

# SPACE TO GROW

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Government

Design guidance for early learning  
and childcare and out of school  
care settings

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# MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

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The near doubling of the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) entitlement in Scotland to 1,140 hours per year from August 2020 is one of the most important and transformative changes we are making during the current Parliamentary term.

On 23 March 2017 I published 'A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland - 2017-18 Action Plan', which commits us to a series of actions in 2017-18 to ensure that this ambitious expansion is rooted in a high quality experience for our children, and to support our delivery partners in creating the additional capacity required, all underpinned by the principles of Quality, Flexibility, Accessibility and Affordability.



Quality is indeed the golden thread that runs through the heart of this expansion, encompassing all aspects of ELC provision – from staff, curriculum, delivery models and, crucially, ELC settings and environments both indoor and outdoor, which research shows are a key factor in improving learning outcomes for children.

The first of the 2017-18 Action Plan commitments to be delivered is the publication of Space to Grow – good design guidance for all ELC settings, existing and planned, which promotes the adoption of good design principles as an integral part of this expansion. The guide clarifies what local authorities and other providers of ELC need to think about in terms of good design when creating or redeveloping ELC settings. It will also support local authorities in the preparation of their expansion plans.

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# MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

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Through the case studies and other illustrations of what exciting and innovative things are already happening around the country, and further afield, the guide suggests that applying good design principles and approaches within ELC settings needn't cost the earth, and can make a real difference to the quality of the experience for children, staff, parents and others.

This guidance will therefore act as a key tool for providers, planners, architects, designers and others when collaborating on the building, extending or refurbishing of ELC and out of school care services - encouraging innovative, new approaches and, quite literally, more thinking outside of the box.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Care Inspectorate and Scottish Futures Trust for all their work in bringing this helpful guide to fruition, and commend its publication as an important step on the road towards the expansion of ELC from August 2020.



**Mark McDonald**  
Minister for Childcare  
and Early Years  
June 2017

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# CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOREWORD

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I am delighted the Care Inspectorate has had the opportunity to work in a collaborative way with a range of stakeholders to produce this important resource which will support all early learning and childcare providers, and the out of school care sector, develop new and innovative environments for children to grow and develop in.

Care services, including early learning and childcare and out of school care settings, play a hugely important role in the lives of thousands of children across Scotland.

Expanding early learning and childcare plays a vital role in delivering national outcomes and in making Scotland the best place to grow up.



Already children, including some of the very youngest and those older children who attend out of school care, spend considerable time in these settings and we can expect to see that time increase in the future as the Scottish Government achieves its ambition for every three and four year old and eligible two year-old to receive 1,140 hours of quality early learning and childcare. As the Care Inspectorate works closely with care providers to support improvement, our focus will be on the quality of the individual experiences of children, and the impact the environment can contribute to positive outcomes for children. We will continue to base our evaluations of how well individual children and families' needs are met and not be constrained by conventional approaches.

The Care Inspectorate will, as always, take account of best practice guidance, but our primary focus will be on working flexibly with providers to support innovation and improvement in the delivery of high quality early learning and childcare that achieves the best possible outcomes for children.

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# CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOREWORD

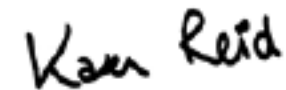
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In order for that to happen, we know that the environment children experience in their care setting needs to meet their needs. The right environment can have a positive impact on child development and improve learning outcomes for children.

Scotland's new Health and Social Care Standards launched in June 2017 are an outcomes-focused way of describing the experiences that children should have as a result of their early learning and childcare. Rather than describing what providers must do, they set out what young people should experience.

As expectations and understandings of quality provision change over time, this gives the national standards longevity, and makes the need for this resource even more important. The Care Inspectorate will work with providers and other partners to establish best practice guidance based on evidence and research to support the implementation of the standards.

I welcome this new guidance which will help care services better meet the needs of children, and I am delighted for the Care Inspectorate to have been so heavily involved in its production. It will be a key document in our scrutiny and improvement work, and I would like to sincerely thank all those who have given of their time to produce it.



**Karen Reid**  
Chief Executive  
Care Inspectorate

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# INTRODUCTION

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In October 2016, the Scottish Government launched the consultation; 'A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland'. The consultation set out a vision for increasing the entitlement to free early learning and childcare to 1,140 hours per year by 2020, for all three and four year olds and eligible two year olds. This supports the Scottish Government's national priorities of giving all children the best start in life and making Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.<sup>1</sup> The provision of universally accessible and high quality early learning childcare establishes the skills and confidence children need throughout their care and learning journey, and as such is a cornerstone for closing attainment and inequality gaps.

A key principle underpinning the expansion of early learning and childcare entitlement to 1,140 hours is the considerable increase in the quantity of funded early learning and childcare hours will not be delivered at the expense of quality.<sup>2</sup>

The priorities of early learning and childcare provision are to:

- Improve outcomes for children, especially those who are more vulnerable or disadvantaged; and
- Support parents to work, train or study, especially those who need routes into sustainable employment and out of poverty.<sup>3</sup>

These priorities align with the Scottish Government early learning and childcare expansion programme objectives of Quality, Flexibility, Affordability and Accessibility.

- **Quality** – the expansion will ensure a high quality experience for all children, complementing other early years and educational activity to close the attainment gap, and recognises the value of those we entrust to give our children the best start in life.
- **Flexibility** – the expansion will support more parents and carers in work, training or study, through greater choice of provider and patterns of provision that are better aligned with working patterns whilst delivering this in a way that ensures a high quality experience for the child.

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1. <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/early-years>

2. Scottish Government (2016) A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Years and Childcare in Scotland

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00507518.pdf>

3. <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/early-years>

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# INTRODUCTION

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- **Accessibility** – early learning and childcare capacity is sufficient and is as conveniently geographically located as possible – particularly in areas of higher deprivation and in rural communities – to support families and enable parents and carers to work, train and study, while also appropriately meeting the needs of children who require additional support and parents who request ELC through the medium of Gaelic.
- **Affordability** – the expansion will increase access to affordable ELC which will help to reduce barriers to participating in the labour market which parents and carers face.

The design guidance was initiated as a result of the expansion in early learning and childcare, but should also be useful for out of school care settings. This acknowledges and recognises the important part out of school care has in providing care, play and learning opportunities for school-age children and also supporting their parents to work, train or study.

This resource delivers on the Scottish Government's Programme for Government commitment to develop good design guidance which will support the delivery of high quality early learning and childcare as part of the expansion.



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# PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE

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## Why is this guidance important?

Already, children spend considerable time within early learning and childcare settings. The current entitlement is for all children aged three and four years olds and eligible two year olds to have 600 hours of funded early learning and childcare per year. The expansion means that children will be entitled to receive 1,140 hours of funded early learning and childcare per year from August 2020. Children therefore will be spending more time in early learning and childcare settings, and as such, the environment needs to be of a high quality to support positive outcomes for children. Research confirms that the environment can have both a positive impact on child development<sup>4</sup> and improve learning outcomes for children.<sup>5</sup> Early learning and childcare and out of school care settings must be provided from an environment

4. Elardo, R., Bradley, R., & Caldwell, B.M., (1975) *Relation of Infants Home Environments to Mental Test Performance from 6 to 36 Months-Longitudinal Analysis*. Child Development Vol. 46 (1)
5. Olds, Rui Anita. (2000). *Child Care Design Guide: The Ultimate Day Care Centre Design Source* McGraw-Hill. New York.

which is fit for purpose<sup>6</sup> and positively supports children to access play and learning opportunities that will impact on their development, health and well-being and happiness. The environment is also important to both parents<sup>7</sup> and providers.<sup>8</sup> This is a view which is supported by a recent survey carried out by the Care Inspectorate, where 69% of parents said the environment was one of the main factors when choosing the service for their child.<sup>9</sup> It is also supported by the Scottish Government's Play Strategy:

6. Scottish Government (2002), *The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services)(Scotland) Regulations* [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2002/114/pdfs/ssi\\_20020114\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2002/114/pdfs/ssi_20020114_en.pdf)
7. Parents: 1757 out a sample of 2,547. This survey data was gathered as part of the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Futures Trust Design Principles consultation exercise. March 2017
8. Berris, R. & Miller, E. (2011) *How design of the physical environment impacts early learning: educators and parents perspectives*. Australasian Journal of Early Childhood. Vol.36
9. Or 1757 from 2748 parents in the survey sample. This survey data was part of the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Futures Trust Design Principles consultation exercise. March 2017

**'High quality play opportunities, and provision of a physical and social environment that supports play, increase the likelihood of improved outcomes for children and lessen the impact of factors that lead to poorer outcomes.'**<sup>10</sup>

and Health and Social Care Standards:

**'I experience a high quality environment if the organisation provides the premises.'**<sup>11</sup>

This guidance aims to maximise the positive experiences for children and improve the quality of care and learning by helping settings to think about innovative design through adopting a child centred approach.

10. Scottish Government (2013) *Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision* <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0042/00425722.pdf>
11. Scottish Government (2017) *Health and Social Care Standards* <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

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# PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE

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This guidance will act as a tool for providers, planners and architects when planning or extending early learning and childcare and out of school care settings. It should help to inform any new infrastructure created or refurbished as part of the expansion. It will provide parents, children and members of the public with information and standards about the positive impact that the environment can provide. The guidance will also inform the Care Inspectorate in their duty of scrutiny and improvement to support innovation and to propagate good practice.

Although the guidance provides insights into what constitutes good design – it acknowledges that all environments are different and diverse. The focus should remain on the impact the environment has on improving outcomes for children.

Finally, it is understood that good design continuously evolves, with innovative solutions constantly being sought as to how to enhance environments in areas such as: space; maximising finite resources; the best use of outdoor space; sustainability; and how the physical environment can help contribute to the best outcomes for Scotland’s children. As such, it is anticipated that this guidance will also evolve as new solutions and new approaches to innovative delivery of settings are identified, allowing these to be incorporated and shared across the sector.

## Definitions

### What is an early learning and childcare setting?

Early learning and childcare is defined as a service, consisting of education and care, of a kind which is suitable in the ordinary case for children who are under school age, regard being had to the importance of interactions and other experiences which support learning and development in a caring and nurturing environment.<sup>12</sup>

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12. <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/early-years>

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# PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE

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## What is an out of school care settings?

Out of school care is the provision of a safe, caring environment offering a range of active, stimulating and restful activities for school age children before and after school, and during holidays.<sup>13</sup>

## What will you find in this document?

The guidance is written with a focus on achieving positive outcomes for children and families through high quality environments. It is underpinned by the following international and national legislation, policy and guidance:

- Health and Social Care Standards<sup>14</sup>
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>15</sup> (UNCRC)
- The Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision<sup>16</sup> (2013)
- Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)<sup>17</sup>

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- Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare<sup>18</sup>
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014<sup>19</sup>
- Birth to Three: Positive outcome for Scotland's Children and Families, National Guidance, Learning and Teaching Scotland (2010)<sup>20</sup>

- Curriculum for Excellence (early stages) (2008)<sup>21</sup>
- My World Outdoors (2016)<sup>22</sup>

The document is structured into two sections.

**Section One** provides both national and international examples of aspects of good or innovative design of indoor and outdoor space. The Care Inspectorate, The Scottish Government and Scottish Futures Trust carried out a significant level of engagement prior to developing this resource. The case studies reflect the interests of those who were part of this process, and include examples of: the use of and quality of outdoor space, modular builds, extensions to existing accommodation, new builds, use of mezzanine areas and new uses of existing assets to demonstrate the range of high quality settings already available in Scotland.

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13. Scottish Government (2013) Play Strategy: A Vision for Scotland

14. <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

15. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

16. <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0042/00425722.pdf>

17. <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/what-is-girfec>

18. <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>

19. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>

20. [https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/ELC/ELC2\\_PreBirthToThree/ELC2\\_PreBirthToThreeBooklet.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/ELC/ELC2_PreBirthToThree/ELC2_PreBirthToThreeBooklet.pdf)

21. Education Scotland, What is Curriculum of Excellence? [https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-\(building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5\)/What%20is%20Curriculum%20for%20Excellence](https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-(building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5)/What%20is%20Curriculum%20for%20Excellence)

22. Care Inspectorate (2016) My World Outdoors [http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/3091/My\\_world\\_outdoors\\_-\\_early\\_years\\_good\\_practice\\_2016.pdf](http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/3091/My_world_outdoors_-_early_years_good_practice_2016.pdf)

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# PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE

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Of course each setting has its own unique circumstances and challenges and the case studies are not designed to provide definitive answers or to be replicated directly. The intention is that they stimulate and inspire thinking, give some examples of ways to consider any challenges presented whilst incorporating standards and best practice. Additionally, alongside examples from Scotland's current practice in early learning and childcare there are examples of innovative international design.

**Section Two** relates to all areas of the environment that would support individual settings. This section describes good practice with reference to standards, practice documents, legislation and research alongside case studies and illustrations. This section also includes some environment input standards for good design e.g. space standards, natural light, toilets and hygiene facilities and outdoor play space. It is anticipated that those who provide settings and those who are involved in designing/planning settings will be familiar with much of the detail in section two. However, the guidance provides an opportunity to carefully consider why certain elements are important to the positive outcomes for children's care, learning and health and wellbeing.

The Care Inspectorate and other bodies can provide you with guidance and advice to support you in the development and planning of the design of settings.

When making an application to the Care Inspectorate to register an early learning and childcare or an out of school care setting, vary an existing setting or update a current setting you should take account of this guidance. When developing a new setting or adapting an existing one it is advisable to contact the Care Inspectorate to provide support and guidance at an early stage in the process.

There are a number of other agencies and regulatory bodies that you may need to contact regarding the environment e.g. Environmental Health, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Building Control and Planning Departments. It is advisable to make contact with these agencies at an early stage of the design process as this may avoid any time consuming and expensive alterations later on in the build process.

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

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### Use of existing assets (existing facilities/ buildings)

**Cosmic Coppers at Merrylee,**  
Glasgow

**Jaybees Childcare,**  
Lockerbie

**Enchanted Forest,**  
Robroyston, Glasgow

**Kilcoy Kindergarten,**  
Kilcoy, Muir of Ord

**Tweedbank Early Learners,**  
Galashiels

**Sjötorget Kindergarten,**  
Stockholm, Sweden

### Extension to existing accommodation

**The International School Aberdeen (ISA)  
Nursery,**  
Aberdeen

**Elie Street Nursery,**  
Glasgow

### Use of outdoor space

**Craigentenny Nursery Class and  
Ferryhill Nursery Class,**  
Edinburgh

**Kirtonholme at Canniesburn,**  
Bearsden, East Dunbartonshire

### Use of mezzanine areas

**Muirkirk Early Childhood Centre,**  
Cumnock

### New builds

**Hobsonville Point Early Learning Centre,**  
Auckland, New Zealand

**KM Kindergarten and Nursery,**  
Japan

**Montpelier Community Nursery,**  
London Borough of Camden, London

### Use of modular builds

**Cairns Early Childhood Centre  
Auchinleck Early Childhood Centre  
and Lainshaw Early Childhood Centre,**  
East Ayrshire

### Use of off-site construction

**Lynburn Primary School Nursery,**  
Dunfermline, Fife

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

Cosmic Coppers  
at Merrylee,  
Glasgow

Provider -  
Cosmic Coppers  
Childcare Limited

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### Key Aspects

- Good use of existing assets to increase capacity
- Direct access to outdoor space
- Innovative use of space
- Different size rooms where children can play and learn on their own, in small or large groups

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Cosmic Coppers  
at Merrylee,  
Glasgow

Provider -  
Cosmic Coppers  
Childcare Limited

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### Description of service

Cosmic Coppers at Merrylee is set within a refurbished car showroom and is based over two units within the same campus. This unit shows how an existing building can be transformed into an innovative early learning and childcare environment. The environment for the children provides a village square, smaller rooms designed as shops and direct access to outdoor space. The layout of the environment promotes independence and encourages children to be responsible for their own learning. They can choose where they want to play, whether they want to be on their own or with small or larger groups. Easy access to the outdoor space enables children to be involved in outdoor activities which positively impacts on their health, wellbeing, learning and development.

