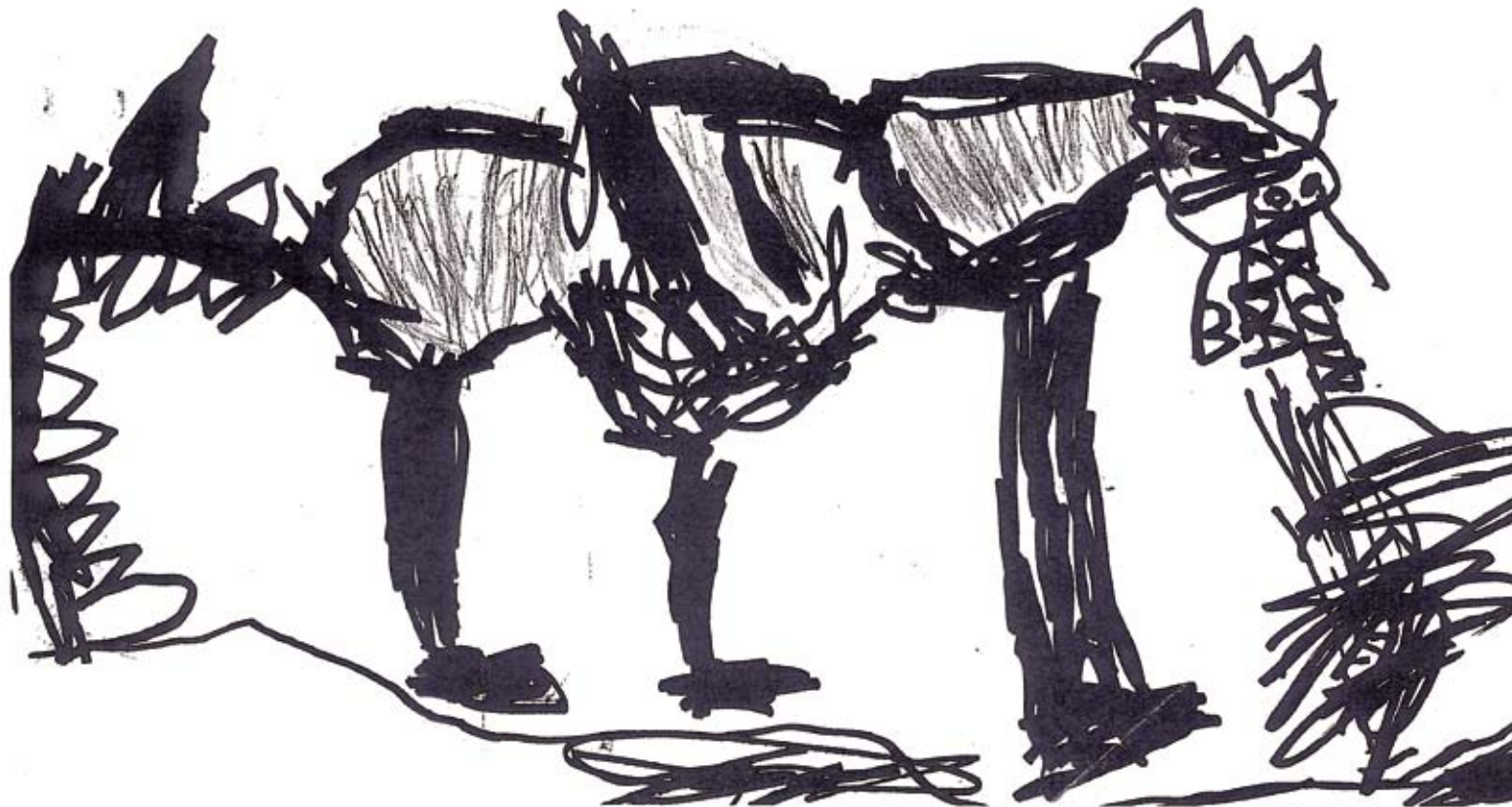


Early Years' Matters

Spring 2007

11

www.LTScotland.org.uk/earlyyears



Comhnall (aged 4 years 10 months): 'I made a Chinese dragon. It just walks and people go under it to make it walk. The people that make it walk are called Jimmy and Alan.'

Editorial

Spring is coming with its encouragement to spend more time outdoors. In this issue you can find out about *Taking Learning Outdoors*, a newly published national report, and read about how this is already happening both in school grounds and further afield. We have Kathleen Robertson's A Curriculum for Excellence update, and information about booking a place at our May Saturday Seminar, 'Let's talk about A Curriculum for Excellence: purposeful, well planned play', when the latest information should be available.

Student views on their nursery placement are very positive and enthusiastic as, for a different reason, are the views of economist Alan Sinclair. To help develop future policies for young children and their families we have the early findings from Growing Up in Scotland, a major longitudinal research study. Our thanks to Stirling Council for providing the artwork with running commentary in this issue.

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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



A Curriculum for Excellence – Early Years Update

Kathleen Robertson,
Early Years Professional Adviser, SEED

Since I last wrote about *A Curriculum for Excellence in Early Years Matters* (issue 10), the teams at SEED and LTS have engaged with the early years community across Scotland, updating them on the work as it evolves and gathering their views to inform the process.

Early years seminars

In November, a series of five seminars took place around the country focusing on *A Curriculum for Excellence* in the early years. The aim was to explore the main messages and to this end we looked at continuity and progression, the proposed new early level and more active learning in early primary. Every authority in Scotland was invited to send delegates who would have a key role in implementing *A Curriculum for Excellence* in their area. A number of practitioners also attended. Lively and informative discussions took place and delegates were invited to explore the way ahead for early years practice and to share current developments within their authority. All comments, both spoken and written, were much appreciated and are helping to inform the thinking as the programme develops.

There follows a brief summary of the main points that emerged from the seminars.

Continuity and progression

Most authorities were reviewing procedures and working towards developing more effective strategies to improve transition for children as they move between pre-school education and P1. Much work was being done on reporting, developing buddying systems, arranging reciprocal visits, sharing videos and photographs of schools and pre-school centres. However, challenges such as time for visits, the number of pre-school centres involved and varied standards of reporting were highlighted. It was acknowledged that effective communication must be a priority and that improved continuity of pedagogical approaches should make the experience a more positive one for children.



Kathleen Robertson, Early Years Professional Adviser to *A Curriculum for Excellence*

Early level

Almost all participants welcomed one level describing a framework for learning for children in pre-school education and P1. Some comments included:

- ‘Great and wonderful opportunities but considerable challenges.’
- ‘Opportunities to ensure continuity and progression, encouraging similar methodologies, respect for one another, a child-centred approach, shared understanding.’
- ‘Smoother transition from pre-school to P1, increased learner confidence, time for younger children to mature – all of which should lead to effective learning.’

