

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 31 January 2023

Early Years Thematic Review on Quality

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the purpose and learning points from the Early Years Thematic review on quality activity.
 - 1.1.2 Note the impact of the changes: consider the impact that both the expansion of Early Years funded entitlement and workforce changes have had on quality within local authority early learning and childcare settings as identified through the review.
 - 1.1.3 Agree next steps at 5.1

Amanda Hatton

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Early Years Thematic Review on Quality

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides a summary of a thematic review that has been undertaken, focusing on quality and the impact of leadership changes within Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) across Local Authority settings in Edinburgh. These changes were in response to the recent expansion within ELC that almost doubled the entitlement of funded ELC to 1140 hours per year for all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. Through a combination of staff focus groups and surveys, mixed impacts were found regarding workforce, staffing and quality of experiences for children. However, staff indicated that the impact on quality was more strongly influenced by the Covid pandemic.

3. Background

3.1 Context of the review

Since the Scottish Government launched *Blueprint for 2020* in 2017, local authorities have been committed to increasing children's entitlement of funded early learning and childcare (ELC) to 1140 hours per year. The deadline for enacting this expansion was delayed from August 2020 to August 2021 due to the Covid pandemic.

3.2 Edinburgh context

Edinburgh has been phasing in the increased funded hours since August 2017. Presently, 10,500 children receive funded ELC in Edinburgh with 65-70% of these children receiving some of or all their funded hours within local authority settings.

As part of the plan for the increased ELC provision in Edinburgh there have been a number of changes required including to delivery models and workforce.

A significant amount of work took place in preparation for this change. This is reflected in the Quality Improvement 2017-20 strategic plan (see appendix 1), the 2021-24 ELC Improvement Plan and Framework (see appendix 2) and the focus on additional professional learning for ELC staff.

3.2.1 Models of delivery

There are various models of delivery available across Edinburgh's diverse ELC estate. Details of this estate and models of delivery are contained within the [Education, Children and Families Committee report dated 7/12/21](#).

3.2.2 Workforce

As part of the expansion, there was an overall increase in the number of staff at all stages of the ELC workforce (SSSC registered), including opportunities for promotion to leadership posts and the creation of a Scottish Government funded team of Equity and Excellence Leads. Important to note is the removal of GTCS registered teachers from the ELC staffing structure and the creation of a central team of Early Years teachers within Edinburgh.

4. Main report

4.1 The Thematic Review on Quality

This review focused on the first principle, Quality, of ELC across the local authority settings and the impact that the leadership changes have had on the Quality of provision for our children.

Strong pedagogical leadership has been highlighted as a key driver for ELC settings when delivering high quality provision, within the Scottish Government: Quality Action Plan (October 2017); it states the importance that *'those who are most qualified and experienced have the time and opportunity for pedagogic leadership and role modelling. There should therefore be an appropriate balance between office management tasks and leading pedagogical practice.'* Realising the Ambition: Being me, the national practice guidance (February 2020) believes that Pedagogical leadership should be *'a focus for every practitioner as a leader of learning in every ELC and school.'*

4.1.1 **Rationale** -The rationale was to review aspects of the delivery of Early Learning and Childcare in relation to themes within both:

4.1.1.1 How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare, Quality Indicators: 1.3 Leadership of Change and 1.4 Leadership of Management and Practitioners.

4.1.1.2 Care Inspectorate: A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged children. Key Question 3- How good is our leadership?

4.1.2 **Process** -The review was led by the Early Years Quality Improvement Manager. In March 2022, a Short Life Working Group (SLWG) was convened, consisting of ELC practitioners and leaders, union representatives and officers within the central team. The practitioners and leaders were from a range of ELC settings who had different models of delivery ensuring a wide

range of experience. The group met regularly to ensure the pace of the review.

The SLWG scoped out the review in April 2022. Visits were arranged to 10 ELC settings to conduct focused discussion. A template with key questions to support consistency within the discussions was developed collaboratively and used to gather the information required. The visits took place between May and June 2022.

In addition to the visits, a questionnaire for all ELC staff was developed to ensure that the group had the widest reach and that all staff had the opportunity to have their voices heard. This questionnaire was open during June 2022 with 136 staff responses.

4.2 Summary of Findings

There have been two summary papers developed analysing the data gathered from the field visits and the questionnaires providing full details and analyses of the findings:

- Appendix 3 – Summary of information from the focus visits
- Appendix 4 – Summary of information from the questionnaire

4.2.1 Key Theme 1- Impact on workforce -Staffing

The responses on the impact on staff were varied. Around a third felt no impact, a third felt negative impact and a final third felt positive impact. The following are the main points noted:

- 4.2.1.1 High turnover of staff was noted due to increased job opportunities however there were also challenges with recruitment.
- 4.2.1.2 Changes to staffing structures and work patterns, providing challenges for some who felt an increased workload and some recognised opportunities for promoted posts including flexibility within work life
- 4.2.1.3 Nursery teacher removed from ELC settings:
 - Challenges and lack of opportunities for Teachers in ELC, however there is a new team of EY teachers supporting pedagogy
 - Opportunities, autonomy for existing staff and increased opportunities for promotion of ELC staff with a new career pathway
- 4.2.1.4 Specific roles and remits of leaders and staff is not consistent across settings and can vary from setting to setting. Staffing models are dependent on number of children and model of delivery. Settings where there is a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team who has regular protected time within the playrooms have been able to manage the change process whilst ensuring quality assurance processes and upskill existing staff.

