

**Project:** ELC Strategic Forum

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<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	15:00 – 16:30	<b>Meeting No:</b>	5
	Thurs 30 March 2017		

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<b>Meeting Place:</b>	Scottish Parliament Committee Room 3	<b>Minutes By:</b>	CA
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**Attendees**

Mark McDonald (Chair)	Minister for Childcare & Early Years
Satwat Rehman	One Parent Families Scotland
Lesley Brown	Education Scotland
Valerie Gale	Care and Learning Alliance
Jean Carwood-Edwards	Early Years Scotland
Vicky Crichton	Save the Children
Carrie Lindsay	Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
Cath Agnew	Care Inspectorate
Cllr Stephanie Primrose	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
Jane O'Donnell	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
Bruce Robertson	ELC Strategic Evidence Group Chair
Clare Simpson	Parenting Across Scotland
Christine Stephen	Stirling University
Maggie Simpson	Scottish Childminding Association
Julie Wild	National Parent Forum of Scotland
Jane Mair	National Day Nurseries Association Scotland
Jim McCormick	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Geraldine Miller	West College Scotland
Gerald McLaughlin	NHS Health Scotland
Sally Cavers	Children in Scotland
Anna Fowlie	Scottish Social Services Council

**SG attendees**

Liz Levy	Early Learning and Childcare Team
Chloe Adam	Early Learning and Childcare Team
Sheree McAlpine	Early Learning and Childcare Team
Jeff Maguire	Early Learning and Childcare Team
Euan Carmichael	Early Learning and Childcare Team

**Apologies**

Fiona McQueen	SG Chief Nursing Officer
Davina Coupar	West College Scotland
Kevin Mitchell	Care Inspectorate
Purnima Tanuku	National Day Nurseries Association Scotland
Irene Audain	Scottish Out of School Care Network
Lesley Gibb	Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
Ann Henderson	Scottish Trades Union Congress

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE
1	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> (5 minutes)	<b>Chair</b>
2	<b>Minutes of last meeting</b> (5 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation of accuracy</li> <li>• Review of actions</li> </ul>	<b>Chair</b> (Paper 05/01)
3	<b>Parliamentary Statement roundtable</b> (25 minutes)	<b>Chair</b>
4	<b>ELC Blueprint Action Plan discussion</b> (30 minutes)	<b>Chair</b> (Paper 05/02)
5	<b>EU Quality Framework and SG ELC Quality Action Plan</b> (20 minutes)	<b>Liz Levy</b> (Paper 05/03)
6	<b>AOB &amp; close</b> (5 minutes)	<b>Chair</b>

[approx. running time - 1 hour 30 minutes]

## **1. Welcome and introductions**

The Chair began by apologising that the meeting would not be the full two hours, noting it was a very busy time and that he had parliamentary business to attend that afternoon.

He said that the key focus today was to get feedback from forum members on the ELC Statement to Parliament of 23 March and associated Action Plan, which set-out the actions the Scottish Government and others will take to deliver high quality ELC provision in the expansion to 1140 hours by 2020.

## **2. Minutes of last meeting**

The minute was approved with no changes.

## **3. Parliamentary Statement Roundtable, incorporating:**

- Summary of Actions

The chair invited forum members to give their high level reactions to the policy direction set out in the ELC Ministerial Statement on 23 March, asking them to keep to 1 minute each if possible.

### **Ensuing discussion - key points made:**

- The commitment to keep quality at the heart of the expansion was strongly welcomed
- Important to consider the impact of Apprentice Levy on training budgets
- The new Inclusion Fund was well received
- Parental engagement is crucial, and a strong Comms plan should be in place to ensure buy-in from parents and carers
- Need to look at messaging around the Pupil Equity Fund, and what it means in relation to ELC
- While the acknowledgement that childminders will play a vital role was welcomed, there were concerns that LAs are not currently doing enough to involve them in their thinking
- Many forum members welcomed the link to wider policy developments – e.g. Raising Attainment and the National Improvement Framework
- Funding Follows the Child was broadly welcomed, but caution should be taken to ensure there is a consistent approach across all local authorities
- The interdependencies of tax and benefit systems must be considered - Universal Credit, Tax Free Childcare and new funding model must be integrated to help parents understand what they are entitled to.