Outcomes and experiences are being written for the eight curricular areas described in *Building the Curriculum*. These areas are designed to provide a framework for gathering related outcomes and experiences together to ensure breadth, but not necessarily for organising learning activities. Some people queried how this might impact on planning, etc. It will be the responsibility of authorities along with individual establishments to develop planning to suit local needs and circumstances. The child-centred, cross-curricular approach to early learning will remain and will be continued into early primary. Further detail will be provided as the curriculum develops.

More active approaches to learning in early primary

Some authorities had started to review methodology in P1 and were providing training for staff to support them in planning a more active approach to learning. A few were continuing this in P2. Current developments were shared and it was acknowledged that while there would be common features present in very good methodology there would be variation in practice to reflect local circumstances.

Participants were asked to share their ideas on what active learning might look like in early primary. The following comments provide an illustration of their thoughts:

- 'Classes where children take ownership of their learning within an environment which is well resourced and in which activities are challenging.'
- 'A true building on of experiences in nursery. Hands on, no dead time, independent play with appropriate skilled intervention/teaching.'
- 'Children learning by doing, thinking, exploring, etc through quality interaction, intervention and relationships, founded on children's interests and abilities across a variety of contexts. All combining to building the four capacities for each child.'

Additional discussion and comments centred around the need for continuing professional development for all staff to ensure understanding and support for the way forward. The need for effective leadership was crucial with staff looking to authorities, headteachers and managers for guidance and support. A presentation which outlines the main messages for the early years was sent to all delegates to support the dissemination of information across schools and pre-school centres in order to raise awareness and to encourage meaningful debate.

As there were many requests for similar opportunities to meet, it is anticipated that a further series of seminars will be arranged at a later date to look in more depth at the emerging work of *A Curriculum for Excellence* with a focus on the early years.

Building the Curriculum

The first document in the Building the Curriculum series of support materials was published in November 2006. This described the curriculum areas and how they each make a contribution towards the development of children and young people as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens (www.acurriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk). Further papers in this series will include advice on the early years.

The first publication, which is due to be published in spring, will explore the importance of active learning. It acknowledges the strengths of pre-school and early primary settings and is intended to support authorities, schools and pre-school establishments in ongoing improvement to the quality of children's experiences. It will take the form of a toolkit, posing evaluative questions for staff in pre-school education and the early years of primary to reflect on their practice, and should be used alongside the *National Care Standards*, *The Child at the Centre 2* and *How Good is Our School? (HGIOS) 3*. It is intended to support staff in pre-school and early primary settings to further develop learning and teaching approaches to ensure better continuity and progression for children.

As a strong feature of *A Curriculum for Excellence* is about putting the excitement back into teaching and learning, a good place to start is with methodology. All staff can be thinking about this. For some in early primary who have already started this journey they have found making one meaningful change at a time suited them better than a radical overhaul. Whatever approach is taken, staff should be confident about the reason for the change and its impact on children.

Emerging outcomes and experiences

The writing teams at Learning and Teaching Scotland continue to work on developing the proposed new guidance. Aspects of this work will be available shortly. A set of outcomes and experiences will be used as a vehicle for engaging with the profession. Although these will be based on a line of development in science, they are intended for all staff to give an early indication of what the new style of outcomes and experiences might look like across the curriculum. You are encouraged to use the outcomes to refresh your thinking on the values, purposes and principles of *A Curriculum for Excellence* and to further reflect on the messages in *Progress and Proposals* and *Building the Curriculum 1*. This will be a good means of preparation for the full set of outcomes and experiences as they emerge at a later date.

Stop Press

See page 20 for information about the next Saturday Seminar on *Let's Talk about A Curriculum for Excellence in the Early Years*.

‘Where Pennies Drop’: the vital role of the pre-school placement in helping student primary teachers to really understand how children learn

Moya Cove, Margaret Martin and Julie McAdam are lecturers in the Faculty of Education at the University of Glasgow. In the following article they consider the value and relevance of the pre-school placement and highlight some of the reasons why student teachers themselves feel that this is a significant experience for them as beginning teachers.

Why is the pre-school placement in initial teacher education so important?

The opportunity for BEd and PGDE primary students to focus on learning in the early years, through the provision of a pre-school placement, has long been a feature of initial teacher education courses. This placement has provided student teachers with invaluable insights into a whole host of issues related to effective learning and teaching, such as how children learn through play, how learning environments might be organised to facilitate the many aspects of learning, how children can be actively involved as responsible partners in their own learning and how adults might interact with children in different ways to support children’s learning – to name but a few. Moreover, the pre-school placement has served to enrich student teachers’ engagement with some of the perennial issues which have challenged the profession; for example, how we can work towards ensuring greater continuity and progression in children’s learning across the sectors.

Arguably, with current and ongoing developments (including the move towards the 3–18 curriculum, the need to expand multi-agency/cross-sectoral collaboration, and the renewal of the debate on extending purposeful play-based learning into the early stages of primary), the imperative for student teachers to undertake a placement in an early years setting is even more critical if we want to achieve the aspirations laid down in *A Curriculum for Excellence*.



How exactly does the pre-school placement contribute to student teachers’ professional growth?

As the students approach their pre-school placement we find that they very often have mixed feelings. Most typically they look forward to the opportunities it will afford them – but this is usually tempered by a degree of trepidation due to the feeling that the professional skills that they have been developing and gaining confidence in within the primary setting might be tested considerably within the nursery setting. (Indeed, most primary teachers would empathise with this position as they struggle to keep their own ‘inner control-freaks’ contained!)

What then tends to happen, as the students work alongside the pre-school staff, children and parents, is that a number of areas of professional knowledge and understanding, which have previously only been partially grasped and still cause confusion, begin to crystallise – and the penny begins to drop. There is a real sense that the pre-school experience is pivotal in shaping these transformations in knowledge and understanding. This view is further supported in a recent research study, ‘Troublesome Knowledge and Threshold Concepts in the Mentoring of Beginning Teachers’, undertaken at Glasgow University, where the findings show that student teachers do indeed make significant breakthroughs in their conceptual awareness of learning and teaching as a result of their nursery experience (McGonigal, McAdam and Cove, 2006). How this happens is perhaps best illustrated by looking at some of the feedback evidence which we have received directly from the students themselves.

As well as the universal realisation of how play aids learning, the students become more acutely aware of the importance of focusing on children's learning rather than on themselves as teachers: '... it has allowed me to think more about how children learn rather than how they are taught. It has been so valuable in letting me see where children are coming from and never to underestimate their prior knowledge ... I saw how children don't have to be dictated to when taught, but how they can lead their own learning ... I saw that children don't come to school to be taught, they come to learn.'