4.2.2 Key theme 2- Impact on quality of experiences for the children

The majority of staff who responded, three-quarters, did believe there had been an impact on children, the responses included positive and negative impacts. These ranged from:

- 4.2.2.1 More time for children to enjoy learning within the setting.
- 4.2.2.2 Longer sessions allowed more depth to learning.
- 4.2.2.3 Lower ratio of staffing supported smaller key groups.
- 4.2.2.4 Strengthening relationships as children attend the setting for longer hours.
- 4.2.2.5 Staff changes throughout the day affects consistency for children.
- 4.2.2.6 Recruitment challenges can affect what experiences are offered to children.
- 4.2.2.7 There was a high number of settings who commented that the biggest impact on quality had been from the Covid pandemic.

4.2.3 **Key theme 3- Impact from Covid Pandemic**

From the focused discussions with staff, there were a significant number of settings that identified the Covid pandemic as having the most significant impact on quality. They identified the following as having greatest impact: staff absences, limiting resources and spaces, impact on children's Speech and Language development, no outings/visits, bubbles in settings, no parents/visitors to the ELC, limited support from outside agencies e.g. HV or SLT and unable to collaborate with other settings.

5. **Next Steps**

- 5.1 In recognising the significant changes that all Early Learning and Childcare teams have undergone, there is now the need for some stability and continued supportive leadership at all levels. It is also important that the leadership capacity in all staff continues to be built for any future improvements.
 - 5.1.2 Further develop the leadership networks across the sector, to build staff confidence developing an empowered system within Early Learning and Childcare
 - 5.1.3 Connect settings who deliver similar models within a network/forum so that good practice can be shared: e.g. sharing staff rotas, annual leave, lunchtime processes etc.
 - 5.1.4 Support settings to establish clear roles and remits which are linked to job descriptions but that are context specific
 - 5.1.5 Specifically, within schools with an ELC class, the designated member from the Senior Leadership Team to ensure weekly protected time within the ELC to support quality assurance processes and continuity of learning across Early Level. A forum for the designated SLT from schools to be established to support this group of leaders and to be led by the Quality Improvement Manager

- 5.1.6 Ensure all practitioners have expectation of leading learning: building on the current professional learning offer to develop staff skills and knowledge on Leadership of Learning

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no financial implications contained in this report

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The central Early Years team will continue to consult with a range of reference groups to ensure that the next steps identified are building leadership capacity towards an empowered system within Early Learning and Childcare.
- 7.2 Through quality assurance processes the Quality Improvement Team will continue to evaluate the Standards and Quality reports and the evaluations from both Education Scotland and Care Inspection visits to maintain the accuracy of the Capacity and Risk Register to inform proportionate support and challenge.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland- Quality Action Plan](#)
- 8.2 [Realising the Ambition: Being me February 2020](#)
- 8.3 [National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16](#)
- 8.4 [Equity and Excellence Leads Report on the Care Inspectorate Special inspection focus and update on development of the role- March 2021](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 3 Year Strategic Plan for Quality 2017-2020
- 9.2 Appendix 2 ELC Improvement Plan and Framework 2021-2024
- 9.3 Appendix 3 Summary of findings from the focused visits
- 9.5 Appendix 4 Summary of findings from the questionnaire

City of Edinburgh Early Years

Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Supporting Quality in ELC

Supporting Quality - The Golden Thread

High quality provision and experiences for children are at the top of our agenda. In our plans towards expansion of Early learning and Childcare within the City of Edinburgh we focus on Quality being the 'Golden thread' and will take account of the priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework including;

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

We have a central Early Years Team consisting of: Quality Improvement Education Officers, Early Years Managers, Development Officers, and Peripatetic Teachers who provide support within our four localities. The Early Years team have a strategic plan identifying key focused area for improvement based on the national documentation: How good is our Early Learning and Childcare and Building the Ambition.

Early Years Focused Self-Evaluation August 2017-June 2019	
Support and Challenge Year 1	
Block 1 September 2017 - March 2018	Block 2 March 2018 – September 2018
<p><i>What do children need?</i> HGIOELC – QI 1.3 Leadership of change BtA - 6.4.1 / 6.5.1 ELC- What do children need?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ VISION, VALUES & AIMS ○ ETHOS ○ ENVIRONMENT ○ CHILDREN'S VOICE 	<p><i>Early Learning Pedagogy</i> HGIOELC – QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and engagement • Quality of Interactions <p>2.2 Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible Pedagogy <p>BtA 7.5.3 - Putting Pedagogy into Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COMMUNICATION ○ ENGAGEMENT ○ CHILDREN'S VOICE ○ DIFFERENTIATION ○ STAFF KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING ○ QUALITY INTERACTIONS

City of Edinburgh Early Years

Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Supporting Quality in ELC

Support and Challenge Year 2	
Block 1 September 2018 - February 2019	Block 2 February 2019 – September 2019
<p><i>Giving children rich and exciting play and learning opportunities</i> HGIOELC – QI 2.2 Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale and Design • Learning and Development • Pedagogy and Play • Skills for life and learning <p>QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing equality and inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing <p>BtA 7.5.1 Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ENGAGEMENT ○ ENVIRONMENT ○ CHILDREN’S VOICE ○ INCLUSION 	<p><i>Planning and securing children’s progress</i> HGIOELC – QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Tracking and Monitoring • Effective use of Assessment <p>QI 3.2 Securing children’s progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progress in communication, language, Maths and Health and Wellbeing ○ Children’s progress over time ○ Overall quality if children’s achievements ○ Ensuring equity for all children <p>BtA 7.5.2 Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ENGAGEMENT ○ ENVIRONMENT ○ CHILDREN’S VOICE ○ INCLUSION <p>How are we closing the gap?</p>
Support and Challenge Year 3	
Block 1 September 2019 - February 2020	Block 2 February 2020 – August 2020
<p><i>Literacy and Communication through:</i> HGIOELC - QIs: 1.2 Leadership of Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children leading learning <p>2.2 Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills for life and learning <p>3.2 Securing Children’s Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress in Communication and Early Language <p>Building the Ambition;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Experiences which ○ Adults who ○ An environment which 	<p><i>Numeracy and Mathematics through:</i> HGIOELC - QIs: 1.2 Leadership of Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children leading learning <p>2.2 Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills for life and learning <p>3.2 Securing Children’s Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress in Numeracy and Mathematics <p>Building the Ambition;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Experiences which ○ Adults who ○ An environment which

