

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) - Shared Inspection Framework Sector Update 7 May 2019

The Scottish Government published Education Governance: Next Steps - Empowering Our Teachers, Parents and Communities to Deliver Excellence and Equity for Our Children on 14 June 2017. This outlined a range of reforms designed to help achieve a shared national vision for children and young people: excellence and equity. The report committed the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland to further enhance their single shared inspection model for ELC and ensure that an institution will only be subject to a single inspection per cycle. Colleagues from both organisations have a strong track record of working effectively together to inspect services and support improvement for our youngest children which provided a strong foundation in taking this work forward.

Both organisations are committed to ensuring our approaches to inspection promote improvement across the sector. We set out to develop a shared inspection framework for the ELC sector, including childminders and out of school care settings. We established a “Shared Inspection Framework Collaborate Working Group”, with membership from staff from the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland and an “External Reference Group” with key stakeholders from the ELC sector to provide advice and guidance on the development of shared inspection framework and revised shared inspection methodology.

Work to develop the shared framework progressed well, but in November 2018 the work was paused due to other operational commitments and to take account of the significant changes taking place within early learning and childcare. We want to ensure that a framework supports the sector to continuously improve as well as meeting the necessary scrutiny requirements of both organisations. We are now in the position to re-establish the Collaborative Working Group and expand the membership of the group to include stakeholders from the sector. By expanding the membership of the group stakeholders will be involved in all aspects of the development of the framework. We want to set out clearly what settings can expect when experiencing an inspection by Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland jointly or individually.

In the meantime both organisations will continue to work closely to carry out our inspection activity in ELC, including through the programme of shared inspections of settings providing funded ELC. The Care Inspectorate will also deliver its programme of inspections, including the inspection of all childminding settings and all ELC settings whether or not they are providing funded ELC.

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