

Summer 2024 Newsletter



Scottish Out of School Care Network

Welcome to our bumper summer newsletter! It is full of links to resources to help you, such as the new SOSCN shop policy packages, holiday guidance, and a poster for parents on childcare costs that you can customise, as well as news about our exciting in-person conference in September 2024 in Glasgow called 'Reaching Out'. Our conference places always go quickly so book as soon as you can, there is also a reduced price for multiple tickets.

Whether an election time or not, we provide guidance on how to get political, and who to contact depending on whether it is a local government, Scottish Government or UK Government issue.

We compare the different regulation rules across the four nations of the UK, and the Care Inspectorate provides a useful update for you.


Greig has an article about his successful resilience through play training, while Patrick delves into why it is important to get out on practice placements and what he learned through doing that.

We provide some more activity ideas and in my favourite contribution for this issue we host an article from children in a service in Wales.

Everyone at SOSCN wishes you all a happy summer, whether taking a much needed break, or going into the intensive, exhausting, but fun holiday care, which makes wonderful memories for everyone involved.

As ever, feedback is welcome and we would love to hear your holiday stories and your views on the issues in these articles.

Irene Audain, Chief Executive, SOSCN



SOSCN 2024 Conference - “Reaching Out! Growing your community presence”

Wednesday 18th September
10am – 3pm
Radisson Blu Hotel, Glasgow

£75 per ticket, or £65 Each when buying multiple

Do you ever consider how taking an active role and strengthening relationships within the wider community could benefit your service?

At our 2024 conference we shall be hearing from school age childcare services which have built strong partnerships with their school and headteacher, the local business community, and developed communities of practice with other childcare services.

We shall also consider the role school age childcare can play as an essential infrastructure service by strengthening local economies and supporting strategies such as anti-poverty initiatives.

The programme will be a mixture of in-person and video presentations, and interactive discussions and activities with delegates having the opportunity to network with services from across Scotland.

A variety of information stalls and activities will be accessible during the breaks.

It will be a fantastic opportunity to meet, chat, learn and have some fun- we look forward to seeing you in September.

[Book Your Ticket](#)

SOSCN Shop - Template Policies and Procedures Now Available

Policies

Keeping employment policies relevant and up to date is essential for the smooth running of your service, but we know that managers, committees, or owners, have little time to review, update, or indeed create new policies as the law changes. For example, in the list of policy bundles below there is a new Carer Leave Policy, this is based in a new legal right for time off to care which was just enacted in April 2024.

Parental leave rights are often complex, so our templates help keep you on track to ensure your policies cover such rights well. Many larger organisations now have a menopause policy in place, so there is a new template policy for that too.

To help with policies and procedures updates, SOSCN now has a collection of policy and procedures templates in the shop at low prices to ensure they are accessible to any service.

Written by experts, the policies can easily be adapted to your setting, and they are all based on the most up to date UK employment law, which applies to employers in Scotland.

With over twenty new policies, you can find template policies which can be purchased individually or in bundles set out below.

Core policies bundle costs £20 and includes eight policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Grievance procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Recruitment Policy and Procedure (Also in the recruitment toolkit)
- Redundancy Policy
- Staff Data Policy



Leave policies bundle costs £20 and includes seven policies:

- Absence Policy
- Carer Leave Policy- note this is a new legal right for staff enacted in April 2024
- Compassionate or Bereavement Policy
- Holiday entitlement
- Other Statutory time off – note.
- Sick Pay Policy
- Time off for Defendants Policy

Rights Policies Bundle costs £20 and consists of seven policies:

- Adult Support and Protection Policy
- Maternity Policy
- Menopause Policy
- Parental Bereavement and Leave Policy
- Parental Leave Policy
- Paternity Policy
- Shared Parental Pay and Leave Policy

All Policies Bundle

At a significant discount if you need all three policy bundles outlined above, then we have them all in one bundle for £45 – saving you £15!

You can also buy any policy individually for £4 each.

Please visit the shop to see what is available:

<https://soscn.org/shop>



Reminders! What do Parents & Carers Need to Know About Your Holiday Club

For those children using school age childcare services during the summer, it involves a new routine to get accustomed to. Many services will have measures in place to help with this transition.

However, it's important to think of parents and carers too, and give them a bit of a helping hand of what to expect, especially for those families using holiday club services for the first time.



It's important to make parents and carers aware of the things that differ between term-time service and holiday club service, so they can be best prepared, and best prepare their children too.

It might be useful to send out a parent information or reminder post via email, on your social media, or even an old-fashioned paper letter. Here are some suggestions on areas to include:

Where to drop off and pick up from

Some holiday club services run from different premises than term time services. Some multi-setting services condense into just one setting. Some services open up their holiday club to children from other schools and areas. So it's important parents and carers know exactly what premises are being used, how to get there, and a reminder of opening and closing times.

You might want to include procedures for parents to follow when dropping off or collecting their child. For example, do they need to sign a register? How can they confirm their identity?

For families that haven't attended your holiday club before, putting up some signage may help them get to the right door!