City of Edinburgh Early Years

Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Supporting Quality in ELC

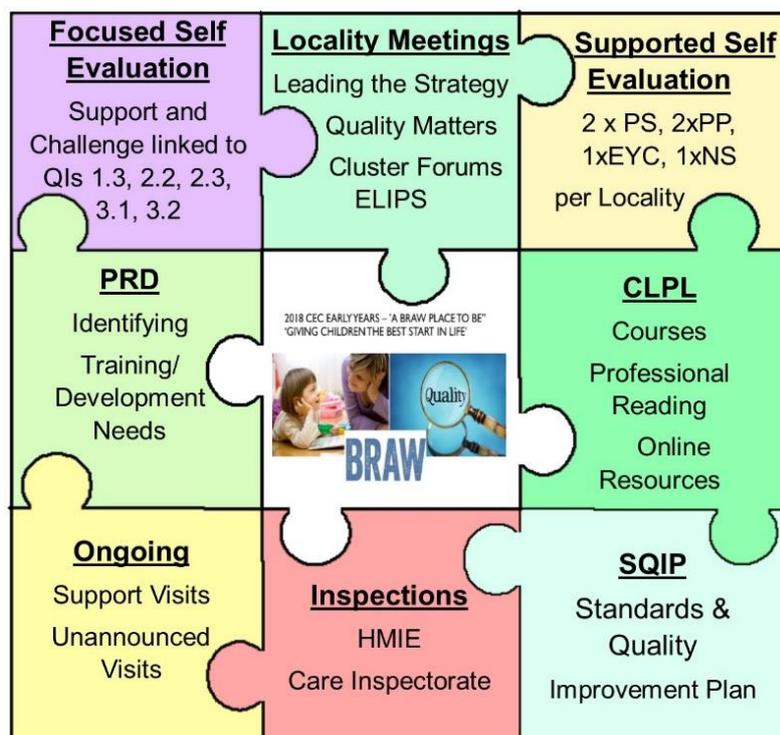
Within each of the four localities we regularly bring together Nursery Classes, Nursery Schools, Early Years Centres, Partner Providers including private nurseries, playgroups and childminders.

Within each session there are locality events where central themes for improvement are shared and developed in line with national guidance linked to our **Early Years Focused Self-Evaluation Plan**.

Proportionate 'Support and Challenge' visits to settings run alongside these events focusing on the central themes from our strategic plan, auditing practice and developing action for improvements.

Within each locality, we are developing small network groups called '**ELIPs**' (**Early Learning Improvement Partnerships**) to support and develop a self-improving system within our early years settings across the city.

Within Year 3 we are building on this by developing '**LLPs**' (**Leadership Learning Partnership Groups**). The groups will be established at the first Leading the Strategy meeting in September. The purpose of the LLPs is to establish and develop collaborative working across all Early Learning and Childcare and to allow leaders time to have professional dialogue. There will be an opportunity for the groups to meet again on a further two occasions at the Leading the Strategy meetings within the year. Further collaboration within the partnerships will be encouraged across the session.





Edinburgh Early Years Improvement Plan

2021-2024

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

Context

The vision for Early Years in Edinburgh focuses on our children:

To ensure all our children have the best start in life. Their voices are heard, they are happy, well cared for and have quality opportunities to have fun, play and learn.

(UNCRC Article 6)

Following the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill passing on 16th March 2021, we will continue to make explicit the links between pedagogy, practice and children's rights.

The City of Edinburgh Council has developed a long-term strategy, **Edinburgh Learns for Life**, to shape the vision for Education in order to improve the life chances for all, from babies to adulthood. The work and planning we do in Early Years support this goal.

From 1 August 2021, the funded early learning and childcare entitlement is 1140 hours per year for all 3 and 4 year olds, and eligible 2 year olds. This is supported by [Funding Follows the Child](#) and ensures that the funded early learning and childcare entitlement is delivered in high quality settings. This approach is 'provider neutral' and is underpinned by a National Standard that all settings that wish to deliver the funded entitlement have to meet.

Edinburgh has been phasing in the increased hours since August 2017 and by last session 2020-21, seventy five percent of our eligible children were receiving the increased hours ahead of time. We are delighted that our plans for the expansion will now mean all eligible children in Edinburgh will have a 1140 place from August 2021.

Approximately 10,500 children receive early learning and childcare in Edinburgh, and our expansion programme created a great opportunity for us to provide a service that would be more flexible, accessible and affordable for parents, whilst also ensuring children attend high quality settings.

Early Years Improvement Plan

2021-24

Our Estate

- 99 LA settings and 10 Forest Kindergartens. 1 new nursery opened in Jan 2021 during the pandemic (St Cuthbert's). Prior to the expansion Edinburgh had no Forest Kindergartens.
- 105 Private and Voluntary settings in partnership with local authority, this figure is 9 less than 2017 due to providers not meeting the National Standard or providers closing.
- 43 childminders, prior to the expansion Edinburgh did not have Childminders in partnership.

