

# **Aberdeen City: Workforce Delivery Plan - Early Learning and Childcare**

## **Introduction**

The Aberdeen City: Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan was approved by Aberdeen City Council Education and Children's Services Committee on 16 November 2017.

It sets out our vision to provide local flexible early learning and childcare which is accessible, affordable, is of high quality and builds on provision already in place to develop a flexible Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) offer, available up to 50 weeks of the year.

In order to deliver our vision, we require a highly skilled workforce and we estimate that we will require an additional 300 practitioners in ELC settings across the city to deliver our expanded ELC offer by August 2020.

This Aberdeen City: Workforce Delivery Plan updates on current developments and sets out our local Action Plan for how we intend to recruit and retain a highly skilled workforce in the city.

## **Background and National Context**

The Scottish Government is committed to expanding the provision of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) from 600 to 1140 hours by 2020. The expansion will support child development and improved outcomes for children through the provision of high quality services and will support parents to return to work or study. ELC services should deliver:

- Quality;
- Flexibility;
- Accessibility; and
- Affordability.

Local Authorities are responsible for the implementation and delivery of 1140 hours in their local area and are to consider phasing and early tests of change to support the design and delivery of services between now and August 2020. The Scottish Government recognises that existing ELC provision will have to be transformed to deliver 1140 hours in line with the Blueprint for 2020 and encourages Local Authorities to innovate to improve service delivery as the Local Authority will be the primary guarantor of quality and the key enabler of flexibility and choice.

The ELC expansion programme will lead to the delivery of an enhanced service model that is responsive to local need.

## **National Early Learning and Childcare Workforce Delivery Plan 2018**

The Scottish Government National Early Learning and Childcare Workforce Delivery Plan was published on 9 August 2018. It sets out what the Government needs to know around training, phasing and jobs, and explores the relations between these to highlight any knowledge gaps to ensure effective delivery of the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.

An Action Plan has been developed which includes a number of key actions under the following key areas:

1. Training
2. Marketing and Recruitment
3. Employment Services
4. Diversity
5. Phasing – training opportunities and new roles
6. Promoting best practice
7. Monitoring and Evaluation

A national website has been established: [www.childcarecareersscotland.scot](http://www.childcarecareersscotland.scot)

### **Local Context**

ELC provision must be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of individual children, parents/carers and the wider community and will support parents to work, train or study, especially those who need routes into sustainable employment and out of poverty. Each local offer of ELC will be designed around the needs of residents in each locality wherever possible. Quality and availability will be overseen by a skilled individual who will support families to design the flexible offer most likely to meet their individual needs. The skilled individual will also be well placed to advise how to the local offer should continue to be amended or enhanced to meet local need.

We aim to fulfil our vision of ELC by:

- Offering ELC up to 50 weeks a year of ELC in partnership with partner providers and local childminders following a review of our contracting arrangements to support growth
- Prioritising the three Priority Areas in the first instance and then other areas of socio-economic disadvantage in the city
- Working with families to develop a range of options in the right places and at the right times
- Considering how the provisions currently attached to primary schools should be used and what other options need to be created in order to provide capacity, quality, accessibility and flexibility.
- Ensuring that decisions taken enhance and not hamper emerging community capacity and further empower enterprising activity
- Looking holistically to ensure that services being provided in each community are complementary to deliver best value

- Continuing to work with The Scottish Government, Association of Directors of Education (ADES) and The Northern Alliance to explore approaches to extending ELC provision and share local knowledge.

### **Implications for our ELC Workforce**

There are currently 845 staff employed in the ELC sector in Aberdeen. In order to expand provision in line with the Blueprint for 2020 we estimate that we will require an additional 300 practitioners.

Aberdeen City Council is working in partnership with the Scottish Government, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, Aberdeen University, NESCOL and local training providers to develop pathways for young people to become ELC professionals through the establishment of an Early Learning and Childcare Academy.