The element of surprise about the world of early years came through at three different levels. Firstly, many students expressed surprise at the children's learning achievements: 'I was amazed at how capable the children were at the ages of 3 and 4 ... not necessarily the fact that they could count/write their name, but at the depth of their understanding and their skills in reasoning ... one boy could even name the basic colours in French!' Secondly, surprise was often noted about children's skills in independence and their abilities in decision making and planning their own learning: '... throughout the nursery the children are involved in thinking and engaging in their learning through the group activities and free play ... I have learned a lot about how responsible and resilient young children are.' The final aspect of surprise observed and noted by students centred around the degree and rigour of planning and the skill of the staff in the assessment process: 'I realised that there is so much planning and organisation in what you may perceive as a 'simple' nursery day ... and the amount and level of observation and recording going on made me appreciate just how much formative assessment goes on in the nursery ... this is something I would definitely like to take into primary with me.'

So what does this tell us about student learning – and, more importantly, how does it inform their practice in the primary school?

That the pre-school placement expands and deepens many students' understandings of how best to support children's learning appears to be quite clear, but it goes beyond that. It brings students face to face again with some of the 'big' issues in learning and teaching, which previously may have seemed quite abstract to them. The experience gained by students serves to remind them to have high expectations of children; it reminds them of the importance of planning motivational learning experiences (lest children 'vote with their feet' or just switch off), it reminds them of the value of good team work and, not least of all, it reminds them of the child as an individual

and the role of formative assessment in shaping learning experiences for individuals. The real trick is for students to capitalise on this experience and think about how it can inform their practice in the early years of primary. The task of early years staff and faculty tutors is paramount here in mentoring the student experience, and the role and co-operation of early years staff in the ITE partnership should not be underestimated. There is every indication that the new generation of beginning teachers have every intention of taking their newfound understandings into the primary – and this will surely contribute to the success of *A Curriculum for Excellence* as we all work together to achieve the aims. As one student puts it, 'I will try more 'whole child' teaching, use children's interests to determine contexts for lessons and I will try to keep learning fun for children ... I so much appreciated the help I had from the nursery staff.'

Reference

McGonigal, J, McAdam, J, and Cove, M, 'Troublesome Knowledge and Threshold Concepts in the Mentoring of Beginning Teachers'. In: *Threshold Concepts Across the Disciplines*, Glasgow Symposium, 31 August 2006, University of Strathclyde, 2006

Iona (aged 4 years 2 months): 'Those are exercises; we need to do exercise so the blood goes around your body. Up, down! Football. Round and round - stop! 'Up, up, down, down!'



Taking Learning Outdoors

Willie White, Development Officer, Outdoor Education, Learning and Teaching Scotland

It's that time of year again – winter is 'supposed' to be over. As the days get longer, brighter and warmer, we catch ourselves gazing out the window reminiscing about the good old days when going outdoors was beyond the big metal fence and sometimes harder, softer or wetter than the rubber crumb-matted area. Are we still allowed to do that? Is it worth the effort? Is it 'excellent'?

What's happening now?

The Outdoor Connections research programme undertook a small-scale study across the country in 2006 to attempt to identify patterns of outdoor learning in the pre-school sector. Twenty-one nurseries were analysed for two separate weeks in May and June, 14 randomly selected and the remaining seven regarded at the start of the selection process as 'active outdoors nurseries'.

A total of just over 8000 pupil hours were spent on outdoor learning activities across the 21 nurseries compared to over 28,000 'at pre-school centre hours'. Across random nurseries the pupils spend on average

'I would argue that all areas of development and all the features of learning can be addressed through outside play in the garden. I think it is just the most marvellous place for children to learn. They are learning about the environment, in control of their own learning, making decisions, problem solving, investigating, having to interact with others and learning to work together, to share.' (Nursery school headteacher)

nearly 23 per cent of their day on outdoor learning activities. The identification of active nurseries was borne out by the data, with non-random centres spending nearly 40 per cent of their day on outdoor learning, considerably more than the time spent by randomly selected nurseries.

The percentage of a pupil's time spent on outdoor learning activities varies quite considerably by pre-school centre, ranging from a low of 7 per cent to a high of 71 per cent. This latter figure is from a non-random centre.

The highest randomly selected centre had a much lower figure of 45 per cent.

The vast majority of outdoor learning events occurred, as one would expect, in the centre's grounds (91 per cent). Pre-school centres are most likely to value grounds as a play resource (74 per cent). However, 63 per cent also responded that their grounds are a very useful curriculum learning resource and only 10 per cent reported that their grounds are not at all useful as a curriculum resource. Forty-one per cent of pre-school centres use their grounds very often or all the time to support curriculum learning, with the majority using their grounds for learning in emotional, personal and social development (87 per cent), communication and language (85 per cent), knowledge and understanding of the world (88 per cent), mathematics (88 per cent), and expressive and aesthetic development (78 per cent). **www.LTScotland.org.uk/takinglearningoutdoors/about/research/index.asp**

Taking Learning Outdoors report

The report *Taking Learning Outdoors* from Outdoor Connections, Learning and Teaching Scotland and the Scottish Executive, arriving in establishments this spring, discusses some of the issues. The report is intended for a broad readership: staff from 3–18 both within formal education settings and those supporting education from outwith establishments. It will also be downloadable as a PDF at **www.LTScotland.org.uk/takinglearningoutdoors/index.asp**

David Cameron, Director of Children's Services, Stirling Council and Chair of the Outdoor Connections Advisory

Group, states in the introduction, 'As a group, we are convinced that outdoor learning offers unique opportunities to extend the potential of our children and young people. We learn in context and through experience and place. Therefore, we need to offer different and challenging experiences to stimulate their learning and development. Learning beyond the classroom, in all its forms, can make a huge contribution to this.'

The report, drawing from last year's significant research programme with children and young people, teachers,



local authorities and outdoor specialists, sets the vision: 'We must work in partnership to overcome the barriers and provide all children and young people across all school subject areas and beyond, and at all stages 3–18, with opportunities to learn outdoors regularly.'

The report recognises the range of barriers which challenge us to make learning excellent outdoors. It acknowledges that overcoming these barriers can be difficult in isolation and that often local partnerships are necessary to move mountains, visit a local park regularly or cross a busy road. It suggests that surmounting these barriers to learning outdoors is indeed important to better prepare young people for their future, making a clear rationale for the role of outdoor learning in enabling children to embrace better sustainable living and working, better health and wellbeing and better learning.

Taking Learning Outdoors illustrates *A Curriculum for Excellence* through the Scottish, UK and international research evidence on outdoor learning. It is intended to encourage professional reflection: 'If children and young people 3–18 are to develop the capacities set out in *A Curriculum for Excellence*, every school and teacher should reflect on how and where they can best become confident, responsible, effective and, above all, successful learners. Outdoor learning can play a significant part in this process.'



When the children went out to begin with it was really interesting to observe how they managed space and we found that the boys used the whole space; they were able to release all this energy and we noticed how long they could concentrate and how positively they were behaving.' (Nursery school headteacher)

Scottish Outdoor Learning Festival 2007

The launch of the report in spring is timed to precede the first ever Scottish Outdoor Learning Festival.