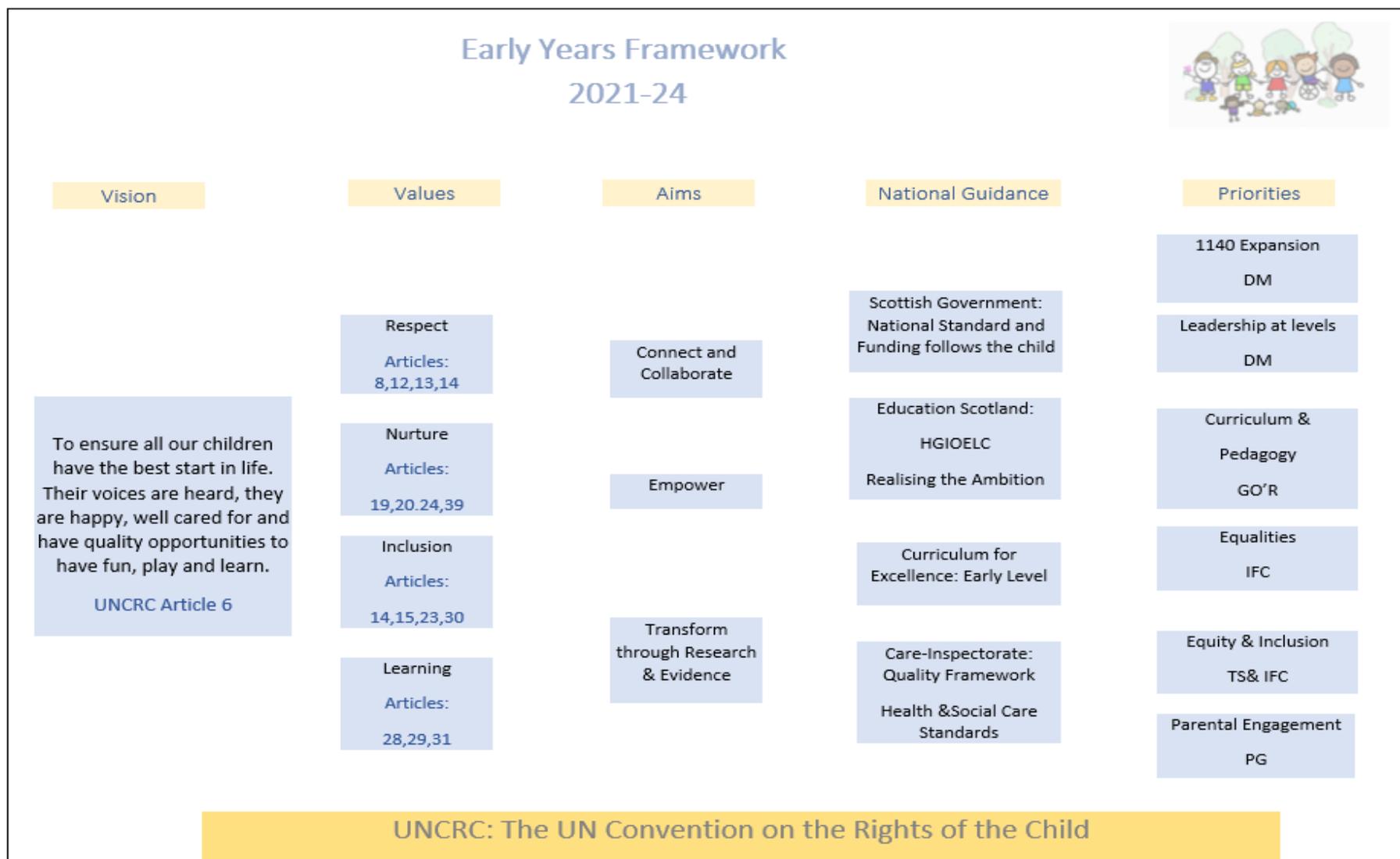
Next steps

- 3 new nurseries will open during session 21-22 (Frogston PS, VictoriaPS and Nether Currie PS) and 4 nurseries will be replaced with a new build (St John Vianney RCPS, St Mark's RCPS, Granton PS and Craigentenny PS)

[Early Learning and Childcare Statutory Guidance](#) issued in July 2021 will support the local authority in carrying out the statutory functions required for implementation and delivery of high-quality Early Learning and Childcare.

To support the achievement of the Early Years Improvement Plan, there is a central Early Years Team consisting of Quality Improvement Education Officers, EY Managers, Operational Support Officers, Development Officers and Peripatetic staff who provide support across the sector. The Early Years Plan identifies key focused areas for improvement based on current national documentation: How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare and Realising the Ambition.

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24



Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

Priority: 1140 Expansion of Early Learning & Childcare			
Overall Responsibility	Donna Murray		
High Level Improvements	Increased ELC provision for all eligible 2, 3- and 4-year olds High quality, flexible, accessible and affordable ELC for families Use of the Early Learning and Childcare Statutory Guidance to support strategic change (July 2021)		
Outcomes	Lead Officer	Key Strategic Action	Measurement
All eligible 2, 3 & 4 year olds will receive 1140 hours of high quality early learning and child care within their chosen locality	Donna Murray	Flexibility of ELC provision will be enhanced through the completion of 5 new build ELC settings and through being responsive to the needs of families	Gather baseline data through the September 2021 parent survey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2024 the percentage of parents/carers receiving early learning through their preferred location will increase by at least 10%. • By June 2024 the number of parents/carers receiving early learning through their preferred model of delivery will increase by at least 20%