Medical Needs

Although parents and carers will no doubt have informed you of medical conditions, allergies or medication needs, it might be a good idea to remind parents and carers of your medication management system. It can often be the case that before an outing whilst you are busy getting organised, a child turns up with some medication in their bag, with no other information.

You can try to prevent this by reminding parents that consent forms and information is required for all medications prior to it being stored or administered. Encourage them to visit you before the holidays so you can help them get this organised and fill out any forms.

This will be helpful for you too, as you can inform staff about any new medical requirements of children before the holidays start, at a staff meeting for example.

Meals and Snacks

You may wish to make parents aware of the snacks your service will offer, so parents can be best prepared. Do you offer breakfast, or will they need to feed their child before bringing them to the service in the morning? Do you provide lunch or will their child need a packed lunch?

You might also want to request that parents provide their children with healthy snacks.

Peanut butter or chocolate and hazelnut spread sandwiches are often included in packed lunches. If your service has a ban on certain foods such as nut products, make this clear to parents and carers.

Weather & Clothing

Here's hoping for a glorious, sunny summer. However, as we know all too well in Scotland, one minute it can be scorching, the next, a downpour!

Therefore, you may wish to remind parents to dress their children appropriately. For example, if you are going on a full day outing, request that children are supplied with a rain jacket, even if it is a beautiful morning. Are sturdy shoes required for a farm park trip instead of sandals? Will you be facilitating water activities where children will need a change of clothes? Just do your best to make it clear to parents what they need to supply their children with.



Some children may be prone to take part in messy play or have a toilet accident. Therefore, there may be an increased chance that a change of clothes will be required, especially given they can be with you for up to 9 or 10 hours instead of the usual 3 or 4. You may wish to request that parents supply a change of clothes in their child's bag for this purpose. Some children are very reluctant to put on a service's spare clothes, so having their own change may make them feel more comfortable.

Lastly, it may be worth making parents aware of your service's policy on sun safety. Does your service supply sunscreen? Will you remind children to apply it? Are there any children who are allergic? Making parents aware of this may put them at ease, knowing your service is going to protect their child from the sun, and some parents may want to supply their children with a specific brand or strength of sunscreen.

Other reminders

Your service might have specific things that you feel your parents and carers should be aware or reminded of. For example:

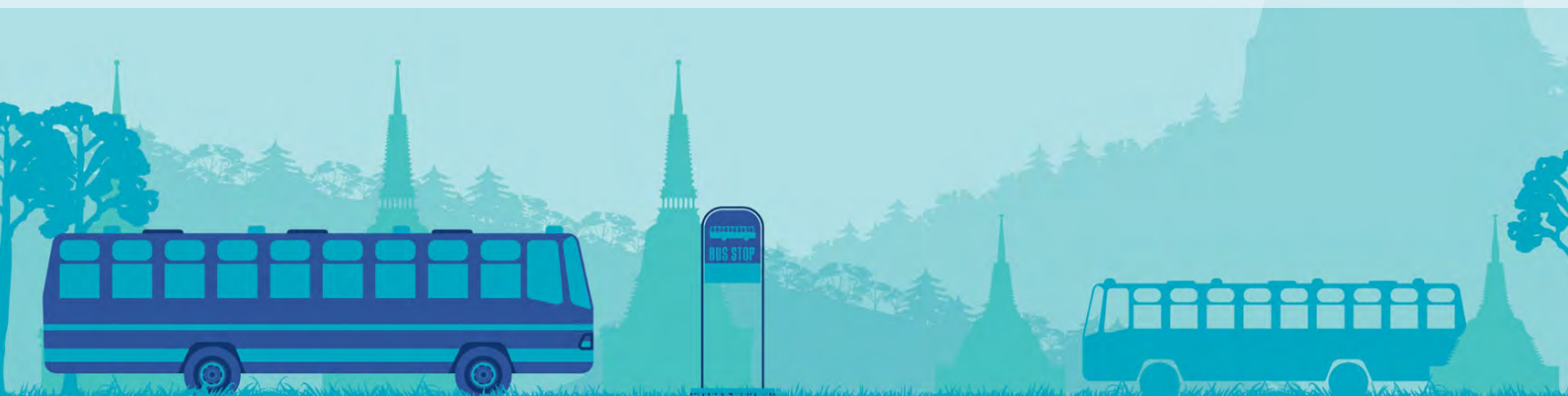
- Is there parking available?
- Where will lost property be stored?
- Who to contact in case of absence?
- Any other specifics that differ from your normal term time services

If you still have spaces to fill, use this publication to alert parents that there is still availability and time to book, or details on how to book in short notice.

Free Bus Travel Cards

It might be a little late for parents to organise these for this summer. However, it is worth reminding parents whose children do not already have a card, that free travel is available through the Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme. This is available for all 5-21 year olds living in Scotland. How parents apply depends on where they live in Scotland, often this will be through the mygovscot account or a Local Authority website, and forms of identification for their child will be required. This is a good scheme for helping parents pay for holiday clubs if additional bus travel is required. To find out more, or if you wish to signpost parents to further information, this website here has everything you need to know:

<https://freebus.scot/>





C A M P A I G N

Getting political - contacting your government representatives

Andrew Shoolbread, Policy and Research Manager, SOSCN

How does it all work?