### **Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Academy**

An ELC Academy has been established and was officially launched on 6 March 2018 with over 250 practitioners present. The ELC Academy is a partnership between Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils, NESCOL and local training providers, to allow us to promote ELC as a positive career choice, to address challenges in recruiting the workforce needed for delivery of expanded provision across the North East of Scotland and to offer shared learning opportunities for the ELC workforce.

The establishment of the ELC Academy will:

- Raise the profile of ELC as a positive career choice within schools and careers guidance, linking with Developing the Young Workforce, highlighting the advantages of working in the sector and showing career and qualification progression routes, pathways and career structures.
- Reviewing how best to provide funded access to qualifications in a sustainable way and provide supported access for those living in areas of socio-economic disadvantage.
- Positive targeted marketing / media recruitment campaign aimed at all those interested in an ELC career / change of career / those returning from a career break and offering more flexible routes into ELC.
- Promoting increased diversity in the workforce to aspire for representation reflecting society.
- Effectively utilising the Learning Pathway for childminders to increase the number of qualified childminders in the city.
- Support the recruitment of 6 Additional Graduate posts to support closing the poverty related attainment gap.

A website for our ELC Academy has also been established: <https://elcacademy.scot>

The ELC Academy has identified three primary drivers for its work:

1. To increase the capacity of existing qualification routes and develop new and innovative routes for our future workforce, as well as increasing professional learning opportunities for our current workforce;
2. To undertake and respond to regular training needs analysis across the workforce by providing ongoing continuous professional learning (CPL) opportunities; and
3. To develop a strategy for the funding of qualifications and professional learning opportunities.

## **Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) as a Positive Career Choice**

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) is changing! Across Scotland, ELC is modernising and becoming more flexible – this means more opportunities for even more practitioners.

ELC Practitioners are responsible for giving our children the best start in life – they nurture and enhance creativity to help shape young lives

The expansion of ELC gives more flexible routes into the sector as a progressive career option with potentially 1,000 jobs in ELC being introduced across the North East of Scotland.

It is a very exciting time for ELC and we are very keen to attract new people into the ELC sector, including young people, school leavers, adult returners and those interested in changing careers, whilst retaining our current highly skilled workforce.

## **Redeployment / Retraining Staff into Early Learning and Childcare**

Aberdeen City Council has recently commissioned a Training Provider to train new ELC Practitioners. Practitioners will be current Aberdeen City Council employee who have chosen to be retrained and redeployed into an ELC setting. The initial pilot is for a small cohort of 30 employees. Following the pilot further employees may consider undertaking the training.

## **Qualifications**

An ELC Establishment Survey was undertaken in April 2018 to help us understand the qualification levels and qualification requirements of our workforce.

Of the 445 practitioners who responded:

- 53% are employed as Early Years Practitioners
- 19% are employed as Lead / Senior Practitioners or Managers
- 28% of the workforce are employed part-time
- 328 practitioners currently hold a qualification (approx 74%)

- 76 practitioners are working towards a qualification
- 32 practitioners have no qualification.

Aberdeen City Council will continue to offer financial support to enable ELC staff to undertake qualifications to support their continuous professional learning and to meet the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration requirements for their role.

### **Review of the Professional Learning Offer**

The Aberdeen City ELC Training Programme is currently published in paper format and available electronically, annually in June, and is organised over three school terms from September until the following June. The ELC Training Programme has four components:

- The Common Induction programme
- The Core programme
- The CPL programme
- Accredited qualifications

Practitioners have highlighted a number of areas which we should focus our collective efforts on. Our professional learning offer has been reviewed to ensure a focus on:

- Child development with a particular focus on eligible 2's
- Additional Support Needs (ASN) including Autism
- Observations to inform planning and the use of the Leuven Scale
- Child led play
- Engaging parents in learning and family nurture
- Leadership development
- Outdoor Learning to promote wellbeing
- Digital and creative skills
- Emergent Literacy

There is a large amount of duplication and commonality currently and there are clear economies of scale in working more collaboratively on our professional learning offer. Each Local Authority has reviewed their programme and will work together to agree how training, made available in all three Local Authority areas, can be accessed by all practitioners, including online via the ELC Academy website.