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

<p>EELCA will provide training and qualifications to develop a highly qualified, skilled and effective workforce, committed to lifelong learning and ensuring the very best outcomes for our children and families.</p>	<p>Donna Murray</p>	<p>Introduce a qualifications pathway from level 6 to level 9 to reflect the ELC career structure</p>	<p>Gather baseline data through consultation with staff By June 2024 the percentage of staff with the following qualifications will be</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Role</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>EYA Level 6</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EYP EELCA Mentors</td> <td style="text-align: right;">15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EYO Level 8</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SEYO Level 9</td> <td style="text-align: right;">90%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Role	Percentage	EYA Level 6	50%	EYP EELCA Mentors	15%	EYO Level 8	10%	SEYO Level 9	90%
Role	Percentage												
EYA Level 6	50%												
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<p>Forest Kindergartens will support the expansion of ELC</p>	<p>Tracey Shaw</p>	<p>Candidates/staff will have opportunity to complete the forest kindergarten training during their studies with ELCCA</p> <p>New FK provision will be explored with natural heritage officers</p> <p>FK will be registered with CI as stand-alone settings ??</p>	<p>Number of candidates /staff completing forest kindergarten training</p> <p>Number of candidates/staff implementing opportunities to children in settings</p> <p>Number of new FK provision expanding year on year</p> <p>Completion of registration</p>										
<p>Childminders will support the expansion of ELC</p>	<p>Paula Dennis</p>	<p>Increase number of CMs in partnership across all localities</p> <p>Establish partnership working with CMs and settings</p> <p>Raise CM profile amongst CEC settings and parents</p> <p>Develop CM quality via Self-Evaluation and Improvement Planning</p>	<p>Achieve initial target of 50 partner CMs, increase year on year to 1/3 of all Edin CMs in partnership</p> <p>Partnership working</p> <p>CI CM Inspection reports</p>										

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

Priority: Leadership at all levels			
Overall Responsibility	Donna Murray		
High Level Improvements	Leaders at all levels to support and guide strategic direction and pace of change Specific professional learning supporting leadership at all levels Improved outcomes for children		
Outcomes	Lead Officer	Key Strategic Action	Measurement
Developing specific professional learning supporting leadership at all levels for:	Donna Murray	Ensure professional networks and professional learning packages for specific groups listed below	The percentage of the qualified workforce participating in and an EELCA programme increases from ... in September 2021 to ... by June 2024
Aspiring Heads of Centres - Develop a training programme for SEYOs interested in applying for HOC posts	Donna Murray	Establish a working group of HOCs to design the content and delivery of the training programme. Identify key council colleagues to support the delivery of the programme e.g. HR, EYMs, Business Managers	By June 2024, at least 50% of newly recruited HOCs have completed the Aspiring Heads of Centre programme.
New Heads of Centre	Tracey Shaw/ Paula Greenhill	Monthly network meetings. Exploring a variety of aspects of leadership and management. Evaluate feedback.	
Equity and Excellence Leads (SEYIO)	Gillian O'Rourke	Monthly network meetings	Evaluations and feedback from EE Leads

Early Years Improvement Plan

2021-24

		<p>Collaboration with SEIC EE Leads including planned meetings for the network of EE Leads across the RIC</p> <p>Regular professional learning planned in response to Self-Evaluation</p> <p>Provide appropriate mandatory training</p> <p>Engagement with the regional CYPIC advisor to support use of Quality Improvement Methodology</p>	Data from intervention work carried out by the EE leads
Early Years Teachers	Paula Greenhill	<p>Work in collaboration with SMT to use Improvement Methodology</p> <p>Weekly/fortnightly network meetings, CLPL plan to include Practitioner Enquiry, coaching/mentoring and key aspects from evaluation from settings/ EY teachers.</p> <p>Develop CLPL for all staff – key themes from EY improvement plan.</p>	<p>Evaluation and feedback from EYT and settings.</p> <p>Feedback from EY teachers on personal development via 1:1</p> <p>Feedback from CLPL leads</p>
SEYO	Paula Dennis	<p>Develop a training package to support newly appointed SEYOs focusing on Management and Leadership</p>	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Feedback from SEYOs</p> <p>S&C visits to settings</p>
EYO	Isla Finlayson	<p>Consult on CLPL needs for EYOs</p> <p>Offer further CLPL opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GIRFEC [EP support] - Mentoring [EELCA support] <p>Promote universal CLPL relevant to role</p>	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Feedback from EYOs</p> <p>S&C visits to settings</p>

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observations and planning - Self-evaluation [GO'R?] Develop EYO network as part of wider peer support structure across CEC ELC	
Introduce a mentoring qualification for EYPs	Donna Murray	EYPs are able to undertake a SQA accredited mentoring qualification delivered through EELCA	By June 2024, 50% of EYPs who have mentored MA/Trainee EYPs since January 2022 are working towards or have completed the mentoring qualification.

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

Priority: Curriculum and Pedagogy			
Overall Responsibility	Gillian O'Rourke		
High Level Improvements	<p>All children will receive high quality learning experiences both indoors and outdoors within ELC</p> <p>All children will make good progress through planned and responsive experiences that promote holistic learning</p> <p>ELC settings will have high aspirations for children's achievement</p> <p>Practitioners will have an up to date knowledge of early learning pedagogy this will be evident in all aspects of practice within settings</p> <p>Improved outcomes for children</p>		
Outcomes	Lead Officer	Key Strategic Action	Measurement
ELC settings will have a sector specific Early Years Framework within <i>Edinburgh Learns For All Strategy</i> to support self-evaluation and improvement	Gillian O'Rourke	Develop 'Edinburgh Learns Early Years – Teaching, Learning & Assessment' framework 2021-22 linked to Realising the Ambition and the CI Quality framework	<p>Increase in number of settings grading themselves 4 or above for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HGIOELC QI 1.3, 2.3, 3.1 & 3.2 <p>CI themes: Quality of Care & Support, Environment, Staffing & Management & Leadership</p>
Planning for learning and securing children's progress will be of a consistently high level for all children 0-5 across in ELC settings	Isla Finlayson (Communication & Literacy)	Develop 'Planning, Assessment and Observation' CLPL linked to Realising the Ambition and the CI Quality framework (Year 1)	<p>Increase in number of settings grading themselves 4 or above for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HGIOELC QI 2.3 & 3.2

