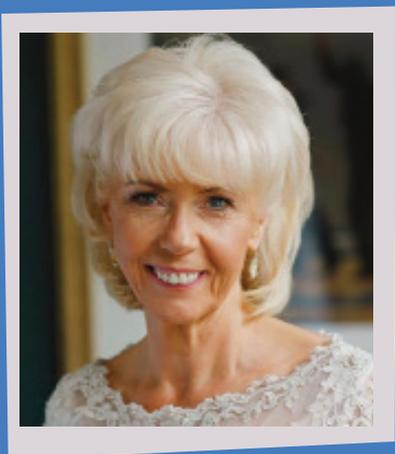




A Guide to Early Years Scotland's Services



FOREWORD

Jean Carwood-Edwards
Chief Executive
Early Years Scotland

I am delighted to present 'A Guide to Early Years Scotland's Services', which gives information about the diverse range of services that the organisation provides. Early Years Scotland is a leading-edge, well respected organisation within the early years sector which has a sound and long established track record.

The purpose of this Service Guide is to inform parents, providers and partners, and other interested parties about our services. Featured are examples of the services which are currently being delivered by Early Years Scotland. We do understand that people and circumstances differ in important ways and therefore to be effective, services and support must be flexible, tailored, planned and delivered in accordance with specific needs and situations.

I hope that you will find the Guide useful and informative and that it will help you to find local solutions for local challenges as you plan ahead. I hope too that this publication will inspire further partnership working, in order to find innovative ways to ensure Scotland's children have the very best start in life.

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The Four Strands of Early Years Scotland's Work

Early Years Scotland is Scotland's leading national specialist organisation that supports our youngest children from birth to 5 years of age.

Our fully qualified Early Years Practitioners work directly with children and their families to deliver our unique Stay Play and Learn sessions in a variety of settings. We work in areas where children and families who have the greatest need, will benefit most from our services.

As a Third Sector organisation, we have been established for over 50 years. We are very proud of our long track record, supporting all of those who work for, and on behalf of, Scotland's youngest children.

There are four strands to our work:

1. Working Directly with Young Children and their Families

Our range of Stay Play and Learn services offer a two generational, play-based approach. Our qualified early years practitioners encourage and engage with young children and their *parents/carers to reduce the attainment gap by strengthening and improving confidence, attachments, interactions, the home learning environment, transitions, and shared learning. We work in a range of prisons to support children affected by parental imprisonment.

Our professional staff offer these very popular services across a variety of local community settings including schools, community and church halls, nurseries, schools and prisons.

2. Membership and Support for ELC Settings, Professionals, and Students

We offer a number of support services and membership benefits to assist a range of staff across the country who provide high quality Early Learning and Childcare in different settings. We also support parents to establish, run and improve parent and toddler groups in local communities.

Early Years Scotland's membership benefits include our helpline; curriculum; inspection and business support; professional learning opportunities; regular magazines and bulletins; a members' area on our

**When we use the term 'parent' we include all main carers*

website; specialist insurance and legal advice; policy templates and much more. We offer membership to students, practitioners, childminders, colleges and universities.

3. Professional Learning Academy

In order to respond to requests from the workforce for high quality Early Learning and Childcare professional learning, Early Years Scotland delivers a range of learning opportunities for providers of Early Learning and Childcare, colleges, universities, local authorities and many more partners.

As the size of the workforce is set to almost double by 2020, Early Years Scotland has invested in establishing an expert dedicated professional learning team who design, develop and deliver affordable, accessible, relevant high quality professional learning opportunities across the country. Thanks to funding from the William Grant Foundation, we now have a new Online Learning Platform, which will offer the Early Learning and Childcare sector new opportunities for professional learning and the development of Early Learning and Childcare National Collaborative Learning Communities.

4. Policy, Practice and Legislation: Advice and Advocacy

Early Years Scotland is committed to ensuring that we remain connected and fully engaged with developments, initiatives and debates on matters relating to young children across the country.

As Early Years Scotland is a membership and service-delivery organisation, we have a responsibility to ensure that our children and members' voices are represented at local and national level. A significant strand of our work therefore lies in informing, influencing, supporting and challenging early years legislation, policy and practice, to ensure Scotland's children have the best start in life.



Our Philosophy

Early Years Scotland's philosophy centres on the following:

- Prevention and early intervention
- Two-generation philosophy
- Emphasis on enriching and enhancing the home learning environment
- Supporting transitions
- Qualified practitioners as role models for children and parents
- Evidence and assets-based
- Support for children's early learning and development
- Inclusivity and capacity, capability, confidence building.