In Scotland we are represented by MPs (UK/Westminster government), MSPs (Scottish Government) and local councillors (Local Councils). All these political representatives are publicly elected and effectively work for us. If you wish to get in contact with a political representative, does it matter which one you get in touch with? Yes, since different governments (national and local) have different responsibilities.

The Scottish Parliament has control and law-making powers over 'devolved matters' (see table below). Matters which are 'reserved' mean that only the UK/Westminster government has powers to make laws relating to these issues- these are matters that have UK-wide or international impact (see table below).

For Scotland, the current general election only relates to reserved matters.

Table: Devolved and Reserved Matters- Scottish and UK/Westminster Government

Devolved matters – Scottish Parliament is able to make laws on the following matters.	Reserved matters – issues that have a UK or international impact remain the responsibility of the UK parliament alone.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• agriculture, forestry and fisheries• benefits (some aspects)• consumer advocacy and advice• economic development• education and training• elections to the Scottish Parliament and local government• energy (some aspects)• environment• equality legislation (some aspects)• fire services• freedom of information• health and social services• housing• justice and policing• local government• planning• sport and the arts• taxation (some aspects)• tourism• transport (some aspects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• benefits (some aspects)• betting and gambling• broadcasting• constitution (some aspects)• consumer protection policy• currency• data protection• defence and national security• equality legislation (most aspects)• energy (most aspects)• elections to the UK Parliament• employment law and industrial relations• financial services• foreign affairs• immigration, asylum and visas• nationality and citizenship• postal services• taxation (some aspects)• telecommunications• trade and industry• transport (some aspects)

Reference: <https://www.parliament.scot/about/how-parliament-works/devolved-and-reserved-powers>, accessed 16/05/2024

Under Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs), each local government in Scotland has the ability to decide how national policies, initiatives, strategies and funding decided by the Scottish Government will be enacted at a local level according to the needs of the community. This means that although there is a national overview or vision, it can be implemented differently across Scotland's 32 local authorities. Under SOAs, local governments have freedom to manage funding from national government according to their own priorities whilst broadly supporting the aims of the Scottish Government.

What does this mean for school age childcare?

Overall responsibility for school age childcare (and more generally, childcare and education) is a 'devolved matter' and therefore the sole responsibility of the Scottish Government. The national government decides the national outcome for school age childcare, childcare, education etc and then the local authority (local government), has to make that happen but with the caveat that there is a level of flexibility to ensure it meets the particular needs of the local community.

As an example, if we think of ELC: the commitment to the 1140 hours ELC expansion came from national government and each local authority had to ensure that they provide these hours for children living in their area. However, the local authority had a degree of flexibility in terms of how these hours would be provided, who would provide them, how much funding they would receive etc. So, the overall objectives of the government were met but providers and parents have different experiences of the 1140 ELC expansion in different local authorities.



The Scottish government is currently developing the Framework for School Age Childcare (SAC) which when launched will state their aim for the sector. At present school age childcare (SAC) is a non-statutory service meaning that local authorities have no obligation to provide or support it. In the past when local authorities appeared to have more funding, some did directly provide school age childcare, have SAC-specific support and development staff, provide free school lets and pay for qualifications and training. Despite changes in funding some local government continue to support SAC to some extent through other non-childcare initiatives such as wider economic benefits, equalities, employability or anti-poverty strategies.

Who should you contact if you want to discuss a SAC matter with a political representative?

In general, for anything 'national' it would be an MSP which could either be your local one, a cabinet Secretary or Minister, or an opposition MSP in a 'shadow Ministerial role'. This could be a question, or raising an issue, about: national funding for SAC, national guidance, legislation, or regulatory bodies etc.

For anything 'local' e.g. local funding for qualifications, premises lets and agreements etc, your primary contacts would be local councillor(s) or local MSP(s). You could contact Ministers or Shadow Ministers at the national level, but this would probably be more to share information – in this case, the power is more at a local level.

For issues relating to financial support to parents to pay for childcare (universal credit/tax-free childcare system) or employment law, then you would contact your local MP, or Minister within the UK/Westminster government as these are reserved matters.

For further information about how to contact a politician and what you might say, please view our revised and updated Campaigning toolkit:

<https://soscn.org/downloads/news/campaign-ideas-2024.pdf>



Campaign Ideas 2024

A week at work in Hutcheson After School Care



**Patrick Morrison,
Practice and Training Officer, SOSCN**

In order to be called the Training & Practice Officer at SOSCN, I feel it is important that I actually do some practice. Otherwise, I feel at risk of dropping 'Practice' from my job title, which I'd rather keep. Without practice, I fear I'd lose up to date knowledge and the practical skills I gained over the previous 12 years working in school age childcare before joining SOSCN last September.

