened for applications of the 15 January and will close on the 29 January at 12 pm. More information about eligibility and the application process is available on [Inspiring Scotland's website](#).

### **Virtual Nature School Programme: Winter Play**

We are very pleased to announce that places have been awarded to more than 500 setting teams on the winter programme of the Scottish Virtual Nature School.

This 3<sup>rd</sup> 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. 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.

Due to the current restrictions on settings, and feedback from practitioners, the programme has taken the decision to postpone its start date from 18 January until after the February break. We hope that this will allow the most children and practitioners to benefit from the work.

In the meantime, the Virtual Nature School are providing a suite of outdoor play and learning resources which can be used by practitioners and parents as part of their home learning package. These materials are available through the [Virtual Nature School Website](#) and are signposted on [the Parent Club website](#).

There are:

- Activity ideas and tips shared regularly on [the Virtual Nature School Facebook](#) and Instagram
- A downloadable nature diary which can be used to celebrate learning, support reflection and improve literacy
- A regular newsletter. Each edition answers a question asked by parents and helps to support discussions with children around outdoor play
- A regular [Virtual Nature School parent podcast](#) focusing on myth busting and ideas to get outdoors. Episode 1 is tips for parents on dressing children warmly for outdoor play.
- A regular practitioner podcast exploring outdoor pedagogy
- Access to the Virtual Nature School videos which provide outdoor learning ideas or inquiries to start of the day's learning

## 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 for outdoor play can be found on the Parent Club website.](#)

[The Parent Club videos encouraging outdoor play can be found on social media.](#)



If you have any questions on this section, please contact Sophie Finlayson at [sophie.finlayson@gov.scot](mailto:sophie.finlayson@gov.scot)

<b>March 2021</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Link</b>
5 March	Round 2 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund covering the four week period from 1 February - 26 February 2021 will open to applications	The Scottish Government has made funding available, through the Temporary Restrictions Fund for day care of children providers (operating at any registered capacity); childminding services who are currently providing childcare to 12 or more children, and, out of school care providers; who remain open to provide care for vulnerable children, children who are eligible for a funded 2 year old place and the children of key workers during the period of temporary restrictions.	<a href="#">Temporary Restrictions Fund application page</a>
16 March	1140 hours 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.</p> <p>The remit of the group is to inform the work of the delivery assurance team on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• progress on the delivery of 1140 since Covid-19;</li> </ul>	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the reinstatement of the 1140 statutory duty;</li> <li>• report to the ELC Joint Delivery Board to evidence any decision and recommendations; and</li> <li>• co-ordination of thematic and targeted support on delivery.</li> </ul>	
18 March	Childcare Sector Working Group (CSWG)	<p>As reported in our December 2020 update, while the work of the ELC and Childcare Sector Working Group (SRG) has largely been stood down it was felt that a regularly recurring meeting of the childcare representative bodies should continue.</p> <p>The SRG members which include the childcare sector representative bodies – CALA, EYS, NDNA, SCMA and SOCN - felt that the valuable lessons and experiences of working together as a group on matters of mutual interest would be beneficial to retain in another form. The CSWG would take this work forward. The CSWG has a broader remit, longer term vision and will have different meeting schedule. With areas of business structured around</p>	

		areas of mutual interest where the representative bodies, in particular, should identify topics for discussion.	
26 March	Critical Childcare and ELC group (sub group of CERG)	The Working Group on ELC and Childcare Sector Recovery was established to support the work of the Critical Childcare and ELC workstream of the Covid-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG). The Working Group, which brings together provider representatives from across the childcare sector, is providing advice and input into: (1) development of guidance documents for the sector; (2) financial sustainability for the sector; (3) workforce; and (4) partnership working.	
<b>April 2021</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Link</b>
2 April	Critical Childcare and ELC group (sub group of CERG)	The Working Group on ELC and Childcare Sector Recovery was established to support the work of the Critical Childcare and ELC workstream of the Covid-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG). The Working Group, which brings together provider representatives from across the childcare sector, is providing advice and input into:	

		(1) development of guidance documents for the sector; (2) financial sustainability for the sector; (3) workforce; and (4) partnership working.	
9 April	Critical Childcare and ELC group (sub group of CERG)	The Working Group on ELC and Childcare Sector Recovery was established to support the work of the Critical Childcare and ELC workstream of the Covid-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG). The Working Group, which brings together provider representatives from across the childcare sector, is providing advice and input into: (1) development of guidance documents for the sector; (2) financial sustainability for the sector; (3) workforce; and (4) partnership working.	
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.	<a href="#">SCMA Annual Conference update</a>
<b>May 2021</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Link</b>

15 May	EYS Annual Conference	Unfortunately due to COVID-19 the EYS annual Conference has been postponed until May 2021.	<a href="#">EYS Annual Conference</a>
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## Annex B – Publications

