



Falkirk Council
Children's Services

Early Learning Team

Quality Improvement Strategy

2019/2020

1.0 National and local context

Linked National Improvement Priorities:

- ✓ Improvement in attainment, particularly in Literacy & Numeracy.
- ✓ Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.
- ✓ Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
- ✓ Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive destinations.

Regional Improvement Collaborative Priorities

- ✓ Strengthen and improve practitioner confidence, understanding and delivery of high quality learning and teaching experiences in Literacy and Numeracy.
- ✓ Strengthen the quality of the ELC workforce to support the quality dimension of the ELC 1140 expansion.
- ✓ Provide professional learning that helps drive forward collaboration leadership at all levels.
- ✓ Ensure performance information and improvement approaches support raising attainment for all.

Falkirk Council – Council of the Future

- ✓ We want the Falkirk Council area to be 'the place to be', where people want to live, work and visit. We are committed to this and have started to make it happen.

Falkirk Council – Children's Services Priorities

Raising attainment & achievement

- Raise attainment for every child and young person and enable them to make excellent progress through their learning journey 3–18yrs.

Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality

- Improve processes to support attainment and positive destinations for Falkirk's vulnerable children and young people.

Skills & Attributes Development

- Improve attainment and positive destinations for Falkirk's young people.

2.0 Vision, Values and Aims for Early Learning

'Our Children First'

We want Falkirk to have an excellent reputation for delivering the best possible outcomes for young children and families.

What do we want for each child in Falkirk: *To succeed. To flourish. To Thrive.*

- They will flourish and grow due to the high expectations and aspirations we set with and for them.
- They will have their unique skills, competences and dispositions valued and developed.
- They will be regarded as already highly competent, capable, creative thinkers and learners.
- They be well-known, respected and valued as the individual that they are.
- They will learn with and from skilled educators who value play as the most effective way to support and evidence their children's holistic learning and development.

Our staff are our greatest asset delivering our vision for children.

What do we want for our staff: *Passionate. Learned. Reflective.*

- They exhibit the highest degree of professionalism.
- They will guide children in their development and learning by motivating, inspiring and nurturing them in every interaction.
- They will listen and respond to the needs, views and preferences of each child and this will inform the decisions and choices that they make.
- They will be the strongest advocate for children rights and will hold others to account.
- They are skilled and learned about how children learn and develop. They will continue to learn and develop throughout their career and we will provide them regular, worthwhile opportunities to do so.

What do we want for our leaders: *Inspiring. Ambitious. Rigorous.*

- They will know what is needed to improve their service and relentlessly pursue excellence by setting exacting standards.
- They will lead collaborative efforts to learn from others and support the learning of others.
- They will know and describe the difference their setting makes to the lives and learning of children and families.
- They will know and remove barriers that prevent children reaching their full potential and will work with families and partners to achieve this.
- They will provide sector-leading strategic leadership and direction.

In doing all of this, we want children to make the best possible start to their learning in Falkirk. To succeed. To flourish. To thrive. We want to know that this has been achieved *because of* what we do in our ELC settings.

****Please note** This is a consultation draft**

3.0 Key Initiatives 2019/20

- Play is the Way
- Marvellous Mealtimes
- Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Wellbeing Toolkit
- Outdoor Play & Learning
- Collaboration across settings

4.0 Early Years Team Goals

To deliver on our promises by:

- Facilitating excellent learning through a manageable suite of comprehensive training opportunities.
- Collecting and using performance data to inform and drive improvement.

