

Appendix 1

THE NATIONAL STANDARD FOR EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

To ensure the delivery of a 'provider neutral approach', the National Standard applies to all providers regardless of whether the funded hours are provided by a setting in the public, private or third sectors, including provision offered by childminders.

The National Standard is aligned to the guiding principles for the expansion to 1140 hours: quality; flexibility; accessibility; and affordability. It is also underpinned by the regulations in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 which applies to all care services across Scotland, including daycare of children and childminding settings.

CRITERIA 1 – Staffing, leadership and management

Criteria for ALL SETTINGS (EXCLUDING CHILDMINDERS):

- Sub-criteria 1.1 – Care Inspectorate quality evaluations are good or better on themes that relate to quality of staffing, management and leadership.
- Sub-criteria 1.2 – All support workers, practitioners and lead practitioners/managers working in the setting and included in the adult : child ratios must have either obtained the benchmark qualification for their role or, if they are still within their first 5 years of registering with the SSSC, have started to work towards this.
- Sub-criteria 1.3 – Sustainable staffing structures are in place which meet the recommended adult : child ratios.
- Sub-criteria 1.4 – All SSSC registered staff in the setting are achieving a minimum of 12 hours per year of Continuous Professional Learning.
- Sub-criteria 1.5 – Staff new to delivering the funded entitlement within the last year are familiar with the content of the most up-to-date version of the national induction resource.

Criteria for CHILDMINDING BUSINESSES:

- Sub-criteria 1.1 – Care Inspectorate quality evaluations are good or better on themes that relate to quality of staffing, management and leadership.
- Sub-criteria 1.2 – From the implementation of the full roll-out of 1140 hours, childminders delivering the funded entitlement must have either obtained the benchmark qualification for ELC practitioners or, if they are still within their first 5 years of delivering the funded hours, be working towards achieving this qualification.
- Sub-criteria 1.3 – The staffing structure in the setting is adequate to meet the recommended adult : child ratios.
- Sub-criteria 1.4 – All childminders delivering the funded entitlement are achieving a minimum of 12 hours per year of Continuous Professional Learning.
- Sub-criteria 1.5 – All childminders newly registered to deliver ELC within the last year have undertaken appropriate induction.

CRITERIA 2 – Development of children's cognitive skills, health and wellbeing

- Sub-criteria 2.1 – Care Inspectorate quality evaluations are good or better on the theme relating to quality of care and support.

- Sub-criteria 2.2 – The setting must have a framework to support children’s learning that is informed by national guidance and is appropriate to support individual children’s development and learning focused on active learning through play.

CRITERIA 3 – Physical Environment

- Sub-criteria 3.1 – Care Inspectorate quality evaluations are good or better on the theme relating to quality of environment.
- Sub-criteria 3.2 – Children have daily access to outdoor play and they regularly experience outdoor play in a natural environment as part of their funded ELC offer.

CRITERIA 4 – Self – Evaluation and Improvement

- Sub-criteria 4.1 – The setting uses relevant national self-evaluation frameworks to self evaluate and systematically identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Sub-criteria 4.2 – The setting has a clear plan, developed in line with self-evaluation evidence, evidence from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate scrutiny activities, research and national practice guidance, to continuously improve the quality of provision and outcomes for children and families.

CRITERIA 5 – Parent and carer engagement and involvement in the life of the setting

- Sub-criteria 5.1 – There is open and regular communication with parents and carers about the work of the setting and families are meaningfully involved in influencing change.
- Sub-criteria 5.2 – Parents and carers are supported to engage in their child’s learning and development.

CRITERIA 6 – Inclusion

- Sub-criteria 6.1 – The setting must comply with the duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- Sub-criteria 6.2 – The setting will be willing to provide appropriate support, including making any reasonable changes to the care and learning environment, to ensure that children’s additional support needs do not provide a barrier to them accessing a full range of experiences and meets their individual needs.

CRITERIA 7 – Business Sustainability

- Settings wishing to deliver the funded entitlement must be able to demonstrate that they are financially viable providers.

CRITERIA 8 – Fair Work Practices, including Payment of the Living Wage

- Settings, including childminders where workers are regularly employed to provide direct care to children, who agree to deliver the funded entitlement will, in accordance with the supporting guidance on Transition Options, pay the real Living Wage to all childcare workers delivering the funded entitlement and commit to adopting and demonstrating Fair Work practices in their setting. In committing to Fair Work practices, settings must take into account:

- a fair and equal pay policy across their setting, (including a commitment to supporting the real Living Wage);
- ELC managers/lead practitioners/employers (in the case of childminders who employ

staff) have clear managerial responsibilities to nurture talent and help individuals fulfil their potential;

- o promoting equality of opportunity and developing a workforce which reflects the population of Scotland in terms of characteristics such as age, gender, religion or belief, race, sexual orientation and disability;

- o security of employment and hours of work, avoiding exploitative employment practices such as unfair zero hours contracts, or pregnancy and maternity discrimination;

- o consideration of patterns of working (including, for example, part-time working and/or term-time working) and support for family friendly working and wider work life balance; and

- o support progressive workforce engagement, including trade union membership or alternative arrangements, to give staff an effective voice, for example, through regular staff meetings, where possible.

CRITERIA 9 – Payment Processes

- Settings delivering the funded entitlement must ensure that access to the funded hours are free at the point of access to the child and that parents and carers are not subject to any fees in relation to the funded hours. The setting must ensure that:

- o parents and carers are not asked to make any upfront payment, including a deposit or any other payment, in respect of the funded hours, therefore ensuring that the child's funded entitlement is free at the point of access;

- o no top-up fees are charged to parents and carers relating to the funded hours;

- o parents and carers are not required to purchase additional hours beyond the funded hours in order to access their child's funded entitlement at the setting;

- o additional charges to parents and carers relating to the funded hours should be optional, and limited to, for example, snacks and costs of outings or extracurricular activities such as music classes; and

- o where parents and carers choose to purchase further hours in addition to the funded hours, the associated fees and hours must be transparent and clearly set out in any parental communication and invoices.

CRITERIA 10 – Food

- Settings must have a clear and comprehensive policy for the provision of healthy meals and snacks for children. This should be consistent with Setting the Table and the Eatwell Guide and should ensure that individual cultural and dietary needs are met. There should be consultation with parents and carers about how other dietary preferences might be accommodated.