

Scottish Government Response to an Independent Review of the Scottish Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and Out of School Care (OSC) Workforce

December 2015

Ministerial Foreword

The Scottish Government warmly welcomes Professor Siraj's thoughtful and comprehensive independent Review of Early Learning and Childcare Workforce and Out of School Care Workforce.

We commissioned this Review in recognition of the vital role played by the workforce in delivering high quality early learning and out of school care to Scotland's children. The last National Review of the Workforce was conducted in 2006¹ and we felt that the time was right to commission an independent expert to look afresh at a range of issues – from the qualifications and training of all those within the workforce, to the career paths available, and, vitally, the status of this most skilled and challenging work.

We considered this to be particularly timely in the context of the introduction of the Scottish Government's ground-breaking Children and Young People Act in 2014, which increased the number of funded hours of early learning and childcare to 600 hours per year: the highest number of hours available anywhere in the UK. The First Minister has since announced that we will go even further and almost double this entitlement, to 1140 hours per year by the end of the next Parliament. I am clear that quality will be at the heart of this expansion, and that the workforce is fundamental to ensuring we deliver that quality of provision.

That is why we accept Professor Siraj's recommendation that we must have a strategic group looking at issues around quality and workforce. This group will have a key role in examining and advising on a range of issues around workforce development and workforce planning for the forthcoming expansion of early learning and childcare.

The group will consist of the same membership as the Core Reference Group of cross-sectoral experts which supported the independent Review. In this group, we have a wealth of experience from across the early learning and childcare and out of school sector and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their constructive and valued contribution to the Review process.

Professor Siraj has set out clearly that we must have a workforce that is highly skilled and trained to work with young children, so that the foundations are laid for their future social and emotional wellbeing and their future attainment. The benefits of high quality early learning interactions with skilled practitioners have been shown to be particularly marked for those children who face particular barriers or challenges in terms of their socio-economic background, and Professor Siraj highlights this in her report.

¹ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/135643/0033618.pdf>

The Scottish Government agrees that children must have access to highly qualified staff with expertise in early childhood learning and development – and that this is particularly vital for those facing particular disadvantages. That is why the First Minister recently announced in October 2015 that we will ensure that all nurseries in the most deprived areas in Scotland will have an additional graduate working with children by 2018, whether this is a teacher with early childhood expertise or a graduate holding the BA Childhood Practice degree.

In addition, as set out in the responses to the individual recommendations, we will work with the strategic group on quality to look at the existing suite of qualifications, to establish if there is a need for any change to both the content of those and the range of qualifications and routes into the sector which are available.

We will also work with partners including the Care Inspectorate, SSSC and SCMA to develop a quality framework for childminders, including a suggested training pathway from induction onwards. This is in recognition that they are a vitally important part of the workforce delivering early learning and childcare to children of all ages, and should be encouraged and supported to undertake career long learning, as do those practitioners working with children within centres.

The need for high quality childcare provision does not end when a child starts school and, in recognition of the vital role played by out of school care, we will also work with partners to develop an updated Framework for out of school care.

Professor Siraj made a number of important recommendations on the status and pay of the early learning and out of school care workforce and the Scottish Government strongly endorses those. In their role nurturing and supporting the early development and learning of children, practitioners at all levels have the genuine potential to transform lives. This should be reflected in the status afforded to the workforce, and in the remuneration they receive.

Scottish Government strongly supports the Living Wage campaign and encourages all organisations, regardless of size, sector and location, to ensure all staff receive a fair level of pay. We will work with the early learning and childcare and out of school care sectors to promote the benefits of the Living Wage, both in terms of social justice and for them as individual employers.

Professor Siraj also recognised that early learning and childcare is a highly gendered workforce – indeed; the most recent SSSC workforce statistics show that only 4% of the early learning and childcare nursery sector, and 0% of childminders, are male. That is why I am committed to doing more to promote early learning and out of school care as a fantastic career for young people, considering, in particular, what more we could do to attract more males into the sector.

This would bring a number of benefits, including increasing gender equality, providing children with positive role models of both genders within early learning and childcare settings, and attracting a wider group of individuals with the right skills and aptitudes to nurture children's growth, learning and development.

We will work with key partners on this, including Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Funding Council.

This is an exciting time for early learning and out of school care, as we plan for the most significant expansion in provision ever seen in Scotland, and the actions we will take in response to Professor Siraj's independent review will be essential to ensure that high quality is at the heart of this transformational change.

Angela Constance MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning

Responses to the Individual Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Given the scope, ambition and policy direction, with its strong Scottish identity; for ELC and Out of School Care, there is a strong probability that the workforce will need to continue to be substantially developed both in size and quality. It would be fitting to undertake this over a reasonable timeframe. The Scottish Government should consider the development of a strategic group to oversee a 15 year vision and development plan for workforce reform. This group might consider setting subgroups to develop and monitor progress on e.g. pay and conditions, a strategy for on-going professional development for all, continuity and progression within and across qualifications at initial and post-graduate levels. See recommendations 2-31.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

Scottish Government recognises the value of a strategic group with oversight of the Quality agenda, particularly in the context of the commitment to expand funded ELC provision to 1140 hours per year by the end of the next Parliament.

To fulfil this role, we will retain the group which supported the Workforce Review, which will consider and discuss a range of issues linked to the recommendations of the Review.

This Group will also report to the Scottish Government Project Board we have established to oversee the planning for the expansion to the 1140 hours, to ensure that all work undertaken to implement Workforce Review recommendations is contextualized within the longer term workforce planning required.

In recognition of this changed and expanded remit, the group will be renamed as the Workforce and Quality Group.

Short-life sub-groups may be set up as required, to progress specific strands of work as indicated in the responses to a number of individual recommendations.

Scottish Government also announced in November 2015 the establishment of a new Early Learning and Childcare Strategic Forum to help develop the policy to expand to 1140 hours in a realistic, achievable and sustainable way. The forum will include representatives from the private, public and third sectors with parents also represented.