Therefore, I asked Hutcheson After-School Care if I could come to their service for a week and join the team as a playworker. Very gratefully, service manager Jackie Thomson accepted my self-imposed invitation.

I spent four afternoons at Hutchie, gaining an insight into how the service operates, how the staff team work and what the children's time at the service involves.

When I first arrive, I was welcomed by Lead Practitioner, Pamela MacKinnon, who was inducting a modern apprentice, studying an SVQ in Social Services (Children & Young People). I joined the induction, where I learned about the history and operations of the service, and was given a tour around the premises.

The service is delivered within its own building on the grounds of Hutchesons' Grammar School. The building has two play rooms and a wellbeing room which was in the midst of being redecorated by the staff and children.

However, they also have access to many areas within the main school building, such as a hall for active indoor play and the school's library, as well as a large playground and cosy, outdoor garden space which the children had designed.

It was clear that the after school club had strong links with the school and junior school. I couldn't help but feel this helped foster a positive relationship between the after school club and the school's leadership, teachers, office staff and janitorial staff, which I think encourage a nurturing, community environment for the children.

On my first day, I started off in the hall where drama games and active play took place. I was invited by some children to play badminton, where I was thoroughly put through my paces.

The rest of the week brought some better weather, as most of the children spent their afternoons out in the playground. There were plenty of options for the children, with the scooters, go-carts and football proving to be most popular. Inside was still an option though, with arts and crafts, computer games and much more on offer.

From the beginning, I felt very welcomed by the staff. As the week went on, I had the opportunity to observe and get to know them a bit better. It was clear that they had great enthusiasm for what they do, whether it was their nurturing and fun interactions with the children, their friendly competition to complete training first, or their commitment to their SVQ studies.

Each day, before the children arrived, Pamela would lead a team brief. She shared important information, but also encouraged the staff team to share their views in open discussion. There was also plenty of planning for their first, upcoming summer holiday club.



CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE

It was evident that Jackie and Pamela had fostered an environment of respect, camaraderie and teamwork. Pamela told me about their struggles with staffing, which many services share at the minute. However, she was delighted that she now felt the service had a settled team with a shared passion and variety of skills that can take the service forward.

As my first practice experience since joining SOSCN, it was a very enjoyable week of playwork practice. It was great to see how a different service operates. Much of it was the same as when I was a manager and practitioner, but with its own unique differences that make a lot of sense, that switched on lightbulbs, making me think, "Why didn't I do it that way?" or "I would try that again".

For example, staff wore earpieces attached to their walkie talkies, meaning communication was kept confidential amongst the staff. Using the earpieces is something I tried previously, but for a number of reasons, just didn't work out. However, witnessing it work well in practice would give me confidence to make adjustments and try it again.



Networking and sharing of practice is something that SOSCN encourages, whether it's at our events or through local forums, for example. However, having this opportunity to go visit and "work" at another service has really opened my eyes to how beneficial this could be to the sector as a whole. If you have the opportunity to visit another service even for a day, I'd certainly recommend it. I don't think it can do harm sharing ideas and learning different (and possibly more effective) ways of doing things to take back and try in your service.

Massive thank you to Pamela, Jackie, the staff team and children at Hutchie for welcoming me for the week.



This is Hutchie's new holiday club logo. The club held a competition where children could enter their designs.

There were so many great entries, but this joint electronic design from a P6 child and S5 child, who used to attend the service, was the winner!



Building Resilience through active play and sport - June 2024

Greig Cavanagh, Physical Activity Coordinator, SOSCN



On Monday 10th June, I delivered a training session at the Albany Centre in Glasgow looking at what resilience is, and how staff can build resilience within school age childcare services through play.

17 participants took part in the session, working through various group and practical activities. These activities involved staff sharing their experiences of how they deliver activities within their services.

I demonstrated how small changes in structured games and activities can challenge and motivate children to continue taking part in play.

Participants left the session with knowledge of new activities and play resources to use within their services.

Thank you to all participants for their enthusiasm throughout the session.



Regulation of School Age Childcare Across the UK- Time for Change in Scotland?



From conversations and results of surveys, we know that many services are struggling to meet legislation requirements both in terms of service delivery and staffing, and this is having an impact on quality, financial sustainability and even the ability to remain open. It is not for want of trying to meet them, but are we now in a position where legislation, guidance and requirements are outstripping what is actually possible to be delivered? Have we reached a point where the ambition of requirements is in fact having an adverse effect as opposed to a positive one? Is it time to radically re-think legislation for school age childcare in Scotland?

If we think back to when legislation relating to services and the workforce came into being (between 15 and 20 years ago) we realise that we were on a different path to the one we are on now. Pre-financial crash and pre-1140 hours expansion there was money available not just for qualifications and training but also many local authorities were able to provide sustainability grants to out of school care and had dedicated support and development officers for the sector. Can you imagine that now? The plan for childcare was a much more integrated 0-16 system which was backed up with financial resources, and the legislation and guidance was set up as such.

