



Education and Learning
Improving Lives Together
Ambition | Compassion | Integrity



NEWSLETTER

ELC Newsletter, Issue 40, April 2025

Contents

[Celebrating the launch of Scotland's Play Vision Statement and Action Plan 2025-2030](#)

[Setting the Table...don't forget](#)

[Strong Start Funding Criteria](#)

[Employment Law Updates](#)

[Increase to National Minimum Wage](#)

[National Insurance Employer Contribution Increase From April 2025](#)

[The PVG scheme is now a legal requirement in Scotland](#)

[Stay, Play and Connect](#)

[Babies Cry, I can cope \(resources\)](#)

[Play on Pedals Spring has sprung and it's time to get pedalling](#)

[Communication Champions - Giraffes Can't Dance](#)

[Consultations](#)

[Early Learning and Childcare \(ELC\) Parent Survey](#)

[Care Inspectorate Updates](#)

[Child and Adult Protection](#)

[Updated provider guidance on records services must keep and notifications](#)

[SSSC](#)

[Children and Young People \(CYP\) Continuous Professional Learning \(CPL\) portal](#)

[Helping you to link the SSSC Codes, UNCRC rights and Keeping the Promise](#)

Parenting & Family

Fear-Less Triple P

Easter Holiday 2025 Family sessions

Incredible Years

Training

Connecting with Parents - places available

Evening & Weekend First Aid courses

Solihull Approach Refresher Course

Solihull Approach in Application

Celebrating the launch of Scotland's Play Vision Statement and Action Plan 2025-2030



Play Scotland are delighted to celebrate the launch of Scotland's Play Vision Statement and Action Plan 2025-2030.

First Minister, John Swinney and Deputy First Minister, Kate Forbes launched Scotland's Play Vision Statement and Action Plan and announced a £25m playpark investment from Woodhead Park in Kirkintilloch Kirkintilloch, Monday 24 March 2025.

Marguerite Hunter Blair, Chief Executive of Play Scotland, said: "We are delighted to be celebrating this clear commitment from the Scottish Government to play opportunities and experiences for all our children and young people.

"It is fantastic that children's rights and voices are at the heart of this new vision for play alongside an enthusiastic cross-sectoral collaboration.

"The clear message coming from the versions of the plan that children have co-produced is simple – more play and better play is good for

everyone.”

Play Scotland CEO, Marguerite Hunter Blair OBE, Chaired the External Play Strategy refresh group which helped shape the Vision Statement and Action Plan. The Play Scotland team worked closely with the Scottish Government to consult with children and young people across Scotland to co-create the children’s version of the vision statement and action plan.

[Read more](#)

[back to top](#)

Setting the Table...don't forget



Updated [Setting the Table](#) Guidance published by the Scottish Government comes into effect from August 2025.

All ELC settings are required to comply with the guidance when children aged 0-5 years old access meals and snacks during their sessions (whether funded or not). Any changes required within your own setting’s context should be fully implemented by August 2025 to support full compliance.

The PKC [Food and Nutrition Padlet](#) provides a range of resources to support meal and snack provision in your setting and includes an overview of the changes within the document labelled “PKC Setting the Table Updates – March 2025” which can be found in the first column.

[back to top](#)

Strong Start Funding Criteria

As of 1 April 2025, the eligibility criteria for Strong Start places was updated. Strong Start places are 1140 hours of funded ELC for children aged two years old.

The main changes are:

- Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credits can no longer be accepted as evidence of eligibility. This is due to the fact that as of April 5, 2025, these have now ended and will no longer be offered as a benefit throughout the UK ([Tax credits ended on 5 April 2025 - GOV.UK](#)).
- For parents and carers applying due to receipt of Universal Credit, monthly household take-home pay must be £850 or less (previously the criteria was £796 or less).

You can find more information on the updates at [Funded early learning and childcare for 2 year olds - mygov.scot](#).

Please ensure that any families that your setting supports who may be eligible for a Strong Start place in the future are aware of the changes. Any Strong Start places already accessed by children, or where a formal offer for 2025/26 has already been made, are not affected by these changes.

[back to top](#)

Employment Law Updates

The Government has increased the statutory rates for the following types of leave:

- maternity pay - www.gov.uk/employers-maternity-pay-leave
- paternity pay - www.gov.uk/employers-paternity-pay-leave
- adoption pay - www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave
- shared parental pay - www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay
- parental bereavement pay - www.gov.uk/parental-bereavement-pay-leave

The weekly statutory rate for these payments has risen from **£184.03** to **£187.18** per week. This change ensures that employees taking time off for family-related reasons receive additional financial support.