“ We quickly identified the need for providing flexible spaces for the children to play in but also wanted open social areas for kids to mingle which opened up seamlessly to an outside play space. This project has revolutionised our attitude on space and how it can be utilised to achieve our goal of learning and socialising through play.”

**Ross Keenan, director**, Cosmic Coppers Childcare Limited.

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# SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Jaybees  
Childcare –  
Lockerbie

Provider -  
Jaybees  
(Childcare) Limited

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## Key Aspects

- Increased capacity by renovating an adjacent building
- Direct access to outdoor space
- Corridor to link both buildings
- Sheltered outdoor area

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Jaybees  
Childcare –  
Lockerbie

Provider -  
Jaybees  
(Childcare) Limited

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### Description of service

The original accommodation was purpose built to provide an early learning and childcare service. Due to a demand for places the provider renovated an adjacent building, added a link corridor to join both buildings and increased the number of children. The outdoor space has a sheltered area enabling children to benefit from being outdoors in all weather conditions throughout the year.

“The development of the adjacent building, adding a link corridor between the two buildings, was designed with outdoor learning at the heart and an aim to provide a natural yet stimulating environment for children accessing Early Learning and Childcare. Children have free flow to the outdoors which includes a covered area so that the weather is not a deterrent. This in turn has increased the number of children who can attend. With an environment that provides enriching experiences for children both indoors and outdoors, it supports and encourages positive outcomes for them at each age and stage, allowing them to learn and develop in a nurturing, safe, healthy and invigorating environment.”

**Jackie Bell, Manager and Director**, Jaybees Childcare

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## **SECTION ONE** **CASE STUDIES**

Enchanted Forest –  
Robroyston,  
Glasgow

Provider -  
Enchanted Forest Nursery  
(Bishopbriggs) Ltd.

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### Key Aspects

- Good use of existing assets
- Creative use of wall space
- Direct access to outdoor space

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

**Enchanted Forest –**  
Robroyston,  
Glasgow

**Provider -**  
**Enchanted Forest Nursery**  
**(Bishopbriggs) Ltd.**

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### Description of service

This setting is based within the ground floor of an office block which has been adapted to provide a good quality early learning and childcare environment. An outdoor space has been creatively designed to provide a variety of natural surfaces for children to explore. The wall space provides interesting space for children to sit and read or just to relax.

“The design of the nursery was done with children in mind with the inclusion of large amounts of natural light, muted natural colours for babies and free-flow outdoor access to the outdoors for toddlers and young children. In addition, our 3-5 children benefit for specially designed book cases which allow children to imaginatively create their own play and learning spaces, as well allowing for cosy spaces where children can read and relax.”

**Mariessa Devlin**, Enchanted Forest Nursery, Bishopbriggs Ltd.

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

Kilcoy Kindergarten –  
Kilcoy,  
Muir of Ord

Provider -  
Kilcoy  
Kindergarten

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### Key Aspects

- Good use of existing assets
- Variety of different outdoor experiences

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

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**Kilcoy Kindergarten –**  
Kilcoy,  
Muir of Ord

**Provider –**  
**Kilcoy**  
**Kindergarten**

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### Description of service

The accommodation was originally built as a tea room and renovated into an early learning and childcare service. The indoor space is at ground level opening to one of the outdoor areas enabling children move from indoors to outdoors, promoting independence. Children have access to a variety of natural outdoor spaces, which promotes health and wellbeing. A large grassy area gives them space to run around, prompting physical activity. The 'forest classrooms' provides opportunities for play and learning in an entirely natural environment. The provider, parents and children developed a quarry, adjacent to the setting, into a play park providing additional outdoor opportunities.

“The covered area just outside this door has a sandpit, a music area and a climbing frame. The children also keep their wellies and suits here. We can play here no matter how rainy or snowy it gets. The impact this makes on the children is that they become very independent, able to get themselves ready to go outside, when they want to. The back garden is part of a field that has been kindly lent to us by a local farmer. It's a place to run around and the children love to play tip and chase in this area. The bridge is how we get from the decking, where we play on our bikes and scooters, to our role play area and our greenhouse. There is also our insect hotel and lots of info about the birds and creatures the children may come across in the garden.”

**Tracy McMorran**, Service Manager

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

Tweedbank Early  
Learners –  
Galasheils

Provider -  
Tweedbank Early Learners  
Committee

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### Key Aspects

- Good use of shared community space
- Access to outdoor areas

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

**Tweedbank Early  
Learners –  
Galasheils**

**Provider -  
Tweedbank Early Learners  
Committee**

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### **Description of service**

Tweedbank Early Learners is based within a community centre which was formerly a barn. The setting has a separate entrance from the community centre, designated space indoors and outdoors, including space within the community garden. Working in partnership with the community enables the setting to be provided from an integrated community resource which offers additional service.

“The positive impact on the children’s learning and outcomes is that they have complete free flow access to the outdoor environment; they are showing independence through making decisions and dressing themselves appropriately for the weather, and being physically active. The children are highly motivated, they are able to communicate well, explore ideas, assess risks, problem solve and make choices around their learning outside.”

**Annamarie Robertson**, Service Manager

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

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Sjötorget  
Kindergarten,  
Stockholm, Sweden

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### Key Aspects

- Good use of existing assets
- Natural light
- Indoor space at different levels
- Interesting use of internal windows

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Sjötorget  
Kindergarten,  
Stockholm, Sweden

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### Description of service

This 'kindergarten' is on the ground level of a residential block in Stockholm. The large number of windows provides an abundance of natural light. The internal windows provide an interesting space for children to sit and look out at what is happening in other areas. The use of internal stairs encourages children to be independent and responsible and to safely move between playrooms on both levels. The stairs also provide space for children to sit and rest, and to be with others.

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

The International School  
Aberdeen (ISA) Nursery –  
Aberdeen

Provider -  
The International School of  
Aberdeen Educational Trust Limited

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### Key Aspects

- Large, natural outdoor space
- Direct access to outdoor space
- Good use of internal space to create both large and smaller space
- Use of circles to create smaller rooms
- Natural light
- Good use of glass internally to enhance natural light

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## **SECTION ONE** **CASE STUDIES**

**The International School  
Aberdeen (ISA) Nursery –  
Aberdeen**

**Provider -  
The International School of  
Aberdeen Educational Trust Limited**

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### **Description of service**

The early learning and childcare setting is based within the International School in Aberdeen. Due to demand of families in the area, an extension to one wing of the accommodation was added to expand the provision for children. Staff, parents and children were fully involved in planning the early learning and childcare space. The children's interest in circles developed into the creation of the glazed semi-circular wall to create the garden room and the circular room (the pod) in the middle of the playroom. As a result of the amount of glass used in this service there is an abundance of natural light. Natural light has a positive effect on the psychological wellbeing of children in terms of mood, security and behaviour.

As part of the extension a very large, natural, outdoor area was developed. Children access this area independently enabling them to make decisions about where they want to be. The outdoor space enables children to have fun and experience a sense of achievement when conquering outdoor challenges. The size and layout of all of the space allows children to be on their own, play with others and to explore and experience the natural environment and to assess risk.

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

The International School  
Aberdeen (ISA) Nursery –  
Aberdeen

Provider -  
The International School of  
Aberdeen Educational Trust Limited

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“These distinct spaces, classroom, pod, garden room and outdoor area are used by parents, children and staff for a variety of purposes at different times of the day. The physical environment, in conjunction with educators, enables their needs to be met. The outdoor area features a variety of levels and surfaces, such as grass, bark chips, mud, pebbles, decking and paving stones and allows children to develop their balance and dexterity as they explore the natural environment, navigating steps, hills, tree stumps and trunks. The area not only changes with the seasons, it changes along with children’s interests, as they create dens, construction areas, water features and indeed stages from which to perform.

The indoor and outdoor areas are dynamic and respond to the changing needs and interests of the people who use them. This was important to us at the start of the design process and continues to be so, as children, staff and parents play, learn and grow in the space together.

**Andrea Taylor**, Manager, ISA. ”

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

Elie Street  
Nursery -  
Glasgow

Provider -  
Glasgow City  
Council

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### Key Aspects

- Extension to listed building
- Direct access to outdoor space
- Use of partitions to create larger or smaller spaces

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Elie Street  
Nursery -  
Glasgow

Provider -  
Glasgow City  
Council

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### Description of service

This setting operates from an extension to a primary school which is accommodated in a listed building. The extension provides additional space for the school on the upper levels with the early learning and childcare at ground level. The design of the internal space includes partitions which enable the accommodation to be used flexibly, as one large playroom or smaller rooms. This helps to meet the needs of individual children allowing them to be with a small number of children or to be part of a larger group. Each area has direct access to one section of the outdoor space enabling children easy access to outdoor space and encouraging independence.

“We believe our current environment provides freedom of choice and allows children to make decisions about their own learning. Our outdoor environment offers motivating, exciting, different, relevant and easily accessible activities for all children. We have easy access to our outdoor area via the three areas in the playroom. Children can access the toilets from the playroom enabling children to access them independently.”

**Michelle Smith**, Manager

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

Craigentenny Nursery Class and  
Ferryhill Nursery Class  
Edinburgh

Provider -  
City of Edinburgh  
Council

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### Key Aspects

- Use of local outdoor space to increase capacity
- Accommodation based service incorporating local natural outdoor space
- Good outdoor opportunities and experiences

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Craightinny Nursery Class and  
Ferryhill Nursery Class  
Edinburgh

Provider -  
City of Edinburgh  
Council

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### Description of service

City of Edinburgh Council is part of the Scottish Government trials for expansion. Some of the children from Craightinny Nursery Class and Ferryhill Nursery Class attend the 'forest kindergarten' for part of their early learning and childcare experience. This provides children with the opportunity to experience a traditional early learning and childcare environment with adjacent outdoor space and also benefit from the opportunities and experiences an entirely outdoor based setting offers. Due to the success of the trial, City of Edinburgh Council plan to continue with this which will enable them to expand the number of children attending each setting.

“The outdoor environment offers wonderful year round opportunities for learning; surrounding all aspects of the curriculum. The closeness of nature, the wonder and curiosity this brings, provides creative experiences. The children involved in the trail have shown increased self- motivation in their learning, particularly around problem solving. They have formed friendship which extend into other spaces. Their concentration and focus in deep learning is evident. Parental/carer feedback has shown a marked difference in the children’s quality of sleep. ”

**Tracy Shaw**, City of Edinburgh Council



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# SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Kirtonholme at  
Canniesburn -  
Bearsden, East Dunbartonshire

Provider -  
Charlotte and Edward Kelly  
Partnership

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## Key Aspects

- Indoor/Outdoor setting
- Direct access to outdoor space

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

**Kirtonholme at  
Canniesburn –**  
Bearsden, East Dunbartonshire

**Provider -  
Charlotte and Edward Kelly  
Partnership**

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### Description of service

The Care Inspectorate, alongside the provider, considered the use of and suitability of the outdoor space when registering the setting. The outdoor space provides children with a variety of different natural outdoor experiences and opportunities. The sheltered area allows children and staff to be outdoors in all weather conditions maximising the use of indoor and outdoor play opportunities.

“The playroom has large doors that open onto a sheltered outdoor environment, where children have lots of opportunities to play and learn. The playroom is set up to ensure children have access to outdoors at all times. Most of our outdoor play is on a large scale, the sand is outside in a rowing boat allowing the children varied experiences. The water area is in various zones outside, due to the flexibility available. The children manage the water through an outdoor tap and make their own choices on where they use the water. The nursery has an outdoor stage where children can perform and develop through play, which also allows small and large groups of children to work together. At the nursery we are fortunate to have a large physical area and a natural planting and growing area that children are able to access daily.”

**Diahann McKerracher**, Manager

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

Muirkirk Early Childhood  
Centre,  
Cumnock

Provider -  
East Ayrshire  
Council

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### Key Aspects

- Good use of space to create mezzanine level
- Increased capacity through additional space
- Two levels with easy access outdoors

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Muirkirk Early Childhood  
Centre,  
Cumnock

Provider -  
East Ayrshire  
Council

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### Description of service

Muirkirk Early Childhood Centre is part of a new build primary school. The design of the early learning and childcare setting includes a mezzanine area and treehouse which children can access independently. As children can use both levels, this is reflected in the number of children the setting can accommodate. The height of the mezzanine partition ensures that children cannot climb over it, and the stairs are wide enough to enable children to access the mezzanine safely. A variety of different types of windows allow natural light in. The roof window allows children to look into the sky from the mezzanine, and a two storey window provides a view of the surrounding countryside.

“The mezzanine area will provide a calm, quiet, nurturing environment for children. Our aim is to provide an atmosphere of intimacy to promote a positive sense of self, with opportunities to relax and interact in the chill out zone. Suitable ventilation and roof windows are included in the design. The height of the mezzanine balustrade is suitable to ensure that children cannot climb over it along with wide stairs to enable children to access the mezzanine.”

**Janie Allen**, Strategic Education Manager (Early Intervention)

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

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**Hobsonville Point,  
Early Learning Centre**  
Auckland, New Zealand

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### Key Aspects

- On school site
- Central area
- Flexible space
- Direct access to outdoor space
- Sustainable

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A large black rectangular area redacting a photograph. The text 'PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES' is written in red at the top of the redacted area.

### Description of service

This setting is based at the local primary school. The design of the building is based on New Zealand's four values: Aspirational, Sustainability, Excellence and 'Hauora' (health/wellbeing), with four sections of the buildings merging to create a central 'heart'. All the rooms flow onto the central space, as does the kitchen, creating a real social heart to the building and representing the organisation's primary value - 'Hauora'.

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

### KM Kindergarten and Nursery, Japan

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#### Key Aspects

- Outdoor space
- Direct access to outdoor space
- Natural light

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#### Description of service

This was developed from an 'old decrepit kindergarten' located at Izumi city. One of the key areas the design had to capture was to encourage children to take more exercise and physical activity. The building surrounds the middle yard with a ramp where children can climb from the first floor to the roof.