At Early Years Scotland we believe that all children deserve the best possible start in life to enable them to thrive and reach their potential. We are aware, however, that some children are born into difficult circumstances which can have a harmful impact on their life chances. Poor living conditions, unemployment, parental imprisonment and physical and mental health problems are just some of the issues that can create a stressful home environment, and potentially prevent a child establishing strong, loving bond with their parents.



Developing the relationship between parent and child is a key focus of our services. Early Years Practitioners promote positive communication and social skills in children and parents through modelling consistent, positive behaviours. In line with the Growing Up in Scotland study's findings that the home learning environment is crucial for young children's development and later educational achievement, our practitioners also demonstrate the benefits of simple, low/no cost activities, encouraging parents to prepare materials and replicate activities at home.

How We Work

Our key responsibility is to support everyone who is engaged, directly or indirectly, in providing Early Learning and Childcare for Scotland's youngest children. We are well equipped to make a positive difference to ensure that all children have the very best start in life, leading to a better future.

Everything that we do must be of the highest quality and in collaboration with our partners. Therefore, we endeavour to be exceptional partners who are open, transparent and always deliver in accordance with all commitments we make. Our determination to achieve our objectives and to continue to improve means that we always strive for the highest standards to ensure that our contributions impact positively on the life chances of young children and their families.



Working Directly with Young Children and their Families

The following programmes are currently being delivered by Early Years Scotland. Our services are flexible, tailored and planned for individual children, partners and families in order that they are as effective as possible.

If you are interested in finding out more about Early Years Scotland's services listed here, or if you would like to talk to us about an idea for a different type of service, please call us on 0141 221 4148 or email: info@earlyyearsscotland.org.

Stay Play and Learn Services

- Community Stay Play and Learn
- P1 Stay Play and Learn
- Baby Stay Play and Learn
- 2 Stay Play and Learn
- Young Parent Stay Play and Learn
- Prison Stay Play and Learn

What does a Stay Play and Learn session look like?

Throughout the session, children experience a plethora of play and learning experiences, and the parents are encouraged to be fully involved. Children and parents enjoy a healthy snack, engage in songs and stories, and the parents have the opportunity to give and receive support to one another about parenting matters. The qualified Early Years Scotland Practitioners also offer informal and friendly support, and signpost parents where required.

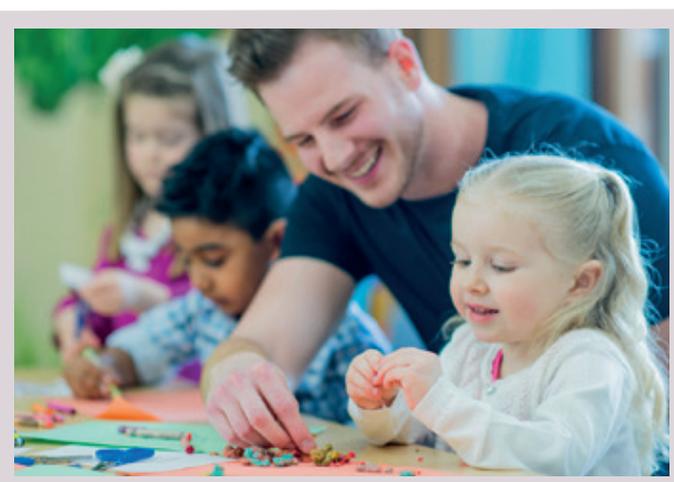
An average session offers the following:

- Welcome and sign-in
- Free play with a range of resources
- Supported art/craft, literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing or messy play activities with the parent and child together
- Healthy snack
- Shared play/activity
- Bookbug singing/rhyme or storytelling session.

What are the benefits of Stay Play and Learn?

The Stay Play and Learn model helps build parents' awareness and understanding of their children's learning and development, and increases their levels of confidence, knowledge, skills, motivation and communication. It boosts their capacity to appreciate the importance of engagement, attachment, relationships and their responsiveness to their children. It promotes effective, positive approaches to managing behaviour. It decreases social isolation and it provides opportunities for much needed peer support. Stay Play and Learn also aims to narrow the poverty-related attainment gap in Scotland; by the time a child is age 5, the gap between children from the most advantaged and most disadvantaged families is already 6-13 months in problem solving, and 11-18 months in expressive vocabulary. The effect of this on children's social, emotional, cognitive and physical development cannot be overstated. The benefits for parents and their children of playing and learning together in a friendly and stimulating setting, are transferred naturally into the family home and everyday life.