5.0 Previous Performance

Measurement Dashboard 2018/19

1: All Early Years Pedagogues (8) are trained in the Scottish Coaching and Leadership Improvement Programme (SCLIP) or equivalent.	●
2: No fewer than 8 interventions for each of Literacy, Numeracy; and, Health and Wellbeing.	●
3: No fewer than 8 interventions for high-quality family learning.	●
4: Successful external verification of internal, vocational training programme for Modern Apprentices in Early Learning and Childcare.	●
5a: ELC settings externally inspected by Care Inspectorate are evaluated good or better in all measures.	●
5b: ELC settings externally inspected by Education Scotland are evaluated good or better in all measures.	●
6: Early level attainment in reading, writing, listening & talking and numeracy is consistently above the national average of 85% in all measures.	●
7: Data gathered through scrutiny activity, both internal and external, shows that children in ELC and early stages primary experience a high quality play-based approach to learning and teaching.	●
8: Practitioners from all establishments are engaged in Falkirk Council's competency framework.	●
9: 66 practitioners (ELC and Primary) across 22 settings achieve the Froebel certificate with Edinburgh University (+33 from last session)	●
10: All settings are represented at the Early Learning Leadership Forum	●
11: Incrementally increase the number of participants at practitioner networks.	●
12: Increase capacity for internal verification by 1FTE.	●

6.0 Attainment measures:

Table 1: P1 Attainment (Teacher Professional Judgement)

	Listening & Talking	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
2016	88%	81%	79%	86%
2017	87%	82%	79%	84%
2018	87%	83%	77%	86%
2019 (target)	90%	85%	85%	88%

All other measures : by June 2020:

- ✓ All ELC settings (100%) inspected by Care Inspectorate are evaluated as good or better in all measures.
- ✓ All ELC settings (100%) inspected by Education Scotland are evaluated as good or better in all measures.
- ✓ No fewer than three evidenced-based interventions in Literacy that are shown to be effective in closing the poverty-related attainment gap in ELC are communicated, shared and spread.
- ✓ No fewer than three evidenced-based interventions in Numeracy that are shown to be effective in closing the poverty-related attainment gap in ELC are communicated, shared and spread.
- ✓ No fewer than three evidenced-based interventions in Health and Wellbeing that are shown to be effective in closing the poverty-related attainment gap in ELC are communicated, shared and spread.
- ✓ No fewer than three evidenced-based interventions in effective Family Learning that are shown to be effective in closing the poverty-related attainment gap in ELC are communicated, shared and spread.
- ✓ All participants Training offered as part of the core central offer are evaluated as being relevant or very relevant.
- ✓ All participants in training indicate an increased level of knowledge and understanding pre and post training (six point scale).
- ✓ 37 ELC and primary practitioners successfully gain the Froebel in Childhood Practice Certificate.
- ✓ Increase the number of settings from 17 to 24 that have staff trained or training in the Froebel in Childhood Practice Certificate.
- ✓ Each ELC setting has at least one trained accredited mentor.
- ✓ 100% of settings are represented at each Early Learning Leadership Forum.
- ✓ All Senior Early Years Officers successfully completed the leadership short-course.
- ✓ All Senior Early Years Officers successfully completed Getting to Grips with Pedagogy course.
- ✓ Three ELC senior leaders successfully gain the interval verification qualification.

6.0 Workstreams, Outcomes and Actions

Workstream 1: Developmentally appropriate early learning, teaching and assessment in ELC and early stages of primary school.

Outcome(s) 2019-2020:

- Children aged 3-6 years in Falkirk benefit from developmentally appropriate learning experiences that are well matched to their individual needs and are in line with national expectations of excellence.
- Early learning practitioners in ELC and primary are confident in the delivery of a developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- Children confidently demonstrate a range of highly developed skills for learning.
- Planning, assessment and reporting is aligned to a developmentally appropriate methodology and is of a consistently high quality across all establishments.

Actions:

