

Scottish Government Early Learning and Childcare COVID-19 Update **No. 13 – March 2021**

Hello and welcome to our end of March update.

It has been fantastic to see all primary school age children able to return to school age childcare services from last week. We know how vital these services are to children and families and how challenging it has been for the sector to deal with the restrictions. We were really pleased on Friday 19 March to announce funding for school age childcare services as part of Round 3 of the Temporary Restrictions fund and also to publish our [School Age Childcare Progress Report](#).

We all need to stay vigilant and continue to follow FACTS and implement the risk mitigations set out in the suite of public health guidance for early learning and childcare, childminders and school age childcare. Staff safety and wellbeing are at the very forefront of that guidance. 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 are circulating updated frequently asked questions and answers relating to the reopening and the updated guidance with this edition of the Update and these will also be available 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 across Scotland 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.

From 25 March the Scottish Government will enter the pre-election period for the Scottish election which is due to take place on Thursday 6 May 2021. As a result, our monthly updates will be paused until the end of May. We will continue to engage with you through Care Inspectorate updates, social media and via stakeholder representatives. We will also shortly be issuing a short survey around engagement, please look out for that as we really do want to hear your views to help us shape our communications with you.

I'd like to finish with another huge thank you to everyone in early learning and childcare including practitioners, childminders and school aged childcare colleagues, for all of your hard work and dedication, and the care and love that you continue to provide to children and families in Scotland.

Take care

Alison Cumming

Alison.Cumming@gov.scot

Interim 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. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill (the Bill) passed its final stage in the Scottish Parliament on 16 March 2021. The soon to be Act will commence 6 months after Royal Assent, so is expected to be in force from October 2021.

The Bill will make it unlawful for public authorities, including Scottish Ministers, to act incompatibly with the incorporated UNCRC requirements, giving children, young people and their representatives the power to go to court to enforce their rights. The Bill will also apply to providers (such as private or third-sector bodies) acting under contracts or other arrangements (such as grants) with Ministers and public authorities.

The Bill will touch on all our work and has the potential to radically change the way we make policy and decisions and deliver services which affect the lives of children and young people across Scotland. Children will have the right to be heard and involved in decisions that affect their lives and all public authorities will be under a legal duty to comply with this and the other UNCRC requirements.

A £2.1 million programme over three years will help public authorities implement the legislation. The programme has three strands as set out in the financial memorandum. These are SG leadership, empowering children to claim their rights and embedding children's rights in public services. Under each strand are a number of activities which will help achieve our aim of children and young people consistently experiencing public authorities upholding their rights.

To ensure that public services are appropriately supported in delivering the step-change in respecting, protecting and fulfilling children's rights that this Bill seeks to deliver, the Scottish Government is committed to developing guidance in partnership with public authorities. We intend to publish initial guidance to help raise awareness of the Bill and support public authorities and other duty bearers to make immediate preparations for commencement. We will also deliver fuller guidance around the time of commencement to support public authorities to take a child's rights approach more broadly. We will also publish guidance in relation to the reporting duty placed on listed authorities under section 15 of the Bill, ahead of the end of the first reporting period in March 2023. In addition to guidance, as part of our Implementation Plan, we are considering other methods to support public authorities, for instance through workforce development and capacity building, and opportunities to support them with regards improvement and innovative practice in relation to children's rights. We remain committed to maintaining the collaborative partnership which has been developed throughout the Bill's progress into commencement and wider implementation.

Through the continuous consideration and prioritisation of children's rights in law, policy and practice right across government and public life in Scotland, we will deliver a fundamental shift in culture that will transform the life chances and outcomes for children and young people and ensure that Scotland can truly be the best place in the world to grow up.

Read the [Bill](#) as passed by the Scottish Parliament. For more information, please get in touch with the [UNCRC Incorporation Team](#).

The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill brings into Scots law duties to act compatibly with the UNCRC rights across both public authorities, such as the Scottish Government and local government, and for private sector bodies undertaking public functions. For early learning and childcare, this is clear that provision of ELC by funded partners will be required to be delivered in a way which is compatible with UNCRC rights, and Scottish Ministers will have duties to take measures to ensure that UNCRC rights are protected in wholly private settings. We know that the UNCRC is already built in to everyday practice right across the ELC and childcare sector. We'll continue to work with the sector as UNCRC incorporation Act moves to the implementation phase and explore how we can showcase and strengthen the work already happening and use ELC and childcare as champions for rights-based practice across all sectors.