Early Years Improvement Plan

2021-24

	<p>Gillian O'Rourke (Numeracy & Maths)</p> <p>Bex Ewart (STEM & Creativity)</p> <p>Paula Dennis (HWB)</p> <p>Tracey Shaw/ Paula Greenhill</p>	<p>Through Quality Assurance ensure that settings are engaging with the new guidance and CLPL opportunities (Years 1-3)</p> <p>Develop clear Early Years curriculum guidance and supporting CLPL for staff for: Literacy and Communication (Year 1) Numeracy & Maths (Year 1&2) STEM (Year 2&3) Health & Well-being- complete and launch resource [Year 1]</p> <p>Develop CLPL opportunities for staff supporting children 0-3.</p> <p>Evaluate the use of DMLO, Reflective questions, learning mats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CI themes: Quality of Care & Support & Environment <p>Feedback from CLPL</p> <p>Quality assurance visits</p>
Practitioners will have a sound understanding of pedagogy and their role in supporting children's experiences	Isla Finlayson	Develop a comprehensive CLPL offer accessible to all ELC practitioners supporting professional learning	Participation numbers and feedback on CLPL
Children will experience high quality learning experiences outdoors	Tracey Shaw	<p>Launch guidance to promote quality outdoor provision for children 0-6 (Year 1)</p> <p>CLPL opportunities – 0-3 outdoors, schematic play outdoors, loose parts play, forest kindergarten and forest school training/qualification (Year 1)</p> <p>Develop and support outdoor networks (Year 2)</p> <p>CLPL opportunities – share best practice/development, develop 'use of self/practitioner' in outdoor play (Year 2)</p>	<p>Increase in number of settings grading themselves 4 or above for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HGIOELC QI 2.3 & 3.2 CI themes: Quality of Care & Support & Environment

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

Priority: Equalities			
Overall Responsibility	Isla Finlayson		
High Level Improvements	All children will feel understood, valued and celebrated by all ELC staff Review and develop inclusive curriculum for ELC		
Outcomes	Lead Officer	Key Strategic Action	Measurement
All staff across ELC will acknowledge, recognise the need to be fully inclusive of all our children and families	Isla Finlayson	Develop and deliver Essential training for all staff re unconscious bias. Support for CLPL from outside consultants [eg Hakim Din, Stella Louis]	Participation numbers and feedback from delegates Tracking and monitoring outcomes from complaints and investigations
Practitioners respond sensitively and consistently when addressing racist, bullying and prejudice issues which contributes to the well-being of all children and families	Isla Finlayson	Create ELC procedural support for addressing racist issues, and ensure all staff are aware of new <i>anti-bullying and prejudice policy</i> Promote through communication structures meetings/newsletters CLPL to support interventions eg persona dolls [EAL service and outside providers]	Attendance Feedback Data on occurrence of incidents within teams
ELC curriculum pathways and approaches to learning will promote diversity and equality	Bex Ewart	Review current ELC curriculum. Promote anti-racist and inclusive curriculum and resourcing across ELC	Visits to settings by CEC officers

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

Priority: Parental Engagement			
Overall Responsibility	Paula Greenhill		
High Level Improvements	Improved partnership working with parents Targeted support for families who are experiencing poverty		
Outcomes	Lead Officer	Key Strategic Action	Measurement
Strategic Edinburgh Learns ELC plan aligning to primary and secondary.	Paula Greenhill Marie Lyons	Share Edinburgh Learns for Life framework- Learning together-across ELC Working group to consider involvement of ELC parents in parent councils Develop CEC Website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plain English • additional easy access button Common threads in CLPL between early years, primary, secondary and community in 4 themes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parental engagement 	Feedback from good practice sessions

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parental involvement • family learning • learning at home 	
CLPL for ELC settings to support Parental Engagement	Paula Greenhill	Working in partnership with parents Develop and deliver a suite of CLPL sessions for staff for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parental engagement • parental involvement • family learning • learning at home 	Staff Survey Feedback for CLPL
Within each ELC setting there will be a Peep Learning Together trained practitioner able to deliver quality sessions for parents	Paula Greenhill	Develop termly network meetings Develop digital Peep approach Increase delivery of quality Peep sessions for parents/carers	Peep learning together data
Families experiencing poverty will be supported in accessing available financial support	Paula Greenhill	Further develop a Maximise type offer for families	Data from the Maximise Programme

Early Years Improvement Plan 2021-24

Priority: Equity and Inclusion			
Overall Responsibility	Isla Finlayson & Tracey Shaw		
High Level Improvements	Children will be supported effectively by staff teams with a better understanding of GIRFEC processes Staff teams will be more aware of the issues facing families affected by poverty Raising awareness and understanding of the promotion of children’s rights within our ELC settings		
Outcomes	Lead Officer	Key Strategic Action	Measurement
Staff within ELC will have an understanding of the GIRFEC processes	Isla Finlayson Tracey Shaw	Provide CLPL for specific cohorts eg PPNS, EYO in NCs, new SEYOs on GIRFEC processes and understanding of ASN inclusion requirements	Participation numbers and feedback Quality of referrals to ASL and audit processes
Supporting Children and families affected and disadvantaged by poverty	Isla Finlayson	Link with Molly Page re 1 in 5 training for ELC settings Make links with curriculum work to support literacy across early level with a focus on supporting progress for children affected by poverty	Participation numbers and feedback