Recommendation 2: Share the international and Scottish literature review in this report which, amongst other things, details what is currently known about effective practice in ELC and Out of School Care with interested partners, stakeholders and practitioners. This could then be extended and updated so the evidence base within the review can be built upon, monitored and evaluated.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

Scottish Government agrees that this would be useful as a resource to add to the existing evidence base on early learning and out of school care.

We will explore how the Literature Review within the Workforce Review could be adapted and expanded upon to provide a new research resource to inform practice in Scotland, working with Scottish Government analysts and partners in IRISS.

We will also consider how the Literature Review could be adapted to meet the needs of specific audiences and, potentially, used as a resource for use in initial training and continuing professional development.

There is also wider work ongoing within Scottish Government to transform the collection of data on early learning and childcare – to meet current and future needs. A new Early Learning and Childcare Census Development Advisory Group has been established to consider how best to do so.

In addition, a Strategic Evidence Group has been established to oversee the development of wider research on implementation of early learning and childcare, including local authority consultation and delivery of choice and flexibility.

Recommendation 3: Consideration should be given to the specific needs of 2 year olds and 3 and 4 year olds in relation to their free entitlements (which could be extended to 30 hours in the future) and the consequent requirements for initial training courses, postgraduate courses and continued professional development in relation to both the children and their parents/carers.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

Scottish Government recognizes the importance of high quality early learning and childcare which is tailored to the needs of children at different stages of their development, and the importance of all staff working with children having the skills and knowledge to deliver that tailored provision. This is particularly true of those children from disadvantaged backgrounds, which is why the Scottish Government has committed to ensuring there will be an additional degree qualified staff member, whether that is a teacher or a Childhood Practitioner, in nurseries in the most economically deprived areas, from 2018.

To ensure that **all** staff working within early learning and out of school care have a sound understanding of children's different needs at the stages of baby, toddler and young child, the Scottish Government, in partnership with key bodies including Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate, developed the 'Building the Ambition' practice guidance, which supports the expansion of funded early learning and childcare places under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate have worked jointly to promote this guidance at both a strategic and service level, which has included internal joint staff training. Education Scotland has delivered training to local facilitators in all 32 local authorities and to national organisations such as the Scottish Childminding

Association, the Scottish Out of School Care Network, Early Years Scotland and the National Day Nurseries Association.

Education Scotland's offer of support to early learning and childcare practitioners, and teachers, which includes the professional learning community 'Glow!', online support materials and face to face engagement, is being further developed to assist practitioners in developing a deeper understanding of how they can help meet the needs of all children 0-5, including those with a free entitlement.

Support will be provided on making the links between 'Building the Ambition', 'Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families' and Curriculum for Excellence. This work will be embedded within the local partnership agreements Education Scotland has with local authorities and will include opportunities for inter-authority professional development to support the sharing and scaling up of highly effective practice.

The Care Inspectorate has registered an increase in places and opening hours, particularly new places for 2 year olds and has introduced a specific inspection focus area looking at outcomes for this age group. This will inform a national report reviewing the initial expansion. A more comprehensive national overview will then be produced after the first year of inspecting the outcomes of children in receipt of funded places.

In terms of supporting children with additional support needs: training for teachers and practitioners includes knowledge of the most common additional support needs for them to be able to support the child in question themselves or seek specialised information and specialised support if necessary.

In terms of broad guidance for all those working with children, young people and their families, the Common Core of Skills, published by Scottish Government in June 2012, is an important resource.

It describes the skills, knowledge and understanding, and values that everyone should have if they work with children, young people and their families, whether they are paid or volunteers.

The skills, knowledge and understanding are described as "essential characteristics" and are set out in two contexts: 'relationships with children, young people and families' and 'relationships between workers'. The essential characteristics are also explicitly cross-referenced to the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The values set out in the Common Core stem from the Getting it Right for Every Child approach.

The Common Core is important for the training and development of the entire children's workforce, and is a valuable resource for early learning and out of school care employers when planning for the deployment and development of staff. That is why Scottish Government is currently undertaking a refreshed programme of work aimed at promoting the guidance widely among all of those working with children.

The Workforce and Quality Group will consider whether there are any gaps in the current suite of qualifications and training for the entire early learning and childcare workforce in terms of the specific needs of children at different stages of their development. This will include looking at the needs of older children, using the analysis of such qualifications covered in the Learning About Play report (Audain and Shoolbread) shortly to be published by Scottish Government.

Recommendation 4: Currently a great many services, including representatives from health, social services, education and the third sector, are involved in EYC initiatives and planning across the sector. However, in some areas some stakeholders may have been overlooked, for example representatives from ELC staff within local schools, consideration should be given to redressing such omissions so that all could benefit from EYC.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

There is a range of improvement activity within the different services involved in the Early Years Collaborative (EYC), which spans the childhood journey from 0-8 years. All Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) have been encouraged to consider how they are engaging the whole of their children's services workforce to improve outcomes linked to local and national priorities.

CPPs have Programme Managers working with practitioners on the ground across the range of services involved in the EYC.

Using the improvement methodology, it is local practitioners that generate the ideas to test, measure, implement and scale up in relation to their services. The 'test of change' ideas are therefore very much led by practitioners at the local level and will depend on local priorities identified for improvement.

The Early Years Taskforce (EYTF) has established four Workstream Champions to help support CPPs, understand the barriers they face and to use the EYTF's extensive network to help improve the lives of Scotland's children and families.

Some CPPs are already bringing the work of the EYC together with Education, and to reflect on these links, the most recent EYC learning session was a joint learning session with Raising Attainment for All (RAFA).

Work has also been progressing in the development of Key Changes themes, which are the high impact interventions that can have the biggest effect on achieving the EYC stretch aims. The Key Change themes are:

- Early support for pregnancy and beyond
- Attachment, child development and learning
- Continuity of care in transitions
- 27-30 month child health review
- Parenting skills and family engagement to support learning
- Addressing child poverty
- Health and Wellbeing

- Play

A series of events have been held on the Key Changes and these have been well attended by practitioners from a variety of disciplines including ELC staff in schools.