- Continue engagement with Strathclyde University for the delivery of professional support and guidance to ELC and early learning practitioners.
- Foster networks within the RIC and across Scotland for the development of play based pedagogy.
- Create a network of support for P1 staff including establishment of a Teacher Learning Community (TLC), sharing of best practice and in-situ coaching.
- Create a network of those teachers who participated in the Strathclyde University course last session.
- Create a bank of high quality adult-initiated literacy and numeracy experiences.
- Devise, share and implement a local authority policy and guidance for play-based pedagogy
- Create peer observation materials for Pedagogy and Play participants.
- Develop progression frameworks for different aspects of play.
- Devise and deliver a short-course focussed on learning, teaching and assessment in ELC and early stages of primary together with a coach-consult model.
- Provide targeted support to clusters and ELC settings as identified through scrutiny/engagement processes.
- Provide targeted support to settings implementing PITW in 18-19 with lower attainment in 2018-2019.
- Provide targeted support to single stream and composite classes engaging in PITW – observation, audit, team teach as appropriate.
- Create smaller networks of single stream and composite class teachers implementing play-based approaches.
- Facilitate at Pushing Play into P2 sessions with Strathclyde University (Deirdre Grogan).
- Review and improve the CLPL offer focussing on key areas of improvement: learning teaching & assessment; securing children's progress; self-evaluation for self-improvement; Literacy.
- Improve the delivery of CLPL towards a facilitative, participative style.
- Engage in the Regional Collaborative task on improving quality experience for children under 3 years.
- Carry out robust quality assurance in all ELC settings with a view to providing targeted supported and effective continuous professional learning opportunities.

Workstream 2: Strategies to prevent / close the poverty-related attainment gap.

Outcome(s): 2018-2019:

- Children in ELC at risk of low attainment are identified early and appropriate child-centred interventions are put in place.
- There is an increased capacity in the centrally-based team in the model for improvement methodology.
- Children in ELC make good progress or better in areas of literacy, numeracy and HWB.
- High-quality family learning is used a key driver for improvement.

Actions:

- Engage with Strathclyde University to evaluate the impact of EY Pedagogues role.
- Engage with Health Visitors to align practice and support early identification of need.
- Carry out small tests of change in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing and share effective interventions.
- Carry out small tests of change in Family Learning and share effective interventions.
- Support leaders in the use of data for improvement including the PDSA approach.
- Support pedagogical leaders in planning for improvement, gathering evidence of impact and choosing appropriate interventions for equity.
- Through effective use of data analysis, support settings in the identification of children who are at risk of low attainment.

Workstream 3: High quality career-long professional learning and support to enhance the delivery of ELC expansion to 1140 hours.

Outcome 2018-2019:

- Early learning and childcare professionals in Falkirk are expertly trained within a framework of excellence and well trained to support 1140 hours.
- Prospective and new ELC support staff and practitioners enter the profession as highly-skilled and energised practitioners.

Actions:

- Publish a core central CLPL offer to all settings.
- Promote 'team engagement' in CLPL wherever possible.
- Create a bank of CLPL course for which settings/clusters can bid.
- Support the local delivery of Froebel in Childhood Practice certificate.
- Provide support and guidance for engaging in Professional Review & Development.
- Introduce training and support for Childminders.
- Develop and share case studies for blended ELC between settings and Childminders.
- Recruit experienced practitioners in delivering high-quality extended day provision as trainers.
- Create a framework of training and mentoring for newly qualified ELC staff.
- Implement the aspirations of the National Induction Resource.
- Produce and share mentoring guidelines for SEYOs and PEYOs in their support of students and trainees.

- Devise a programme of training and support for ELC Assistants; and, support them to attain support/practitioner level qualifications.
- Increase the capacity for internal verification of SVQ qualifications.
- Carryout indepth analysis and tracking of training evaluations.

Workstream 4: Support for sector-leading pedagogical leadership.

Outcome 2018-2019:

- Each setting has an identified pedagogical leader.
- Those in a pedagogical leadership role provide excellent leadership and are well supported in the delivery of high quality early learning in ELC and primary.

Actions:

- Work with further education institutions, the Scottish College of Educational Leadership (SCEL) to devise a framework to support Head Teachers and senior leaders to undertake the role of pedagogical leader.
- Develop capacity among leaders and practitioners to engage fully and confidently with external support and challenge.
- Create a framework of support for Senior Early Years Officers.
- Provide guidance and support in aspects of leadership, particularly in the area of self-evaluation for self-improvement; and, the formulation of vision, values and aims.
- Provide ongoing support for securing children's progress through the Early Learning Leadership Forum Support.
- Provide support for the formulation of high quality curriculum rationale statements.
- Provide opportunities for those staff with an additional early years' post-graduate qualification to lead learning at a systems level.
- Support the use of data, particularly relating to CLPL, to inform improvement planning and leadership of change at setting and authority level.