In addition, the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL) has increased from **£123** to **£125** per week. This is the minimum weekly earnings required for employees to qualify for these statutory payments

Increase to National Minimum Wage

The new rates for the National Minimum Wage (NMW), including the National Living Wage (NLW), which apply from 1 April 2025 are as follows

	NMW Rate	Increase (£)	Percentage increase
National Living Wage (21 and over)	£12.21	£0.77	6.7
18-20 Year Old Rate	£10.00	£1.40	16.3
16-17 Year Old Rate	£7.55	£1.15	18.0
Apprentice Rate	£7.55	£1.15	18.0

[back to top](#)

National Insurance Employer Contribution Increase From April 2025

From 6th April 2025 there will be an increase in the amount employers must contribute towards National Insurance, this raise may cost businesses more but it does not affect employees, i.e. individuals will not have to pay more.

About National Insurance Contributions – Employee and Employer

There are two types of National Insurance Contributions- one which is paid by an employee and one which is paid by the employer. The first is Primary (Employee) Class 1 National Insurance which is taken directly from an employee's salary (through PAYE), and the 2nd is Secondary (Employer) Class 1 National Insurance which is an additional contribution paid by the employer.

For both categories, there is a minimum amount that someone must earn before these contributions are paid. For Primary Class 1 NI Contributions, an employee only starts paying once they are earning £12,570 per year (£417 per month/£272 per week) at a rate of 8%, and this is deducted from gross salary. This stays the same from 6th April 2025.

The minimum amount at which an employer begins to pay National Insurance contributions is considerably lower than that of the

employee; the contribution percentage is higher, and it is an extra cost to the employer, over-and-above the employee's salary.

From the 6th April 2025 both the minimum salary limit and % changed for Secondary (EMPLOYER) National Insurance contributions.

The Secondary (Employer) Class 1 National Insurance contributions rose to 15% from 13.5% (an increase of 1.5%), and the minimum starting salary for paying the NI contributions dropped to £5,000 from £9,000. This means that employers will potentially have to pay for employees who were previously exempt, and at the same time, pay a higher NI contribution rate, so wage bills could increase.

But, don't panic- despite initial suggestions, a business' wage bill might actually go down. How is this possible?

Alongside the aforementioned changes there are also changes to the Employment Allowance, which rose from £5,000 to £10,100 per year (an increase of £5,100) and is used to offset NI payments for the employer. The Employment Allowance is basically a sum which is deducted from the employer's NI contribution bill. So, if an employer's total annual NI contribution bill is less than £10,100, they won't have to pay any NI contributions.

The Employment Allowance will now be open to all businesses which pay NI employer contributions; before it was only available to businesses which paid up to £100,000 in annual NI contributions. Please note that the £10,100 is an allowance- businesses do not get this sum of money from HMRC- it is an amount deducted from the first £10,100 of the annual NI bill. For some large businesses this will be used up in the first month, for others it will cover the cost of the whole year, or part of it.

[back to top](#)

The PVG scheme is now a legal requirement in Scotland

From 1 April 2025, membership of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme became a legal requirement in Scotland. Any individual who is to carry out a regulated role (paid or voluntary) with children, protected adults or both, must be a member of the PVG scheme, prior to carrying out that role.

Through continuous monitoring by Disclosure Scotland, membership of the PVG scheme provides confidence to organisations and the public that a person continues to be suitable to carry out a regulated role.

Gerard Hart, Chief Executive of Disclosure Scotland said: “Disclosure Scotland’s number one priority is the protection of vulnerable groups in Scotland and today marks an important milestone in that role, with more to come as we implement the remaining elements of the new law in the months ahead.”

The Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 aims to protect the public, while balancing the need for people to move on from offending and simplify the process for disclosing criminal history information.

In addition to this change to the PVG scheme, the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 introduces:

- more control over disclosure information for applicants
- simplified disclosure products, making it easier to understand and use our services
- regulated roles to define whether PVG scheme membership is required

More information For more information on the PVG scheme and to find out if the new legal requirement applies to you or those in your organisation, visit Disclosure Scotland’s website:

www.disclosure.gov.scot/

An online checker to see if a role needs PVG scheme membership can also be found here: www.mygov.scot/check-role-needs-pvg

[back to top](#)

Stay, Play & Connect Sessions

Stay, Play & Connect Sessions

**For pre school children who are,
or might be, autistic.**

**These sessions are free of charge and
will start back on**

Tuesday 29th April 2025.