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# SECTION ONE

## CASE STUDIES

Montpelier Community Nursery,  
London Borough of Camden,  
London

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### Key Aspects

- Outdoor space
- Direct access to outdoor space
- Natural light
- Low windows
- Sustainable

### Description of service

The setting is planned around a large flexible play space that generously opens out to the external green space. Indoor-outdoor play is central to the design concept and the garden environment is considered central to the children's learning experience. Three strip windows with north-south orientation span the plan diagonally. The orientation of the openings allows the sun to enter the building when it is low to take advantage of solar gain in colder months, while large

overhangs block out the sun when required to prevent overheating. The larger north facing roof window brings in an abundance of daylight and facilitates cross ventilation. The service is designed as an energy efficient building in operation and low carbon in construction. A mixed sedum blanket forms the roof finish, contributing to local biodiversity and water retention.

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## **SECTION ONE** **CASE STUDIES**

Cairns Early Childhood Centre  
Auchinleck Early Childhood Centre  
and Lainshaw Early Childhood Centre –  
East Ayrshire

Provider -  
East Ayrshire  
Council

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### Key Aspects

- Modular build
- Part of primary school
- Direct access to outdoor space

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## SECTION ONE CASE STUDIES

Cairns Early Childhood Centre  
Auchinleck Early Childhood Centre  
and Lainshaw Early Childhood Centre –  
East Ayrshire

Provider -  
East Ayrshire  
Council

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### Description of service

All three early learning and childcare settings are part of a primary school. Pods have been fitted to extend the age range to include two year olds. The pods are the same design allowing this to be replicated in other settings, where appropriate. The main features of the design include full length windows, children's independent access to hand washing, toilets and outdoor space. The space also includes changing facilities and a flexible room which can be used as a parents room.

“In order to maximise the benefit of existing early childhood centres, the design for three new extensions to accommodate two year olds had the same design brief. Important features of the design included a parents room or space, full length windows with a window seat, direct access to outdoor play areas, ease of access to hand washing and toilet facilities, and a changing facility. The sensitively thought out environment uses natural materials which provide sensory experiences for children both inside and outside.”

**Janie Allen**, Strategic Education Manager (Early Intervention)

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# SECTION ONE

## USE OF MODULAR/ OFF SITE CONSTRUCTION

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Modular/Off site manufacturing of buildings was used extensively in the past for the provision of houses and industrial buildings. However, a perception surrounding the use of modular buildings developed, in part due to a documentary made in 1983 by World in Action, which “alleged timber frame construction could not produce houses that would last, citing rot in the frames of nine-year-old homes on a Cornwall estate.”<sup>23</sup> These claims have now been widely discredited, but the fact that many prefabricated buildings were built as temporary structures compounded the view of them being of lower quality and status, which people did not think was appropriate for public buildings.

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However due to the advancement of off-site manufacturing techniques and an increased focus on quality throughout the construction process, the use of off-site manufacturing is starting to gain momentum again.

Many local authorities have already used off-site manufacturing to develop their education estate, including Fife for Lynburn Nursery below, and the use of this, where appropriate, is something that would be recommended when planning early learning and childcare and after school care settings.

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### What is off-site construction?

Off-site construction involves assembling complete buildings or modules that have been built in a specialised factory under controlled conditions. The modules can be fully fitted with electrics, plumbing, heating and internal finishes before being transported to the building site and connected, to form the building. Modules can be connected side-by-side and end-to-end, as well as in multiple storeys, to create buildings of any size, shape or configuration. There is also the possibility to add/remove parts from the modules as and when required throughout the life of the building.

As such there are many perceived benefits of modular/off site manufacturing which have been summarised on next page. For a more comprehensive review of some of the benefits please refer to the HSE overview on Offsite Production in the UK Construction Industry.<sup>24</sup>

23. <http://www.ukconstructionweek.com/news/construction-buzz/1017-world-in-action-and-barratts-the-builders-construction-buzz-100>,

24. Taylor, S. “Offsite Production in the UK Construction Industry – prepared by HSE. A Brief Overview”. [http://www.buildoffsite.com/content/uploads/2015/04/HSE-off-site\\_production\\_june09.pdf](http://www.buildoffsite.com/content/uploads/2015/04/HSE-off-site_production_june09.pdf)

# SECTION ONE

## USE OF MODULAR/ OFF SITE CONSTRUCTION

### Benefits of off-site construction

- **Shorter build times** – although time in the factory will be incurred the time actually on-site is greatly reduced using off-site manufacturing techniques;
- **Assured quality** – as the product is built in a controlled environment it can lead to a better quality of product with minimal snags. Products must meet strict quality assurance before they leave the factory with some modular manufacturers applying ISO 9001 certification for its quality-management systems. The environment for the workforce is also enhanced which can reduce the risk of accidents;
- **Minimal disruption** – factory-based construction minimises time on site, meaning less noise and disruption to neighbouring businesses/residents, as well as a cleaner, safer, less congested site;

- **Cost and time certainty** – factory-built projects are not subject to weather-related delays or site-based skills shortages, so buildings can be completed on time and budget as well as providing job opportunities in areas where there is not a huge amount of traditional construction being undertaken;
- **Future flexibility** – modular buildings have the capacity to be expanded, reduced, reconfigured or even relocated to meet the changing requirements of the service;
- **Reduced waste** – off-site construction can generate up to 70% less waste than traditional on-site building methods due to the virtual elimination of waste board materials and insulation.<sup>25</sup>



### THINK ABOUT

- 💡 What are the benefits to the provider of using offsite manufacturing in this case – will these be realised?
- 💡 Can the use of modular be used to reduce construction time whilst increasing quality?
- 💡 Will the space being designed and constructed provide the quality environment that is desired?

25. Taylor, S. "Offsite Production in the UK Construction Industry – prepared by HSE. A Brief Overview".

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## **SECTION 02**

# **ENVIRONMENT**

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This section describes good practice with reference to standards, practice documents, legislation and research alongside case studies and photographs.

This section also includes some minimum standards e.g. space standards, natural light, the number of toilets and outdoor play space.

[Scroll over the icons opposite and click to find out more.](#)

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT

### LOCATION

#### Keys Aspects

- Importance of location
- Security of the entrance

The location of the setting is important to parents, children and staff. Research tells us that 86% of parents chose a service for their child because it was near to work/home/education<sup>26</sup>. It is important to think carefully about how accessible the setting is. For example, having a setting close to or on college and university campuses can encourage and support parents in accessing education and training<sup>27</sup>.

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The location should enable children to be an active part of the local community.<sup>28</sup> When considering the use of existing community assets you should not limit thinking to 'vacant' premises but consider co-location with not only schools but other settings where co-location could be of benefit, such care homes for older people where the intergenerational benefits to both the adults and the children could be enhanced in building positive and stimulating relationships. You should consider how the local community and surrounding area can provide positive learning experiences that have a positive impact on children's health and wellbeing.

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26. 2,363 from 2,748 in the survey sample. This survey data was part of the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Futures Trust Design Principles consultation exercise. March 2017

27. Scottish Government (2016) A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Years and Childcare in Scotland <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00507518.pdf>

28. 5.9: I experience care and support free from isolation because the location and type of premises enable me to be an active member of the local community if this is appropriate. Scottish Government (2017) Health and Social Care Standards <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

## SECTION 02 ENVIRONMENT

### LOCATION

Some parents prefer an out of school care setting to be part of their child's school campus. This prevents children moving from one location to another every day. Some school age children may also prefer the settings to operate from their school as they are familiar with this environment. Others however, may prefer a change of environment as they may feel they are still 'in school' even during school holidays.

Families who have a child attending an out of school care and an early learning and childcare settings may find it useful to have both located together or in close proximity. Where an early learning and childcare setting is located within a primary school building it is helpful to locate the setting near to the early level primary classes to support transition.

A setting located within a local community may enable some parents and children to walk to the service. However, some parents will travel out with their immediate community to be near work, education or as they identify the service as best meeting their needs and the needs of their child. Some parents may choose to access public transport however others may use their car. Car parking, where provided, should allow children and parents to walk safely to the setting.<sup>29</sup>

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#### THINK ABOUT

- How accessible is the location of the service to those who may use it?
- Is the location somewhere parents would want to bring their children to, and children would want to come to?
- Consider other amenities/businesses nearby, pollution, noise.
- How suitable and stimulating is the local environment for children?
- Where are other childcare settings based that parents may use?

29. Scottish Government (2016), Building Standard Technical Handbook <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/techbooks/techhandbooks/th2016dom>

# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT

### ENTRANCE

There should be a balance between security and a stimulating and inviting entrance for children and their parents. A secure entrance is essential to support safety and monitor access. Some examples could include:

- a bell entry system
- a glazed panel on the door or at the side of the door which allows the staff member to see who is outside
- key pad entry
- a video security system at the main door, accessed remotely, can help staff to monitor the entrance without having to leave the childcare areas.

The entrance should be accessible to all and should be as visible as possible. This space should be sufficiently illuminated to ensure the area is safe and visible in the dark. The entrance should be wide enough for wheelchair and large buggies access<sup>30</sup>.

The approach to the setting should be inviting to children, as the aesthetic quality deeply influences a child's acceptance of a new environment.<sup>31</sup> An aesthetically pleasing entrance encourages children inside and helps them feel a sense of belonging. Children in Germany can enjoy the excitement of attending a setting designed as a cat, where they can slide down the tail to get to the outdoor space.<sup>32</sup>



### THINK ABOUT

- How welcoming is the entrance and would it be somewhere children would want to go explore?
- How safe is the entrance and exit?
- Would people be able to go inside without being seen?
- Is the immediate area outside safe i.e. safety barriers onto main roads?
- Would children be able to leave the environment without the knowledge of an adult?

30. Scottish Government, Building Standards Technical Guidance (2016) <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/techbooks/techhandbooks/th2016dom>

31. Olds, Rui Anita. (2000). *Child Care Design Guide: The Ultimate Day Care Centre Design Source* McGraw-Hill. New York.

32. <https://www.avso.org/interior-design-ideas/kindergarten-in-the-form-of-a-cat>

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### SPACE FOR CHILDREN

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#### Keys Aspects

- Space Standards
- The use of space for positive outcomes for children
- Space to sleep and rest
- Indoor/outdoor settings
- Space to eat

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child has the right to play<sup>33</sup>. This is supported by the Scottish Government's Play Strategy, which states that all children and young people should have space and time to play<sup>34</sup>. The Health and Care Standards state

'as a child I can direct my own play and activities in a way that I choose and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable to my age and stage, which stimulate natural curiosity, learning and creativity.'<sup>35</sup> In practice, this means that children need sufficient space to play, learn and develop in early learning and childcare and out of school care settings.

Having a designated playroom or space for any child does not mean children are unable to spend time in other space. All children should be able to access all appropriate areas and settings during their day that will support their development, learning and social interactions.

#### Space Standards

Space standards are a feature in UK and international early learning and childcare settings<sup>36</sup>. Research has been conducted into assessing: what constitutes the best space standard<sup>37</sup>; how space can affect a child's stress levels; and how it can play an important role in developing their communication and social skills<sup>38</sup>. Additionally, we know that the first two years of life children are absorbed in learning to crawl and walk. Having more generous space for younger children allows them to develop confidence while safely reaching their developmental milestones.

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33. Article 31: That every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

34. Scottish Government (2013) Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0042/00425722.pdf>

35. 2.27, Wellbeing. <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

36. For example, England, Ireland, Wales, Japan, New Zealand and the Nordic countries all employ minimum space standards.

37. Anita Rui Old (2000) *Childcare Design Guide: The Ultimate Day Care Design Guide*. McGraw-Hill.

38. R. White & V. Stoecklin (2003), Great 35 sq foot Myth <http://www.whitehutchinson.com/children/articles/35footmyth.shtml>



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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



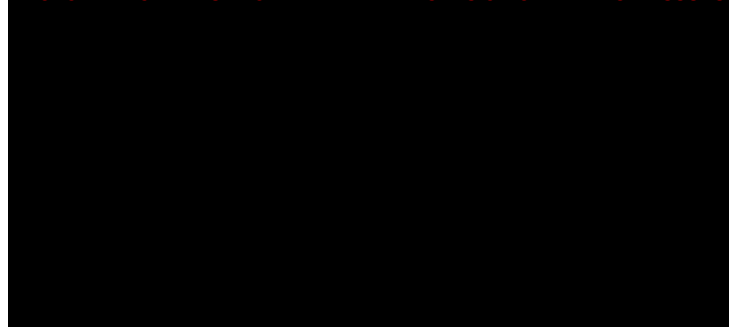
### Current Care Inspectorate Expectations

- For children under two years - a minimum of 3.7 square metres, per child
- For children aged two years to under three years - a minimum of 2.8 square meters, per child
- For children aged three and over - a minimum of 2.3 square meters, per child.

The space referred to is defined as space for children’s play and movement. This should not include toilets, changing facilities, storage space, space taken up by set fixtures and fittings or any space identified for other use i.e. kitchens, staff/parents or community space.

The Care Inspectorate’s primary focus will be on working flexibly and collaboratively with providers to support innovation and improvement in the delivery of high quality early learning and childcare, and out of school care, that achieves the best possible outcomes for children. In light of new health and care standards launched on 9 June 2017, the Care Inspectorate will work with providers and other partners to establish best practice guidance based on evidence and research.

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**NB -These space standards have been derived from previous guidance and legislation. The School Premises Regulations (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967<sup>39</sup> and associated amendments are currently under review by the Scottish Government. The proposal is that reference to nursery schools and classes is removed from the amended Regulations which will come into force early in 2018, on the understanding that they are referenced within other guidance. Therefore, it is expected that the space standards as detailed above apply to all early learning and childcare and out of school care settings.**

### The Environment

The environment should be relaxed, homely, comfortable and welcoming<sup>40</sup>. A nurturing environment will help promote a positive sense of wellbeing for children<sup>41</sup>.

39. The School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/uksi/1967/1199>

40. <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background/wellbeing/nurtured>

41. [https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/ELC/ELC2\\_PreBirthToThree/ELC2\\_PreBirthToThreeBooklet.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/ELC/ELC2_PreBirthToThree/ELC2_PreBirthToThreeBooklet.pdf)

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## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



The environment should be safe<sup>42</sup> and children should feel safe and protected<sup>43</sup>. The environment should support and develop all of the needs of individual children, including their physical, cognitive and emotional needs<sup>44</sup>. Education Scotland's tool for self-evaluation refers to the environment as 'Our accommodation provides a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment that is of a very high standard of cleanliness<sup>45</sup>.

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How space is used is extremely important to children and to those who work with them. When adults look at the environment from a child's perspective it helps them understand how it looks and feels to a child. When planning space for children it is important to think of what children need or would want to help them develop and grow. When planning a setting you may not be aware of all of the needs of the children who may be attending. Therefore you will need to continually evaluate and review the environment to meet the needs of all children.