This kind of impact simply cannot be replicated in most traditional nursery arrangements, where at the moment, the majority of parents have no choice within the range of funded provision available, and have to drop their child and go. There is a level of 'officialdom' that can come with Early Learning and Childcare provision that Stay Play and Learn sessions don't have, due to them being more informal and delivered by the Third Sector in local, familiar venues. For this reason, Stay Play and Learn sessions often act as a helpful stepping stone into full Early Learning and Childcare provision.





Community Stay Play and Learn / Baby Stay Play and Learn

This service is planned, set up and delivered by Early Years Scotland, often in collaboration with partners. Essentially the central aim of Stay Play and Learn is to provide shared play and learning opportunities for a small group of families with young children from birth to five in local community settings. Once a suitable venue has been identified, the two hour sessions are facilitated by qualified Early Years Practitioners once or twice per week.

P1 Stay Play and Learn

P1 Stay Play and Learn is a unique service, which focuses on closing the attainment gap and aims to help improve the transition between nursery and primary school.

Early Years Scotland, in partnership with primary schools, offers parents the opportunity to attend shared play and learning sessions to support their child before, starting and during primary. These sessions are facilitated by fully qualified and experienced Early Years Practitioners who deliver informal, play based sessions in primary schools with parents who are encouraged to participate fully

I am so glad my Health Visitor told me about this session, it is great to let my son have a little play with other babies and for me to speak to other Mums who are going through the same, making me realise I am not alone.

Parent, Baby Stay Play and Learn

in their children's learning from the start of school. This successful service supports a range of children and families across the central belt of Scotland.

2 Stay Play and Learn

Early Years Scotland 2 Stay Play and Learn (2SPL) provides Early Learning and Childcare funded sessions for eligible two year old children to attend with their parent/carer. These sessions are available within venues across Glasgow.

The unique nature of our 2SPL service provides opportunities for intergenerational learning which enables parents to learn new ways of supporting their child's care and learning needs, leading to skills for learning and life.

My child is a real chatterbox since coming to 2SPL, I feel comfortable coming along knowing I'm not judged, it's a great place for me and my kid! **Parent, 2 Stay Play and Learn**

Early Years Scotland created and designed the 2SPL model based on the growing awareness of the importance of attachment and bonding for young children, and in recognition of the fact that separating parents/carers and children for longer periods of time may not be in the best interest of all families. Many parents of eligible two year old children state that they are not ready to leave their young child in nursery provision, and instead, wish to stay, play and learn together, in less 'official' venues such as our community settings.

Therefore we know, that for some children, simply providing a new pathway that separates them from their parents for more hours over a longer time than previously, may actually exacerbate the level of disadvantage being experienced, since the importance of attachment and bonding is not always to the fore.

By supporting an enhanced home learning environment, children's attainment and achievement can be improved. We support parents' understanding of the importance of play and help them to recognise and make the most of every day learning opportunities.

Prison Stay Play and Learn: Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment

We work in partnership with the Scottish Prison Service staff to support prisoners, their children and partners. Families are provided with opportunities to improve attachments so that relationships can be maintained or improved, leading to outcomes that are more positive for their children.

The Early Years Scotland prison service can support children and families through the following support interventions:

- Pre-visit Session for children and families
- Family Play Session
- Baby Massage Programmes
- Mothers' Programme / Arts and Crafts Session
- Fathers' Programme and Fathers' Forum
- Awareness raising Sessions with prison staff and other agencies
- Signposting to other support agencies.

The Fathers' /Mothers' Programme involves the Early Years Scotland Early Years Practitioner working with prisoners to increase their knowledge and understanding of, for example, the importance of play, healthy living, positive behaviour management, communications, early literacy, child development and brain development. Within both programmes, prisoners also have the opportunity to engage in practical play experiences, building their knowledge and confidence when later playing with their child at the family visit time.



During Baby Massage, fathers/mothers and babies enjoy and benefit from the valuable learning experiences as outlined on page 9.

Feedback received from families and prison staff who have participated in the Early Years Scotland Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment programmes, highlights the following benefits:

- Improved relationships between prisoners and their children
- Increased confidence and self-esteem, and prisoners and children actively learning together
- Fun and laughter with loved ones despite challenging circumstances
- Parents' support for each other and developing friendships



I'm getting to see my wee girl. First time in 2 years and it will be her birthday the day she comes up. I've been telling my mum about the group and what we have been doing and making. I think it's helped.