As *Taking Learning Outdoors* recognises the importance of establishing effective national, local and school community partnerships to overcome the barriers to participation, LTS and a range of partners are organising a national networking event, the Scottish Outdoor Learning Festival 2007, to help you make the connections.

Following a small SETT-type format, it will be held on 30 April 2007 at the Royal Highland Centre, Scotland's National Showground, Edinburgh.

What do others think?

Deputy Education Minister Robert Brown MSP recognised the potential of outdoor learning in an address to the Outdoor Connections national conference in February 2006. 'We are moving to the concept that outdoor learning for all young people should be an intrinsic, ongoing part of pupils' educational experience, which is essential for allowing children to become adults in the real world with the ability to make sound choices for the future.'

As the Deputy Minister for Education and Young People said, 'We must challenge people to think: why learn indoors?' (February 2006)

Get out there!

So go ahead, make the effort, and take learning outdoors beyond the rubber playground. It's not only allowed, it's positively encouraged, it's innovative, it's excellent and the children love it!

Keep up to date with progress in the Outdoor Connections programme by subscribing to the electronic newsletter at outdoorconnections@LTScotland.org.uk

Education is about lighting a fire

Chris Miles, Pre-school Education Co-ordinator in Fife, describes 'lighting a fire' for learning outdoors.

As someone who, as a child, spent most of her time outside, and as an adult still does when possible, I became incandescent with excitement when I saw and heard about the Scandinavian outdoor kindergartens at a conference in 2005. It aroused other feelings in me too, feelings of anger about what childhood has become, often a life of voyeurism and inactivity, a life with an absence of the risk taking that helps us to grow and discover ourselves and our own potential. I wanted to make it happen in Fife **tomorrow**.

Permission and passion

But I knew some of that would be quite frightening for people working in the stifling atmosphere of health and safety, risk assessments, and a perception that the sole rationale of the National Care Commission is to stop anything interesting from happening. That wasn't the prevailing climate at the conference though. Permission was in the air.



I took that permission. I then wanted to give pre-school educators in Fife two things – the same permission, and the same passion. W B Yeats said that 'education is not filling a bucket, but lighting a fire'. To light the fire underneath them I needed them to be lit with the same torch that I had been lit with, and so I invited the same Norwegian speaker over. When I sent out the invitations to the conference at which he would ignite everything, I said in my letter: 'If you have no intentions of doing anything about this, dinna bother coming.' The conference was sold out. The fires are still burning.

Organic approach

Of course no one had much of a clue how to get started. But **they wanted to**. That was more than half the battle. We also had the good fortune to have in Fife the Sathya Sai Montessori School, where the children go out into nature for a part of every day, and where the staff are very knowledgeable about what kind of experience this should be. We took a very organic approach to the whole thing, which was to let people begin immediately to try to identify a place to go, within reach. Some are luckier than others in this. I had a group of people who had been involved in the idea from the outset, a multi-agency group including someone from the Ranger service and someone from the Forestry Commission. They were ready to help with identifying suitable sites. I thought it important that each school should come up with their own local solution to where to go, how to get there, and what support they would require from parents. Mostly they have sorted all of that out themselves.

Trust young children

No, my biggest worry was how to support staff to not teach, to trust that young children would be bursting with their own enquiries, to ensure that they got there and that they were kept safe, and then to let them at it without interference. There was to be no 'Gather round, children, while ...' It was also important to emphasise the regularity of the visits, and always to the **same place**. If the visits are too infrequent and to different places, the children never get beyond the novelty factor and into the real substance. It also had to be made clear that the playground, even after development, was not a substitute experience. Improve the outdoor play facilities by all means, but it will never be the woods. Nor is it about a picnic on the lawn, even in all weathers.

'In all weathers' has to be emphasised too. The Norwegian view is that there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes. Schools needed to be equipped with suitable gear for a variety of sizes and shapes of children to make this possible for them all.



Three-day course

As people got going, we planned a three-day course. The first day was philosophical and to set the tone. An important part of it was to revisit childhood and remember the important experiences that have never left you, to understand them, and to respect everyone's right to have them. The second day was out in the woods with Mike Flinn from the Forestry Commission. The purpose of the day was not to teach people things they could teach children, but to help the adults to feel comfortable in themselves in the woods. Risk assessments were also covered on that day. The third day was with the children of the Sathya Sai School, seeing it all happening, feeling it.

Corroboree

Since then quite a number of schools are doing it, all at different stages of development, confidence and understanding. As a group we are ready to give whatever support is needed. In March we are bringing everyone who did the training back to Sathya Sai for a Corroboree – a gathering round the fire to talk, hosted by the children, cooking on the fire. We are preparing to do outreach support, going out to the woods with a nursery group, talking it through, mentoring. And – we are preparing to put on another conference, to begin the whole cycle again with the next wave of enthusiasts.



£100k potted for new sensory garden

Fundraising has potted a fantastic sum of over £100k for a Sensory Garden development at the Royal Blind School in Edinburgh. The launch of the project was celebrated on 30 January as representatives from HSBC, The RS MacDonald Trust and Friends of the Royal Blind School joined children and staff from the school to turn the first sod.

At the Canaan Lane campus the emphasis is on the education and care of pupils who are combating multiple disabilities in addition to their visual impairment. Themes such as movement, water, play, contemplation and activity are really important for the children and are some of the key themes that have been integrated into the development of the Sensory Garden.

Key features that the development will incorporate include:

- ✿ a secure and nurturing space for pupils
- ✿ a place to allow natural integration between Royal Blind School pupils and nearby schools
- ✿ a place for parents of residential pupils to spend time in a relaxed and personal space with their child
- ✿ a fun place for brothers and sisters of pupils and a place for families of pupils to get together and socialise.

Designed to encourage the children's abilities to explore and learn, the Sensory Garden will include many features that touch the senses such as:

- ✿ raised flowerbeds with distinctive differences to stimulate the senses of smell and touch
- ✿ various walkway surfaces for children to explore
- ✿ wind chimes and musical instruments to stimulate the sense of hearing
- ✿ areas such as steps and gradients to moderately challenge the children.

Our Outdoor Learning Area

Catherine MacMillan, Bowmore Primary Pre-Five Unit, writes about a recent project.

In 2004 we began fundraising to develop the entrance area of the school with the aim of it becoming an outdoor learning area for pre-five and Primary 1–3 children. It was a long and sometimes challenging project, which has paid off as the area was officially opened in September 2006.

Community ownership

Throughout the whole process there was full involvement of all children, enabling them to become effective contributors and confident individuals. Parents, staff and the wider community were also involved. During our first discussion with the pre-five children we asked them what they would like to have in an outdoor play area. We recorded their suggestions and then did the same thing with their parents before comparing their ideas. The similarities were amazing!

The older children in the school were also involved in the project, for example in the design and setting up of the area. This developed a sense of ownership/community throughout the whole school.