The sessions will run every

Tuesday until 24th June 2025.

10:00-11:30am

At Perth Autism Support - Activities Room

**No need to book - just come along into main
reception and staff will be there to greet you!**

For more info please contact:

 **families@perthautismsupport.org.uk**



Perth Autism Support offer Stay, Play and Connect sessions every week. If you would like someone from their team to come along to any of your family events to promote their group and meet your families, please get in touch directly - families@perthautismsupport.org.uk

back to top

Babies Cry, I can cope (resources)

BABIES CRY! Infant crying is normal and it will stop. A baby's cry can be upsetting and frustrating. It is designed to get your attention and you may be worried that something is wrong with your baby. Below are some new national resources to share with families.

Infant crying and how to cope



ICON
Babies Cry, You Can Cope!

click on image to download leaflet

Infant crying and how to cope

Babies born prematurely



ICON
Babies Cry, You Can Cope!

click on image to download leaflet

ICON



How to manage when
a baby cries

click on image to download leaflet



How to manage when
a baby cries

Babies born prematurely

back to top

Play on Pedals Spring has sprung and it's time to get pedalling



Spring is a fantastic time for a trained practitioner to run Play on Pedals. The aim is that children in ELC will have had the opportunity to participate in the programme prior to starting school.

Why and What is Play on Pedals?

Play on Pedals is a programme which supports and develops the cycling skills of children in Early Learning and Childcare Settings (ELC). Through a series of fun and imaginative learning experiences, children develop their balance and control skills, through learning to use balance and pedal bikes.

Play on Pedals links to the Curriculum for Excellence covering areas within early level such as Health and Wellbeing, Literacy, Maths, Technology and Science.

Trained Play on Pedals Instructors in ELC settings have highlighted positive progress in children's developmental milestones. Rattray said...

"We have increased the number of children who can ride balance and pedal bikes. This has had a positive impact on oral language development, listening, turn taking, sharing and problem-solving skills. It has helped children develop their spatial awareness, become responsible for their own safety and learn to check the bike is safe to ride."

All LA ELC settings have a fleet of bikes, which have recently been maintained. Almost all settings have a trained instructor.

How can Partner Providers get involved with Play on Pedals?

We already have several partner providers delivering Play on Pedals with some settings linking with their Early Years Support Teachers to make connections with LA ELC settings so our partners can access bikes and helmets at a school site to run their programme.

How do we get someone trained?

The next training session takes place on 20 **May 2025 - 9.15am - 4.15pm - Letham Primary School**. Details for booking onto the course can be found on [ECS Learning Hub - Curriculum and Pedagogy](#).

How do we involve parents?

In addition to settings running Play on Pedals, many Early Years Family Learning Practitioners also deliver programmes with their children and families. This is an excellent opportunity for ECPs and EYFLP to collaborate together to support their child's development.

If you would like any further information, please speak with your Early Years Support Teacher or Nursery Teacher in the first instance.



back to top

Communication Champions - Giraffes Can't Dance

Almost all ELC Local Authority and Funded Provider settings have at least one nominated Communication Champion to take on a leadership role for the development of communication and language in their setting. We would like to thank those who have engaged with this learning and attended or viewed sessions to hear inputs on different

aspects of language development and learn strategies to support children's literacy and communication skills.

At the beginning of the year Communication Champions came together to share their learning and attend a range of workshops. Since then, several ELC settings have submitted their improvement tasks evidencing the impact on children's language development in their setting.

To support the work of the setting, each setting receives their own "Giraffe's Can't Dance" story basket on completion of their task.

Inch View received their Giraffe Can't Dance Story Basket and have already put this to very good use in the setting.



[back to top](#)



Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Parent Survey

The survey is now open to take part and will be until the end of May.

We would be grateful if you could you send an email to all parents / carers of children who have not yet started school that you work with.

The email text can be found here: [ELC Parent research - Text to email parents](#)

This email explains the purpose of the survey, what parents need to do to take part, and a link to the survey itself. It also includes a link to our taking part page and our privacy notice.

About the survey

This survey is being carried out by the Scottish Centre for Social Research (ScotCen) on behalf of the Scottish Government. This survey is part of the ongoing evaluation of the expansion of funded early learning and childcare, from 600 hours to 1140 hours.

We are asking early learning and childcare providers (including childminders) in Scotland to share this survey with parents and carers who have **children aged 0-6** in attendance at their setting, and to encourage them to take part. As well as third sector and intermediaries who work with families of children of this age. The more parents that take part in the survey, the higher quality and more robust the findings will be.