Mothers' Programme participant

- Stronger family relationships and reduced stress
- Improved play and learning experiences at home
- Parents more confident to access other services
- Improvement in children's behaviour and parents' ability to manage this
- Improved prisoner behaviour overall.

Parents also state the following benefits around increased knowledge and understanding of:

- Child development
- The importance of play
- Brain development
- The value and quality of time spent with their child
- Children's rights
- The importance of attachment and bonding
- The effects of stress on a child's brain
- Children's health and wellbeing.

Family Visitor Centre at HMP Low Moss

The Scottish Government has a commitment to ensure all prisons in Scotland have a Family

Visitor Centre. The Early Years Scotland Family Visitor Centre is a place for families and friends to relax before their visit, and access independent and impartial advice and information to support prisoners' families. Early Years Scotland is working in partnership with HMP Low Moss and we are proud to provide this service for the benefit of children and families affected by parental imprisonment. Our staff within the Family Visitor Centre have experience working with children and families, and are available to assist with any questions no matter how big or small. There is free tea and coffee available, a play area for the children, and a confidential family room for use if families need advice or just want a supportive chat.

I never knew about children's development and this has given me knowledge and understanding about my son's growing stage and helped me to interact more with him.

Fathers' Programme participant

Baby Massage Services: Community and Prison

Qualified and experienced Early Years Scotland Early Years Practitioners offer six week courses in Baby Massage. As well as providing many of the benefits associated with Stay Play and Learn, Baby Massage also facilitates:

- Bonding, closeness, secure attachments and physical contact
- Increased feelings and levels of love, responsive care and ability to soothe and comfort baby
- Increased levels of relaxation and quality of sleep
- Understanding of how to treat wind, colic, teething and distress
- Parents' understanding of their baby's body language and behaviour
- Enjoyment of one-to-one quality time between parent and baby
- Increased knowledge and confidence around how to nurture baby
- Learning about the importance of parent / baby communications.

The wide-ranging benefits extend well beyond the course itself.

Supporting Young Mothers and their Babies

This service has been specifically designed to support teenage mothers experiencing a range of difficulties such as poverty, bonding and forming secure attachments, substance misuse, social isolation, lack of confidence and positive parenting knowledge.

The young parents and babies, who are also receiving support from other service providers, attend a weekly session, which is led by two qualified and experienced Early Years Scotland Early Years Practitioners. During this session, positive relationships are encouraged and the parents are supported in appropriate ways to improve their knowledge and understanding of their role and also of child development and the importance of play, bonding and healthy living.

The Early Years Practitioners model a variety of approaches and behaviours. The central aim is to improve babies' life chances and, by intervening early, prevent or reduce the likelihood of the need for crisis intervention at a later stage.

All Stay Play and Learn services aim to support and improve:

- Parents' capacity to support their children's development and learning
- Parents' levels of confidence, knowledge, skills, motivation and communication
- Enriched home learning environments
- Promotion of effective, positive approaches to managing behaviour
- Peer support and reduce social isolation
- Attachments, relationships and parents' responsiveness to their children
- Active learning, problem-solving and growing independence
- Children's social, emotional, cognitive and physical development
- Concentration, curiosity and social interaction
- Healthy eating and living
- Opportunities for signposting to other support services
- Effective transitions.

The Incredible Years® (Dumfries and Galloway Council)

The Incredible Years® is an evidence-based programme for parents and children to help reduce challenging behaviours in children, and increase their social, emotional learning and self-control skills. The programme gives parents additional skills to use praise and reinforcement of positive behaviours, and supports parents with effective strategies to set limits and to manage unwanted behaviour. The programme is aimed at parents with children aged 3 years to 6 years and aims to:

- Support parents in their parenting role
- Increase self-confidence
- Strengthen children's social skills, emotional regulation and school readiness
- Introduce rules, routines and effective behaviour limit setting
- Help parents think about positive ways of dealing with challenging behaviour
- Encourage the use of praise and incentives to promote cooperative behaviour.

A team of dedicated and qualified practitioners - including our Early Years Scotland trained staff - from Education, Social Work, Community Learning and Development, and the NHS, help to deliver the programme. The course runs for two hours a week, on the same day for 14 weeks.