The local community were very supportive throughout the project from helping with fundraising and planning to designing playground markings and setting up the equipment.

Transition supported

Staff quickly realised the potential this project had for furthering their transition programmes both from parent and toddler to pre-five and from pre-five to Primary 1.

The local parent and toddler group became involved in our fundraising activities and are now encouraged to use the area as part of the induction programme.

As the area is for pre-five and infant children it also helps with the children's transition into Primary 1 as it is already a familiar environment for the children that they enjoy



using. It has also been a nice way for the children to meet the older children as well as the infant teachers as we sometimes use the area at the same time.

Areas for learning

From an early years perspective the area offers fantastic opportunities for investigation and discovery play throughout the whole curriculum. We have incorporated different 'areas' for learning. There is a sensory area in which the children have planted a variety of plants which look, smell and feel different. One of the children's favourite activities in this area has been number hunts. We hide tiny number confetti that the children search for, which they use tweezers to pick up and place in their little pouches.

Healthy eating

We also have lots of opportunities for planting. We have cold frames which are for bringing on our seedlings, flower beds, tubs and a vegetable patch. These areas encourage children to develop an appreciation for growing things and caring for the environment. It is a great way of enhancing children's learning about healthy eating as it gives them hands-on experience and the opportunity to plant, care for and then taste different vegetables.

We have now started to develop our 'wild garden' where we will have lots of wild flowers which we hope will attract a variety of minibeasts and also birds, which we might catch interesting footage of in our birdcam.

Being creative

Our music area consists of a large turtle drum, chimes and metalaphone. We also have other instruments such as a thunder stick and boomwhackers! The music the children create outside is so different from what they do inside. The children can be really noisy and creative. The metalaphone often creates a church setting for role play as the children think it sounds like church bells.

In the role play area there is a beautiful wooden play house including furniture and dressing-up costumes. We also have a log train that takes us on lots of exciting adventures.

In the physical area we have two springers, a climbing frame, swinging steps and a wooden bridge. This provides the children with a large area for developing their gross motor skills through play. Again it often becomes imaginative play – if you fall off the log stepping stones you will get eaten by the hungry crocodile!

Inside the sandpit

We have a large sandpit which offers the children the opportunity to actually get into the pit, unlike the sandpit indoors. Many learning opportunities can be planned for this area but many unplanned opportunities also arise –



we have dug to find the pirates' lost treasure (silver stones that we painted), we have planted pretend flowers in terracotta pots for the play house and there have been many, many more activities.

The children also make fantastic use of 'old bits and pieces'. For example, they love to use old bits of drainpipes and duck tape to make tunnels for the cars to go through. These children are learning about solving



problems and learning to collaborate with others as well as developing their fine motor skills and much more.

The area is used to complement our indoor environment, which means we meet all children's interests. For example, one child last year did not particularly enjoy art and craft activities indoors but loved using the big paint brushes and rollers outside on the art easels which are mounted on our fence.

Cross-curricular links

Our project has been an excellent way of enabling all children to become responsible citizens, incorporating the Eco Schools and Health Promoting Schools projects. The children are actively learning about health and wellbeing and they are enjoying being active and getting outdoors, not only in this new area but also in other exciting places around the island, including the woods and beaches. We have also been promoting environmental awareness by encouraging recycling. One exciting way we are doing this is by making a greenhouse from recycled plastic bottles. The Primary 6/7 class have taken ownership of this project with the whole school contributing.

This has been a very exciting time for all involved; the benefits for the children's holistic development are immense and the children are displaying a clear ability to be successful learners. It is obvious to see that this whole project has been based around the four capacities of *A Curriculum for Excellence*.

Staff and children continue to be very enthusiastic, thinking up new ideas about what we can do in our new outdoor learning area.

Growing Up in Scotland study



This article highlights some of the topics presented in the first year's report from the Growing Up in Scotland study.

About GUS

The Growing Up in Scotland study (GUS) is an important new longitudinal research study which began in 2005 and is one of the largest of its kind ever carried out in Scotland. The study will provide information that will help develop policies affecting young children and their families in Scotland. The aim of the study is to track the lives of a cohort of Scottish children from the early years, through childhood and beyond. Focusing initially on a cohort of 5217 children aged 0–1 and a cohort of 2859 children aged 2–3, these children will be followed up annually until the age of 5. The study covers a wide range of topics and the findings can be found on www.growingupinScotland.org.uk.

Later this year the data from the study will be made available through the ESRC data archive. The project is funded by the Scottish Executive and is carried out by the Scottish Centre for Social Research in collaboration with the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of Edinburgh.

Characteristics and circumstances of children and their families

The first year's data from the study provides a picture of the characteristics and circumstances of children and their families. These have been examined further in three separate Research Findings reports that accompany the main overview report. The findings in these reports highlight the powerful inter-relationships between demographic factors, family structure and socio-economic circumstances. These further reports concentrate on the following topics:

- Pregnancy, Birth, and Early Parenting
- Sources of formal and informal support for parents of young children
- Use of childcare by parents of young children.

Pregnancy and birth

- Most pregnancies were actively planned (60 per cent); the vast majority of these were planned by both parents.

- Approximately half of all mothers and seven out of 10 first-time mothers said they had attended at least some antenatal classes but around two-thirds of those aged under 20 did not attend any classes and were much more likely to say that they simply did not like classes/groups or that they did not know where there were any classes.

Parenting young children

There is much in the evidence from the study that is positive in relation to parenting young children. Many child-related issues reported at the time of interview were considered to be minor, such as teething or sleeping, suggesting that parents are coping with these and that they are part and parcel of everyday life with very young children.

The first three months

- The issues most likely to be seen as either a bit of a problem or a big problem were wind or colic, the child's sleeping pattern and managing the relationship between the baby and his or her siblings.

Breastfeeding

- Across both cohorts, around two-thirds of mothers indicated that they had originally intended to breastfeed their child and around 90 per cent of this group actually did so.

Parental support

Parents' perceptions of the range of sources of support available to them have been mapped, contributing to the knowledge base available to those developing and assessing policies and services designed to support parenting.

Grandparents

- The majority of parents received some support for their parenting from their own parents.
- Most children see their grandparents regularly with around four out of five children seeing them once a week or more often.
- Almost all of the children in the study had at least one grandparent who was still alive. Just over half had four grandparents and a quarter had three. About one in six had either one or two grandparents and one in 20 had five or more.

Knowledge of key government-supported initiatives aimed at parents and families

- Many parents had limited knowledge of a range of services and policies specifically aimed at supporting their parenting and their child's development. Whilst most had heard of Working Families Tax Credit, the Child Trust Fund, NHS 24 and the Children's Traffic

Club, services such as Sure Start, ParentLine Scotland and the Childcare Link website and telephone helpline were less well known.