3. ELC Statutory Duty and the Expansion

The legislation to reinstate the duty to ensure all eligible children benefit from 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare by August 2021 was agreed at the Education and Skills Committee on 17 February and was approved in Parliament on 3 March.

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 is continuing its engagement with councils to support them in implementing their expansion plans. 15 authorities are now offering 1140 hours to all eligible children, and those local authorities that are not yet offering 1140 hours continue to make good progress on increasing their offer.

The Improvement Service are currently in the process of collating and analysing data from the latest delivery progress data collection and would like to thank all local authority colleagues who have worked to complete these returns. The collated national report will be published on the Improvement Service website in early April. If you have any questions on this, please don't hesitate to contact elc@improvementservice.org

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](#) was published on 30 July 2020.

We will publish a 'light touch' update of this Guidance 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.

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

Early Learning and Childcare Statutory Guidance

Statutory Guidance on the delivery of ELC 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.

[A public consultation on the revised statutory guidance](#) was undertaken over the period December 2019 to March 2020 and [the analysis report on the consultation](#) responses has now been published. Where permission was given, the consultation responses will soon also be published on Citizen Space.

Work is currently progressing to reflect on the consultation responses 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

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

4. COVID-19

COVID SAFETY

Guidance and accompanying resources

Regulated childcare has now reopened to all pre-school and primary school aged children.

The suite of childcare guidance is up to date to reflect the latest evidence and public health advice.

[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](#)

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.

We have developed a FAQ document to accompany the guidance which is attached alongside this up-date.

We have also developed a short animation that settings can use in staff training sessions. The animation shows four scenarios that include a mixture of safe and risky behaviours. We hope this will help stimulate discussion within staff teams about behaviours that everyone should adopt to keep themselves and colleagues safe. We've added a link to the animation within some guidance for use as a separate attachment to this update.

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](#)

New Public Health Scotland dashboard

Public Health Scotland (PHS) have published a new [dashboard](#) that pulls together in one place data on COVID-19 in children and young people of educational age, education staff and education settings.

The dashboard provides data on:

- Testing and Cases among children and young people of educational age (2-19 years), including the number and rate of positive cases and the percentage of tests taken that are positive.
- The number of hospital admissions related to COVID-19 among children and young people of educational age (2-17 years).
- Information from contact tracing, including the percentage of cases who were present in an educational setting in the 7-days before symptom onset and the percentage of cases who work in education or childcare.

The dashboard will be updated weekly and will help keep staff and parents up to date with the direct impact of the pandemic on young people and those working in education. The dashboard includes information that is discussed each week within the COVID-19 Education Recovery Group.

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.

The guidance around informal childcare has not changed. 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

Scottish Government published [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.

[Supplementary guidance was issued for organised activities for children](#) from 5 January 2021 and was updated on 12 March

In relation to parent and baby classes, these groups are currently permitted outdoors, for up to 15 adults and an unlimited number of children under the age of 5.

In line with the publication of the timetable for easing restrictions, assuming the data supports such a move, from 26 April we anticipate these groups will be allowed to meet indoors for up to 10 adults.

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

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 were receiving testing kits 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. Deliveries are now expected to be taking place in the week of 22 March and the week of 29 March. You should already be in receipt of information about this roll out if your setting is part of the second phase.

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

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

5. Information for parents and carers

Return to ELC

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.

It is important that families understand that the transmission risk of 'at home' play dates are different to the risks in childcare settings that are following approved guidance. Settings and parent organisations can help us to promote these messages.

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](#)

1140 Parental Communication

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.

We are also developing new case study content. If you have 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.

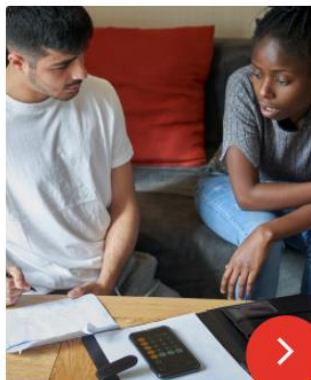
Please **contact Katherine Tierney's ELC: Access and Parental Communications team** through the ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot mailbox with further suggestions for the Parent Club FAQ or other parental communication.