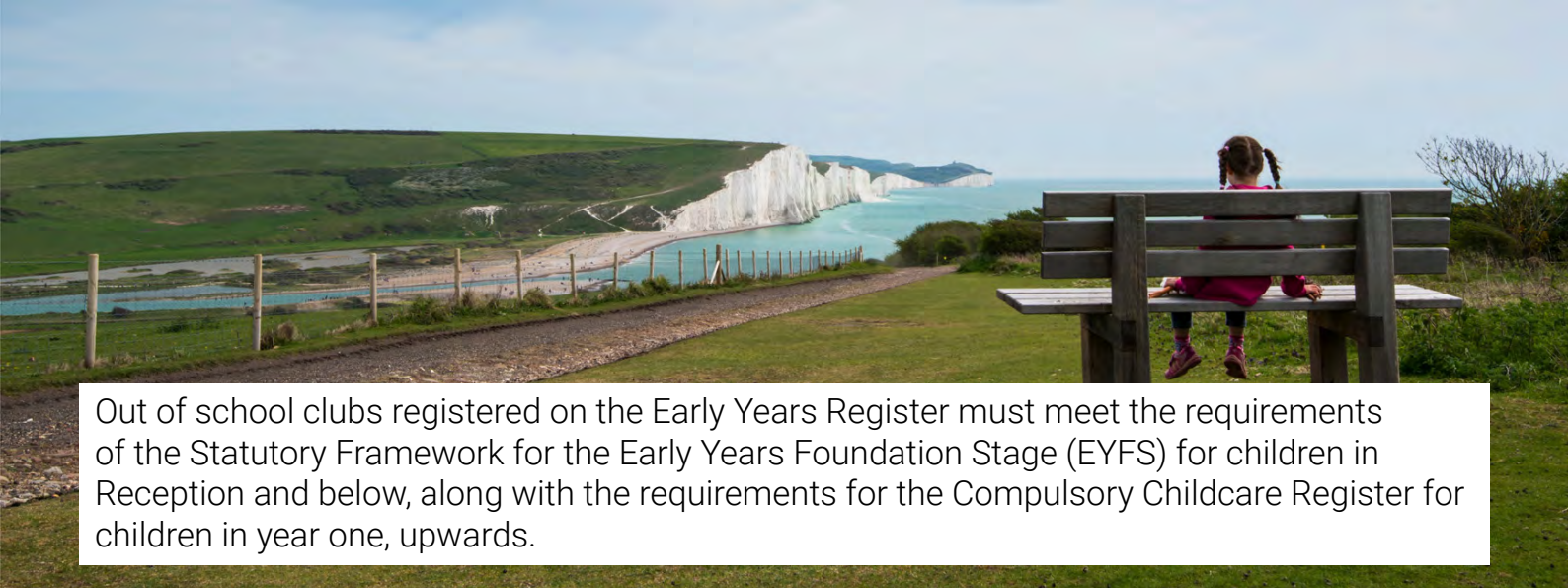
So what needs to change, and what can change? Sustainability needs to be considered but so do safeguarding, wellbeing and quality of experience for children and young. Should there be more flexibility with ratios? Is a level-9 qualification necessary for managers? Would a variety of qualifications be suitable in a setting? Do only some staff need to be qualified? We know that the Building the System Unit in the Scottish Government School Age Childcare Team are looking at potential changes to legislation, so now is the time to start having these conversations.

Before potential changes to the Scottish system are considered, we should look at the legislative landscape across the three other UK nations- below we share the regulation requirements for school age childcare services and the workforce in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. (All information is taken from the 4 Nations UK Out of School Childcare Forum <https://www.uk4osc.org>, accessed June 2024.)

ENGLAND

Out of school childcare settings in England have to register with Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) if they take children up to the age of 8. For children in reception year* and below, registration is on the Early Years Register and for children from year 1 up to age 8, registration is on the Compulsory Childcare Register.

If providers care exclusively for children aged 8 and over, or are exempt from registration because of the type of provision they offer (sports-based holiday camps for example) they can choose to register on the Voluntary Childcare Register if they meet certain conditions.



Out of school clubs registered on the Early Years Register must meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children in Reception and below, along with the requirements for the Compulsory Childcare Register for children in year one, upwards.

In terms of staffing ratios, the statutory requirement for clubs caring for school aged children is a ratio of 1 adult:30 children, but in reality, most clubs work on a ratio of 1:8 or 1:10 (insurance criteria can have an effect on ratios). Ratios for younger children vary, dependent on the age of the children.

If a club cares for children who are not yet of school age, the staff must meet the same qualification requirements as a nursery:

- the manager must have an 'approved' Early Years Educator Level 3 qualification (or above)
- at least one member of staff at each session must have an 'approved' Early Years Educator Level 3 qualification. This can be the same person as the manager, as long as they are working directly with the children.
- half the remaining staff who are caring for the pre-school children must have an 'approved' Level 2 qualification (or above).

If the club only cares for children of school age, ie. children in reception year and upwards, there are no qualification requirements. It is for the registered person to determine the skills and experience, qualifications and training needed within their workforce.