Attendance at groups and classes for parents and children

- Around 40 per cent of parents in both samples said they had attended a mother and baby or mother and toddler group in the last year. Only a very small proportion of parents in each cohort said they had attended a parenting class or group in the last year.
- Almost all respondents who had attended a parenting class or group reported that they found it to be very or fairly useful.

Child health and development

Children's general health and development was reported by parents as good or very good overall and this assessment was fairly uniform across the population, although there was some evidence of less advanced development by children from more disadvantaged settings and by boys than by girls.

- In terms of developmental milestones among babies, there were few differences between boys and girls in relation to gross motor skills, but girls tended to be more advanced in relation to fine motor skills and communicative gestures.
- Among young children, girls were also more likely to have reached developmental milestones, especially those related to getting dressed or undressed.
- In terms of young children's language development, parents were again more likely to express concerns about boys than about girls.

Parenting styles and responsibilities

While the majority of parents are unsure about the possibility of being 'taught' how to be a good parent, it is clear that suspicion of professional experts varies according to age, education and socio-economic circumstances, and is highest among young parents.

Activities with the child

- Parents' use of resources and parental activities with the child were structured by differences in education and socio-economic circumstances. For example, children from less affluent households had fewer books.
- Parents with higher levels of educational attainment spent the most time with children in activities generally regarded as having a high educational value. For example, 76 per cent of parents in the highest income quartile looked at books with their baby or read them stories every day or most days, compared with 57 per cent of those in the lowest income group.

Television and other audio or visual media

- Children with younger mothers and children from lone-parent families and from less affluent households were more likely to have watched television and to have watched it more often, and were also relatively more likely to have watched television on their own rather than with other household members.

Household division of labour

- The survey found that gendered divisions of labour persisted in the majority of family households.

Childcare

Parents of three out of five babies and parents of just over three-quarters of young children used some kind of childcare on a regular basis.

Types of childcare used

- The most common type of childcare provider was the child's grandparents. Two-thirds of families with babies and half of families with young children had help with childcare from grandparents. Nurseries were the next most common provider used.
- Around two-thirds of families using childcare were using only one childcare arrangement.
- Informal childcare was found to be central to almost all families' childcare arrangements but particularly so for families in more economically deprived circumstances.



Number of hours and days per week

- Half of all families using regular childcare had arrangements lasting between 17 and 40 hours per week. A small proportion (8 per cent) of families used childcare for over 40 hours per week.

Cost of childcare

- About one-quarter (27 per cent) of parents reported that paying for childcare was either difficult or very difficult.

Degree of choice and childcare preferences

- The majority of parents did not think they had much choice of childcare providers.
- Those using informal provision were more likely to indicate a desire to change and private nurseries were by far the most popular alternative selected.

Parental health

Parental health and wellbeing are important in shaping the early experiences of young children, including their health and development. Overall, the indicators used in the study suggest that general levels of parental health and wellbeing are good. However, closer examination of differences between sub-groups reinforces the established pattern of inequalities in relation to health.

Find out more

Further information about GUS is available on the GUS website. Here there is also an option to sign up for a newsletter which will keep you informed, by email, of any news or events relating to the project. The resources available on the website include:

- all the reports from the first year of the study
- a film of the event that was held in January to launch the first year's findings, including presentations from the senior researcher for the project and responses from three heads of service within the Scottish Executive
- a short film of an interview with the senior researcher highlighting some of the main points of interest from the study
- details of how to contact the GUS dissemination officer.

Hard copies of the reports from the first year of GUS are available from:

Analytical Services Unit – Children, Young People and Social Care Branch, Area 1-B (South), Scottish Executive, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

www.scotland.gov.uk/insight



What's happening to our children's teeth?

Health Scotland has launched a new DVD for parents on how to care for their children's teeth.

The launch was held on 20 February at the Children's House Nursery School in Edinburgh, where the DVD was watched by parents, and the children enjoyed a story on the importance of looking after their teeth.

Celia Gardiner, Programme Manager for Early Years, explains:

'Our research told us that parents wanted more information on how to look after their children's teeth. They wanted to know more about the relationship between diet and dental health. Parents also raised questions on how to reduce the amount of sugar their children were consuming. We feel that our new DVD addresses these needs and are confident that it will help increase awareness so that Scotland's children can have healthier teeth.'



The DVD gives information on:

- 'hidden sugars' – foods that are surprisingly high in sugar
- why and when sugary foods cause decay
- timing of when sugary foods are eaten and the impact on tooth decay
- low- and no-sugar foods
- tooth-brushing techniques.

Obtaining a copy

To get a free copy of the DVD, text BRUSH to 84118 (standard rates apply).

Further copies of the DVD are available at dentists and via health promotion departments across Scotland. In addition, 50,000 Bookstart bags, free bags of books given to parents of children aged 0–4 years, will each contain a DVD. Bookmarks promoting the DVD are available in all community libraries. The DVD is supported by a radio campaign during February and March.

This campaign is just one of a series of measures, outlined in the Action Plan for improving oral health and modernising NHS dental services in Scotland (SE 2005), which aims to address Scotland's poor oral health record.

For more information on the oral health campaign, please contact Paula Fletcher, Communications Manager
paula.fletcher@health.scot.nhs.uk Tel: 0131 536 5551



Proud supporters of Scotland's National Hand Hygiene Campaign.

www.washyourhandsofthem.com



National Hand Hygiene Campaign

The National Hand Hygiene Campaign was launched in January to promote the health benefits of good hand hygiene. The campaign, led by Health Protection Scotland, has received support from leading healthcare bodies and, crucially, strong messages of support from the public, who recognise that this isn't a message from the 'nanny state' but a hugely important public health issue – and one with a simple solution at the heart of it.

The campaign has already started a debate and has begun to make people think about how washing their hands can make a difference to their health.

You can visit the campaign's official website www.washyourhandsofthem.com for more information.

The campaign will develop an information pack for pre-school establishments and primary schools for issue in August. This pack will contain a range of materials to help pre-school staff and teachers to engage children in activities promoting the importance of good hand hygiene.

It is hoped that the campaign message, 'Germs. Wash your hands of them', will become part of the daily routine of people of all ages, not just at work and at school, but at home and in healthcare settings. Preventing infection is everyone's business and we can all make a difference just by making sure our hands are clean.

£1.5 million book funding helps readers make an early start

The Scottish Executive has pledged funding of £1.5 million over the next two years to expand the world's first scheme to provide free books for babies.

Administered by Booktrust, Bookstart was the first national scheme in the world to provide free books for babies when it began in 1992. It involves libraries, health professionals, arts development workers, Sure Start and early years workers.

Expansion of existing service

The new Scottish Executive cash will lead to an expansion of the existing service in Scotland, designed to introduce children to books, and stimulate their engagement with the arts, from a very early age.

Additional elements of the programme that have now been promised include the provision of Bookstart+ packs for children aged 18–30 months and My Bookstart Treasure Chests for children aged 36–48 months.