The survey asks questions about parents' experience of using funded early learning and childcare, how well it works, and what, if any, improvements could be made. Parents will also be asked about their use of other types of paid for and informal unpaid childcare and some questions about themselves.

This is an online survey that will take a maximum of 20 minutes to complete.

Promoting the survey to parents / carers

In addition to sending out the email inviting parents / carers to take part in the survey we would be very grateful if you could also, do any of the following in the next 1-2 weeks to promote the survey (if these are possible):

- Advertise the survey in your newsletter or parents WhatsApp group – some text has been supplied here that you can use: [ELC Parent research - Newsletter and whatsapp text](#)
- Display an A4 poster in you setting – have provided a poster you can print out here: [ELC Parent research - Poster](#)

These additional communications will help to remind parents about the survey and encourage them to take part.

More information

You can view our taking part page here: <https://natcen.ac.uk/ELCparents>. This page details what parents need to do to take part and includes a list of answers to potential questions they may have.

You can view the privacy notice [here](#). This details what they do with the data that we collect from the survey.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact direct at **0800 652 0201** or email at ELCparents@scotcen.org.uk.

[back to top](#)



Child and Adult Protection

The Care Inspectorate recently published an [update](#) to advise that they will be strengthening their supporting protection role within the social care and social work sector.

The key change that all ELC settings should be aware of is that the “*allegation of abuse*” eform has been replaced with a new “*protection concern about a person using a service*” eform and asks for additional information regarding agencies involved in the context of the notification.

The change came into place from April 7th and can be accessed using normal procedures through the Care Inspectorate's [eForm portal](#). Further information on submission of an eform for protection concerns can be found on p.14 of [Notification guidance for early learning and childcare services March 25.pdf](#).

back to top

Updated provider guidance on records services must keep and notifications

Care Inspectorate have updated their provider guidance on records services must keep and notifications they must make. To reduce the amount of information overall and ensure it is clear and relevant to each sector, there are now three versions of the guidance:

- **early learning and childcare (including childminders) services**
- **children and young people services**
- **adult services.**

Please note the guidance contains information on the updated notification of a protection concern (previously allegation of abuse) which is not live until 7 April 2025.

Please see their website for more information on the change of notification and how they are **strengthening our protection procedures**.

The PKC Early Years Team will be in touch soon with setting with an update.

back to top



Children and Young People (CYP) Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) portal

Did you know that the SSSC have a dedicated portal for people working with children and young people to access free continuous professional learning (CPL) modules and earn MyLearning badges #openbadges?

The module on supporting parents to further engage in their children's development counts towards four of the seven core learning and reflective practice.

Access this course here:

<https://cpldirectory.elc.sssc.uk.com/modules/module-2-supporting-parents-to-further-engage-in-their-childs-development/>

back to top

Helping you to link the SSSC Codes, UNCRC rights and Keeping the Promise

SSSC have produced a new learning resource for people working with children and young people to support you to use the SSSC Codes of Practice, the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Promise in your practice.

Find out more

back to top

Changes to qualification conditions for SSSC registration

From June SSSC will introduce a three-year timescale for new registrants in the social care workforce to gain their qualification for registration.

This is part of their changes to registration, qualifications and skills they introduced in June 2024. However, they delayed its introduction for the social care workforce after listening to concerns from employers and stakeholders.

Deadline for applications and updates

SSSC will process any applications or updates (including those made through annual declarations), which result in a qualification condition on

a registration, before the change, if they receive them by **25 April 2025**. This relies on all the required information being provided.

If SSSC receive them before 25 April the existing qualification condition timescale will apply.

SSSC cannot guarantee processing any applications or updates received after 25 April 2025 before the three-year qualification condition timescale starts on 1 June 2025.

[Read more](#)

[back to top](#)



Fear-Less Triple P



Fear-Less Triple P

Fear-Less Triple P is a parenting programme for parents of children and young people aged 6-14 years old. The programme aims to help parents support their children with anxiety.

Fear-Less Triple P can help you

- Encourage your child's coping skills
- Help your child manage their anxiety
- Teach your child problem solving skills
- Become confident as a parent in responding to anxiety
- Take care of yourself as a parent

Upcoming Group Sessions

Online Group	Weekly every Wednesday 30 th April – 11 th June	10am – 12pm
Blairstown Community Campus	Weekly every Wednesday 30 th April – 11 th June	5.30pm – 7.30pm
Perth Grammar School	Weekly every Thursday 8 th May – 19 th June	5.30pm – 7.30pm

For more information, please email parenting@pkc.gov.uk



Education and Learning
Improving Lives Together
Ambition | Compassion | Integrity



Read more on the programme on the [PKC website](#).