In addition to the range of work ongoing with the Early Years Collaborative to drive cross-sectoral, integrated improvement activity, Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places a duty on each local authority and the relevant health board to jointly prepare a Children's Services Plan (CSP) for the area of the local authority covering a 3 year period and to jointly publish an annual report detailing how the provision of children's services and related services in that area have been provided in accordance with the CSP.

Under Part 3, Children's Services Plans will be required to provide for children's services both universal and targeted as well as providing children's services in a local area which: safeguard, promote and support wellbeing, prevention and early intervention, are integrated and make the best use of resources. Three year Children's Services Plans (CSPs), for the period 2017-20, meeting the requirements of Part 3 will be expected to be in place in April 2017.

Recommendation 5: Develop a national assessment framework system inclusive of the current CfE for ELC 0-6 which has the potential to be used by a range of early years' professionals and is sensitive to the Scottish stance on assessment. Accompanied by a recording system with the potential to follow the child and aid transitions.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

The consultation draft of the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education was launched on 1 September. The intention is that the Framework will bring together key information to evaluate performance and inform the actions to improve the attainment and wider outcomes for every child in Scotland.

The Framework builds on best practice within Curriculum for Excellence, including approaches to assessment, in using a range of data and evidence to report and plan improvements for children. From 2017 onwards, the Framework will be expanded, with a particular focus on the inclusion of the assessment of children's progress in early years, which builds on the assessment and development approaches currently in use across education and health.

Recommendation 6: The pilot of Raising Attainment for All (RAFA) has involved schools and LAs but there has not yet been involvement with the Out of School Care workforce, including childminders. Consideration should be given to involving them here as they would have an important contribution to make to children's wellbeing and social and academic success.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

Scottish Government accepts this timely recommendation, and will ensure that out of school care providers are more actively engaged in RAFA going forward.

Recommendation 7: The new Scottish College of Educational Leadership in collaboration with SSSC, should consider: first, consultation with the ELC and Out of School Care workforces to determine their specific requirements; and second, offer bespoke, focussed leadership courses for them, including leadership for learning and family support as part of the professional learning opportunities available through the Framework for Educational Leadership.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

SSSC is the body in Scotland with lead responsibility for workforce development for the early learning and out of school care workforce.

The SSSC is responsible for developing leadership capacity in Scotland's social services, through the '*Strategy for Building Leadership Capacity in Scotland's social services*'. The strategy is aimed at all levels of workers in all parts of the sector, public, voluntary and private. The SSSC's '*Step into Leadership*' website brings together a wide range of leadership tools and resources to support and promote leadership at all levels. The SSSC also works with the Scottish Leaders Forum and the Public Service Collaborative Learning network to facilitate the exchange of leadership expertise across all public services to ensure a consistent approach to leadership development.

SCEL are a relatively new organisation, with a stated aim to make a difference to the outcomes for children and young people through access to innovative and quality leadership programmes and services.

An important part of SCEL's remit is to develop coherence across existing professional learning/leadership programmes.

An important part of this work has been to develop a rigorous endorsement process, where providers of professional learning in leadership can apply to have their programmes endorsed by SCEL. Such programmes are then accessible through the Framework for Educational Leadership.

SCEL are currently conducting a scoping exercise to gather information about current provision for early learning and childcare practitioners in the area of leadership development.

Following completion of the scoping exercise, SCEL may seek to endorse a number of existing leadership programmes for early years leaders and practitioners who hold the Childhood Practice Award as a first step in order that these can be included and accessed via the Framework for Educational Leadership.

Going forward, SSSC and SCEL will ensure they work in partnership, in accordance with their recently developed statement of partnership working, to ensure that the

respective roles of each organisation are clearly defined in relation to developing any professional learning activities specifically for this group if there is an identified need.

Discussions are also underway with Education Scotland to work with both SCEL and SSSC on leadership development.

Recommendation 8: Special consideration should be given to the Care and Support theme used by the Care inspectorate (which links to the National Care Standard, 2009) to ensure that it is included in future inspections as well as in education, training and all qualifications designed to improve quality. There is a strong feeling within Scotland that the focus should be on early learning as well as childcare, and that the specific skills, attributes, dispositions and knowledge necessary to support early years professionals in improving children's learning and development leading to enhanced children's outcomes within this age group birth-6 is not overlooked.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

The Care Inspectorate's methodology is undergoing a change: from measuring provider inputs to assessing outcomes for children. This means that more priority is being given to the quality of Care and Support compared to other themes such as the quality of Environment.

The Care Inspectorate recognises that the quality of adult to child interaction and the strength of a child's relationship with their key worker is a key factor in determining whether children's needs are met and the quality of the service provided. Inspections are increasingly assessing and reporting on the quality of relationships in a service and the extent to which children are nurtured.

The current redesign of inspection methodology will consolidate this shift from measuring 'harder' technical inputs to 'softer' outcomes. Childminding inspection reports have already adopted a more outcome-based approach using the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators and children's daycare inspection reports will also change. In advance of this, the Care and Support theme for children's daycare has been enhanced by adding a specific focus area for 2 year olds.

The value of the Care and Support theme has been confirmed not only by the Care Inspectorate's review of methodology, but also by independent academic research in the form of the Growing Up in Scotland research. The key aspects of the Care and Support theme are being retained and enhanced as inspection methodology evolves. The Care Inspectorate will also discuss with SQA and SSSC the Care and Support theme and the Growing Up in Scotland research to inform the quality education, training and qualifications.

With regard to the current review of the National Care Standards, the Care Inspectorate will ensure that the key aspects of the Care and Support theme, and the principles underpinning it, are retained and enhanced. Although the terminology, format and content of the National Care Standards will change, it is important that this strength within the existing framework goes forward to the new model.

While in many settings this integrated approach has been embedded over many years, support is still required in others to help change the culture of those settings that previously viewed their role as being only care or education. The integration of care and learning is therefore a key message for all support and development work offered by Education Scotland, reinforcing the principles of 'Building the Ambition' and the aims of the Children and Young People Act.