There are specific training requirements – clubs need to have a member of staff trained in safeguarding and a paediatric first aid at each session. All staff need to have food hygiene, safeguarding and Prevent duty training.

(*Reception is the first year at primary school, although it is not mandatory; it is like a bridge between nursery and school.)

WALES

Out of School Childcare that operates for more than 2 hours and/or more than 6 days a year, must be registered with the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Registered providers must adhere to the [National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare](#) (NMS) for children up to the age of 12 and the [Childminding and Day Care \(Wales\) Regulations 2010](#).



There are some services which fall under the exceptions order and do not need to register, these may include holiday activity clubs. These exceptions do not apply where children are below the age of 5 and attend for more than four hours a day, or the person offers coaching or tuition in more than two of the following activities: Sport, Performing arts, Arts and crafts, School study or homework support or Religious or cultural study.

Registered Out of School Childcare Clubs are inspected by CIW at least once every 3 years. These inspections may either be:

- Full inspection looking at all areas of their service based on 4 core themes; Well-being, Care and Development, Environment, and Leadership and Management along with a rating of Excellent; Good; Adequate; or Poor
- Focused inspections to follow up on areas of improvement identified previously.

Alongside this annually settings are required to complete a [Self Assessment of Service Statement \(SASS\)](#), which includes a Quality of Care report (QOC)

Currently there is no requirement for the Out of School Childcare workforce to register with any authority.

Prior to 2016, Childcare was only registered and inspected for children up to the age of 8. This was amended following extensive consultation with the sector, to include children up to the age of 12.

Settings have to follow strict ratios of qualified staff to children of 1:8 for children aged 3-7 years and 1:10 for children aged 8-12 years.

Senior Playworkers must have a Level 3 in Playwork although a qualification at Level 5 is recommended for management. The standards state that a minimum of at least 50% of the non-supervisory staff holds a qualification at least at Level 2 and at least half of these have a qualification at Level 3.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Out of School Childcare services (2 hours and above per session) are required to register with the Health and Social Care Trust in their area. (Currently there are 5 Trusts). There are three categories of childcare setting that are required to register with HSC Trusts – childminders, full day care and sessional day care.

Sessional day care is defined as day care for children which covers less than a continuous period of four hours in any day and covers stand-alone Out of School Childcare clubs.

Health and Social Care Trusts are responsible for registering and inspecting these services against the requirements laid down in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

Out of School Childcare services must operate with a minimum of 2 staff and on a ratio of 1 adult: 8 children.

The premises need to be safe, secure and suitable for their purpose and meet relevant statutory requirements with a minimum space requirement per child set forth. (Dependent on whether the care is sessional, full day care).



Under the Children (Northern Ireland) Order, registration is not required when providing supervised activities such as those offered by:

- Uniformed organisations, i.e., Scouts
- Religious activities
- Leisure and recreational activities
- Education tuition
- Activities occurring in schools designed to enhance a child's skills or attainments

Registered settings are inspected by HSC Trust Early Years Teams (Social Workers) against the Minimum Standards for Childminding and Day Care for Children Under Age 12.

<http://childcarepartnerships.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/early-years-standards-full-version-Updated-October-2018.pdf>

Individual requirements for those working in Out of School Childcare are established as part of the registration process – e.g qualifications, experience, etc. Staff must be over the age of 18 years old.

Within the Minimum Standards for Childminding and Day Care for Children under Age 12, and the associated Implementation Guidance Version 3 sets out the minimum qualification requirements for staff working within the early years and childcare sector.

- Level 5 qualifications are now established as the minimum attainment levels for leaders i.e. the person in charge/manager and deputy leaders in full day care, crèche and sessional care (Children's Care Learning and Development (CCLD) and Playwork at level 5).

Individuals working within registered provision are not required to register with any other body.

Whilst other UK-nations have lower requirements in terms of service delivery and qualifications, we do not know how these impact on the overall quality of services or children's experiences compared to Scotland. Also, we know from discussions with partner organisations in the separate nations that financial sustainability, and staff recruitment and retention are very much live issues even with different requirements.

For Scotland, does the solution lie in having legislation which is more proportionate and specifically tailored to school age childcare, and not a 0-16 service which didn't materialise, and now favours early years? Oh and of course, more direct funding- we'll never stop asking for that!