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42. The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations (2002) [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2002/114/pdfs/ssi\\_20020114\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2002/114/pdfs/ssi_20020114_en.pdf)
43. <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background/wellbeing/safe>
44. Article 23: A child with a disability has the right to love a full and decent life with dignity and as far as possible independence and to play an active part in the community. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>
45. Education Scotland, How good is our early learning and childcare? (2016) [https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks\\_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1\\_NIHeditSelf-evaluationHGIELC/HGIOELCO20316Revised.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1_NIHeditSelf-evaluationHGIELC/HGIOELCO20316Revised.pdf)

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## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



The physical environment can make a lot of demands on children, particularly for children with additional support needs. The environment must be inclusive of all children regardless of their abilities and needs. Careful consideration and thoughtful planning, particularly at key transition points in the child's learning journey, will ensure that the environment responds to all children's needs. An environment which is welcoming, calm and quiet is generally conducive to learning and care, however, for some children the nature of their needs may have practical implications, for example wheel chair access, sound proofing. As with physical, visual or hearing impairment, for children with communication impairments it is important

that reasonable adjustments are made to reduce as many barriers to learning and participation as possible. Children with autism spectrum disorder can find the environment particularly challenging. This is mainly due to sensory difficulties and problems with central coherence. Recent studies examine challenges for children with autism spectrum disorder in relation to the classroom, however this could be transferred to any learning environment for children:

**'For almost any other special need, the classroom only becomes disabling when a demand to perform a given task is made. For the child with autism, disability begins at the door.'**<sup>46</sup>

46. Hanbury, M. (2007). Positive Behaviour Strategies to Support Children and Young People with Autism. London

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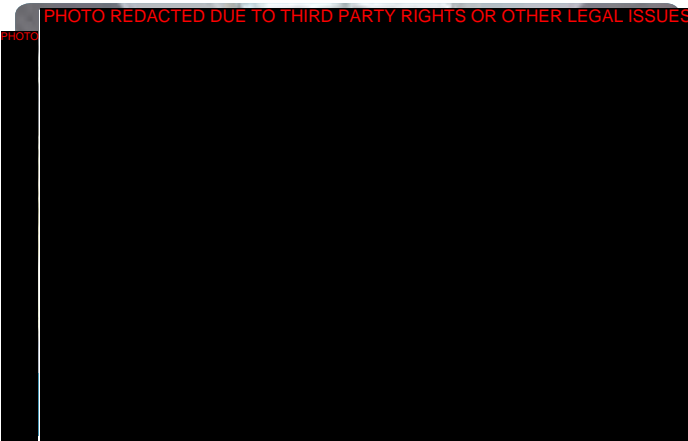
## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



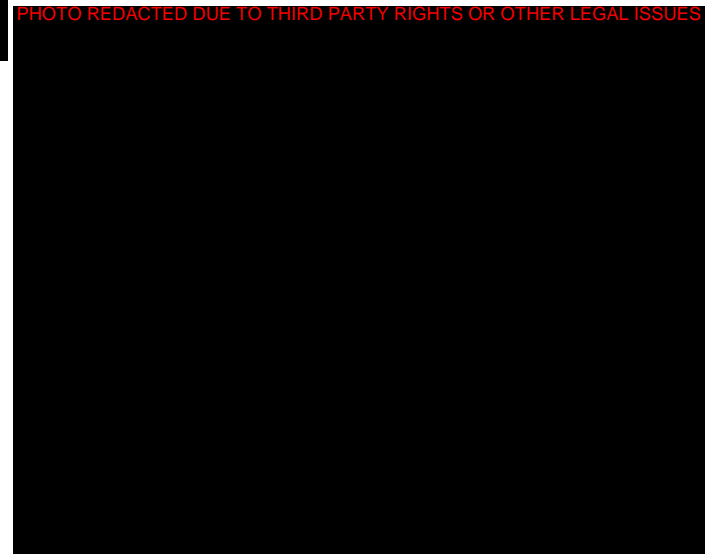
An on-going evaluation and review of the impact on children of the environment will ensure the environment supports the needs of all children.

Children need space to be with children in large or small groups<sup>47</sup>, to make friends and build relationships with children and adults and to be active. However, children also need space to be on their own,<sup>48</sup> to have some quiet time and to relax<sup>49</sup>. This is particularly important for children with autism spectrum disorder, who may need time alone during times of stress<sup>50</sup>.



Many children currently sleep or rest for a period during their time within a setting. With the expansion to 1140 hours, it is likely that instead of the traditional model of early learning and childcare where children attend morning or afternoon sessions, more children may attend for a longer day. Therefore it may be that more

children need to rest or sleep. Children should be able to rest or sleep when they need to without being disturbed. In some small playrooms, children can rest or sleep comfortably within the room, but achieving this may be more difficult in larger rooms with more children. When planning space for children to sleep or rest you should consider the needs of individual children.



- 47. GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicator, Active – The environment encourages children to be curious and to explore. Areas are well thought out and promote opportunities for children to play and learn together. <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background/wellbeing/active>
- 48. 1.26 I can choose to spend time alone. Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>
- 49. Section 7.3.1 – Wellbeing. Scottish Government (2014) Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>
- 50. Scottish Autism, Autism Toolbox (2009) <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/07/06111319/0>

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# SECTION 02

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### SPACE FOR CHILDREN

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When planning space for babies, consideration needs to be given to what babies need. Babies need to feel safe, happy<sup>51</sup>, cosy and content<sup>52</sup>. They need an environment which they can relate to: home-like, calm and comfortable and where they can move freely<sup>53</sup>. Therefore, it is best practice for babies to have their own identified playroom.

A report from the Sutton Trust reviewed the evidence on the quality of early childhood education and care for children under three years. The report recommends that in order to ensure physical environments are suitable for two years olds, a service should have **'small group sizes appropriate to age/stage, within a calm environment which promotes individual care and attention'**<sup>54</sup>. The report refers to the best-available evidence which suggest there should be no more than 12 children. The research identifies this as best practice and individual settings should consider the impact of the size of groupings on the health, well being, learning and development of young children.

The number of children who will be in one space at any time is important for all early learning and childcare and out of school care settings. Some children can be overwhelmed with large rooms, large number of children and staff and high noise levels. It is important to remember what the environment should feel like to a child and what negative impact this could have on their health, wellbeing, behaviour, ability to play and learn and form relationships with other children and adults. It is beneficial if children have access to both large and small rooms/areas where they can choose to spend time in. The use of partitions in a large space allows the space to be divided. The use of curved walls, rooms with different dimensions, shapes and space to investigate can help the environment to be more aesthetically pleasing to children.

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51. Section 7.3.1 – Wellbeing Scottish Government (2014) Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>

52. Education Scotland (2016) How good is our early learning and childcare? [https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks\\_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1\\_NIHeditSelf-evaluationHGIELC/HGIOELC020316Revised.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1_NIHeditSelf-evaluationHGIELC/HGIOELC020316Revised.pdf)

53. Section 6.3.1 – A focus on babies, what do they need? Scottish Government (2014) Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare

54. Sutton Trust (2014) A Review of the Research Evidence on Quality of Early Childhood Education and Care for Children under Three <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/1sound-foundations-jan2014-3.pdf>

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In Reggio Emilia, Italy, the approach to the environment comprises of connected spaces that flow into one another. Rooms open onto a central piazza and children move freely through the space.

Having a flexible space can be very beneficial. This can be used for a variety of purposes, for staff, parents, community and as another space to be used by the

children for example, additional space for indoor active play or to be used to provide meals at lunch time. In Tower view Nursery, Glasgow the flexible space is used for football coaching, dance and games, parents groups, staff training and meetings. The area is also used for the children to have lunch in a separate area to support a positive eating environment.

The use of space for children attending out of school care service should be used to effectively meet the needs of the children attending. During term time the children have been in school during the day, therefore many are looking to engage in active, physical play after school. Many settings who offer before school care often find children choose to participate in quieter, relaxed activities in preparation for their learning at school.

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It is important to listen to children when planning or designing space as children should be leading their learning. We spoke with the school age children who attend Enchanted Forest nursery in Inverkip. They told us it was important to:

- have lots of space
- have opportunities to play outside
- be able to play football and run around
- have a separate space from the 'nursery'
- have a quiet room, an arts and craft and a room for older children
- be able to go outside to play and have a big garden with grass and AstroTurf
- to have fun<sup>55</sup>.

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55. This response was gathered as part of the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Futures Trust Design Principles consultation exercise. March 2017

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## SPACE FOR CHILDREN

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The environment should provide a balance between experiences and opportunities both inside and outside<sup>56</sup>. For example, the Care Inspectorate note in My World Outdoors<sup>57</sup> that simply being outside in fresh air is beneficial, but when children are helped to actively explore nature for themselves the dividends for improving outcomes are exponential. If staff help children to develop their own free-flow play activities outdoors they can learn through nature. From this, we can begin to see children flourish. Many children become more confident, co-operative, calm and content. For some it can be transformative. For example, for children experiencing emotional and behavioural problems, or struggling in traditional formal settings, immersion in a natural

setting can be therapeutic and helps realise their potential. Education Scotland highlights the effect indoor and outdoor spaces have on maximizing high quality learning<sup>58</sup>. Outdoor play itself has many benefits for children: it has a positive effect on their health, wellbeing, learning and development and promotes curiosity, inquiry and creativity<sup>59</sup>. More importantly it gives children the opportunity to have fun outside. Exposure to sunlight is necessary for absorption of vitamin D which is necessary for health and wellbeing<sup>60</sup>.

The best way to get access to natural light is by spending as much time as possible outside. For example, in Japan and Canada, they have ‘sunshine laws’ as they have recognised the link between natural light deprivation and depression. A minimum number of hours per day of daylight must be available to occupants of buildings<sup>61</sup>.

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56. Section 7.5.1 – Wellbeing. Scottish Government (2014) Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>

57. [http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/3091/My\\_world\\_outdoors\\_-\\_early\\_years\\_good\\_practice\\_2016.pdf](http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/3091/My_world_outdoors_-_early_years_good_practice_2016.pdf)

58. Education Scotland, How good is our early learning and childcare? (2016) [https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks\\_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1\\_NIHeditSelf-evaluationHGIELC/HGIOELC020316Revised.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1_NIHeditSelf-evaluationHGIELC/HGIOELC020316Revised.pdf)

59. Section 7 – Putting pedagogy into practice. Scottish Government (2014) Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare

60. [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Healthy-Living/Food-Health/vitaminD provision](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Healthy-Living/Food-Health/vitaminD%20provision)

61. Olds, Rui Anita. (2000). Child Care Design Guide: The Ultimate Day Care Centre Design Source McGraw-Hill. New York.



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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### Outdoor Space

For children in early learning and childcare and out of school care settings this means they should play outside as much as possible. This view is supported by the Scottish Government's Health and Social Care Standards: **'as a child I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment'**.<sup>62</sup> A suitable, stimulating, challenging and safe outdoor space adjacent to the accommodation enables children to move easily between indoors and outdoors, encouraging independence and providing additional opportunities.

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All early learning and childcare and out of school care settings should have adjacent, safe and suitable outdoor space. A view which is supported by a recent survey carried out by the Care Inspectorate where:

- 75% parents felt it was 'very important', with 23% finding it 'important'; and
- 91% staff felt it was 'very important', with 7% finding it 'important'<sup>63</sup>.

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62. 1.32, Wellbeing. Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

63. Parents: 1910 out a sample of 2,547. Staff: 1037 out a sample of 1140. This survey data was gathered as part of the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Futures Trust Design Principles consultation exercise. March 2017

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With the expansion in early learning and childcare many children will spend longer in settings, therefore it is vitally important they can play outside when they choose to<sup>64</sup>. Children who attend out of school care settings will have been in indoor school environment most of the day therefore outdoor play may be very important to them. How easy it is for a child to move independently between both depends to a large extent on the design of the environment. Many settings have direct access outside from each playroom, through either a single door or patio style doors.

Accommodation built around the outdoor space can make it easier for children and staff to access the outdoor area. A sheltered area enables children to stay outdoors in wet weather conditions. The sheltered area does not have to be a fixed structure as long as it provides shelter from the elements.

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64. 1.25: can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

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### SPACE FOR CHILDREN

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Outdoor space should not make children feel overprotected. However, a risk assessment should be carried out to ensure that the space is safe. The space should offer challenges and encourage children to take more risks, giving them a sense of achievement<sup>65</sup>; being outdoors offers children the opportunity to be noisy without disturbing others.

A natural outdoor environment has many benefits to child development, learning and fun. Furthermore, movement itself plays an important part in a child linking this to the natural world:

**‘The natural world offers perpetual play of sensory action and rhythm, in the movement of earth, air, fire and water – a feast for the sensorimotor apparatus of the human child’<sup>66</sup>.**

Natural outdoor space gives children more opportunity and space to experience nature, to feel the grass under their feet, to plant, dig for worms, experiment with mud, stones, to climb trees and to enjoy getting dirty.

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65. GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicator – Achieving. <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background/wellbeing/achieving>

66. Olds, Rui Anita. (2000). *Child Care Design Guide: The Ultimate Day Care Centre Design Source* McGraw-Hill. New York.

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## ENVIRONMENT

### SPACE FOR CHILDREN

An environment rich in a mix of surfaces, textures and different spaces enables children to explore, to spend time with others or find a quiet space to play or be on their own. A view which is supported by a recent consultation carried out by with parents in Orkney. The key elements of outdoor space for parents were:

**'A messy garden, gardens that are a bit of an adventure, magical spaces, pathways leading to new spaces, water, natural climbing opportunities, e.g. boulders, trees, chunks of wood, spaces to hide-bushes, hidey holes'**<sup>67</sup>.

In some urban areas providing a natural outdoor environment may be challenging. Providing areas of different surfaces and keeping the surface as natural as possible can help. There is also the opportunity to expand natural outdoor learning and experiences through the use of community space.

67. This research was as part of the Design Guidance consultation process in early years and childcare settings in Orkney, March 2017



### THINK ABOUT

- What can children experience in the outdoor space?
- What makes the outdoor space inviting, enjoyable and exciting to children?
- How can children move from between both spaces independently? What things would stop them doing this or be a risk?
- How natural is the outdoor space? Is there grass, trees, flowers, areas for digging and planting, water, soil, mud?
- What space is there for children to be creative?
- Where would a child have space to be on their own?
- How safe is the area?
- What areas are challenging and create an element of risk for a child?

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# SECTION 02

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### Indoor/Outdoor Settings

The Care Inspectorate has facilitated the development of outdoor and forest settings over a period of time. While not all settings can provide solely outdoor provision, there are opportunities to provide a blended approach of outdoor and indoor learning and care in many settings. Already, there are some existing early learning and childcare settings where account has been taken of the quality and children's use of outdoor space and the number of registered places has been increased in acknowledgement of the positive experiences children have.

Through discussions with providers, local authorities, the Association of Directors of Education (ADES) and early learning and childcare networks, it was apparent that many providers plan to consider the use of outdoor space when expanding their service. This is based on: recognition of the importance of outdoor experiences, children's increased use of suitable outdoor areas and improvements to the

quality and accessibility of outdoor space. It is the view of the Care Inspectorate, The Scottish Government and Scottish Futures Trust that the following additional guidance will support the provision of indoor/outdoor settings.