A revised Professional Learning Offer is currently being developed for 2018-19 for Aberdeen City ELC staff. This will include:

- Core training
- Continuous professional learning courses
- Outdoor programmes
- Leadership programmes
- Seminars

- A Quality Award which will complement the priorities identified in the Scottish Government's Quality Action Plan

In future, all CPL opportunities will be advertised on the ELC Academy website, with the programme reviewed and refined on a more regular basis to respond to the needs of practitioners and to maximise joint training opportunities with practitioners from across Aberdeenshire and Moray ELC settings.

## Aberdeen City: Workforce Delivery Plan 2018-2020

<b>1. Establish an ELC Academy to increase the numbers of people entering the workforce (Launched on 6 March 2018)</b>			
<b>Improvement Activity</b>	<b>This is how we'll do it</b>	<b>By Whom/ By When</b>	<b>Evidence of Impact</b>
Establishment of ELC Academy to raise the profile of ELC as a positive career choice within schools, highlighting the advantage of working in the ELC sector and showing career and qualification progression routes, pathways and career structures.	<p>Appointment of shared ELC Academy Project Officer.</p> <p>Consultation with existing workforce and stakeholders to establish barriers and how to incentivise a career in ELC including ensuring there is an appropriately progressive career structure.</p> <p>Develop Action Plan based on consultation responses and agree responsibilities in taking forward.</p> <p>Develop a range of publicity materials and an 'in school' presence to attract young people into the profession including the use of social media.</p> <p>Align with Developing the Young Workforce agenda.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils</p> <p>ELC Academy Project Officer</p> <p>By end 2018</p>	Increase in the number of new recruits attracted to a career in ELC.
Increased understanding of movement across the ELC workforce.	Establish a means of recording movement across the ELC workforce to inform commissioning strategy and ability to level terms and conditions.	<p>Early Years Data Manager?</p> <p>By end 2018</p>	Better understanding of trends informing strategy.
Engaging with local training providers to explore more flexible routes into ELC	<p>Explore work based learning, college and university with all potential providers and consider the need to procure 4 quotes in order to remove the barriers that inhibit part-time learning and accessible learning.</p> <p>Maximising all available routes</p> <p>Work with the Scottish Government, in line with National Workforce Delivery Plan to offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distance Learning opportunities</li> <li>- Out of hours access to training</li> <li>- Work based training</li> </ul>	<p>ELC Academy Project Officer</p> <p>Early Years Team</p> <p>From 2018-2020 and ongoing</p>	<p>Mapping of existing routes into ELC</p> <p>Matching routes with future needs</p>

Delivery of a new Professional Learning Offer	<p>Review the approach to the provision of Continuous Professional Learning.</p> <p>Protect time to access more opportunities for training.</p> <p>Fully utilise the ELC Academy to support Professional Learning.</p>	<p>Early Years Team ELC Academy</p>	<p>Highly skilled and motivated staff delivering high quality ELC.</p>
Promoting a career in ELC for those wishing to return to work or to change career.	<p>Promote ELC as a career option at all relevant events where there could be potential future employees.</p> <p>Offer retraining opportunity to 30+ Aberdeen City Council employees who are seeking a change of career.</p> <p>Enhance entry level supports in keeping with needs identified.</p>	<p>Early Years Team</p> <p>Great Western Pre-School</p> <p>August 2018-2019</p>	<p>Increased levels of recruitment and retention within ELC sector.</p>
Promote increased diversity in the workforce to aspire for representation reflecting society.	<p>Analyse composition of current workforce to identify next steps.</p> <p>Develop strategy and specific materials to attract under-represented groups.</p> <p>Establish links with Community Learning and Family Learning to seek their help in signposting individuals and agreeing supported routes into the profession.</p>	<p>ELC Academy Project Officer</p> <p>By end 2018</p>	<p>Increased diversity evident.</p>
Positive targeted marketing / media / recruitment campaign aimed at all those interested in an ELC career / change of career / those returning from a career break.	<p>Produce flexible information and a recruitment package suitable for a range of potential candidates, aligned with Scottish Government national campaign, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social media presence</li> <li>- Leaflets</li> <li>- Posters</li> <li>- FAQs</li> <li>- ELC Academy website</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<p>ELC Academy Project Officer</p> <p>From 2018-20 and ongoing</p>	
Effectively utilise the Learning Pathway for childminders to increase the number of qualified childminders across the city.	<p>Identify areas where the provision of childminders should be enhanced to guide engagement.</p> <p>SCMA Development Officer to focus on priority localities and</p>	<p>Family Information Service</p> <p>SCMA</p>	<p>Increased numbers of childminders registering in priority localities.</p>