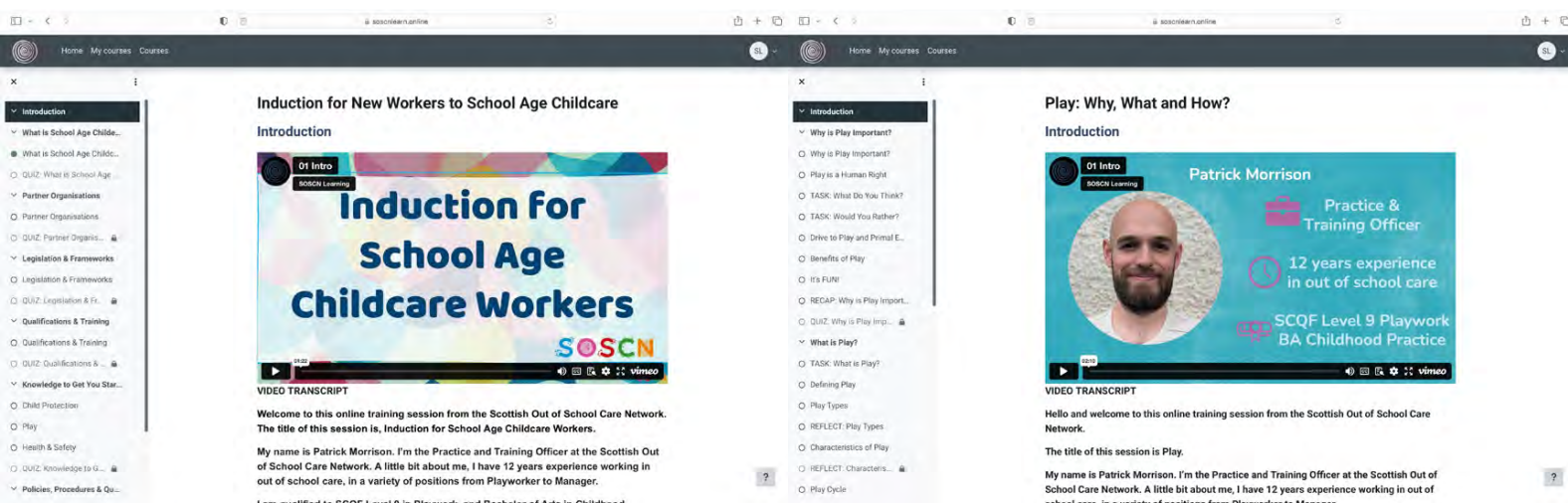
SOSCN's online training platform



New Online Courses

SOSCN's online training platform – soscnclearn.online – has been up and running for a couple of months now and feedback from participants has been very positive. Courses are currently available in Induction for New Workers, Medication Management, and Play, with all courses designed specifically for the school age childcare sector. If you would like to bulk buy courses for your staff, please get in touch.

<https://soscnclearn.online>



Pen Pal from Wales: Discover the Fun at Little Disciples!

Hello friends from around the world!

We are a group of children from Little Disciples Out of School Club living in a beautiful part of the world called Wales. Have you ever heard of it? Wales is a land full of green hills, ancient castles, and friendly people. But today, we want to tell you about something even more exciting—our amazing out of school clubs! These clubs are where the fun never stops, and the adventures are endless.

Imagine this: school is over, and instead of going straight home, you get to jump into a world of laughter, games, and creativity. That's what happens at Little Disciples. The moment the final bell rings, we can't wait to get there. It's like stepping into a magical world where you can be anything you want and do anything you imagine.

One of our favourite things at club is the craft corner. Here, we get to make the coolest things. Last week, we made dragons out of cardboard and painted them in bright colours. Mine was a bright red dragon named "Dewi," after the patron saint of Wales, Saint David. We also do painting, drawing, and even clay modelling. It's like having our own mini art studio!

When the weather is nice (which it often is, despite what people say about Welsh rain), we head outside. We have a huge playground with loads of loose parts, outdoor equipment, tunnels and climbing equipment, that's not all! Sometimes, we go on little nature walks around the area and visit local farms. We collect leaves, spot birds, make bug-hotels, and even have mini treasure hunts in our forest school area.

Inside, the fun continues with loads of games. We play everything from board games like Monopoly and Scrabble to video games on our club's iPads and Nintendo switch! We need to remember to keep safe on these devices and tell a trusted adult if anything worries us. Our friends and I have the best time challenging each other in Mario Kart tournaments. And if you love puzzles, we have those too—big, challenging ones that we all work on together.

We also have an indoor loose parts treasure chest and den making kits which are full of materials! We love to use our imagination when creating dens and sometimes we sometimes dress up in the material too!

After all the running around, we sometimes need a little quiet time. That's when we gather in our wellbeing area to chill and talk to our friends. Our playworkers read us the most amazing tales from Welsh legends to funny modern stories. It's the perfect way to unwind and let our imaginations soar.

But the best part of the club is the friends you make. We laugh together, play together, and sometimes even argue, but it's all part of the fun. Our playworkers are like our big buddies—they join in our games, help us with crafts, and are always there to make sure everyone is having a good time.

So, if you ever get the chance to come to Wales, make sure to check out our clubs. They're not just places to stay after school—they're places where every day is an adventure, and every moment is filled with joy. I hope one day, you get to experience the fun just like we do!

Gân (from) Little Disciples Out of School Club & Holiday Club (Your new friends from Wales)

GET YOUR FREE CUSTOMISABLE POSTER TEMPLATE

SAVE ON YOUR CHILDCARE COSTS THIS

SUMMER!