There is no agreed standard for the provision of outdoor space. For expansion planning purposes, providers and planners have requested the Scottish Government provide some parameters on the outdoor space to support registration of an increased number of children within an indoor/outdoor setting. **It is therefore recommended that a maximum increase of 20% of the total registered number of children is considered as a guideline.** This would of course be dependent on the suitability of the outdoor space and plans for how it would be used. The quality of children's experiences and outcomes are and will remain of paramount importance in terms of the use of outdoor space.

If a setting wishes to maximise the outdoor space to increase the number of children, the following elements should be considered to support the provision of indoor/outdoor settings:

- Do the aims and objectives of your service clearly reflect both indoor and outdoor experiences?
- Have parents been involved and consulted in the development of the service to enable staff to share the positive effects on health and wellbeing of children of being outdoors?
- Have children been consulted and supported to provide ideas for the environment?
- Do you have a comprehensive proposal on how the outdoor space will be used every day?
- Have you given careful consideration to the opportunities and experiences that will be available outside to compliment indoors experiences?
- Do the staff team understand the value and ethos of outdoor learning?

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### SPACE FOR CHILDREN

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- Are staff motivated and enthusiastic and do they have appropriate training to provide children with a range of learning experiences both indoors and outdoors?
  - How can the outdoor space be directly accessed from the playroom?
  - Are children able to go outside independently when they choose to?
  - Will staff be suitably deployed to enable children to use both indoor and outdoor space?
  - Is the outdoor area as natural as possible, offering a range of different surfaces, a stimulating environment which promotes challenges and provides elements of risk for children to manage?
  - Is there a suitable sheltered area to enable children to access outdoor space in all weathers either fixed or of a temporary nature?
  - Is there a variety of different areas to allow children to have quiet time, have space to play alone, with small or large groups?
- Are resources suitable to an outdoor learning environment and to encourage active play?
  - Is there easy access to toilets, hand hygiene and to changing facilities where changing facilities are appropriate?
  - Is there appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear which is easily accessible to children and staff?
  - Is there suitable storage including storage of used outdoor clothing and footwear?

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### SPACE FOR CHILDREN



#### THINK ABOUT

- How does or could the indoor and outdoor space meet the needs of individual children?
- Does the space help children to form attachments to individual adults who are their main caregiver?
- Does the space help children to form attachments to other children?
- What space is there for children who are learning to walk or crawl?
- How do you think the space feels to a child? Would they be overwhelmed by the size? Would they feel cosy, content and safe? Is it too noisy?
- Where would a child go to have some quiet time or space on their own?
- What space is there for children to run around and take part in physical activities?

- How does the space support children's learning and development, health and wellbeing?
- How do you feel as an adult in this environment?

#### Space to Eat

Provision of food is an integral part of a care and learning environment. When children have a positive experience of eating and drinking in an early learning and childcare service, it will help them to develop an appreciation that eating can be an enjoyable activity, and understand the role of food within social and cultural contexts on long term health benefits.<sup>68</sup>

68. Scottish Executive (2004), Curriculum Review Group Report <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/26800/0023690.pdf>

Children should have suitable space to have food and drinks. With the expansion in early learning and childcare more children may have lunch within the service. Therefore, providers may need to look at the space available for meals or snacks and consider where improvements could enhance the child's experience. Opportunities should be available for children to help prepare meals and snacks<sup>69</sup>. Space for children to eat should be relaxed, quiet and peaceful and allow for children and staff to sit together<sup>70</sup>. Children often take longer to eat than adults, particularly babies and toddlers, as they try to be independent and feed themselves. Similarly children can get restless if mealtimes take too long. Therefore, mealtime should take as long as a child needs, as stated in Health and

69. 1.34: If I need help with eating and drinking, this is carried out in a dignified way and my personal preferences are respected. Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

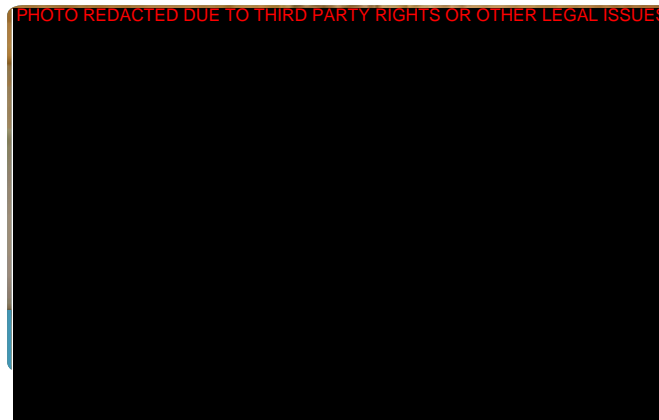
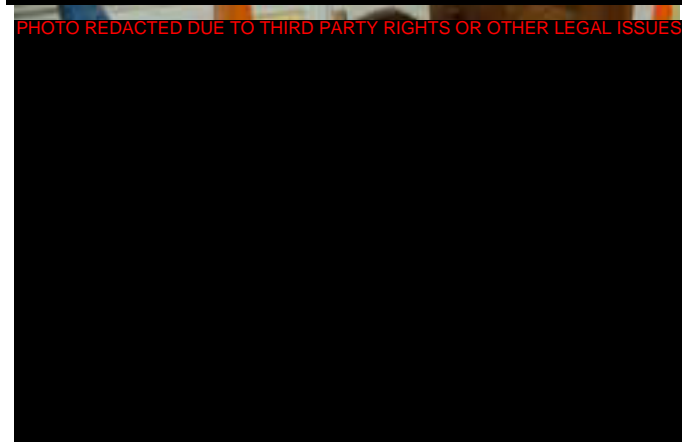
70. Health Scotland (2015), Setting the Table: Nutritional guidance and food standards for early years childcare providers in Scotland <http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/21130-Setting%20the%20Table%20Nutritional%20Guidance%20and%20Food%20Standards.pdf>

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Social Care Standards: **'I can enjoy unhurried snacks and meal time in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible'**.<sup>71</sup> In the first year of life, babies follow individual feeding patterns which can change regularly<sup>72</sup>. Therefore, the space for babies at mealtimes should be adaptable to meet their individual needs. In small settings it may be appropriate to use the playroom for mealtimes.



In other circumstances a separate lunch space may be provided or a setting may consider a combination of both. Children should be involved in making and preparing their meals and snacks where appropriate. Many settings also encourage children to grow and prepare food. This is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards; **'If appropriate, I can choose to make my own meals, snacks and drinks, with support if I need it, and can choose to grow, cook and eat my own food where possible'**.<sup>73</sup>

Children should always have access to fresh water to keep them hydrated<sup>74</sup>. Settings should consider how children can easily access water. A supply of wholesome water is a requirement within premises where members of the public have access to drinking water. Water supplies in early learning and childcare settings need to meet this requirement. Lead can make drinking water unwholesome. Exposure to significant quantities of lead can be especially harmful to the health of unborn babies and young children due to their immaturity and still developing brain, other organs and nervous systems. It is therefore important that settings are provided in premises where there are no lead pipes or lead storage tanks in the water supply route to drinking water points or kitchen areas where food or drinks may be prepared.

71. 1.35, Eating and Drinking. Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards.

72. Health Scotland (2015), Setting the Table: Nutritional guidance and food standards for early years childcare providers in Scotland

73. 1.38, Eating and Drinking. Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards.

74. 1.39: I can drink fresh water at all times. Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards.

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### SPACE FOR CHILDREN

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Where a building warrant for change of use of premises is being sought, a water sample for lead should be taken. Scottish Water should be contacted to organise a water sample from the premises if it is connected to the public water mains. If the premises are on a private water supply then you should arrange to have a sample taken of the water by contacting the Environmental Health Department at your Local Council<sup>75</sup>.



#### THINK ABOUT

- 💡 What arrangements have been put in place to make the environment suitable for eating?
- 💡 Is there enough space to allow children to take time to have meals?
- 💡 Is the water supply suitable?

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75. Further information on the health effects of exposure to lead can be found on the NHS Inform website. <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/lead-poisoning>.

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### STAFF, PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

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#### Keys Aspects

- Importance of staff spaces
- The benefits of space for parents, children and the community

#### Staff

Staff should be able to take breaks away from the children. There must be space where staff can safely store their personal belongings and where they can meet others<sup>76</sup>. Staff rooms should be a suitable size to accommodate the number of staff. Staff areas can also be used for staff to plan, review literature and for the storage of staff resources. A staff room or resource area or training room allows for this space to be used flexibly for other activities when available.

There should be an area/office for administrative work and for the storage of confidential records. Administrative space visible from the entry point helps to create a friendly atmosphere a point of contact for parents together with an additional means of operating a secure entrance.

A separate room or office for management is best practice as it provides a space where staff and parents can speak confidentially outside administrative hours. The location of this room should provide a balance between accessibility and confidentially to parents, children and staff.

#### Parents and the community

Settings should be designed to attract children and families, to encourage parents not only to use the service for their child but for them to be involved, enjoy, and benefit from the wider community.

Parents should be encouraged to spend time in playrooms and should be welcomed into the setting which enhances communication with staff. It is also very beneficial to have other facilities for parents for example a parents room. A 'parents room' enables parents to meet informally, provides space for parents

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<sup>76</sup>. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1992/3004/made/data.pdf>

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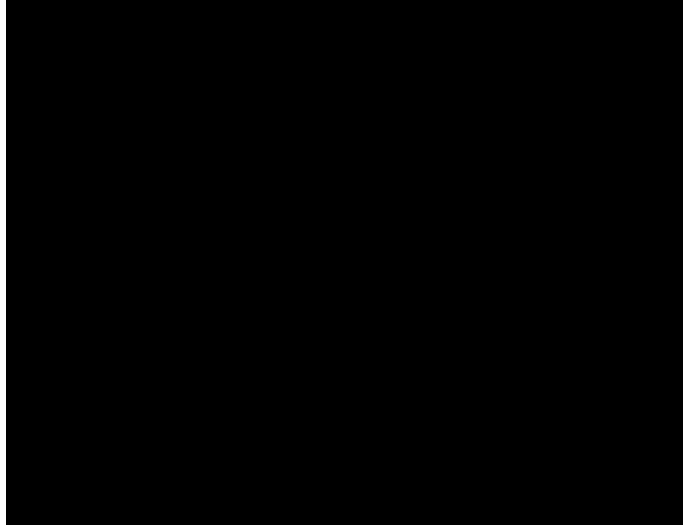


### STAFF, PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

when settling children, helps parents support one another and provides space for interest groups and training. Space for parents and encouragement for them to spend time in the service supports parental participation and helps parents to feel a valued part of the service. Good parental partnership enable staff to work with parents out with the playroom and support them engage with others.

Space which can be used by visiting settings, such as Health Visitors, Social Work and, Speech and Language Specialists can be extremely beneficial to families. Sometimes it makes it easier for families to access these services as it brings the service to them in an environment that the child and family are comfortable in. It also allows for effective, collaborative working between parents, staff and children and other agencies.

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#### THINK ABOUT

- 💡 Where will parents and staff have confidential discussions?
- 💡 Can the staff area be used for all staff and is it comfortable, suitable space for lunch/breaks?
- 💡 Where will staff training/meetings take place? Is the space suitable?
- 💡 Where is the office situated? Does this allow for those in the office to be visible to staff/children and parents?
- 💡 How inviting is the space for parents? Does it encourage parents to take part in other activities within the service?
- 💡 Where would external agencies meet families within the service? Is this space suitable?

# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### HEATING, VENTILATION, LIGHTING, NOISE AND SUSTAINABILITY

#### Keys Aspects

- Temperature
- Ventilation
- Lighting
- Impact of noise
- Sustainability

As a minimum requirement there must be adequate and suitable heating, ventilation and light<sup>77</sup> and reference should be made to Building Standards<sup>78</sup>. The Health and Social Care Standards state:

**'My environment has plenty of natural light and fresh air and the lighting, ventilation and heating can be adjusted to meet my needs and wishes'**<sup>79</sup>.

#### Heating

The environment for early learning and childcare and out of school care settings should be a comfortable temperature for children.

The safety of heating appliances is an important consideration in the prevention of accidents. Safety is the responsibility of the provider and is a matter for them to risk assess. To reduce the risk, you may want to consider cool to touch radiators or under floor heating. Heating controls which are accessible to staff allow them to adjust the temperature to support children feel comfortable.

When moving to new premises the children from Garthamlock Nursery were asked about their new environment. They told staff what they knew about under floor heating:

**'We've not to touch the pipes. They are warm', 'The floor will be laid on top of the pipes', 'The pipes will heat up the floor', 'Then we will be nice and toasty.'**<sup>80</sup>

#### Ventilation

The ventilation should be suitable to the specific area. Fresh air should be available in all main rooms used by children<sup>81</sup>. Studies into the impact of building design on children with autism spectrum disorder suggest that good natural ventilation should be a key feature of settings<sup>82</sup>. One of the best ways of providing natural ventilation is by opening windows which

77. The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2011/9780111012321/contents>  
78. British Standards Institution (2006) British Standard 6465-1:2006 Sanitary Installations  
79. 5.19, Wellbeing. Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

80. This data was part of the Care Inspectorate's Design Principles consultation exercise. March 2017  
81. 5.19, Wellbeing. Scottish Government (2017), Health and Social Care Standards  
82. Whitehurst, T. (2006) The impact of building design on children with autistic spectrum disorders. Good Autism Practice. Vol.1, May 2006.

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## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



## HEATING, VENTILATION, LIGHTING, NOISE AND SUSTAINABILITY

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allows natural air to circulate. This helps to create a healthier, homely, comfortable environment and enables staff to control the level of ventilation. In general, research indicates that there is a link between natural ventilation and health outcomes<sup>83</sup>. Natural ventilation is also an effective measure to control infection<sup>84</sup>.

### Lighting

Natural light should be within the playrooms used by children. Natural light should be in as many areas as possible throughout the premises. As a minimum standard, natural light should be within the playrooms used by children. All opportunities for maximising natural light should be taken.

Natural light affects psychological wellbeing in terms of mood, security and behaviour. Having good natural light in a premise has been recognised as being beneficial to children with autism spectrum disorder. Research tells us that fluorescent lighting can affect the vision field of some people with autism spectrum disorder<sup>85</sup>. Therefore, think carefully about the type of artificial lighting used. Natural light is not only beneficial to the wellbeing of children but also to staff. Artificial and natural light should be used flexibly to suit the use of the specific space<sup>86</sup>.

Windows are the second most effective way of ensuring access to natural light, the first being access to outdoors. To help children feel less confined indoors they should be able to see out of windows. Research tells us parents view windows as

an important aspect of the environment. A survey conducted by the Care Inspectorate found that 63% parents felt it was 'very important' that windows were available for children to see out; with 30% stating it was 'important'<sup>87</sup>.