Membership and Support for ELC Settings, Professionals, and Students

Early Years Scotland offers the following categories of membership:

- Voluntary Early Learning and Childcare Settings
- Private Early Learning and Childcare Settings
- Local Authority Early Learning and Childcare settings
- Parent and Toddler Groups
- Individual Practitioners
- Childminders
- Colleges
- Universities
- Individual Students
- Local Authorities
- Voluntary Sector Organisations
- Companies and Businesses
- Primary Schools

If you have five settings or more, and take out Early Years Scotland membership for each setting, then you qualify for a 10% discount!



Membership Benefits

Our membership benefits include :

- Early Years Scotland: The Magazine for Early Years Professionals
- Parent Chat Magazine for Parents of Babies and Young Children
- Monthly e-bulletin
- Website and dedicated members' area keeping you up-to-date with Early Learning and Childcare developments
- Range of sample policies for Early Learning and Childcare settings
- Top Tips for Parents on early years topics
- Dedicated support helpline
- Insurance package and legal advice line
- Discounted publications and resources
- Discounted rates for the Early Years Scotland conference, events and professional learning
- Access to a wide range of free online publications
- Free job vacancy advertising
- Support to ensure that you are sustainable and manage your setting effectively
- Support for your setting on social media
- Access to Early Years Scotland conference videos.

Please visit our website earlyyearsscotland.org to view the full range of benefits that are applicable to each individual category.

Early Years Scotland provides support and information to voluntary, private and local authority settings and childminders with regard to:

- Curriculum and business support
- Leadership
- Improvement planning
- Self-evaluation
- Inspections
- National and local developments
- Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration processes
- Recruitment and employment
- Professional learning and skills development
- Policies and policy development
- Partnership and multi-agency working
- Financial management
- Effective committees and governance
- Insurance.

Supporting Early Learning and Childcare Settings

Where there are Early Years Scotland staff working in partnership with a local authority, direct support is available to member settings in relation to best practice and business sustainability. Our Development & Support Officers can provide valuable bespoke local support that can lead to successful and sustainable services.

Development & Support Officers

The Early Years Scotland Direct Support Service is designed to provide development and support (* for committees, providers) of all voluntary sector managed Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) commissioned providers, private and funded partners.

We are committed as an organisation to continuing to collaborate on and develop robust and meaningful partnership working opportunities across statutory, private and third sector services.

By becoming a member of Early Years Scotland, your setting agrees to adopt the principles set out in this Early Years Scotland Code of Practice, in order that children will receive the highest quality Early Learning and Childcare, delivered by a high-quality professional workforce.

This is a bespoke service and focuses on the following:*

- Support to ELC settings with targeted support that prioritises their needs.
- Guidance and support with business management issues, focusing on sustainability and assist in applying for external funding.
- Support with supervision and appraisals using robust policies and procedures.
- Support with safer recruitment of staff, using robust policies and procedures to meet regulatory body requirements.
- Guidance and training to committee members in understanding their roles and responsibilities as charity trustees in line with charity law.
- Providing support with self-evaluations and the development of an annual improvement plan on request.
- A bespoke service to Funded providers of ELC to help with any issues, guidance, best practice in line with the national standard
- Listening and helping to build relationships between ELC settings and other professional bodies as an intermediary.
- Ensuring that our children and members' voices are represented at local and national level.

Support for Parent and Toddler Groups:

- Guidance on financial, business and management issues to improve sustainability, and assist in applying for external funding.
- Support committee members in understanding their roles and responsibilities.

Supporting Parent and Toddler Groups within Communities

Early Years Scotland provides support and information for parent and toddler groups with regard to:

- High quality two-generation shared play and learning experiences
- Supporting parents to increase both their own and their children's levels of confidence and skills
- Together We Can workshops led by Early Years Scotland Early Years Practitioners that can later be led by parents in subsequent parent and toddler group sessions
- Early learning experiences which can be transferred to the home

- Financial guidance
- Insurance
- Policy development and adherence to policies
- Effective management committees
- Maximising benefits and successful outcomes for children and families.

Providing Scotland's children with the very best start in life is essential if we are going to achieve excellence and equity for all. Many parents are keen to contribute to the successful running of their local parent and toddler group, but often feel they lack the necessary knowledge and/or confidence. Early Years Scotland staff understand this, and support parents in many ways including conducting organisational health checks and audits, and also assisting them to identify and explore potential funding avenues.

This support service enables groups to establish and run effective committees resulting in successful, sustainable community provision for parents and their young children. Many of these approaches and activities are then continued into the home, resulting in enriched home learning environment and improved outcomes for children.