<b>Date Published</b>	<b>Document Link</b>
19/02/2021	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): updated school aged childcare services guidance</a>
17/02/2021	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): updated childminder services guidance</a>
16/02/2021	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): updated early learning and childcare (ELC) services guidance</a>
03/02/2021	<a href="#">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</a>
21/01/2021	<a href="#">Our commitment to childminding: report</a>
13/01/2021	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): childcare provision for January 2021</a>
22/12/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): support to childcare sector</a>
22/12/2020	<a href="#">Scottish Government Outdoor Clothing Fund - Inspiring Scotland</a>
25/11/2020	<a href="#">The impact of COVID-19 on children and young people - 2-4 year olds</a>
24/11/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): impact on children, young people and families - evidence summary October 2020</a>
18/11/2020	<a href="#">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</a>
30/10/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID19) Early Learning and Childcare Services</a>
30/10/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID 19) Childminder Services Guidance</a>
30/10/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID 19) School Age Childcare Services Guidance</a>
24/10/2020	<a href="#">Halloween and Bonfire Night - Advice on safe and enjoyable celebrations</a>
23/10/2020	<a href="#">Scotland's strategic framework</a>
24/09/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): organised activities for children</a>
11/09/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020 - version 3</a>
24/08/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): public health measures at borders (international travel)</a>
23/08/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): local advice and measures</a>
21/08/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reopening early learning and childcare services - frequently asked questions</a>
21/08/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on re-opening school age childcare services - frequently asked questions</a>
30/07/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reopening early learning and childcare services</a>
30/07/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): childminding services guidance</a>
30/07/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reopening school age childcare services</a>
30/07/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): fully outdoor childcare providers guidance</a>
30/07/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues – advisory note on physical distancing in early learning and childcare settings (ELC)</a>
30/07/2020	<a href="#">Funding follows the child and the national standard for early learning and childcare providers: interim guidance</a>
03/07/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19) Phase 3: guidance on reopening school aged childcare services</a>
24/06/2020	<a href="#">Further route map detail announced</a>
15/06/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19) Phase 3: guidance on reopening early learning and childcare services</a>

01/06/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): fully outdoor childcare providers guidance</a>
01/06/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): childminder services guidance</a>
26/05/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): schools, early learning and childcare settings - scientific evidence</a>
21/05/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision</a>
15/05/2020	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): physical distancing in education and childcare settings</a>
31/03/2020	<a href="#">Joint statement issued by Ms Todd and Cllr McCabe on the 1140 hours revocation</a>
31/03/2020	<a href="#">Social distancing in education and childcare settings guidance</a>
30/03/2020	<a href="#">Childcare providers: closure information</a>
30/03/2020	<a href="#">Information for private and third sector childcare providers about business support</a>
30/03/2020	<a href="#">Information for Childminders about business and financial support</a>
30/03/2020	<a href="#">Childcare closures and emergency provision</a>
24/03/2020	<a href="#">Implementing social distancing in education and childcare settings</a>
24/03/2020	<a href="#">School and ELC closures - guidance for key workers</a>
20/03/2020	<a href="#">Guidance on critical childcare and learning provision for key workers</a>
21/01/2021	<a href="#">Our commitment to childminding: report</a>
13/01/2021	<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): childcare provision for January 2021</a>
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18/11/2020	<a href="#">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</a>

## Extending eligibility for two year olds with a parent who has experience of care: supplementary information

### **Discretionary basis**

In time it may be appropriate to legislate for a specific eligibility criteria as part of wider system and legislative changes flowing from the work to Keep the Promise. We do not consider local authorities require a legislative definition or statutory criteria at this time in order to identify children likely to benefit from the 2 year old offer.

This will require continued joint working between local authorities, childcare services and the full range of services and contacts families have, to encourage engagement with the offer and referrals.

In the work done to scope the impact of the commitment, presented to the Finance Working Group, we estimated this may bring in additional families who would not otherwise be eligible under statutory criteria. We do not anticipate any increases will be significant. If a local authority is concerned about the impact on capacity, this can be raised through the Finance Working Group.

### **What does 'care experience' mean?**

[The Promise](#) outlines:

*The Care Review has heard that, as a definition, 'care experience' has meaning for many. It has supported movement-building and is helpful as an understanding of personal identity. The Care Review also heard that it is an identity definition that some who have been 'looked after' do not wish to identify with as it can feel like a perpetuation of 'othering'.*

*[C]are experience [is used] ... as a description of the environment that a child or young person is growing up in and as an identity definition, and to denote access to specific rights and entitlements.*

*The Care Review believes in an expansive and holistic understanding of 'care experience' that includes all the various settings and experiences of care. Within this there must be an understanding of how the role of the state in individuals' upbringing relates to ongoing rights and entitlements. The experience of being cared for must not be stigmatising. The Care Review supports a broad and diverse understanding of care experience, to ensure a collective recognition that care represents a part of all Scotland's communities.*

### **How do we confirm eligibility?**

Scottish Government does not generally provide a template for how eligibility should be established. We understand however that the model of self-declaration used for student funding has been well-received and offers a pragmatic solution for providing evidence. This a self-declaring system requiring a counter-signature from a professional with knowledge of the person's care experience. More information can be found on the SAAS website here: [Support for care experienced students - SAAS](#)