**'The spirit of a place depends more on the presence of natural light than perhaps any other factor'<sup>88</sup>.**

Windows help to make for a more homely environment. Consideration could be given to how the use of floor to ceiling windows or fully glazed doors can be used to increase the amount of natural light and to enable children to see outside. Where windows are not at eye level, improvements can be made to help children see out outside. To help both babies<sup>89</sup> and children develop and also to

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83. Zhang, G. Spickett, J. Rumchev, K. Lee, A.H, Stick, S. (2006) *Indoor environmental quality in a 'low allergen' school and three standard primary schools in Western Australia*. International Journal of Environmental and Health Vol.16, January 2006

84. World Health Organisation (2009) Natural ventilation for infection control in health-care settings [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241547857\\_eng.pdf?ua=1](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241547857_eng.pdf?ua=1)

85. Irlen, H. (1991). *Reading through Colours: Overcoming Dyslexia and Other Reading Disabilities through the Irlen Method*. New York: Avery

86. Berris, R. & Miller, E. (2011) How design of the physical environment impacts early learning: educators and parents perspectives. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*. Vol.36

87. 1731 of 2748 of parents in the sample survey. This data was gathered as part of the Care Inspectorate's Design Principles consultation exercise. March 2017

88. Olds, Rui Anita. (2000). *Child Care Design Guide: The Ultimate Day Care Centre Design Source* McGraw-Hill. New York.

89. Scottish Government (2014), *Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare* <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>

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## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT

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### HEATING, VENTILATION, LIGHTING, NOISE AND SUSTAINABILITY

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learn about the world outside, the view from the window should be interesting. Blinds or suitable covers for windows will help to shade the room from direct sunlight and help keep the temperature comfortable.

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You may want to consider using roof windows or light tubes to increase the level of natural light within a room. This can make the area more interesting by creating glimpses of the sky or making interesting patterns of light. Some providers have made very good use of roof windows alongside the use of a mezzanine area to bring children closer to the sky.



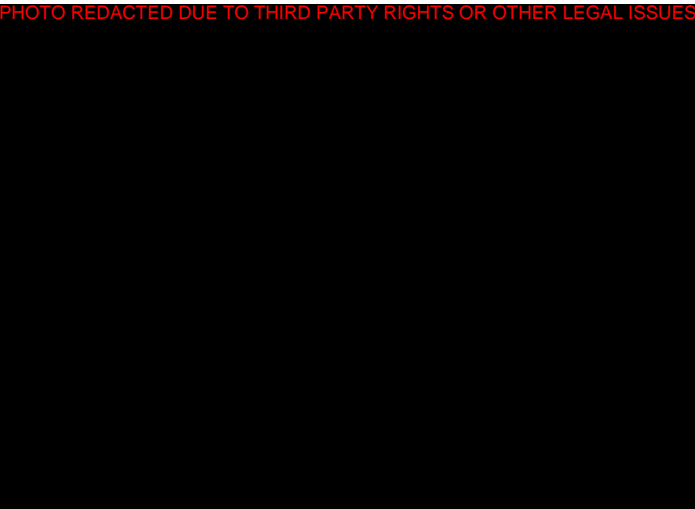
# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### HEATING, VENTILATION, LIGHTING, NOISE AND SUSTAINABILITY

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In the Fuji Kindergarten Japan, there is at least one roof window or skylight into each indoor area<sup>90</sup>. In this service children can play on the roof, and this allows them to look inside the rooms along with creating additional natural light.

90. Tezuka Architects (2016) *The Yellow Book*. Jovis



#### THINK ABOUT

- 💡 Consider how the temperature of the environment would feel to a child?
- 💡 What measures have been put in place to reduce the risk from heating appliances?
- 💡 How do you ensure the safety of windows?
- 💡 What measures have been taken to maximise natural light and natural ventilation?
- 💡 What impact could the type of artificial light used have on a child?
- 💡 Are windows at a level that children can see out of? If not what improvements can be done to achieve this?

#### Noise

The environment should be free from avoidable and intrusive noise<sup>91</sup>. This applies to the internal noise and noise from external sources. The design of the environment is an important factor of controlling the impact of noise<sup>92</sup>. Sound can either support or interfere with what is happening within any environment. Some sounds are an important source of familiarisation or security for children. Many children can find unusual sounds or extreme quiet to be upsetting<sup>93</sup>.

91. 5.18 My environment is relaxed, welcoming, peaceful and free from avoidable and intrusive noise and smells. Scottish Government (2017) *Health and Social Care Standards* <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

92. Evans, G.W & Maxwell, L. (1997) *Chronic noise exposure and reading deficits: The mediating effects of language acquisition*. Environment and Behaviour, Vol.29

93. Olds, Rui Anita. (2000). *Child Care Design Guide: The Ultimate Day Care Centre Design Source* McGraw-Hill. New York.

# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### HEATING, VENTILATION, LIGHTING, NOISE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Research tells us that for people with autistic spectrum disorder noise can create confusion and fear:

“Auditory and tactile input often overwhelmed me. Loud noise hurt my ears. When noise and sensory stimulation became too intense, I was able to shut off my hearing and retreat into my own world”<sup>94</sup>

One important task for children is learning to focus on what is relevant and ignore what isn't. Some research shows how the presence of noise can have a detrimental effect on young children when they are attempting to learn new words. Children will rarely be in a completely quiet environment, but reducing noise levels can help children learn even when there is background noise<sup>95</sup>.

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The height of the ceiling and the acoustics are important when designing an environment for children as this can present problems in respect of noise<sup>96</sup>. Measures can be put in place to reduce noise levels within an environment. The use of acoustic panels can reduce noise levels.

‘Settings should create a harmonious and pleasing acoustic environment and control, absorb or dissipate unwanted noise’<sup>97</sup>.

#### THINK ABOUT

- What sounds would be familiar and help children feel secure?
- What noise would be likely to impact on child's concentration?
- Could the level of noise be frightening to a child?
- What is balance of sound between familiar noise and unwanted noise?
- If staff find the noise too loud, consider the impact this could have on a young child?
- What measures have been put in place to reduce noise where the ceiling is high?

94. Grandin.T (1996), *Emergence: Labelled Autistic*. New York

95. McMillan, B. & Saffran, J. (2016). *Learning in Complex Environment: The Effects of Background Speech on Early Word Learning*. Child Development. Vol.87, July 2016.

96. McMillan, B. & Saffran, J. (2016).

97. Olds, Rui Anita. (2000). *Child Care Design Guide: The Ultimate Day Care Centre Design Source* McGraw-Hill. New York.

# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### HEATING, VENTILATION, LIGHTING, NOISE AND SUSTAINABILITY

#### Sustainability

Sustainable development is defined as:

“Development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”<sup>98</sup>

The Scottish Government is committed to sustainable development in schools. In 2013, the Government accepted all 31 recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group’s ‘Learning for Sustainability Report.’<sup>99</sup> Education Scotland holds sustainable development as an educational priority,<sup>100</sup> concluding that it contributes to raising attainment and achievement.<sup>101</sup>

98. United Nations (1987), Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future <http://un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm>

99. Scottish Government, Learning for Stability (2013) <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE/OnePlanetSchools/GovernmentResponse%20>

100. [http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4\\_tcm4-870533.pdf](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4_tcm4-870533.pdf)

101. Education Scotland (2013), Vision 2030+ Concluding report of the Learning for Sustainability National Implementation Group <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/res1-vision-2030.pdf>

“Every school should have a whole school approach to learning for sustainability that is robust, demonstrable, evaluated and supported by leadership at all levels.”

This applies in equal measure to an early learning and childcare service as it does to primary or secondary school.

It is imperative that any new education establishment, including early learning and childcare settings or any extensions, incorporates sustainable development from the beginning of the design phase:

**Sustainability needs to become a core aspect of planning, design, development and management of schools and changes to them. In addition, ‘greener’ schools, in themselves, are a powerful learning and teaching tool.**<sup>102</sup>

102. Scottish Government (2009), Building Better Schools: Investing in Scotland’s Future, Principle 6 <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/09/22154600/16>

A majority of early learning and childcare and out of school care settings have already embraced sustainable design and development and have been awarded the Eco Schools Green Flag.<sup>103</sup>

The Scottish Government publication offers advice on what sustainable development means to them, as well as the process of delivering a well-designed, sustainable building.<sup>104</sup> What is clear is that all sustainable solutions must be factored in at the design stage and then revisited at each stage of the process for them to be effective. This is in order to ensure that the clear vision for sustainability that needs to be established at the outset is carried through the entire design, construction and operational phases.<sup>105</sup>

103. <http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainable-development-education/eco-schools>

104. Scottish Government (2004) Sustainability – Building Our Future: Scotland’s School Estate <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2004/12/20327/47466>

105. Scottish Government (2004) Sustainability – Building Our Future: Scotland’s School Estate <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2004/12/20327/47466>

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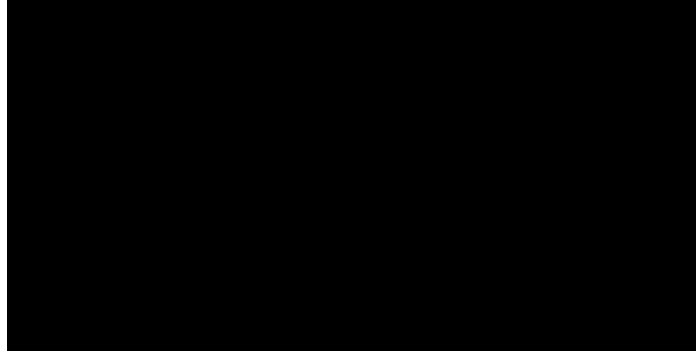


### HEATING, VENTILATION, LIGHTING, NOISE AND SUSTAINABILITY

'When choosing materials for building based settings there is a dual role to protect children from harmful toxins and to protect the environment from further depletion of natural resources.'<sup>106</sup>

The Rocking Horse Nursery, Aberdeen, is the first 'Passive House' nursery in Scotland. Passive House buildings are designed with quality components, high levels of insulation, and systems to recycle heat and circulate fresh air around the building. Passive buildings are extremely energy efficient, requiring significantly lower levels of energy for space heating than regular buildings.

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#### THINK ABOUT

- What building materials provide a sustainable solution and encourage sustainable learning?
- Will the sustainable solution be easily implemented during the operations phase to ensure the sustainable design benefits can be realised?

# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### Keys Aspects

- Importance of hand hygiene procedures

There should be proper provision for hand washing within the service. Hand hygiene is widely acknowledged as the most effective way of preventing and controlling avoidable infections<sup>107</sup>. Hand washing must be carried out at appropriate times, using the correct facilities, suitable products and the correct procedures<sup>108</sup>. This section relates to the facilities for hand washing. Other guidance is available about products and procedures<sup>109</sup>. Children should be encouraged to learn about hand hygiene. Good hand hygiene should always be promoted. As well as preventing infection, hand washing is an important part of healthy living for children and can be fun. Hand washbasins should be available in:

- kitchens;
- food preparation areas;

- toilets; and
- nappy changing areas;

It is not expected that there is a hand washbasin in playrooms for school age children (i.e. out of school care settings) unless providers wish to make this available. However children and staff must have access to hand washbasins nearby the playroom.

Guidance on hand washbasins in relation to food preparation is available under the section Kitchen and Food Preparation.

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107. NHS Education for Scotland (2015), Preventing Infection in Care at Home Handbook. NHS Scotland

108. Care Inspectorate (2014) Hand Hygiene: information to support improvement <http://www.hub.careinspectorate.com/media/208454/hand-hygiene-information-to-support-improvement.pdf>

109. Health Protection Scotland (2017), Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings <http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/resourcedocument.aspx?id=5761>

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



Hand washbasins should only ever be used for hand washing and not for any other purpose. Hand washbasins and taps should be able to be operated by children and the temperature of the water should be thermostatically controlled. The hand washbasins should be of a suitable size and height for children and staff. Best practice would be to have two hand washbasins within each playroom, one at a height suitable for adults and one at a height suitable for children.

However, where this is not possible, one hand washbasin would support hand washing. Where the hand wash basin is at an adult height, a suitable step would support children to use it. Where the hand wash basin is at a child's height, consideration should be given to staff health issues.

Beginning information on hand washing facilities in staff toilets is part of building standards<sup>110</sup>.



### THINK ABOUT

- Where is the most suitable place to install washbasins?
- How accessible are washbasins to both children and staff?
- Is there a washbasin in all of the areas there should be?

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110. SSI No.210 Welfare of users 4.—(1) A provider must (a) make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users; (b) provide services in a manner which respects the privacy and dignity of service users. The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations (2011) [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2011/210/pdfs/ssi\\_20110210\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2011/210/pdfs/ssi_20110210_en.pdf)

# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### Keys Aspects

- Importance of suitability of children's toilets
- Number of toilets
- Intervening ventilated space
- Staff toilets

It is important for children to feel safe and comfortable when going to the toilet. The toilet facilities should be well ventilated,<sup>111</sup> suitably heated and be in a place which is within easy reach of children to promote their independence.<sup>112</sup> Providing children with clean, suitable, safe toilets they can access easily is essential for ensuring children develop good bladder and bowel health habits throughout their life<sup>113</sup>.

Some continence problems children experience can be as a result of their reluctant to using toilets. A delay in attaining continence in childhood can lead to bladder dysfunction or bowel problems in later life<sup>114</sup>.

The British Standard for toilets for 'nursery (aged three to five years)' is one w.c. per 10 children or part thereof, not less than four<sup>115</sup>. This is interpreted as, for example, where a service is registered for 34 children, three toilets would be sufficient. Where a service is registered for 35 children, four toilets should be provided. Although the British Standard relates specifically to children aged three to five, this standard would also be applied to children aged two years and in out of school care settings. Many children aged

two years may be in nappies, therefore suitable changing facilities should also be available. The changing facility would be counted in the number of w.c's. For example, where a service is provided to 40 children aged two years to those not attending school, three w.c's and one changing facility would be suitable. Where the service is small e.g. 10 children aged two years to those not attending school, one w.c. and one changing facility should be provided. However providers may wish to have additional facilities as appropriate.<sup>116</sup> Within the toilets one hand washbasin should be available for every 10 children.<sup>117</sup>

111. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations(1992) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1992/3004/made/data.pdf>

112. 5.3: I can easily access a toilet from the rooms I use and I can use a toilet when I need to. Scottish Government (2017) Health and Social Care Standards <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

113. Association for Continence Advice & Care Inspectorate, Reshaping Ladder and Bowel Care in Scotland. Lecture 1 University of Stirling 1 October 2015.

114. Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence(ERIC)(2012)The Right to Go: A Guide to Helping Early Years Settings and Schools Manage Continence <https://www.eric.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=b489039f-2af5-4595-a2fb-5d80d7a67f02>

115. British Standard (2006) 6465-1:2006 Sanitary Installations.

116. Care Inspectorate (2014) Nappy changing facilities in early years, nurseries and large childminding services <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/177131/nappy-changing-facilities.pdf>

117. British Standard (2006) 6465-1:2006 Sanitary Installations

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## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



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Children's privacy and dignity should be respected when using toilets. Dignity and respect are central principles of the Health and Social Care Standards<sup>118</sup>. Each w.c. should be contained within its own individual compartment. Full height doors on cubicles and locks on doors are not recommended for early learning and childcare settings as many young children need assistance from staff. Separate boys and girls toilets are not necessary for early learning and childcare settings. However, school age children should have separate toilets, unless the environment they are based in has purpose built communal facilities or the w.c. and hand washbasin is provided within an individual room.

Where school age children share the environment with younger children both age groups, it is best practice for them to have separate toilet facilities. Where an

early learning and childcare settings has a small number of children and is based within a small primary school, it may be reasonable for children to share toilets with school children where suitable toilets facilities are available.

It is best practice for sanitary facilities to be of a suitable size for those using them. Small children need child sized toilets so that they can sit comfortably and children's feet should touch the ground when using the toilet<sup>119</sup>. Smaller fixtures enhance independence which is particularly important in an early learning and childcare service. The National Resource Centre for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education suggests that using a full size toilet for small

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118. Scottish Government (2017) Health and Social Care Standards <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00520693.pdf>

119. National Resource Centre for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education, University of Colorado College of Nursing (2015) Caring For Our Children [http://cfoc.nrckids.org/images/Buttons/Download\\_s2.png](http://cfoc.nrckids.org/images/Buttons/Download_s2.png)



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## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



children without supervision is not recommended due to the size of the toilet in comparison to the size of the child<sup>120</sup>. Where an early learning and childcare setting may have a larger w.c. an inset seat and step should be used. When using a larger sized w.c. with an inset seat, consideration needs to be given to the width of a standard toilet seat. Many settings do not encourage the use of potties, therefore a child who is being toilet trained will use the toilet. Guidance on potty training refers to the disadvantages of an adult sized toilet as large and intimidating for some small children<sup>121</sup>.

Where urinals are available for school age children these would be counted in the ratio of w.c.'s. However a w.c. must also be available, for privacy.

In indoor/outdoor settings, suitable outdoor toilet facilities may make it easier for children and may help promote independence. These can be included in the ratio of children's toilets.

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120. National Resource Centre for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education, University of Colorado College of Nursing (2015) Caring For Our Children

121. ERIC (2012) The Right to Go: A Guide to Helping Early Years Settings and Schools Manage Continence

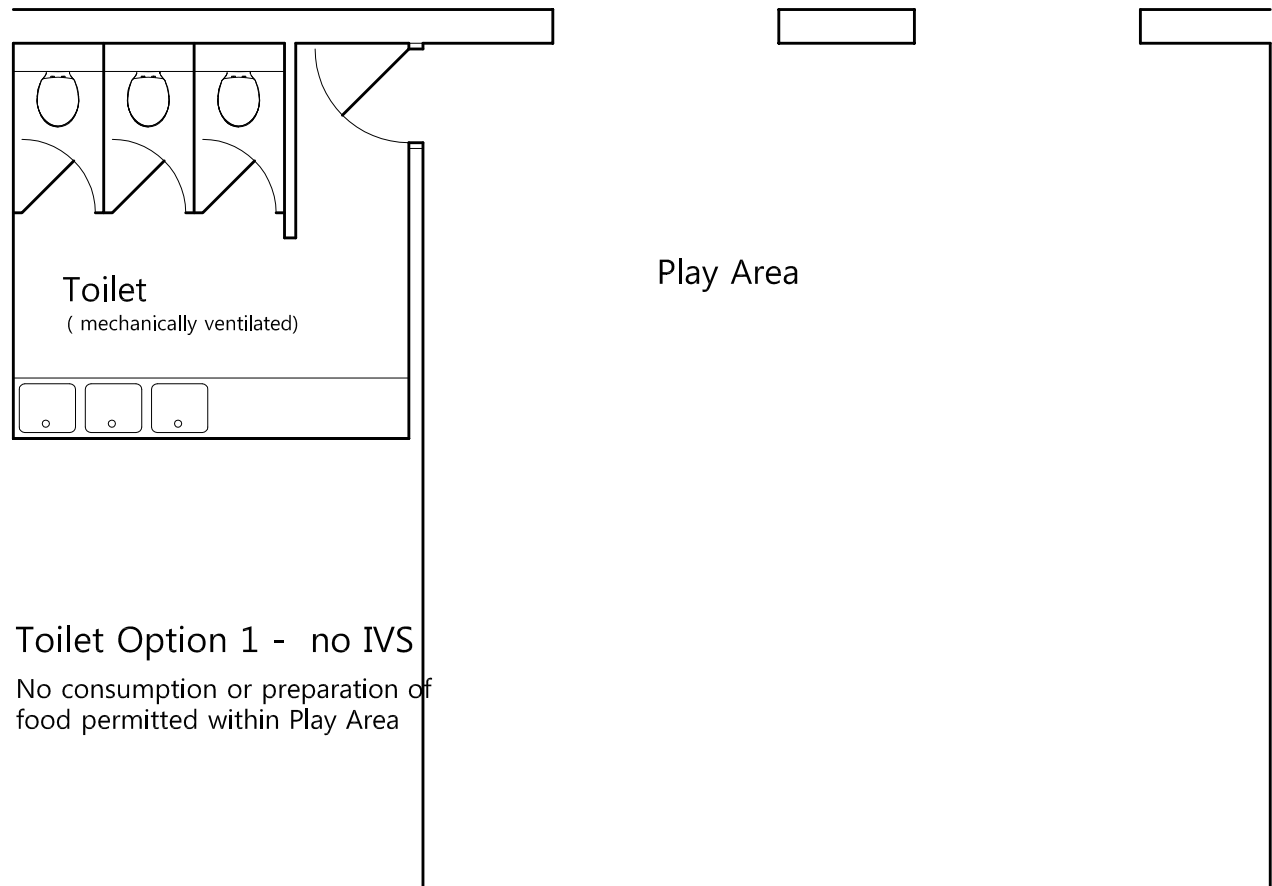
# SECTION 02 ENVIRONMENT



Accessible toilet facilities may be included in the ratio of children's w.c.'s where appropriate, e.g. when they are not used by members of the public and not included in the ratio of staff toilets.

To meet food hygiene regulations, sanitary accommodation should not open directly on to any room or space used wholly or partly for the preparation or consumption of food on a commercial basis. This is most commonly addressed by providing an intervening, ventilated space between a toilet and the playroom.<sup>122</sup> It is important to liaise early with the local environmental health department for advice regarding this. The three diagrams opposite and on the next page, illustrate options for consideration.

## Early Years Design Guide Toilet Options - 1



### Toilet Option 1 - no IVS

No consumption or preparation of food permitted within Play Area

122. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/2996/made/data.pdf>

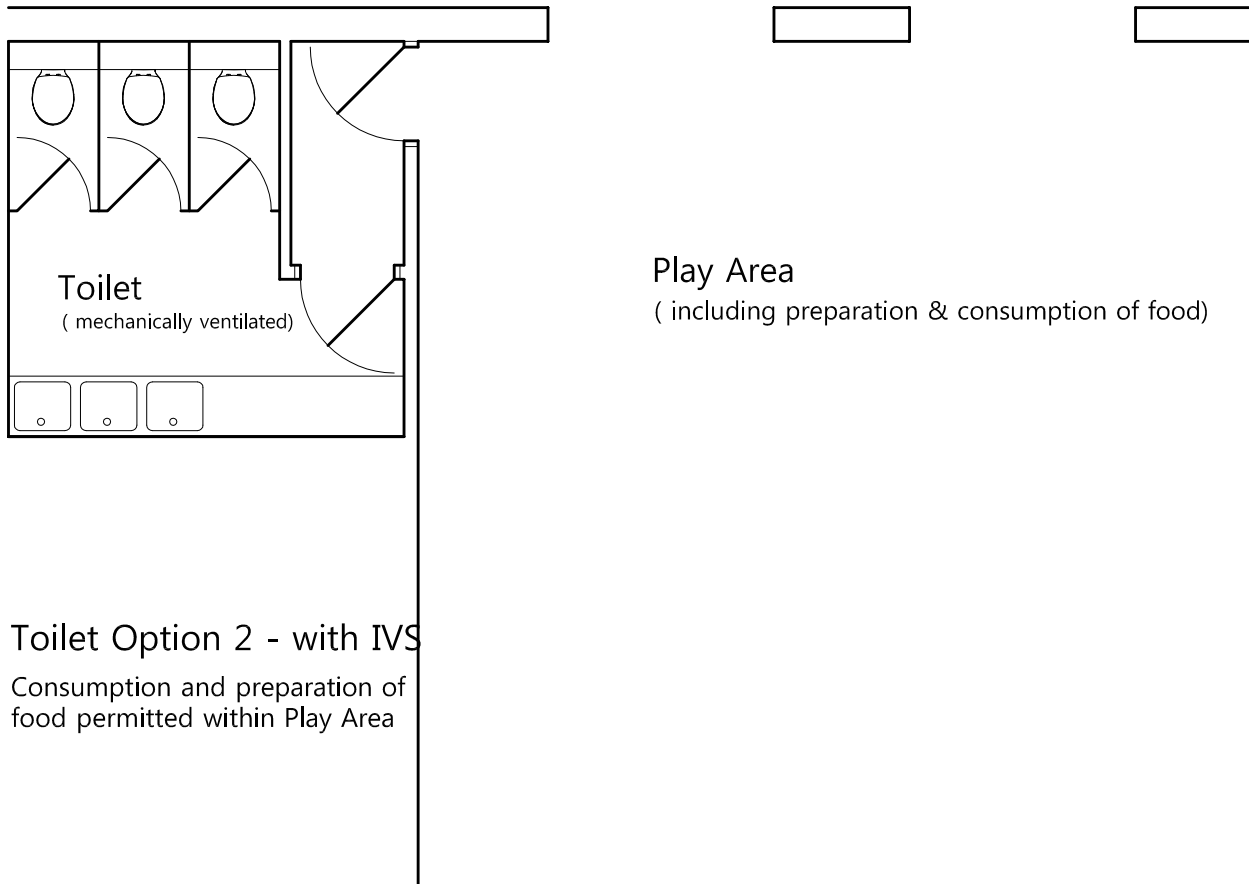
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# SECTION 02 ENVIRONMENT



## Early Years Design Guide Toilet Options - 2



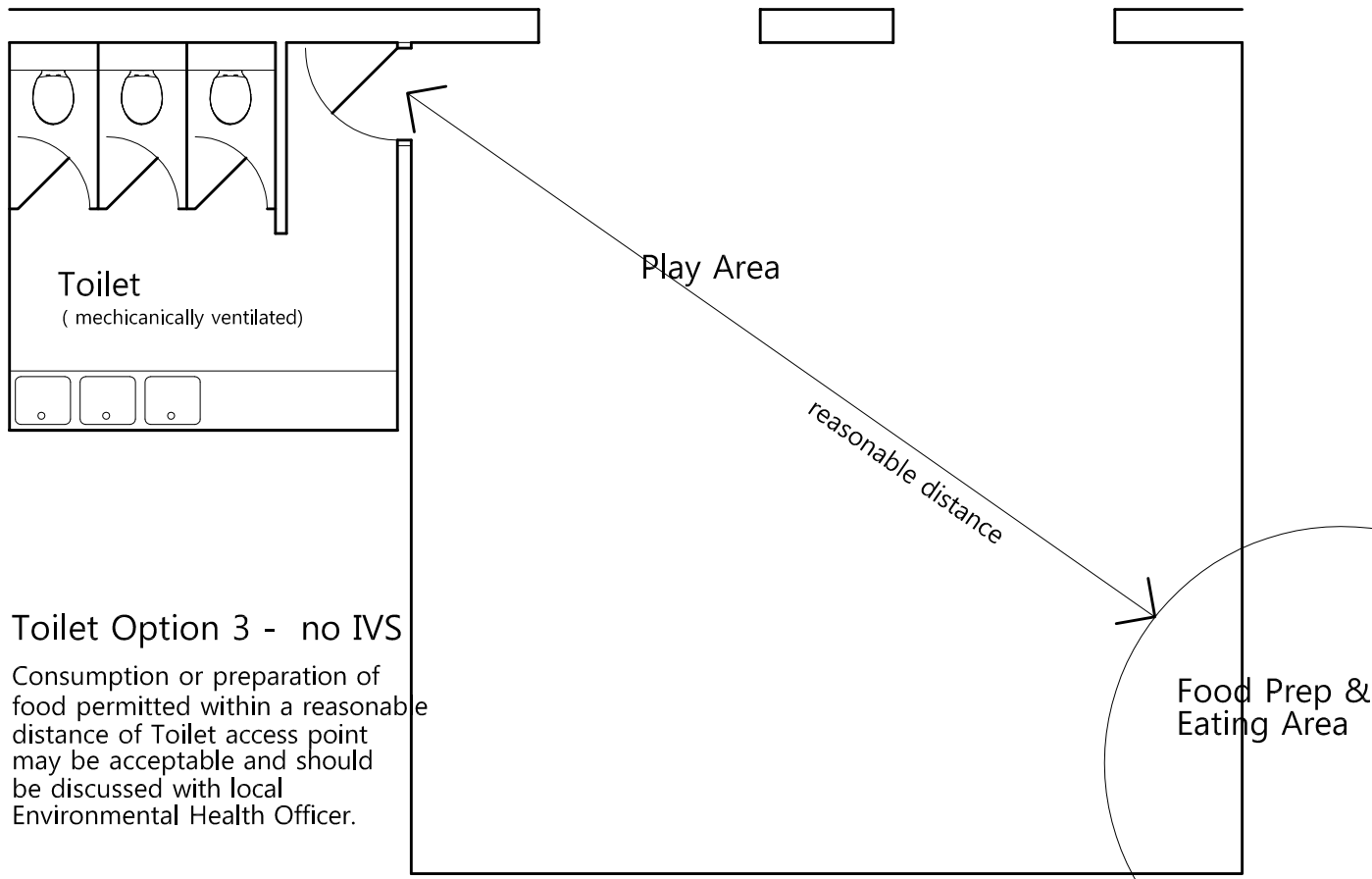
Toilet Option 2 - with IVS

Consumption and preparation of food permitted within Play Area

# SECTION 02 ENVIRONMENT



## Early Years Design Guide Toilet Options - 3



### Toilet Option 3 - no IVS

Consumption or preparation of food permitted within a reasonable distance of Toilet access point may be acceptable and should be discussed with local Environmental Health Officer.



### THINK ABOUT

- 💡 If you were a child, would you be comfortable using the toilet facilities?
- 💡 Is the height and size of toilets and wash hand basins suitable for all of the children attending the service?
- 💡 What measures have been taken to respect privacy and dignity?
- 💡 How easy is it for children to access the toilets independently?
- 💡 Where young children need the assistance of staff how easy is it for this to happen?
- 💡 How does the position of where the toilets are situated meet with food safety regulations?