-Registration processes must be undertaken for new services – there are different categories for registration dependant on the service type. The Care Inspectorate are in negotiation about reviewing the categories of registration

- Consideration should be given to family support centres, which do not feature prominently in Action Plan.

- Acknowledgement that upskilling existing staff may be challenging, and thought should be given to annual funding cycle in relation to SAAS and SFC , which support part time training

#### **4 and 5. ELC Blueprint Action Plan and Quality Action Plan**

- EU Quality Framework and SG ELC Quality Action Plan (papers 05/02 and 05/03).

The chair introduced this item by noting restrictions on time and suggested the group combine items 4 and 5. The chair asked Liz Levy to speak on paper 05/03.

Liz outlined the Scottish Government's vision for Quality – noting it is the golden thread running through the entire programme. She explained that there had not been a specific question on defining Quality in the Blueprint Consultation, and wanted to ensure the Quality Action Plan is shaped in collaboration with stakeholders.

Liz explained that the immediate priorities are childminder accreditation, the creation of an Inclusion Fund to support young people with additional support needs and disabilities and developing a Quality Action Plan by end October.

Liz sought a steer on how to define quality and stated her intention to expand the existing Workforce and Quality Group. Notes of interest were requested from forum members and that they consider appropriate colleagues for inclusion by next week (w/c 3 April).

Liz discussed the EU Quality Framework, which can act as a driver for developing the Quality Action Plan. The Framework sets out 10 key principles to support policy-makers in pursuing excellence in ELC (Annex A).

#### **Ensuing discussion - key points made:**

- Recognised the need to identify 'what quality looks like', and to think about how that would be measured i.e. self-evaluation or inspection. There must be a robust system to assure the Scottish Government and families.

- Must address children's outcomes but avoid league tables

- All quality provision must tackle the attainment gap by ensuring staff explicitly focus on and meet the particular needs of children living in disadvantaged circumstances?

- It was noted that there should be representation of an ASN body on the new Quality Reference Group who will assist with development of the Quality Action Plan.

- The expansion offers an opportunity to rethink the education landscape, enabling more analysis for children's outcomes and drawing in transition from ELC to school. Creating a wider picture.
- Underperforming settings must be supported by local authorities, inspection and improvement bodies (CI, ES) and Scottish Government to develop and improve their services, without threat of losing partnership status.
- Join-up with work by National Improvement Framework, noting the difficulty of measuring outcomes in a very flexible environment.

## **Actions**

1/ Liz to receive notes of interest to sit on the new Quality Reference Group by 7 April.

## **7. AOB & Close**

There was no AOB. The Chair thanked everyone for their feedback today.

The Chair suggested that the next meeting should take place at the end of August or early September, to accommodate family commitments over the summer break.

It was suggested that a member of the Delivery Models Trials team attend the next meeting to provide an update on the trials progress. Forum members were made aware of trials team showcase taking place on 4 May. It was noted that the date coincided with local government elections.

## **Actions**

2/Provide the group with details on the roles of SG ELC team members

3/Provide the group with Governance structures so they are aware of other groups and forums

## **Summary of Actions**

1/ Liz to receive notes of interest for membership of the Quality Reference Group.

2/ Provide the group with details on the roles of SG ELC team members.

3/Provide the group with Governance structures so they are aware of other groups and forums

**The EU Quality framework sets out 10 key principles to support policy-makers in pursuing excellence in ELC:**

- Provision that is available and affordable to all families and their children;
- Provision that encourages participation, strengthens social inclusion and embraces diversity;
- Well-qualified staff whose initial and continued training enables them to fulfil their professional role;
- Supportive working conditions, including professional leadership, which create opportunities for observation, reflection, planning, teamwork and cooperation with parents;
- A curriculum based on pedagogic goals, values and approaches which enable children to reach their full potential in a holistic way;
- A curriculum which requires staff to collaborate with children, colleagues and parents and to reflect on their own practice;
- Monitoring and evaluating produces information at the relevant local, regional and/or national level to support continuing improvements in the quality of policy and practice;
- Monitoring and evaluation that is in the best interest of the child;
- Stakeholders have a clear and shared understanding of their role and responsibilities, and know that they are expected to collaborate with partner organisations; and
- Legislation, regulation and/or funding supports progress towards a universal entitlement to publicly subsidised or funded early childhood education and care, and progress is regularly reported to all stakeholders.