Recommendation 9: There is a need for the further development of the evidence base of high quality practice relating to the Out of School Care workforce both within and beyond Scotland. Consideration should be given to this, so that the current Schools Out (2003) Framework can be extended to offer further guidance on effective practice. There is a need for the further development of the evidence base of high quality practice relating to the Out of School Care workforce both within and beyond Scotland. Consideration should be given to this, so that the current Schools Out (2003) Framework can be extended to offer further guidance on effective practice.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

The Scottish Government appreciates the vital role played by out of school care in contributing to improved outcomes for children, as well as providing a valuable service for working parents.

We will build on initial work undertaken in 2014 to investigate the existing evidence on OOSC to understand the characteristics of high quality care; and we will assess the viability for ongoing monitoring of OOSC in Scotland through our data collections for the future.

We will work with key stakeholders to scope and produce an updated Framework for all forms of out of school care, including childminding.

Recommendation 10: Further discussion at a national level of, and strategic professional development around, the term ELC to support the understanding of the importance of highly qualified, knowledgeable and effective ELC and Out of School practitioners.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

Scottish Government recognizes that the term "early learning and childcare" is a relatively new one, introduced through the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 to convey that nurture and learning are indivisible in the early years.

The national practice guidance 'Building the Ambition' sets out a clear definition of "early learning and childcare" for practitioners working with babies, toddlers and young children. The principle of integrated learning and care delivered across a wide range of settings is fully supported by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate and is central to current developments to support both practice and strategic development in the sector.

Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate will continue their work promoting 'Building the Ambition'. The united front adopted by the organisations is helping to ensure that this landmark publication gains currency and credibility across the early learning and childcare sector.

As well as raising awareness of 'Building the Ambition' on shared inspections and when they inspect services separately, Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate are also promoting the guidance in publications and at a strategic level through dialogues with umbrella organisations representing providers, local authorities and users. Education Scotland has also been carrying out capacity building with local authorities and national partners, to support implementation of the guidance.

The Care Inspectorate will ensure that the guidance is promoted in all its regulatory and scrutiny activity. For instance, the Registration Team will ensure that all new services have a good awareness and will promote its use as a helpful tool for service self-assessment, quality assurance and improvement.

The Scottish Government's vision for early years as articulated by the guidance extends beyond those services in partnership to provide funded places.

Therefore the Care Inspectorate is promoting the guidance in all its inspection activity. Childminders and out of school care are vital parts of the whole early learning and childcare system and are consequently being actively included.

Education Scotland is currently reviewing its self-evaluation for improvement frameworks. Following a period of consultation, 'The Child at the Centre' will be replaced in 2016 by 'How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare'. This new guidance will support improvement in all early learning and childcare settings for children aged 0-5 and will be aligned with the Care Inspectorate's self-evaluation.

The new guidance takes account of 'Building the Ambition, 'Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families' and Curriculum for Excellence. It will form an integral part of the suite of self-evaluation frameworks covering all stages of education and will be delivered through an online digital resource. This will ensure that additional materials to exemplify the indicators are current and reflect the improving environment for early learning and childcare.

Scottish Government will also develop guidance on early learning and childcare for parents, to raise awareness of what we would expect good practice to look like for children of all ages, and distribute this widely.

Recommendation 11: Compulsory training for Primary Head Teachers who have nursery and P1 classes in their schools, considering both why ELC is important for Scotland's future and what effective early years pedagogy and practice looks like and how this sets the foundations for learning for Curriculum for Excellence

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

To further support the existing skills and knowledge of primary head teachers on effective early years pedagogy, Scottish Government will ask the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) to work with the sector to identify any potential gaps in learning provision in this area, including theories of attachment and the importance of attachment for young children's development. Further to the completion of this scoping study we will then consider whether it is necessary to commission SCEL to develop programmes to meet this need.

In commissioning SCEL to consider the possible learning needs of senior school leaders in respect of ELC we are aware that the College has already contracted Dr Mary Wingrave, Programme Leader in Childhood Practice (BA and M.Ed.) from Glasgow University, to carry out a scoping exercise to look at the ways in which SCEL can support leadership development in the ELC workforce, as described in the response to recommendation 7. A separate scoping exercise, looking at what further support might be helpful, will be required for primary heads.

In terms of wider support for headteachers, in September 2015 the Scottish College for Educational Leadership introduced a new Qualification for Headship which has replaced the Scottish Qualification for Headship and the Flexible Route to Headship. The first element of the Masters qualification, called Into Headship, is currently being offered by seven universities and 147 teachers have now started the programme. Into Headship aims to ensure aspirant headteachers are supported to develop and continue to build the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding required of senior leaders. The qualification is aimed at those teachers whose next post will be that of a headteacher, likely to be within 2/3 years.

Recommendation 12: SSSC in collaboration with associate bodies and other stakeholders to consider the development of standards for or guidance on the core skills, attributes, dispositions and knowledge that would be appropriate for practitioner and support workers within the ELC and Out of school workforces to achieve.

The Scottish Government does not accept this recommendation

The Scottish Government is satisfied that the standards and guidance which are already in place are sufficiently robust.

National Occupational Standards (NOS) are benchmark statements which describe the knowledge, skills and values an individual is expected to demonstrate in a given area of practice. They are written in consultation with employers and stakeholders.

The SSSC has responsibility for the development, maintenance and review of standards relating to all job roles in the social service sector. This function is carried out in SSSC's role as the Scottish partner in Skills for Care and Development, the Sector Skills Council for the care sector in the UK. NOS are used in a number of ways including job descriptions, performance management and supervision/career progression.

The SSSC engages with the sector to identify skill sets based on NOS for different groups of workers practicing within different contexts and at different levels of complexity and responsibility.

The SSSC is responsible for developing other occupational benchmark standards including Childhood Practice. Standards are developed in Scotland in the context of the duty through the Regulation for Care (Scotland) Act 2001 – ‘promoting education and training’. The SSSC regularly reviews standards used by the sector. The Benchmark Standard for Childhood Practice is currently under review.