Early Years Improvement Plan

2021-24

	Gillian O'Rourke	Embedding the role of Equity and Excellence Leads (SEYIO) across identified settings using SIMD data. Focus on the strategic direction from the Scottish Government continuing to develop network of highly skilled practitioners.	Care Inspection feedback Self-Evaluation from the SEYIO network
Health and Wellbeing will be fully embedded within our ELC settings	Paula Dennis	Create HWB connected guidance for CEC and PPs linked to Equity & UNCRC, aligned to Edinburgh learns for All Review, refresh and launch EY Building Resilience resource	Visits to settings by QIEOs Care Inspectorate Inspection Reports Staff Training and feedback Children and families' feedback
UNCRC	Paula Dennis	Embed rights-based approach and pedagogy underpinned by UNCRC	QIEO visits CI Inspection reports Staff Training and feedback Children and families' feedback
Staff within ELC will have an understanding of The Promise	Tracey Shaw	Ensure that the ELC sector are informed and updated in regard to fulfilling duties in the widest capacity and sector specific from the plan	Feedback from ELC staff Feedback from children and families who are care experienced
ELC staff will use RtA to support equity and inclusion for children aged 0-3	Tracey Shaw	CLPL opportunity promoting equity and inclusion with a RtA focus	Participation numbers and feedback
Homeless families will be supported and feel included	Tracey Shaw	Identify a locality lead to promote ELC to homeless families and ensure inclusion during transitions	Data of ELC service uptake Data of successful P1 school entry

Summary of information from focused visits

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Key Questions:

Have there been changes to models of delivery and staffing?

What has the impact on quality of experiences for children been?

Changes to model, delivery and staffing

- Changes happened at a particularly challenging time with COVID and so preparation in some cases was limited
- So many changes at the same time within some ELC settings
- Contract changes for staff- shifts/rota's/term-time to full year
- Roles changed and tweaked to cover role of the teacher
- Different shift patterns to support change in length of day/Increased hours:
 - longer shifts/later shift until 6pm in some settings has been a challenge for staffing
 - Allowed protected collegiate time within some models to support improvement work
- New roles created-SEYOs (settings covering 52 weeks and off campus models), additional EYOs for larger settings
- Roles have needed to adapt according to model of staffing:
 - EYO role has more leadership responsibility since removal of teacher role
 - Settings that have an allocation of one or two SEYOs (Off campus ELC or 52 week settings) have been able to manage this change more effectively
 - New SEYOs have been able to support leadership and management within the ELC with the designated SLT
 - Settings that have not been allocated SEYOs have found the impact on leadership of learning more challenging and there has been more responsibility for the EYOs and the designated SLT
 - Settings where the designated SLT has weekly protected time within the ELC has supported quality and managed the changes (working with staff not just regular meetings but being on the floor)
 - CLPL support for EYOs – leadership skills
- In a number of settings term-time places are full and seem to be the preferred option for families rather than full year model

Opportunities and challenges:

- Learn from each other – peer mentoring
- EYO greater responsibility

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- New staff teams – passion, enthusiasm, revitalise practice
- Communication – consistency difficult as teams have grown quickly
- Lack of time together as a team due to challenges
- People coming into Early Years with new skills and experiences
- Staff availability – supply challenges/workforce issues/recruitment
- Different staff teams merging together
- Staff mindset – managing change positively
- More collegiate time – term time settings
- Consistency throughout larger team
- 6pm pickup not taken up all children especially ELC linked to schools/school day
- Planning – team responsibility, some settings have embraced this some have found it particularly challenging
- Managing annual leave- rotas/shift patterns
- Building work – rebuilds, fixing buildings etc.
- Remits have changed
- EYOs supporting EYPs in more of a leadership role
- Promotion opportunities – career pathways enhanced, although term time SEYO roles are limited
- Staff turnover has been rapid in some settings
- Workforce/recruitment challenges

Impact on Quality

- Clear Vision, Values and Aims has supported quality
- Designated SLT and SEYO or EYO lead self-evaluation to support continuous improvement.
- SLT and SEYO or EYO lead learning within the staff teams although recognition that it is everyone's responsibility to lead learning to ensure quality experiences for children, in some settings good examples of practitioners leading planning
- Where there are effective processes for 1:1 check in's, PRDs, room meetings, room walks this has supported consistency in quality within the ELC
- In some settings leadership of learning and self-evaluation has been challenging due to a number of factors: Staffing, Covid mitigations, removal of teacher so establishing new roles within teams, extending staff teams
- Staff commitment and hard work has ensured continuity of learning and quality experiences for children
- 0-6 collaborative pilots – collegiate working, building positive relationships supporting transition for children
- New delivery models, longer days, extended hours in ELC:

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- for some children – children with ASN or very young have found the full days more difficult to cope with and can be tired by the end of the day
- allows time to re-visit learning, extend and develop learning experiences for the children
- lunchtime experiences for the children supporting HWB
- change of pace, less hurried than shorter sessions
- staff have more opportunity to build deeper stronger relationships with the children
- More flexibility in terms of support for children and families

Impact of Covid on Quality:

Some settings report that Covid has had the biggest impact on quality of experiences:

- limiting resources and spaces
- impact on children's SLT development
- no outings/visits
- bubbles in settings
- no parents / visitors to the ELC
- limited support from outside agencies eg. HV or SLT
- not able to go and visit other settings
- staffing absences
- limited CLPL opportunities for staff
- no cluster support/sharing of practice

Key Themes

- Clarity over roles, remits and the structure of the ELC team
- Leadership roles/remits – DHT, SEYO, EYO
- Shift patterns and cover for annual leave can be a challenge for settings who have moved from term-time to full year
- Support for SEYO when other SEYO is off
- Teachers removed from all ELC settings
- Team of centrally managed EY Teacher supporting Pedagogy
- Change of management structure – HT removal from standalone Nursery Schools
- More time with children – deepens learning, builds stronger relationships
- Fewer transitions for children and flexibility allowing support for children who may require more ELC time
- More time for visits/excursions
- Part time staff prefer full days – flexibility supporting work life balance/childcare