The pleasure of books

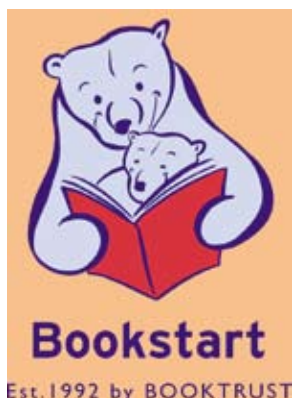
Caroline McLeod, Bookstart National Development Manager for Scotland, said:

'The extra funding from the Scottish Executive is wonderful news for Bookstart in Scotland. The funding will allow us to build on our very strong Bookstart programme for babies, to continue to inform and remind parents and carers about the importance of book sharing throughout the early years, from birth right up to when children are ready to start school.'

Delivery arrangements

From April 2007 Bookstart+ packs will be delivered to children aged between 15 months and 24 months, primarily via health visitors. The packs will also be available from secondary access points including libraries, Sure Start centres and other relevant organisations to ensure that as many children as possible receive their packs. Local authorities will be responsible for delivery of the My Bookstart Treasure Chests for 3-year-olds.

The books are chosen by Booktrust, an independent charity that encourages people to discover and enjoy reading. Although Bookstart works with different partners, including commercial sponsors, charitable trusts and government departments, the book selection process is independent and has no government or commercial involvement.



For further information on Bookstart please go to www.bookstart.org.uk



Gregor (aged 4 years 4 months): This is Robert the Bruce. He's wearing a special hat so his head doesn't get chopped off by the bad ones. Hold on, I forgot to do William Wallace's neck ... There. I need to make Robert the Bruce's leg longer because one's long and one's short - they need to be the same size. That's his eyes and his ears - a smile because he's happy ... He's got long fingers that hold on to his axe... It's sharp. I want to be in the group because I find out about castles, William Wallace and Robert Bruce. Robert the Bruce had a spider. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and his head there - Harris told me all about the spider - he knows everything about castles and stuff and he can tell everything about soldiers and all that. I brought in my book. It's all about William Wallace and Robert the Bruce - the Scotland book - I live in Doune, Scotland.

Spreading the word

Communication is the root of children's learning and social development. Children's communication charity I CAN is helping early years settings get back to those roots with an early intervention programme called Early Talk.

Communication is the foundation life skill. It affects our ability to learn, form relationships and make friends.

In the UK, one in ten children has a communication disability. In addition to this, upwards of 50 per cent of all children are entering primary schools without the speech and language skills needed to make friends and acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills. In disadvantaged areas this figure is more than 80 per cent.

Children are less likely to become successful learners if they have not acquired basic communication, literacy or numeracy skills, according to children's communication charity I CAN. Without basic literacy and numeracy skills a child will struggle to follow and process what is taught in the classroom and is more likely to fail at school.

Communication is central

Lesley Culling, I CAN's Deputy Head of Early Years and Partnership Services, said: 'Communication is central if children are to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. Early intervention gives children the best chance of success, making sure that they don't get left out and left behind and helping them to get the best out of their pre-school education.'

I CAN has developed a programme which promotes communication-supportive environments for all children and ensures effective pre-school provision for children with speech, language and communication difficulties. The Early Talk programme has been modelled on the structure of the I CAN early years specialist centres. These centres are scattered throughout the UK, including one attached to the Obsdale Nursery, located within Obsdale Primary School in Alness.

Joint partnership

The centre was set up in 2003 as a joint partnership between NHS Highland and the Education Division of the Highland Council. The aim of the centre, which recently maintained its

accreditation, is to provide, within a mainstream nursery setting, enhanced support and intensive, integrated speech and language therapy and teaching for children with specific and significant speech and language needs. The centre also provides outreach services including support for parents and pre-school workers.

In 2005–06 the centre supported six children in the nursery and provided outreach and support to a further eight children. With three staff, including a speech and language therapist, teacher and childcare development worker, children benefited from a variety of teaching methods including Narrative Approaches, the SALLEY programme, individual and group-based work and Hannen. Cued Articulation, Makaton and the constant use of visual support aids also helped children to develop basic skills such as attention, listening, auditory memory and phonic awareness. Most showed good improvement and some markedly so – in one case so much so that the child was discharged midway through the school year. Also, as a result of the programme, children showed an improved readiness for reading.

Accreditation framework

Lesley said: 'Early Talk is a programme of advisory support, information and professional development delivered in partnership with children's services and celebrates achievement within those partnerships. Early Talk promotes the four capacities of *A Curriculum for Excellence* through an accreditation framework for language-friendly setting environments and the support of early years staff via training.'

Early Talk aims to bring the good practice being used in settings like Obsdale to a wider number of early years settings. Not only do the children benefit, but the staff at the nursery, visiting professionals and the families are also supported and gain from the methods used at the centre. I CAN staff receive regular training to refresh their skills as well as covering new teaching methods, which contributes towards the success of the centre.'

Funding support

Early Talk is being made possible through the support of the HBOS colleagues and the HBOS Foundation. I CAN was chosen as HBOS colleagues' Charity of the Year for 2006 and, as a result, received more than £1.5 million through the Million £ Challenge – a volunteering and fundraising initiative – which is helping I CAN reach tens of thousands of children through Early Talk.

For further information visit www.ican.org.uk or contact Lesley Culling at lculling@ican.org.uk

‘How Small Children Make a Big Difference’

Christine Riach talked to Alan Sinclair about his recently published paper on the importance of investing in supporting young children.

Another advocate has joined the ranks of early years enthusiasts. Alan Sinclair of The Work Foundation, who has spent most of his working life supporting the young people who find getting into employment so difficult and challenging, admits that he should have recognised the importance of early childhood much sooner.

A steep learning curve

Alan is the first to acknowledge that he is not an early years expert. He has been on a steep and committed learning curve gathering views and relevant research findings from a wide range of sociological, economic, educational and psychological perspectives. Having spent most of his professional life developing and delivering groundbreaking strategies to address the issues of the long-term unemployed and, in particular, school leavers, he is now convinced that there has been too much focus and expenditure at the wrong end of childhood.

Fascinating and at times controversial

Alan has now written a provocative paper, *0–5: How Small Children Make a Big Difference*, launched recently by The Work Foundation in Glasgow and in London. The paper is a fascinating, and at times controversial, read for everyone interested in improving outcomes for young children and their families. Importantly the work emphasises the need for effective support from the moment of conception – pregnancy has significant implications for the wellbeing of children – and throughout the first five or six years of a child’s life. Effective services are seen as playing a vital role in supporting the development of skills and attitudes for learning and for living, nearly always developed in the first three years of life. It is in their early years that children learn how to take turns, to share, to show interest in other people, to stick at a challenging task, to get themselves organised, to share ideas and feelings, to look people squarely in the eye – all of the things that matter when we start a new job or need to fight our corner or to influence others. We have always known this – hopefully the wider world is also opening up now to the early years.