All Scottish Vocational Qualifications and Apprentice Frameworks used by the social service sector in Scotland are based on the National Occupational Standards and are required to be evidenced within qualifications accepted for registration with the SSSC.

In addition, each part of the Register includes a clear role descriptor.

Recommendation 13: Consider making induction or pre-registration training a requirement for registration to provide a childminding service under the Public Services Reform Act.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

The Care Inspectorate is the body which registers and inspects childminders.

Therefore, the Scottish Government has asked the Care Inspectorate to scope a framework for an induction programme and continuous professional framework for childminders in light of this recommendation, in recognition of the importance of making high quality training available to childminders at the beginning of, and throughout, their careers.

Care Inspectorate will take this work forward, working with key partners including SCMA, SSSC and Education Scotland.

Recommendation 14: Consider including childminders (but in particular community childminders; those commissioned to deliver 600 hours of ELC and those providing specialist high quality services) on the same register with the same conditions as the majority of the ELC workforce, i.e. with SSSC, and invest in and build on these services.

The Scottish Government does not accept this recommendation

Current legislation prevents childminders from being registered by the SSSC because they are registered as a service provider with the Care Inspectorate.

It is the view of Scottish Government that it would be over-burdensome for self-employed individuals to be required to register twice - once with SSSC and once with the Care Inspectorate, who conduct inspections of childminding services.

An unintended consequence of requiring SSSC registration could be that this puts off some individuals from continuing to childmind or applying to register – a situation which Scottish Government would not wish to see, as they provide an invaluable service to many families.

The spirit of this recommendation is that it aims to promote access to appropriate learning and development opportunities. We welcome this aspiration, and we know there is a great deal of enthusiasm among childminders to enhance their professional status and their distinctive contribution working with children of all ages.

However, we believe that this can be done in other ways such as through scoping a framework for an induction programme and continuous professional framework, which we have asked the Care Inspectorate to take forward - as set out in the response to recommendation 13.

In future, when developing a new continuous professional framework for childminders, we will work with the SSSC, SCMA and Care Inspectorate to build in milestones indicating a suggested pathway for childminders to attain suitable relevant qualifications and CPD, linked to SSSC's Code of Practice.

We will also work with the Workforce and Quality Group to identify further measures that could be taken to support childminders' learning and access to qualifications throughout their careers.

Recommendation 15: Consider teachers working within ELC settings and how their professional relationships with the rest of the ELC workforce might be developed in positive directions. Scottish Government to take the lead, working with SNCT and open up discussions and debate around working conditions that are more flexible so that they are more suitable to the ELC working conditions in settings that are not schools. Some additional agreements regarding flexibility of working conditions, as well as possible career progressions, might need to be mapped out, if the role of the teacher working face to face with children under five years is to continue.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

Scottish Government values the role of teachers working within early learning and childcare settings and remains committed to ensuring all those children benefitting from the funded entitlement have access to a teacher.

The First Minister announced in October 2015 that from 2018, all nurseries in deprived areas should have an additional graduate with early learning and childcare expertise working with young children. The expectation is that this will be either a teacher or a holder of the BA Childhood Practice degree, in recognition that both of these professionals can effectively support young children's learning and development.

Scottish Government continues to fund the universities of Aberdeen and Strathclyde to deliver early years-specific Masters qualifications for primary teachers, to provide opportunities for teachers to specialize. We will explore with other Teacher Education Institutions whether there is scope to develop similar courses across Scotland.

In terms of teachers' terms and conditions: these are a matter for the SNCT to determine. Any future discussions around flexibility would need to be considered through the SNCT.

Recommendation 16: This recommendation relates to Recommendation 8 and the recurrent theme within Scotland of concern about focussing on supporting the learning and development of young children. The recent GUS report showed links between the Care and Support theme used within Care Inspections and children's outcomes. Analysis of the standards underpinning those inspections highlighted the content of section 4 of the current National Care Standards (2009) as fundamental to the Care and Support theme. Consideration should therefore be given to retaining the content of this section during any revision of the Care Standards.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

See response to Recommendation 8. Standard 4 of the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16, "Engaging with Children", currently forms the core element of the Care and Support theme, which will be retained. The development of inspection methodology based on the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators is giving more weight to the quality of adult to child interaction.

Recommendation 17: Consider formalising and simplifying the current inspections position. Currently ELC settings can receive one shared inspection from two different bodies coming together, with either a joint education and care inspection or one inspection conducted by one single inspectorate body for ELC. This would better articulate with Scottish policy thrust of the ELC that care and education are inseparable and cannot be viewed separately.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

There is a range of activity ongoing on the part of both inspectorates to facilitate streamlined and complementary inspection programmes.

The Care Inspectorate has a legal duty to regulate and inspect all registered care services providing both funded and non-funded early learning and childcare under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010. The Act provides the Care Inspectorate with the powers to regulate all care services but also a duty of furthering improvement in the quality of services. The inspections of childminding and daycare of children's services providing early learning and childcare focus on outcomes for children using national guidance with a particular focus on the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators to evaluate how the service is meeting and promoting outcomes for children and their families.

The inspections also provide opportunities for staff, parents and external agencies to engage with Care Inspectorate staff to support improvement in services and the development of a quality assurance framework for continuous improvement. The inspection teams can also include “inspection volunteers” who provide an enhanced service user perspective to the process. The findings of the individual inspections contribute to the findings of our inspections of Children’s Services with Community Planning Partnerships providing support to agencies to plan and develop children’s services within an area.

Education Scotland has powers to inspect services funded to provide early learning and childcare under the Education (Scotland) Act. These inspections provide an independent evaluation of the quality of educational provision and promote improvement and innovation to enhance children’s experiences and lead to better outcomes. To support improvement, inspectors focus on the quality of children’s learning and achievement. There is a particular interest in the development of children’s understanding in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing. Education Scotland inspections of early learning and childcare settings also provide an opportunity for setting staff to participate in high level professional dialogue about their practice and how its supports improved outcomes for children.