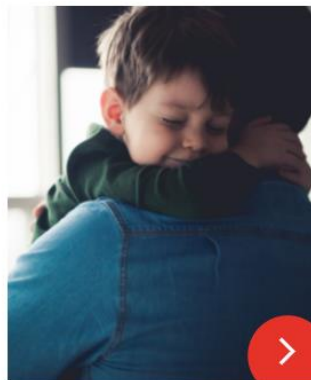
LATEST INFORMATION ON CORONAVIRUS



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

6. Outdoor Learning

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)

Outdoor Winter Clothing Fund in ELC

On 22 December 2021 Scottish Government announced a new £1 million Outdoor Clothing Fund as part of the wider £100 million Winter Support Package.

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

The fund was open to all early learning and childcare providers delivering universal funded ELC, who had children in their settings with identified winter clothing needs. By its close, fund supported 23,506 children to access essential winter clothing for outdoor play in ELC

The fund is now closed but more information 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 3rd cohort will be aimed at supporting outdoor nature based play over the winter months, when the weather can be more challenging and practitioners often less confident in providing outdoor opportunities.

Settings who take part in the programme will receive 6 weeks of guided support to improve and develop their winter outdoor learning. 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.

The programme began in March 2021 and is due to end in early April 2021.

Outdoor Play Marketing Campaign

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

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

[Activity cards and information 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

7. Extension of the Nursery Rates Relief Scheme

The Scottish Government announced on 4 December that 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

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 opened for applications on 5 March 2021 and **will close on 1 April 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 open in February or not.

Making the Additional Support Grant available to all providers in this way allows 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 can apply for the Additional Support Grant through Round 2 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund (TRF) application form.

Round 3 – focused on School Age Childcare Settings

Round 3 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund (TRF) covering the four week period from 1 March–31 March 2021.

It will open to applications on **7 April 2021** and close on **4 May 2021** and will target **support specifically to the school age childcare sector** in the light of prolonged restrictions on their services due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Up to £3 million is available to support school aged childcare providers following the full reopening of nurseries and other early learning and childcare (ELC) settings from 22 February, school aged childcare will have experienced three further weeks of restrictions than ELC settings, unable to reopen until 15 March.

All open school age childcare providers will be able to access a support grant for each week in which they are open. Grants will vary depending on capacity and how many weeks a setting was open.

In recognition of ongoing challenges facing the school aged childcare sector, all registered settings, whether open or closed, will also be able to claim an 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.

School aged childcare providers will be able to apply through the [Temporary Restrictions Fund application site](#).

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

Contact info: ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

9. Support for Childminders

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 childminders registered with the Care Inspectorate (on 1 February 2021) in order to secure the sustainability of their businesses.

The fund opened to applications on **11 March and closed on 17 March**. We are delighted that the majority of childminders applied for the grant and all payments are due to be made before the 31 March 2021.

Contact info: 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](#).

Contact Info: Luke McPherson at Luke.McPherson@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](#)

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 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 third meeting of the CSWG took on 18 March 2021 with a focus on the UNCRC, Funding Follows the Child, and response to COVID-19. 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 25 February.

For more information please contact ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

13. Primary 1 deferral and ELC eligibility

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. 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 1 March and our initial focus has been on evaluation planning.

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

debbi.ramsay@gov.scot

14. Analysis and Evidence

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/

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.**

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, 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.

16. Workforce and Professional Learning

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

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

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

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

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

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

17. Play Strategy Report and Outdoor Play Fund

Play Scotland's progress report on the Scottish Government's play strategy was published on 19 March 2021.

The report highlights the growing body of evidence on the adverse impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the associated restrictions on children and young people's wellbeing, resulting from changes to their daily lives including reduced opportunities for play and social interaction with their peers. It takes account of mitigating measures that the Scottish Government have put in place to support children's play at a time of national crisis and highlights how play organisations have responded to the pandemic. and provides eight recommendations on how Scotland's Play Strategy should be taken forward in the light of COVID-19.

Play Scotland consulted over 340 children aged 0-18, including children and young people with additional support needs; children from asylum seeking or refugee families from black and ethnic minority communities; children from families identified as vulnerable or essential key workers; and children and young people involved with play, youth and childcare services.

The report makes eight recommendations on how Scotland's Play Strategy should be taken forward in the light of COVID-19:

- refresh the Play Strategy and ensure national and local leadership support a child's right to play
- renew and develop the national and local commitment to outdoor play

- listen to children and young people and act on what they say
- ensure inclusion of all children and young people
- ensure cross sectoral and inter professional approaches to play are in place
- sustain and support play provision through adequate funding
- maintain a focus on playful learning and play in schools
- strengthen the play sector nationally and locally

The report, recommendations, and consultation can be found at [Play Strategy - Play Scotland](#)

Ms Todd also announced funding of £500,000 to expand the Outdoor Community Play Fund in 2021-22. Children in some of the country's most deprived areas will benefit from free organised outdoor play activities aimed at improving their health and wellbeing. In 2020-21 the fund, which is administered by Inspiring Scotland, distributed £380,000 to 23 play charities reaching more than 5,000 children in Scotland's most deprived communities.