Professional Learning Academy

Early Years Scotland offers a range of professional learning opportunities to inspire, encourage and support your early years practice...



As a specialist early years organisation, we bring a wealth of early years experience to our professional learning events. We look forward to sharing this experience with you in order to support you in your work of delivering high quality Early Learning and Childcare. Career-long professional learning allows you to stay informed in the ever-changing landscape of a sector which is experiencing rapid growth and development. Commitment to professional learning, reflection and personal development ensures that your knowledge of policy, practice and pedagogy is up-to-date and relevant. This means that your learning pathway will be underpinned by current legislation, the latest research and best practice shared by colleagues from across the sector, and will encourage you, your team or your organisation to reflect upon, and develop your early years provision.

All of our professional learning opportunities can be used as evidence towards meeting the standards for your professional body, SSSC and GTC Scotland.

Our professional learning can be delivered at a time and place to suit you; in-house, in your setting or at a centrally organised venue. We also offer weekend and evening opportunities and we have an EYS Online Learning Platform too.

Early Years Scotland Professional Learning Academy provides opportunities for staff to engage in learning, including the following:

- Loose Parts: a Key to Discovery in Play
- Unlocking Schematic Play
- Discovering the World through STEM
- Rich, Engaging Environments for Two Year Olds
- The Learning Cycle: Observations, Assessment and Planning in the Early Years
- Managing Effective Transitions
- Inspiring Future Leaders
- Lens on Outdoor Learning: My World Outdoors
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Working with Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment
- Prevention and Early Intervention: Brain Development
- Supporting Children Affected by Disadvantage
- Involving and Engaging Parents
- Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families
- How good is our early learning and childcare?
- Getting it right for every child.



Conference and Events

Early Years Scotland develops and supports a wide range of events and conferences nationally. We host our own Early Years Scotland Annual National Conference for all those who work for, and on behalf of, young children in September each year. This regularly over-subscribed event, held on a Saturday, showcases national and international early years experts, and welcomes over 350 delegates.

We have recently, for example, supported the following key events:

- An Early Years Career Event focusing on Diversity in the Early Years Workforce for Scottish Government, with Skills Development Scotland, Glasgow City Council, the Scottish Funding Council, and Media Scotland.
- What Matters to Us Conference working in partnership with Iriss, the Scottish Social Services Council, College Development Network, the ALLIANCE, and university and college sector representatives.

We also support a wide range of conferences and events by providing keynote presentations, workshops and seminars on a variety of themes upon request.

Every Day's a Story Day: National Storytelling Campaign

Early Years Scotland was delighted to launch a new campaign entitled Every Day's A Story Day in 2019. The campaign's aim is two-fold: to ensure that every child in Scotland hears a story every day from birth through childhood, and to encourage parents and staff in nurseries, schools, colleges etc. to place a renewed focus on storytelling and sign up to our pledge to support this aspiration on our electronic Story Scroll. The Early Years Scotland Campaign has many eminent 'Story Champions' including:

- Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister
- John Swinney, Deputy First Minister
- Maree Todd, Minister for Children and Young People
- Marc Lambert, CEO Scottish Book Trust
- Fred MacAulay, Comedian
- Kirsty Wark, Broadcaster and Journalist
- Clare English, Journalist and Former BBC Presenter
- Graham Spiers, Sports Journalist
- Des Clarke, Radio Presenter and Stand-up Comedian
- Jordan Young, Actor
- Catriona Shearer, Journalist and Broadcaster
- Grant Koper, Children's Author

Policy, Practice and Legislation: Advice and Advocacy

As Early Years Scotland is a membership and service delivery organisation, we have continued to ensure that we recognise our responsibility to make certain that our children and members' voices are represented at local and national level. A significant strand of our work therefore has been rooted in informing, influencing, supporting and challenging early years legislation, policy and practice.

Early Years Scotland has continued to play an ever-increasing prominent role at national level, in contributing to and advising on, policy and guidance. This has been undertaken mainly through our membership of key working and advisory groups. The remit of most of the groups

relates to the unprecedented planned expansion of funded entitlement of Early Learning and Childcare for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds. We have also contributed substantially to the policy process by engaging with and submitting organisational responses to a number of high level consultations.

We are represented on a wide range of local and national groups, such as the Curriculum and Assessment Board, the ELC Strategic Forum, and many others. We can therefore ensure that we effectively represent our Early Years Scotland members nationally, and ultimately the voices of children across Scotland.





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