[Book your place now](#)

[back to top](#)

Easter Holiday 2025 Family sessions

During the two-week holiday period the Parenting and Family learning team, Childcare strategy Team & Early Years Family Learning practitioners ran a mix of outdoor and indoor sessions. 28 sessions throughout Perth and Kinross were on offer for families to enjoy a mix of sports and craft activities, these sessions allowed us to offer support to 140 families, 259 children and provide 299 packed lunches.

100% of families who completed evaluations stated that they had enjoyed attending the sessions with 90% sharing it had really helped them to connect with other families and build relationships while having fun. 98% share that the packed lunches available provided a benefit to their family. These sessions allowed families to spend time together connecting and trying activities that they may not always want to do at home, it reduced the time that may have been spent on devices and helped reduce the financial cost of having to pay for activities. 95% of the parents stated that attending these activities builds their confidence to attend other groups or sessions in the future.

[back to top](#)

Incredible Years

Just a reminder that the closing date for the August Incredible Years Groups will be the **13th June 2025**.

As always, we will have a mix of Perth and rural groups. Rural groups on offer will include Methven, Newhill, Kinross & Longforgan, Comrie & Crieff. The available groups will include:

- Incredible Years Babies Programme
- Incredible Years Toddlers 1-2
- Basic Incredible Years 3-6
- School Age Incredible Years 7-12
- Autism specific Incredible years 2-6

For more information on the programme please see our website [Parenting and family learning - Perth & Kinross Council](#) or contact the team directly parenting@pkc.gov.uk. Any applications can be made by a professional or directly from the family .

[back to top](#)



Connecting with Parents - places available

Target Audience: All staff supporting children, young people and their families.

Connecting with Parents Motivation is a strength-based communication skills training system. It is designed to enhance the abilities of the early years and the wider children and families workforce, so that they can have more of the kinds of conversations with parents that facilitate uptake of support.

Date, Time and Venue: 6 May 2025 - 9.30am - 4.30pm - Perth Grammar School

Aims and Outcomes: Develop empathy for parents of young children with behaviour problems. Help engage parents with support to deal with challenges with their children's health & wellbeing or behaviour. Refresh communication skills and understand ambivalence.

Practitioners will have increased confidence to support parents to access services.

Practitioners will be confident to use Open ended questions, Affirmations, Reflection and Summaries when responding to change talk.

[Book now](#)

Evening & Weekend First Aid courses

Please note new dates have been added for Saturday First Aid courses

7th June

4th October

21st February (2026)

The evening course

10th/11th June

Please use these links to book:

[First Aid – Evening Courses](#)

[First Aid - Saturday Courses](#)

Solihull Approach Refresher Course (3 Hours)

This 3-hour refresher course provides an essential recap of the Solihull Approach, reinforcing key principles and their practical application in supporting emotional well-being and relationships within educational settings. Designed for those who have previously completed Solihull training, this session revisits core concepts such as containment, reciprocity, and behaviour management, helping participants refresh their understanding and refine their practice. Through interactive discussions and real-world examples, attendees will leave feeling more confident in applying the approach effectively in their work with children, young people, and families.

Dates:

30/06/2025 – 9.30 – 12.30 - Perth Grammar School

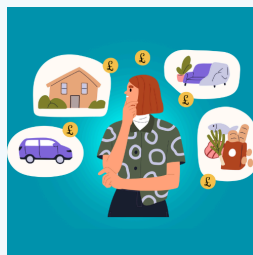
30/06/2025 – 13.30 – 16.30 – Perth Grammar School

[Book now](#)

Solihull Approach in Application

This 1.5 hour interactive session is designed for professionals who have completed Solihull Approach training and want to deepen their understanding and application in real-world settings. Solihull Approach in Practice provides a space to revisit key concepts such as containment, reciprocity, and behaviour as communication, while also encouraging shared reflection and discussion. Participants will have the opportunity to explore challenges, celebrate successes, and refine their approach through peer learning. Whether you work in education, healthcare, or social care, this session will help strengthen your confidence in embedding Solihull principles into everyday practice.

Session dates coming soon!



Struggling with the cost of living?

You received this email because you have subscribed to email updates from Perth and Kinross Council.

[Update your preferences or unsubscribe here](#)



Comhairle Pheairt
is Cheann Rois



Perth and Kinross Council

2 High Street, PH1 5PH, Perth