UPTO
85%

OF COSTS COVERED IF

YOU ACCESS
UNIVERSAL CREDIT

MEANING HOLIDAY CLUB
COULD COST JUST

£4.50

PER SESSION
INSTEAD OF £30

OR

20%

OF COSTS COVERED IF

YOU EARN LESS THAN
£100K PER YEAR,
THROUGH TAX-FREE
CHILDCARE

MEANING HOLIDAY CLUB
COULD COST JUST

£24

PER SESSION
INSTEAD OF £30

SAVE ON YOUR CHILDCARE COSTS!



UPTO
85%

OF COSTS COVERED IF

YOU ACCESS
UNIVERSAL CREDIT

MEANING
AFTER-SCHOOL COULD
COST JUST

£2.28

PER SESSION
INSTEAD OF £15.20

OR

20%

OF COSTS COVERED IF

YOU EARN LESS THAN
£100K PER YEAR,
THROUGH TAX-FREE
CHILDCARE

MEANING
AFTER-SCHOOL COULD
COST JUST

£12.16

PER SESSION
INSTEAD OF £15.20

SCAN THE QR CODES TO
CHECK ELIGIBILITY



UNIVERSAL
CREDIT



TAX-FREE
CHILDCARE

SOSCN

Scottish Out of School Care Network
Supporting children's rights to play, care and learning

SOSCN is a charity registered in Scotland, No. SC020520

ES TO
ITY



TAX-FREE
CHILDCARE

SOSCN

Scottish Out of School Care Network
Supporting children's rights to play, care and learning

SOSCN is a charity registered in Scotland, No. SC020520

We've created a free Childcare Costs poster template for services to share with their parents to highlight the potential savings they can make on childcare fees, through universal credit and tax-free childcare.

You can customise the posters to show what the costs for your service could be.

Download for free at the SOSCN shop, with a follow along tutorial video to help you edit the poster with your fees and logo.

www.soscn.org/shop

Care Inspectorate Updates

As we head into the summer, the Care Inspectorate is highlighting the latest new resources to help all staff and children make the most of the summer fun.

Many children will spend longer periods of time in their school-aged childcare setting over the summer holidays. When children have a strong connection to their care environment and the people in it, exposure to new experiences builds self-esteem and wellbeing. Children's involvement in the design of their summer holiday routines and activities strengthens how we meaningfully listen to and act upon the voice of the child.



Space to grow and thrive

Space to grow and thrive aims to provide a comprehensive and up-to-date framework for planning, designing and delivering high-quality ELC and SACC settings that support children's wellbeing, learning and development.

This resource builds on the previous Space to grow resource and incorporates the lessons learned from the expansion programme along with the pandemic and feedback from the sector.

Me, my family and my childcare setting

Me, my family and my childcare setting emphasises the critical importance of meaningful relationships and strong connections beginning with families accessing their childcare setting.

This practice note shares examples and insights from ELC and SACC staff, that outline their own experience of supporting a family-centred culture within their childcare settings. We promote relevant childcare research and policy as a powerful tool for fostering a positive, family-centred culture.

This was produced alongside Connecting with your childcare setting – a guide for families.

Both resources are designed to highlight the importance of families being physically present in their child's setting as part of their daily experiences.

Keeping children safe: Look, Think, Act

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that children are safe, secure and protected from harm. Our notifications and scrutiny work has highlighted that children's safety is at greater risk when outings, transitions and children's natural curiosity and exploration are not fully understood and supported by staff. To support staff to keep children safe, we have developed a range of practice notes.

And remember Simoa the elephant from our Look, Think, Act campaign helps to keep children safe by raising awareness of how, and why, they could leave a childcare setting without a responsible adult.





Activities Ideas

SOSCN has two great resources for activities ideas that you could do in your service over the summer.

Summer Activities Booklet

The first, that we published recently, has a variety of resources and activities for fun holiday experiences. All the examples are 'tried and tested' as they have been suggested by school age childcare services across Scotland. In the booklet you will find tips for programming, and how to make the most of your staff, ideas for accessing support from local supermarkets, and lots of activities ideas that you can do in your service and on outings in your area. Download a copy of this here:

<https://soscn.org/downloads/news/soscn-summer-2024-activity-ideas.pdf>

Get Ready for Summer Event

This booklet was made for an event we held last year. Contained within this booklet you will find some step-by-step instructions to create your own summer games event within your service. There are 5 games ideas, each with their own creative ideas for what you can make in preparation for the game. It is important to make sure all children are being challenged during the activities, to this end, each game also has a section for how to challenge every child by adapting each game to best suit each child who is taking part. Staff can adapt activities by watching the children in the first few minutes of the games and make then decisions about what needs can be done to make things trickier or more manageable. Download a copy of this here:

<https://soscn.org/downloads/news/get-ready-for-summer-booklet.pdf>

Thank you for reading.
Please get in touch
if you have any
comments or would
like to find out more
about anything in this
newsletter.



Scottish Out of School Care Network © 2024

SOSCN takes no responsibility for the content of external websites

Company No. SC200662.

SOSCN is a charity registered in Scotland, No. SC020520

SOSCN is a Living Wage employer

soscn.org

info@soscn.org

We acknowledge the support of the Scottish Government through a
CYPFEIF and ALEC Fund Grant, and CSRS Fund.