Ms Todd said "Protecting children's right to play has been one of the key priorities in our decision making to suppress transmission of the virus. We understand the value of outdoor play for children's wellbeing and resilience, as well as their physical and mental health.

"Children and families from more deprived areas can often find it more difficult to access organised outdoor activities, so I'm pleased that this additional funding will help even more children play outside in a safe and fun way."

More details on this fund to follow.

18. 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. Payments will be made under the new Scheme from 1 August 2021.

The Scottish Government's ambition is to ensure that as many children as possible attending eligible settings are in receipt of the milk and healthy snack policy, embedding the habit of regular consumption of high-quality dairy produce and fruit and vegetables from an early age. The purpose of the Scheme is to support improvement in children's health in the earliest years, which is crucial in tackling health inequalities.

The new Scheme will be delivered by local authorities who will provide agreed direct and upfront funding for pre-school day care and childminder settings which:

- are registered with Care Inspectorate;
- have registered with their local authority to be part of the Scheme; and
- where pre-school children spend 2 or more hours per day,

The new Scheme will cover 189mls (1/3 pint) - or a 200ml container- per child per day of:

- plain fresh cow's milk (whole milk for children 1 year and over, including the option of semi-skimmed milk for children 2 years and over) or first infant formula (for children under 12 months);
- or, where children cannot consume cow's milk for medical, ethical or religious reasons, plain fresh goat or sheep milk

(whole milk for children 1 year and over or to include semi- skimmed milk for children 2 years), or a specified unsweetened calcium-enriched non-dairy alternative ;

- **AND** a healthy snack portion (fruit or vegetables) per child per day.

Settings wishing to participate in the Scheme will need to register with their local authority. Each setting will need to register in the local authority in which it operates (in the case of chains, registration must be where each individual setting is located).

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.

More information on how settings can register will be provided in May 2021. In the meantime, please visit the [Scottish Government website](#) for details on the Scheme.

The UK Nursery Milk Scheme will cease to operate in Scotland with effect from 31 July 2021; participating settings will have 6 months in which to continue to submit claims to the UK Nursery Milk Reimbursement Unit for milk provided up to and including 31 July 2021.

April 2021	Event	Information	Link
1 April	Temporary Restrictions Fund Round 2 closes	<p>The Scottish Government has made funding available, through the Temporary Restrictions Fund, for day care of children providers (operating at any registered capacity); a 'childminding service' which is registered to care for 12 or more children, out of school care providers (operating at any registered capacity); who remained open during the period of temporary restrictions to provide care for vulnerable children, children who are eligible for a funded 2 year old place and the children of key workers.</p> <p>Eligible services can apply for Round 2 of the Fund covering the four week period from 1 February – 26 February 2021 from 5 March 2021</p>	Temporary Restrictions Fund information
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.	
7 April	Temporary Restrictions Fund Round 3 opens	<p>Round 3 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund covering the four week period from 1 March– 31 March 2021 will open to applications on 7 April 2021 and close on 4 May 2021 and will target support specifically to the school age childcare sector in the light of prolonged restrictions on their services due to coronavirus (COVID-19).</p> <p>Up to £3 million is available to support school aged childcare providers following the full reopening of nurseries and other early learning and childcare (ELC) settings from 22 February, school aged childcare will have experienced three further weeks of restrictions than ELC settings, unable to reopen until 15 March.</p>	Temporary Restrictions Fund information

		All open school age childcare providers will be able to access a support grant for each week in which they are open. Grants will vary depending on capacity and how many weeks a setting was open.	
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.	
May 2021	Event	Information	Link
4 May	Temporary Restrictions Fund Round 3 closes	Round 3 of the Temporary Restrictions Fund covering the four week period from 1 March– 31 March 2021 will close on 4 May 2021 and will target support specifically to the school age childcare sector in the light of prolonged	Temporary Restrictions Fund information

		restrictions on their services due to coronavirus (COVID-19).	
15 May	EYS Annual Conference	Unfortunately due to COVID-19 the EYS annual Conference has been postponed until May 2021.	EYS Annual Conference

Annex B – Publications

Date Published	Document Link
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
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

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](#)