Positive contributors

There are other influential voices fuelling this belief, including that of James Heckman, the Nobel Prize-winning economist of Chicago University. Heckman has used a range of data to demonstrate that effective investment in early childhood will have implications for children’s educational achievement, will reduce the need for more costly intervention later and will reduce the cost of crime prevention and police services.

A key collaborator in Alan’s work has been Strathclyde Police’s Violence Reduction Unit, which is actively promoting early childhood support as a way of reducing the flow of disaffected and disengaged young people into the prison system. As Alan writes, ‘If we get the early years right, we will help people to look after themselves and, in time, get work. Instead of being a threat on the streets and a cost to the criminal justice system, a drag on their classmates and a liability to the health and welfare system, [children] will turn into adults who can contribute positively to society.’



Shaping the future

Crucially, Alan reflects the need for a national policy framework to support early childhood development and investment. Currently there is no shared agreement, particularly around bolstering parenting, to shape the development of services and policies for young children and families in Scotland. Much has been achieved and across Scotland there are examples of effective integrated work to address children’s needs and many readers of this article will be at the sharp end of that. There is no doubt that more needs to be done. The early childhood agenda needs to move faster and smarter to bring about the change required to ensure every child in the country has a good start.

What do you think?

Alan has made an important contribution to this debate. As an early years enthusiast of many years standing, I feel a sense of optimism I have not felt for some time. Learning and Teaching Scotland is keen to hear your views about Alan’s work and indeed about the development of effective approaches to supporting young children and their parents in Scotland today. Tell us what you think on the early years online discussion forum at www.LTScotland.org.uk/earlyyears/eydiscussionforum.asp or email Eileen Carmichael at e.carmichael@LTScotland.org.uk.

The Work Foundation

www.theworkfoundation.com/index.aspx

0–5: How Small Children Make a Big Difference is available at: www.theworkfoundation.com/Assets/PDFs/early_years1.pdf

Scottish Council for the Regulation of Care: Inspections in 2007–08



Inspection Focus Areas

You will be aware that in the current inspection year the Care Commission has been focusing on particular areas during inspection. For early years services, child protection, Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) codes of practice, healthy eating and use of Birth to Three guidance have been inspected against the relevant National Care Standards. In the next inspection year, we will be focusing on the following focus areas and relevant National Care Standards.

Focus Area 2007–08	Standards
Child Protection and Staff Training and Development	3 Health and wellbeing
	10 Involving other services
	12 Confidence in staff
Active Play	3 Health and wellbeing
	5 Quality of experience
Infection Control	2 A safe environment
	3 Health and wellbeing

Other National Care Standards or regulations may apply and be referred to by Care Commission officers. However, these are the main National Care Standards which will be inspected against for these focus areas.

Frequency of inspection

At present, each service is required to be inspected on an annual basis. However, Scottish Ministers have consulted widely on the possibility of changing the minimum frequency of inspection of early years education and day care services. It is possible that a change to the minimum frequency of inspection will be introduced in the next financial year. Changes in the minimum frequency of inspection must be agreed by the Scottish Parliament and it is understood that the matter may be debated in the Scottish Parliament in late February or in March 2007. The proposals vary according to the services:

- day care of children where the service caters for children under 3 years of age – no change
- day care of children where only those aged 3 years and over are provided for – move to a minimum of one inspection every two years
- childcare agencies – move to a minimum of one inspection every two years.

It is proposed that the inspection frequency for all other services for children will remain the same.

Registration of workers in day care of children services

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is responsible for registering people who work in social services and regulating their education and training.

Invitations to register

The part of the Register for managers of a day care of children service opened in October 2006. Practitioners in day care of children services will be invited to register from March 2007 and support workers from October 2008. The SSSC will be writing to all managers of day care of children services asking them to confirm how many practitioners work within their services so that the relevant number of application packs can be sent to each service.

Qualification requirements

In adherence with the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, the SSSC has established a qualification-based Register. This is in order to ensure that the key groups of workers who are subject to registration receive appropriate training and education to enable them to carry out the important work required of them in a safe and competent manner.

All applicants for registration need to meet the qualification requirements set for the part of the Register they are applying for. Applicants who do not hold a relevant qualification can still be registered. The SSSC can register a worker who meets the rest of the registration criteria subject to the condition that they gain their qualification within a specified period of time. This will normally be the first three years of their initial registration period.

Registered with another body?

Some workers in day care of children services will already be registered with another regulatory body (eg General Teaching Council for Scotland, Nursing and Midwifery Council). They are not required to apply for registration with the SSSC as long as they remain registered with their current regulatory body.

Keeping practice up to date

One of the requirements of registration is that all registered workers continue to keep their practice up to date. During their five-year registration period, workers in day care of children services must complete either 60 hours or 10 days of study, training, courses, seminars, reading, teaching or other activities which could advance their professional development or inform their practice and keep a record of this training and learning.

If you are a worker in a day care of children service and you have any questions about registration please contact the SSSC's registration helpline on 0845 60 30 891 or email registration@sssc.uk.com. Further information about registration is also available on the SSSC website www.sssc.uk.com



Saturday Seminar

A Curriculum for Excellence – supporting purposeful, well planned play

in Conversation with **Gill Robinson, Kenneth Muir** and **Iram Siraj-Blatchford**

The fourth in the series of Early Years Saturday Seminars will be held by Learning and Teaching Scotland on 19 May, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow.

The Saturday Seminars, held in May and November each year, are designed to encourage debate and discussion on key topics within the early years community, through presentations, debate and conversations with the audience.

Attendance will count towards continuing professional development entitlement.

Delegates attending the May event will get the opportunity to engage with Dr Gill Robinson, responsible for developing *A Curriculum for Excellence* at the Scottish Executive, Kenneth Muir, HMCI responsible for pre-school inspections among other responsibilities, and Professor Iram Siraj-Blatchford from the Institute of Education, University of London.

Booking a place

The fourth in this series of seminars follows on from the very well received previous seminars, which had delegates from a wide range of backgrounds. To book a place at the May seminar, complete the booking form at www.LTScotland.org.uk/earlyyears or contact Customer Services, tel: **08700 100 297**; email: enquiries@LTScotland.org.uk

The conversations that take place at the May seminar will be used to form the fourth in the Perspectives on the Early Years series, *Let's Talk about A Curriculum for Excellence*. Previous Perspectives papers are available from Customer Services at LTS.

We look forward to seeing you in May!

2007 Early Years Catalogue from LTS

The 2007 *Early Years Resource Catalogue* from Learning and Teaching Scotland is now available online. It is free to download as a PDF and can be found at

www.LTScotland.org.uk/edresources

The catalogue offers a selection of publications, software, video and online resources that have been developed specifically for early education.

New resources featured include the Self-assessment Toolkit for Early Years and the updated and revised edition of the popular *Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Years Education*.



www.LTScotland.org.uk/earlyyears