	<p>areas identified as lacking childminding provision.</p> <p>Start-up grants offered for new childminders registering in priority localities.</p> <p>Link with Employability pipeline to target childminding as a career option.</p> <p>Consultation with current and potential childminders to understand the challenges in registration and redesign support systems.</p> <p>Development of Action Plan to address shortfall</p>	<p>Early Years Team</p> <p>Employability partners</p>	
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## 2. Improve Access to training and qualifications in a sustainable and impactful way

Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By Whom/ By When	Evidence of Impact
<p>Review how best to provide funded access to qualifications in a sustainable way and provide supported access for those living in areas of socio-economic disadvantage</p>	<p>Continue to use Childcare Strategy resources to support Workforce Development and Expansion to enable ELC staff to undertake qualifications as part of their continuous professional development and to meet Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration requirements,</p> <p>Increase uptake of Individual Training Accounts (ITA's) to maximise spend on qualifications and ensure best value. (£200 per year via ITA if income under £22,000).</p> <p>Develop a strategy to include incentives to encourage those in SIMD areas to consider ELC as a career option.</p> <p>Maximise and publicise employability options in SIMD areas 1 and 2 and clarify barriers to the profession.</p> <p>Review entry level qualifications based on consultation feedback.</p>	<p>Early Years Team</p> <p>Early Years Team</p> <p>SCMA</p> <p>Early Years Team</p> <p>SCMA</p> <p>Locality Managers</p>	<p>Increase number of ELC staff holding a recognised qualification.</p> <p>Increased % of ELC Support Workers, Practitioners and Managers holding an appropriate qualification for their role to meet SSSC registration requirements.</p> <p>Increased number of qualifications funded from available resource.</p> <p>Data indicates increase in recruitment from SIMD areas 1 and 2.</p>

<b>3. Establish 6 Additional Graduate posts to support closing the poverty related attainment gap within ELC settings</b>			
<b>Improvement Activity</b>	<b>This is how we'll do it</b>	<b>By Whom/ By When</b>	<b>Evidence of Impact</b>
Recruitment of 6 Additional Graduate posts to be in post by August 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete recruitment and induction</li> <li>• 3 posts filled</li> <li>• 3 posts to fill</li> <li>• Placement of Additional Graduate posts in ELC settings in priority localities</li> </ul>	Service Manager – Early Years  August 2018	Evidence of closing the poverty related attainment gap evident, e.g. speech and language, numeracy.
<b>4. Review current staffing structures to bring about maximum flexibility</b>			
<b>Improvement Activity</b>	<b>This is how we'll do it</b>	<b>By Whom/ By When</b>	<b>Evidence of Impact</b>
Review current staffing structures to ensure that provisions can support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality</li> <li>- Flexibility</li> <li>- Accessibility</li> <li>- Affordability</li> </ul>	Work with Professional Associations, Practitioners, Head Teachers and Human Resources to review the impact of the interim staffing structure.  Use data to deliver a series of staff engagement workshops to develop proposals to enable us to meet the vision for ELC.  Finalised proposal for formal consultation.	Transformation and Improvement Manager  Programme Manager	Proposal in place that will support quality, flexibility, accessibility and affordability.