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- More autonomy for EYOs and EYPs when teacher role was removed
- Long day for young children at settling period in particular
- Lunches in some settings have been a challenge – moving furniture, quality of experience in others they have built in a really sociable learning experience for the children
- Teacher previous workload vs EYO/SEYO
- Increased numbers of staff in ELC teams
- Teacher role was a more senior role than an EYO role
- More choice of recruitment – positive for staff, challenge for staff teams
- Digital technology: opportunities and challenges for staff

Next Steps/Recommendations

- 1140 model networks
- Sharing practice opportunities
- Establish clear roles and remits which are linked to job descriptions but context specific
- Designated SLT having weekly protected time within the ELC has supported quality and managed the changes (working with staff not just regular meetings but being on the floor)
- Sharing staff rotas, annual leave, lunchtime processes etc
- Ensuring all practitioners have expectation of leading learning through supporting planning

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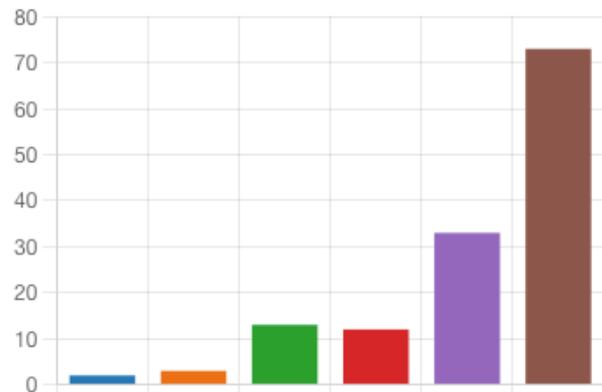
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1. What role do you currently hold?

● Head Teacher	2
● Head of Centre	3
● DHT/PT responsible for ELC	13
● SEYO	12
● EYO	33
● EYP	73



2. Within your current ELC setting have you experienced changes:

● Staffing	76
● Model of delivery	55
● No changes	5



3. Describe the changes within your setting:

72 respondents (53%) answered **staff** for this question.



Key themes for Q3:

- Staffing – high turnover of staff, staff changes and staff absence
- Model of delivery – 52 weeks, longer days, move to 1140 hours etc.
- Nursery teacher removed

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4. Has there been an impact on quality of experiences for the children?

● Yes	100
● No	36



5. If yes, please describe the impact on quality for the children.

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Some responses to Q5:

- *“The children have longer to enjoy and wallow in their play. They can strengthen relationships with staff and each other and extend their learning further”*
- *“...we now have more time to deliver high quality learning experiences.”*
- *“The quality of the children’s experiences has changed, but due to covid”*
- *“Children get to know staff then they leave. Different supply staff coming so no consistency”*
- *“Children with allocated hours are not receiving this because the post is so difficult to fill. The change of delivery model has had a positive impact.”*
- *“I feel two days does not give the children a consistent enough routine to make the most out of their experience.”*
- *“Due to staff shortages, Forest school sessions had to be put on hold as not enough staff to support the children both in nursery and outdoors.”*
- *“Staff have commented that smaller group sizes have facilitated more in depth observations and identification of next steps...”*
- *“...Most of them do not fully utilise their allocated hours [52 weeks] as they are picked up from nursery at the same time as the term time children.”*

84 respondents (62%) answered **children** for this question.



6. Have the changes resulted in an impact for you in your role?

● No	41
● Yes resulting in more opportunit...	46
● Yes negatively	49



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7. If yes, please describe

37 respondents (27%) answered **staff** for this question.



Key themes for Q7:

- Increased responsibility – heavier workload but some report increased opportunity for personal/career development
- Increase in time spent recruiting due to high turnover of staff
- Change of work pattern – introduction of shifts and rota system, which is positive for some, but not others
- Increased opportunity for promotion within the sector
- More time spent covering staff absence

8. As a result of the changes please describe any areas where you recognise a need for support or professional development.

42 respondents (31%) answered **staff** for this question.



Some responses to Q8:

- *“More availability for mandatory training for staff such as First Aid, Autism Awareness, Child Protection etc.”*
- *“Courses difficult to attend because of staffing”*
- *“It would be good to share good practice with cluster nurseries...”*
- *“I feel that EYOs and Seniors would benefit from leadership training, coaching techniques etc, to better support them in leading the nursery team”*
- *“EYO role needs to be updated and defined by Edinburgh...”*

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- *“Administrative support for nursery staff regarding organisation of snack. Supporting children with ASN; speech and language support and ASD.”*
- *“...Further opportunity for training regarding challenging behaviour and insecure attachments post pandemic.”*
- *“Support to change routines that best suit the needs of the children...”*
- *“...Further training on child development would also be beneficial...”*
- *“...Prioritising collegiate time for the team is essential in maintaining high quality...”*
- *“More training opportunities, especially face to face, more all together training in the setting”*
- *“More support and training for PSA's and EYP's with 1:1 children that have additional needs”*
- *“...Stronger connections with local primaries, to show the important foundation work we have done with children before moving on.”*

9. Please add any further comment you feel will be relevant to this review.

32 respondents (24%) answered **staff** for this question.



Key themes from Q9:

- Changes to EYO role have been challenging and seems inconsistent between settings
- Staffing challenges are significant
- Changes to model of delivery – positive for some, challenging for others
- Significant changes in the sector over recent years – both opportunities and challenges
- Time management is challenging with longer hours and staffing difficulties