Education Scotland inspections of early learning and childcare settings are undertaken both by Her Majesty’s Inspectors and by Associate Assessors. Recognised for their expertise and the contribution they can make to improvement, Associate Assessors are drawn from across early learning and childcare in Scotland, at both strategic and practice levels. There is a clear expectation that the experience they gain from working with Education Scotland is taken back to their organisation and shared with colleagues to further improve practice.

Education Scotland inspections can result in a number of outcomes for settings. These include the opportunity to work with Education Scotland to share highly effective and innovative practice to support national improvement, or the opportunity to further engage with local authority and Education Scotland officers to secure improvements in provision.

The unique blend of scrutiny and support offered by Education Scotland contributes to national, local and setting improvement. Education Scotland staff work closely with setting and local authority staff to build capacity. The involvement of Associate Assessors employed by local authorities and third sector organisations supports the scaling up of effective practice and builds capacity in stakeholder organisations.

Education Scotland staff work closely with Scottish Government policy officers to ensure that intelligence gathered from inspection and improvement work is used to support future evidence-based policy development.

Where Education Scotland is inspecting an early learning and childcare service, wherever possible this is undertaken on a shared basis with the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland inspecting together. These inspections are undertaken in an efficient manner using the shared inspection resources.

With regard to shared inspections, the two organisations have made recent changes to streamline and simplify the process. For example, all paperwork is jointly badged

and the planning process is more co-ordinated to reduce the inspection burden. A current review of the shared inspection process will result in further streamlining, including a reduction in duplication with regard to pre-inspection information required of providers.

Regarding self-assessment, the two bodies will work together to ensure that the Care Inspectorate's self-assessment tool is aligned with Education Scotland's new "How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare Setting?" resource.

Shared follow-up inspections will also be piloted. This will be part of a wider review developing an inspection model involving more continuous engagement with providers, with data sharing replacing the need for one-off requests for information from providers.

The ongoing review and development of shared approaches to the inspection of early learning and childcare centres which has been a feature of the partnership working between Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate in recent years, is informing the wider review of inspection being undertaken by Education Scotland at present.

To date, Education Scotland has only evaluated the quality of early learning and childcare delivered to children aged 3-5 in centre-based settings, although they have always commented on the quality of provision for children under 3. Specific development work by Education Scotland, in partnership with a range of stakeholders including the Care Inspectorate, is underway to develop quality assurance models for the full range of settings providing the entitlement to early learning and childcare.

The Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland remain committed to working together on all aspects of inspection activity for early learning and childcare to ensure maximum alignment and reduced burden on the sector.

Recommendation 18: SQA and SSSC together with associated bodies and stakeholders to consider relooking at the structure of all qualifications for ELC and Out of School Care that they quality assure and accredit. They may like to add to the core units and assessments of the awards as appropriate so that they better reflect the main business of the settings in which the student learners work. This should improve their ability to support learners in developing high quality relationships and interactions with children which promote wellbeing, extend thinking and concept development.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

The Scottish Government, SQA and SSSC recognise the importance of ensuring regular maintenance, review and development of early learning and childcare qualifications, to ensure they remain up-to-date and fit for purpose for those who work within different sectors e.g. early learning and childcare, out of school care and residential childcare.

To ensure this, SQA regularly host stakeholder meetings with membership from SSSC, employers including private and third sector providers, Senior External

Verifiers, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Further Education (FE) and training providers where these issues are discussed on a regular basis.

In addition, SQA have contact with and consult early learning and childcare centres through a variety of media to ensure they are aware of any concerns about the fit between the qualifications and the needs of the sector.

SQA also plan, in late 2015, to engage with early learning and childcare centres supporting staff to undertake the SVQ route to becoming qualified as practitioners. The purpose of this will be to support centres in advising SVQ candidates how to capture and provide evidence of the knowledge they will need, specific to the context they are working in (e.g. early learning and childcare, residential childcare).

The current revised SVQ qualification structures were introduced in 2014. They reflect the desire expressed by the sector to enable flexibility within and across early learning and childcare settings and establish parity of knowledge and skills among the workforce. The SVQs are set at a greater level of complexity and volume of learning than the predecessor qualifications.

When undertaking a mandatory or optional SVQ unit, learners are required to demonstrate that they have applied knowledge and understanding to practice in their workplace so ensuring learning is context-specific to the setting in which they practice. This, therefore, differentiates between early learning and childcare and, for example, out of school care.

Every SVQ unit specifies that learners must relate a number of underpinning areas of knowledge and understanding to their practice. These areas include 'Rights', 'Practice' and 'Theory for Practice'.

Scottish Government will work with the Workforce and Quality Group to determine whether further work is needed to strengthen the emphasis within SVQs on early childhood development for those working in ELC settings in particular.

Recommendation 19: If children's outcomes are to be supported and enhanced, consideration should be given to ensuring that there are highly qualified and knowledgeable practitioners in all ELC settings who lead learning and support families with the home learning environment. Given the continued demise of teachers in the sector, development of more creative and new initial, graduate degrees designed for practitioners leading learning in ELC could enable this. Every strong profession has a good initial graduate route/s. This should not threaten the work-based childhood practice degree programme or discourage further and higher educational institutions from offering their initial degree programmes to work-based practitioners through more creative, flexible delivery options.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

The Scottish Government accepts that it is positive to have a variety of routes into early learning and childcare as a career, and will consider the scope to pilot a new initial degree on early childhood learning/development, which could also cover the

importance of the home learning environment as highlighted in the recommendation, working with the Workforce and Quality Group.

We know that there is an existing initial BA degree, for those who already hold the HNC Early Education and Childcare, offered by the University of the West of Scotland. We will consider with the Workforce and Quality Group whether there is scope to develop further innovative initial qualifications at other institutions.

Recommendation 20: Consider introducing an early years specific teacher training at both initial (0-6 with specialisms in both 0-3 and 3-6) and postgraduate levels which are resources and supported on a par with primary school courses.

The Scottish Government does not accept this recommendation

Scottish Government remains committed to ensuring all children receiving the funded early learning and childcare entitlement have access to a teacher. We have also committed to ensuring that all nurseries in the most deprived areas will have an additional graduate with expertise in early learning and childcare working face to face with children by 2018, whether that is a teacher or a Childhood Practitioner.