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### Staff facilities

Staff toilets should not be shared with children and should not be counted when considering the overall number of toilets available for children. All toilet facilities for staff should be provided in accordance with building regulations<sup>123</sup>, health and safety and work regulations<sup>124</sup>, food safety regulations<sup>125</sup> and the Equality Act (2010)<sup>126</sup>. Building standards apply to new or converted buildings, to extensions or alterations to buildings which have toilet facilities.



### THINK ABOUT

- 💡 How do the toilet facilities for staff comply with the relevant regulations?
- 💡 What account has been taken of the equality act particularly in terms of accessible facilities?
- 💡 What measures have been taken to make the toilets comfortable and safe?

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123. Scottish Government (2016), Building Standard Technical Handbook

124. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations (1992)

125. [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/pdfs/ssi\\_20060003\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/pdfs/ssi_20060003_en.pdf)

126. Equality Act (2010) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### Keys Aspects

- Supporting personal care
- Supporting continence
- Protecting against infection

Settings which provide care to children in nappies or who require assistance with continence aids must have appropriate facilities for nappy changing and personal care. The facilities must provide children with a suitable, safe, clean environment and appropriate equipment.<sup>127</sup> When changing children their privacy<sup>128</sup> and dignity<sup>129</sup> must be respected.

In 2006 and 2012, E.coli 0157 outbreaks in Scottish nurseries resulting in serious infections in children and staff were reported. Outcomes of the infections may

have serious and long-term effects for those affected. One method of spreading E.coli 0157 and many other types of gastro-intestinal infections can be attributed to failures in the provision of appropriate nappy changing/personal care facilities; this includes the provision of hand washing sinks and associated practices. Children under the age of three are particularly susceptible to infection. Evidence from outbreak situations, notifications to the Care Inspectorate regarding incidences of infection, and evidence from research highlights this. The Care Inspectorate has developed a guidance document to provide advice and to support improvement in relation to nappy changing.<sup>130</sup> The guidance describes suitable changing facilities for children and differentiates between facilities for children aged under two years and for those over two years.



### THINK ABOUT

- How is the privacy and dignity of children respected?
- How would the area look and feel to a child? Is it warm, comfortable, pleasant, spacious?
- Is there enough space for adults and children to move around?
- What facilities are there to support good infection control procedures?
- What measures have been taken to ensure the changing area is consistent with the nappy changing guidance?

127. 5.7 If I wear nappies there is a suitable area with a sink and some privacy for me to be changed. Scottish Government (2014) National Health and Social Care Standards

128. 1.4. if I require intimate care this is carried out in a dignified way with my privacy and personal preferences respected.

129. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

130. Care Inspectorate (2014) Nappy changing facilities in early years, nurseries and large childminding services <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/177131/nappy-changing-facilities.pdf>

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## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



### KITCHEN AND FOOD PREPARATION

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An early learning and childcare service or out of school care setting providing food, including snacks for children is likely to be considered a food business by Environmental Health.

Food Safety is regulated in all care settings by the local authority Environmental Health department. The provider will need to comply with the requirements of the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006<sup>131</sup> and other supporting legislation.

Early learning and childcare and out of school care settings offer snacks with many providing facilities for children to have lunch/meals. Provision for meals can include food cooked on the premises, the use of outside caterers or where children bring a packed lunch.

A setting that provides breakfast cereals and snacks could be adequately furnished by a preparation area or kitchenette type arrangement contained within the playroom. This would mainly relate to out of school care settings and some early learning and childcare settings where there is very limited food preparation. This can be useful where children help prepare food usually for snack. Many providers do this by installing a half wall partition. A wall or controlled access partition would not be required where cold/ambient foods are prepared only.

A kitchenette would also be a suitable arrangement where cooked lunches are to be brought to the settings by another caterer and “plated out”.

A setting which intends to cater beyond this level may require a kitchen physically separate from the playroom. The size of the kitchen should be appropriate to the amount of equipment and the volume of food to be cooked and prepared. Suitable storage facilities should be available for food, kitchen utensils, cooking equipment, cutlery and crockery.

The design and structural requirements for food provision in a setting are determined to an extent by the level of food provision, Environmental Health can provide support and guidance on this.

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131. Scottish Government (2006), The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/pdfs/ssi\\_20060003\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/pdfs/ssi_20060003_en.pdf)

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## SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



### KITCHEN AND FOOD PREPARATION

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Hand hygiene is very important. Each kitchen or kitchenette/food preparation area must have at least one wash hand sink for food handlers to wash their hands. Wash hand sinks for cleaning hands must have taps which provide hot and cold running water (or mixer water at a comfortable temperature). A kitchen where cooking takes place and high risk food is prepared must have separate sinks for washing food and for cleaning food equipment and utensils. The wash up sinks must have a tap or taps supplying hot and cold water. The food washing sink must have a cold water supply as minimum.<sup>132</sup> It is best practice for the taps on food preparation sinks to be non-hand operated taps (lever or automatic).

A kitchenette where only low risk foods are prepared or where ready to eat food comes from another provider must have, as a minimum, a single or double drainer sink. This can be used for food preparation (e.g. washing vegetables and fruit) and washing dishes, providing proper cleaning of the sink takes place between these uses. This sink must have a tap or taps supplying hot and cold running water. Where space permits a dishwashing machine is a very useful addition.

Where high risk food is brought to the setting there must be sufficient refrigerated storage to keep the food at a safe temperature. A food temperature of 8°C or below is effective in controlling the multiplication of most bacteria in perishable food. It is recommended practice to operate refrigerators and chillers at 5°C or below.

Some parents prefer to supply food, usually in the form of a packed lunch. For advice regarding storage contact Environmental Health.

Examples of high risk food would be foods which are ready to eat, do not need any further cooking, and provide a place for bacteria to live, grow and thrive e.g. cooked meat and fish, gravy, stock, sauces and soup.

For a kitchenette a single under counter refrigerator or an upright fridge-freezer may be sufficient storage space. For a kitchen cooking and preparing meals there must be sufficient refrigerator and freezer storage for all of the food that must be kept temperature controlled. All food must be stored appropriately to reduce the risk of food borne illness.<sup>133</sup> In Scotland, there are no prescribed temperatures for refrigerators; however it is best practice to store food in refrigerators between 1°C and 4°C.<sup>134</sup>

132. Scottish Government (2006), The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/pdfs/ssi\\_20060003\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/pdfs/ssi_20060003_en.pdf)

133. Health Protection Scotland (2017) Infection Protection and Control in Childcare Settings <http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/resourcedocument.aspx?id=5761>

134. Food Standards Agency (2016) Guidance on Temperature Control Legislation in the United Kingdom <http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/tempcontrolguiduk.pdf>



# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### KITCHEN AND FOOD PREPARATION

Appropriate facilities should be available where formula milk is prepared or breast milk stored.<sup>135</sup> Two sinks are required in any areas where formula milk is prepared, one for hand washing and one for cleaning.<sup>136</sup>

The following are general requirements which apply to kitchens and kitchenettes:

- Kitchens and kitchenettes must be adequately lit and ventilated.
- Windows and any other openings must be constructed in a way that prevents dirt from building up
- Windows and any other openings (such as doors) that are likely to be opened to the outside must be fitted with insect-proof screens that can be easily removed for cleaning.
- Doors must be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect.

- Where cooking takes place the installation of extract ventilation will be required.

The floors and walls should be made from materials which are smooth, hard-wearing, washable and in a good condition. They must be easy to clean and, if necessary, disinfect. Bare wood is not acceptable. Floors should be covered with a material which reduces the risk of slipping when contaminated or wet.

Ceilings must be in good condition, smooth and easy to clean, with no flaking paint or plaster. The finish must prevent dirt from building up and reduce condensation, mould and shedding of particles.

Kitchen cupboards and worktops must be made from materials which are easy to clean and where necessary disinfect. All items, fittings and equipment that come into contact with food must be kept in good order, repair and condition.<sup>137</sup>



#### THINK ABOUT

- Does the service need to be registered as a food business?
- Have you contacted your local environmental health department about your arrangements for providing food?
- What food is provided and does this require the service to be registered as a food business?
- How suitable is the kitchen, kitchenette/preparation area?
- What arrangements are in place to prepare and store food? Are these suitable?
- What are the facilities for those who handle food to wash their hands? Are these suitable?
- Where a washing machine is within the food preparation area is this used for non-soiled items only?

135. Health Protection Scotland (2017) Infection Protection and Control in Childcare Settings

136. Scottish Government (2006), The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations

137. Scottish Government (2006), The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### LAUNDRY AND UTILITY PROVISION

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#### Keys Aspects

- Suitable laundry space
- Suitable utility provision

Settings will generate a certain amount of laundry. Providers may choose to launder their own linen or send them to an external laundry. The main concern in relation to laundry relates to infection control. Dirty and especially soiled (faecally contaminated) linen and clothing can be sources of cross-infection. Sending dirty and soiled children's clothing home for parents to wash is recommended practice.

Where a provider launders items, (including soiled items) washing machines and driers should be provided and located in a dedicated room away from the playroom and the kitchen. The room should not be accessible to children. The room should be well ventilated, with space to store clean laundry and to deal separately with soiled laundry. Fresh, clean linen should be stored in a dry area separate from any used linen.<sup>138</sup> The room should have hand washing facilities.<sup>139</sup> It would be good practice to also have a utility sink. A washing machine can be located in a kitchen, kitchenette/food preparation area as long as the washing machine is for laundering non-soiled materials. Soiled (faecally contaminated) clothing should never enter an area where food is prepared.

A secure room/cupboard should be available to store cleaning and disinfecting chemicals and equipment with enough storage and shelving to enable safe, hygienic storage of equipment. A utility sink should be available to dispose of waste and for environmental cleaning activities (e.g. emptying dirty water from mop buckets, cleaning mop buckets). Many settings have this within a utility room which is also used to store cleaning items. A utility sink can also be used for general purposes for example, for washing paints. Sinks for hand washing cannot be used for the purpose of cleaning of utility items and must only be used for hand washing.<sup>140</sup>

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138. Health Protection Scotland (2017) Infection Protection and Control in Childcare Settings <http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/resourcedocument.aspx?id=5761>

139. Scottish Government (2006), The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/pdfs/ssi\\_20060003\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/pdfs/ssi_20060003_en.pdf)

140. Care Inspectorate (2014) Hand hygiene: information to support improvement <http://www.hub.careinspectorate.com/media/208454/hand-hygiene-information-to-support-improvement.pdf>

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### LAUNDRY AND UTILITY PROVISION

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#### THINK ABOUT

- What laundry and utility facilities are available? Are they suitable?
- What measures have been taken to reduce the risk of cross infection?
- Where is the laundry and utility facility situated? Are they accessible to the children?
- Who will carry out laundry duties and cleaning duties? Is there designated laundry and cleaning staff?
- How accessible is the general purpose utility sink?

# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



### STORAGE

#### Keys Aspects

- **Suitable storage arrangements**

Storage arrangements should be suitable for the purpose of the items being stored. Storage should be available for play equipment/resources, including large equipment, prams, bedding, kitchen utensils and food, towels, linen and personal care items. It is important that space is available for walking aids or any other aids children require. Any large items which may be used outdoors should be suitable of being stored in inclement weather. It can be helpful if the storage space for these items is outside. Suitable, lockable storage should be available for medication, where appropriate<sup>141</sup>.

Appropriate storage should be available for outdoor clothes. Children should be able to access these easily, however consideration should be given to the storage and drying of these items when not being used by children. Some providers have found the use of a 'boot room' to be beneficial. In Cairellot Nursery Bishopton, the boot room is beside the door and in Kelvinside Academy Nursery, Glasgow the boot storage is under the sheltered area.

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141. Care Inspectorate (2014), Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/189567/childrens-service-medication-guidance.pdf>

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# SECTION 02

## ENVIRONMENT



A buggy store is extremely helpful to parents. Buggy stores should be carefully planned. If the area is outside it should be secure but accessible to parents. A covered area will provide shelter as a protection from the elements. If inside, the area should not be near the main entrance or near where parents and children may be gathering as this would cause congestion and may be a fire risk.

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### THINK ABOUT

- How accessible is the storage area for staff?
- How easy is it for children to access outdoor weather clothes?
- How suitable is space for the items being stored?
- What arrangements are in place for items that require to be locked away?
- Where can parents safely leave buggies?

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# SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



## Consultation

As with all building design, the design of any new or refurbished early learning and childcare, or after school care setting, will have to undertake a period of consultation, whether it be statutory or not.

It is recommended that all relevant bodies, including those noted below, are consulted at an early stage in the design and development process to ensure that all are content with the proposed design. This should prevent any last-minute alterations to the building and unnecessary effort, time and cost.

The regulatory bodies that should be consulted are:

**Care Inspectorate** – Early consultation with the Care Inspectorate regarding potential building design for specific types of service is advisable. Please contact your local registration inspector or the National Enquiry Line on 0845 600 9527 for further help and advice.

**Building Standards Division (Scottish Government)** – The Scottish building regulations apply to the design, construction or demolition of a building, the provision of services, fittings or equipment and the conversion of a building. For more detailed information on the building standards system, please refer to your local building standards officer.

**Environmental Health** – Local Authority Environmental Health are responsible for the regulation of food prep and safety in local authority settings, plus private and third sector settings. They also regulate Health & Safety in the private and third sector settings with HSE performing this duty in local authority settings. Please contact your local environmental health officer for further details and to engage them in the design process. The relevant standards used in relation to environmental health are the Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004.

**Planning** – The planning system is used to make decisions about future development, and the use of land in our towns, cities and countryside. It decides where development should happen, where it should not and how development affects its surroundings. The planning system exists to regulate the use of land and buildings by granting or refusing planning permission. Decisions about planning applications are based on the development plan for your area, which is prepared by your local council or national park authority. For further information around your individual setting please make contact with your local planning department, early on in the design process.

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# SECTION 02

# ENVIRONMENT



## **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service –**

Although not a regulatory body the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have conveyed a willingness to work with all early learning and childcare and after school care services to prevent fires and make communities safer. They would welcome consultation at the design stage to field questions individual settings may have over how the building regulations should be applied in relation to fire safety. Please refer to the following website for further contact details - <http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/forms/contact-us.aspx>.

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# APPENDIX 1

## GOOD DESIGN: GUIDANCE ON ENVIRONMENT INPUT STANDARDS

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The Scottish Government has responded to comments from providers and planners, who requested a list of key principles for all early learning and child care and out of school care settings.

### Space

Current Care Inspectorate Expectations:

For children under two years - a minimum of 3.7 square metres, per child  
For children aged two years to under three years - a minimum of 2.8 square meters, per child  
For children aged three and over - a minimum of 2.3 square meters, per child.

### Natural light

Natural light should be available within playrooms used by children.

### Number of toilets

For children aged over two years, one w.c. for every 10 children, or part thereof, not less than four. For example a service registered for 34 children, three toilets would be sufficient. A service registered for 35 children four toilets should be provided.

### Outdoor play space

Children should have access to suitable, safe outdoor space adjacent to the accommodation.

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