We are continuing to invest in early years Masters courses for primary teachers at the universities of Strathclyde and Aberdeen, and will explore whether there is scope to work with Teacher Education Institutions to develop further early years Masters across Scotland as set out in the response to recommendation 15.

In addition, we will scope whether there is a need to support early years training for primary headteachers, as set out in the response to recommendation 11.

However, we do not consider that introducing an early years specific teaching degree is necessary, given the opportunities which already exist for providing teachers with the opportunity to specialize in early years, including the Masters qualifications outlined above, and the joint early years/primary teaching degree which has been offered at the University of Stirling for some years.

Scottish Government considers that an early years specific teaching degree could potentially restrict the career options of teachers, who would only be able to work in nurseries and early primary rather than the current situation where they can also work across primaries 1-7. However, we will explore with the Workforce and Quality Group whether there is a need to look again at, and potentially increase, the level of early years content within the initial primary teaching degree, including the scope to look at coverage of the needs of children in the pre-3 age range.

Recommendation 21: Consider offering conversion and upskilling courses for current primary trained teachers, who have the existing 3-12 teaching award but who do not feel confident to teach younger children, such as the well-known Froebel training. These courses could be linked to vacancies available.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

As set out in the responses to recommendations 15 and 20, Scottish Government funds early years Masters qualifications at the universities of Strathclyde and

Aberdeen for primary teachers, and will explore the scope to work with Teacher Education Institutions to develop further qualifications of this type.

In terms of career-long learning for teachers: we recognise the value of locally developed approaches to providing CPD on early learning, and would encourage local authorities, working with national partners, to consider developing training options on the basis of the needs and priorities of the early learning and childcare workforce within their local areas.

In terms of building on the available resources for all practitioners on what high quality practice looks like; as set out in the response to recommendation 2, Scottish Government will explore how the Literature Review within the Workforce Review could be adapted and expanded upon, for use, potentially, in initial training and continuing professional development.

Recommendation 22: Universities and other Higher Education Institutions should consider the range of courses they offer for ELC, as well as offering initial graduate routes of high quality such as the one at Stirling University; there should be an increase in Masters routes which include a strong research component.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

We know that universities already offer a range of courses on early learning and childcare. This includes the joint primary teaching/early years degree offered by the University of Stirling, as referenced in the recommendation, and the BA Childhood Studies offered by the University of the West of Scotland, open to students who already hold the HNC in Early Education and Childcare.

Scottish Government funds the universities of Aberdeen and Strathclyde to deliver early years-specific Masters qualifications for primary teachers, to provide opportunities for teachers to specialize. These qualifications include a research component and are intended to give students the skills to apply academic research into their practice.

Over and above existing provision, as set out in the response to recommendation 19, Scottish Government will consider the scope to pilot a new initial degree on early childhood learning/development, working with the Workforce and Quality Group. We will also, as set out in the responses to recommendations 15, 20 and 21, explore with Teacher Education Institutions the scope to extend the spread of Masters-level qualifications in the early years learning across Scotland.

Recommendation 23: SQA and SSSC should consider making further checks on the effectiveness of training, assessment and qualifications providers to ensure standards and comparability. Emphasis could be placed on ensuring diversity of experiences within good and excellent settings and time given from reflection, planning and reading.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

SQA currently employs a variety of checks on the effectiveness of assessment, verification and qualifications providers to ensure standards and comparability. These include:

- External verification (subject and systems)
- Qualification Support Team activity
- Customer Support networking days with workshops to support, guide and advise centres on assessment and verification covering a wide range of topics including: standardisation of practice, continuous professional development, assessment planning, preparation for assessment, understanding and capturing common knowledge etc.
- Robust approval process as set out on SQA's website
http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/Systems_and_Qualification_Approval_Guide_2014.pdf

Work is also ongoing within SQA to look at improving processes for entries and certification with centres.

In order to facilitate further improvements to quality assurance, Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate have pledged to share the findings from their inspections with SQA, SSSC and initial training providers on a pro-active basis going forward, where there are concerns about the quality of practitioners' training and how well they are meeting the development needs of children at different stages.

Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate will establish a regular dialogue with SQA and SSSC in order to give feedback regarding course content as well as individual training providers.

The SSSC will also build on their existing support for SQA's quality assurance role to ensure their quality assurance of the programmes they approve address the points made in this recommendation.

Recommendation 24: More collaboration and communication is desirable amongst the qualifications bodies to ensure better understanding of each other's course content, core training needs and developing continuity and progression within and across courses, both initial and postgraduate. A key stakeholder group facilitating, including relevant bodies such as SSSC, such communication should be established to advise future directions, convened by the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

Scottish Government will work with the Workforce and Quality Group to identify whether better communication between the qualifications bodies, and those who offer training for different practitioners working within the early learning and out of school care workforces, is needed, and whether that could be achieved using existing groups and networks, or whether a new group is needed.

Recommendation 25: Develop and recommend a national pay scale for ELC and Out of School Care which should be adopted by all Local Authority provision and highly recommended to the third sector who serve funded children. This is likely to necessitate a review of funding of children's entitlement in ELC within the private and third sector. All practitioners should be entitled to a living wage or above rather than a minimum wage.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

The Scottish Government recognises that low pay can be a particular problem within the early learning and childcare sector.

For this reason, we welcome this recommendation.

Scottish Government does not set pay for those working within the local authority sector: this is determined by individual local authorities.

However, the Scottish Government fully supports the principles of the Living Wage campaign, and we encourage every organisation, regardless of size, sector and location, to ensure all staff receive a fair level of pay.

There are currently a number of Scotland-based childcare providers who are Accredited Living Wage Employers. We are aware of the pressures on the sector and are keen to engage with providers on the specific support that might helpfully be provided to them in future through the Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative.

In relation to out of school care: SOSCN has developed a recommended pay scale and, as a Living Wage employer, recommends to its sector that it should pay at least the Living Wage.

Recommendation 26: Review remuneration over time for those who have worked to achieve their BA in Childhood Practice or those who in the future enter the profession with appropriate degree level qualifications.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

Remuneration for those members of the workforce who hold the BA Childhood Practice degree is a matter for employers. We would expect employers to offer an appropriate rate of remuneration for those working as managers within early learning and childcare settings.

Recommendation 27: Language is powerful in influencing people's attitudes and views. For this reason, the term practitioner should be reviewed as in a lay person's views it is unlikely to be associated with someone who is professional or a leading expert in their sector. The Early Years Division should consult the sector and find a more suitable term.

The Scottish Government does not accept this recommendation

The Scottish Government supports the use of the term "practitioner" for those working within the early learning and childcare sector: this is widely understood and accepted as describing those working within the sector, and links to registration with the SSSC.

However, it is for local authorities to determine whether they wish to consider introducing different terms within their areas; we know that some areas use the term "early years educator" as they feel this better reflects the work undertaken.

We will work with key partners including SSSC and Skills Development Scotland to raise awareness of the range of tasks carried out by those working as practitioners at all levels of the early learning and childcare workforce, to increase the level of public awareness and understanding of what this vitally important job entails.

Recommendation 28: LAs should consider bringing LA and partnership settings together to support planning and management of the ELC and Out of School workforces together in a more integrated way.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation in part

Local authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that parents of 3 and 4 year olds, and eligible 2 year olds, are offered 600 hours per year of funded early learning and childcare. This can be delivered through their own provision or through entering into partnership with private or voluntary settings. Decisions concerning workforce planning to deliver the entitlement also rest with local authorities.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 introduced a requirement for local authorities to consult with representative populations of parents on how the funded entitlement could be delivered in a way that best meets their needs.

Scottish Government will consult with existing networks of local authority and partner providers to scope how best to ensure workforce planning underpins the provision of flexible early learning and childcare, and involves all the relevant partners.

Recommendation 29: Guidance needs to be prepared and disseminated to career service advisors and those responsible in secondary schools for supporting young people with career choices to ensure that they understand the importance of the work and rigours of the qualifications and day to day challenges in professions related to ELC. The care and education of young children requires a professional and suitably qualified workforce in the same way as it does for those working with older children.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

The Scottish Government agrees that it is vital for young people coming into the early learning and out of school care workforces to be fully informed as to the rigours and challenges, as well as the opportunities and rewards, of choosing a career in these sectors.

There is work ongoing, via the implementation of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, to revise the Standard for Careers Guidance, which will give young people improved information about the career which best suits them.

In relation to early learning and out of school care specifically: the SSSC is currently working with Skills Development Scotland and Jobcentre Plus on promoting careers in care, and on developing a variety of apprenticeships to improve access. The SSSC has developed with UK partners the resource "A Question of Care" which is an online resource to help people considering working in the sector identify whether they have the right attributes.

The SSSC has also developed a network of Career Ambassadors who are people working in the sector who are able to engage with schools, Jobcentres and others to explain what work in the care sector entails.

Scottish Government will strengthen this existing activity by working with Skills Development Scotland and the SSSC to raise awareness further throughout the

careers service and within schools/colleges and training providers of the requirements around qualifications for early learning and out of school care, and the skills and aptitudes needed, as well as the potential career paths open to practitioners, working with early learning and childcare employers.

We will also work with Skills Development Scotland, SSSC, the Workforce and Quality Group, Scottish Funding Council and equalities organisations to scope what more can be done to promote early learning and out of school care as careers for men. These workforces are currently extremely gender-segregated, as recognised by Professor Siraj in her report, and Scottish Government considers it would have a range of societal benefits to improve the gender balance, as well as providing a positive career path for men with the skills and aptitudes to support children's learning and care.

Recommendation 30: Further evaluation and research is needed to consider the impact of Out of School Care and also Childminding on children's outcomes in Scotland. In addition, further research considering the impact of ELC and Out of School Care for children from disadvantaged and/or with additional learning needs in Scotland would be beneficial.

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

The Scottish Government accepts that further evidence on the impact of out of school care and childminding on children's outcomes would be valuable.

To progress this recommendation, the Care Inspectorate will interrogate its existing grading data and analyse its regulatory findings in more detail with regard to OSC and childminding. This will identify the factors affecting quality outcomes and what makes some services work better than others. For example, OSC is provided in a range of forms in different local authority areas and a more detailed analysis of grading will allow conclusions to be drawn regarding quality. A similar analysis of existing data will be carried out for childminding.

In response to this recommendation, the Care Inspectorate is also planning to introduce a specific OSC Inspection Focus Area for the next inspection year in order to increase the evidence base on impact of OSC.

While Education Scotland does not have a duty to inspect OSC provision in Scotland, OSC may be presented during the inspection of learning communities and wraparound services run in ELC settings. As such, its contribution is assessed and contributes to the overall evaluation of provision for learners within the community. This evidence can be interrogated and used to support future work in this area.

In addition, the Scottish Government will explore the scope to commission further academic research on the impact of OSC and childminding on children, linked to the scoping exercise of existing evidence we will undertake on OSC, set out in the response to recommendation 9.

Recommendation 31: Further research is needed to consider the inspection process and how this links to children's outcomes, this would support the further development of inspection indicators, as well as ensure that inspections support improvement and continue to inform future policy direction

The Scottish Government accepts this recommendation

Scottish Government agrees that further research on the links between the inspection process and children's outcomes would be helpful.

Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate inspect against a number of quality indicators and quality themes which have been carefully considered to provide evidence of providers' effectiveness in supporting improved outcomes. Both organisations are currently involved in significant reviews of their inspection methodology which will include further consideration of this.

Scottish Government will consider, together with the inspection bodies, whether there is scope for further specific research to be carried out through the ongoing Growing Up in Scotland longitudinal study. For example, further research could look in more detail at the correlation between inspection findings and outcomes for children attending the services inspected. This could identify how inspection can make a difference to improving services and outcomes for children. This could inform the development of the National Care Standards and the Care Inspectorate's inspection indicators.



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