

Promoting health and wellbeing in 0-5 years settings: a guide

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This guidance is available at
www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/childrenservices/healthyliving/
Please check here for the latest version

AIM

The aim of '**Promoting health and wellbeing in 0-5 years settings: a guide**' is to provide information and advice to help you to ensure that your early years provision contributes to the health and wellbeing of children and families. It was first produced in 2005 by NHS Highland and Highland Council's Childcare and Early Education Service, with advice from early years organisations and other partners.

This 2010 updated version includes new information, in particular an introduction to the Early Years Framework and *Getting it right for every child*, together with the latest guidance on other topics such as Pre-school Orthoptic Vision Screening and Food Safety.

'**Promoting health and wellbeing in 0-5 years settings: a guide**' supports Highland Council's Nursery Guidelines and Policies and Care and Learning Alliance guidance and complements the Your Choice to Healthy Living initiative that operates in all Highland schools.

WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

Anyone working in groups with young children from 0 to 5 years old and their families in Highland – toddler groups, playgroups, all-day nurseries, pre-school education providers, out of school care clubs, family support organisations, social work and public health services – should find useful information here. The guide draws together the main topics in one place and offers suggestions for further contacts or details.

WHY HAVE A GUIDE?

Scotland has among the highest rates of coronary heart disease, cancer, stroke and obesity/overweight among developed countries and the Highlands are no exception to this pattern. Getting a good start in the very early years enables healthy all-round development and lays the foundations for long-term wellbeing. Nationally, the early years are now recognised as a vital stage at which to influence positive outcomes for children, especially those who may be vulnerable for any reason.

The Government's health action plan, *Better Health, Better Care* (2007) states:

'By getting it right in the early years and supporting good healthy choices and behaviours amongst children and young people, we can set them on a trajectory where they can sustain good health throughout their lives.'

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

If you work in a registered provision with young children, you will already have a series of policies and guidance in place. What this guide does is to point you to areas you should know about or consider, highlight important aspects and suggest sources of advice.

The guide is arranged in numbered sections to cover the main topics, as listed on the **Contents** page and referred to in the **Index**. In many cases you will find that the guide refers you to a source where you can find more detailed information, such as a website, a document, an individual or an agency. We recommend you read **Sections 1 to 3** first, for an introduction to the context of health and wellbeing in the early years.

KEY GUIDANCE boxes summarise important points.

The loose-leaf format has been chosen so that when policies alter or new resources become available, updates can be inserted. The latest version of the guide will be found at www.forhighlandchildren.org > Your Choice >

As your first step, please complete the following page

'Our Key Contacts'

and place it in the front of your folder.

Many people have helped to compile the original guide and this updated version and their help is gratefully acknowledged. In particular, we would like to thank Care and Learning Alliance, Action for Children, NHS Highland and Highland Council staff for their contributions.

OUR KEY CONTACTS

If you need help with local telephone numbers, please contact:

Childcare & Early Education Service
For Health Centres: NHS Highland

tel. 01463 711176
tel. 01463 701318

Our Link Health Visitor/Public Health Nurse

Every pre-school education provider now has a named 'Link Health Visitor', who is part of the public health nursing team.

Link Health Visitor/ Public Health Nurse:

Name _____

Tel. No. _____

Our nearest Health Centre

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone number _____

Childcare and Family Resource Officer

Name _____

Telephone number _____

Local Social Work Services office

Telephone number _____

Emergency Social Work Services: Tel. 0845 769 7284

Aim and Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **Promoting health and wellbeing in 0-5 years settings: a guide**. We hope you will find that the contents help you in your work with young children and families and also benefit staff and volunteers.

It is widely acknowledged that the first few years of a child's life are crucial to their healthy development and will have a fundamental influence on their later wellbeing. Parents and other family members are children's prime carers and educators, but increasingly, early years practitioners play an important part in determining the quality of a child's environment and experiences.

The World Health Organisation's definition of health, 1948

'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.'

It is the first few years of a child's life, including the antenatal period, that start to lay the foundations for a person's long-term development. The period before formal school begins is also an opportunity for children and their families to adopt a positive attitude to their health and wellbeing.

Health-promoting early years providers ensure that children are safe, well-nourished, play and learn actively and create environments which build the social and emotional confidence of children, families and staff.

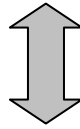
Early years practitioners play an increasing role in sharing the care of young children with their parents. A setting that develops health and wellbeing is a place where children (and adults) are valued – and as importantly, know that they are valued. Children who are encouraged to enjoy being themselves and to make healthy choices for themselves, stand a better chance of a positive future.

Policy Context

Below is a summary of the main policies and strategies most relevant to early years services. A glossary of terms is at the end of this Section.

Early years services: policy context:

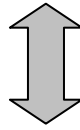
Children and Families in the Highlands



Local early years and family support services

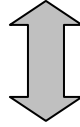


Early Years Framework: Highland action plan



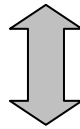
For Highland's Children 3

(our children's services plan 2009-12)



Local Outcome Agreement with Government

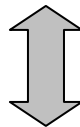
(Highland Community Planning Partnership)



Early Years Framework

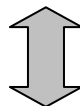
Getting it right for every child Birth to Three

Curriculum for Excellence Health for All Children



Better Health, Better Care Equally Well Achieving our Potential

Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland Healthy Eating, Active Living Plan



National Outcomes

All children are: successful learners, confident individuals,
effective contributors and responsible citizens

Highland structures

National policies & guidance

National Outcomes

The Government has 15 'national outcomes' to support its strategic objectives for Scotland. Most of these objectives contribute to improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities through a focus on the wider determinants of health such as socio-economic circumstances, employment, education, community safety, supportive communities and our environments. Particularly relevant are the outcomes:

- **That our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed**
- **That we live longer, healthier lives**
- **That we tackle the significant inequalities in society**

The vision is for all children to be: successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. To achieve these outcomes children need to be: **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included.**

Two key Scottish strategies will steer the way that services support children and families in future: The Early Years Framework and *getting it right for every child*, outlined below.

The Early Years Framework

This is Scotland's national ten-year action plan, for children from the antenatal stage up to 8 years old (*see also later in Introduction*). It aims to ensure that all children get a good start and has a particular focus on the 0-3s stage and around strengthening parenting capacity:

'It is during our very earliest years and even pre-birth that a large part of the pattern for our future adult life is set. The early years are therefore a key opportunity to shape a Scotland of the future which is smarter, healthier, safer and stronger, wealthier, fairer and greener.'

The Early Years Framework, Scottish Government/CoSLA, 2008

For more details about *The Early Years Framework*:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/Early-years-framework

Getting it right for every child

This is the Scottish programme to change how services operate so that the right children get the right help at the right time. The aim is to reduce bureaucracy and to speed up responses, so that children are supported as early as possible. The child and family should remain at the centre of any interventions, with services drawn in to help (rather than a child being 'referred on' to services). Using the *getting it right for every child* approach:

- Every child has a named person who is responsible for making sure that while the family is in touch with their service, the child has the right help in place to support his/her development and well-being. The Named Person for a child aged 0-5 years will usually be the child's own Family Health Visitor;
- When more than one agency is involved in an intervention, a Lead Professional is agreed. The Lead Professional will co-ordinate the Child's Plan, to which the agencies contribute.
- Agencies are using a common method of assessing a child's needs, based around using the 'My World Triangle' (*see end of Section*).
- More information is available at:
www.forhighlandchildren.org/html/girfec/girfec.php

Alongside these two key strategies is the universal child health programme '**Health for All Children:4 – Getting it right for Scotland's Children**' (sometimes known as 'Hall 4') which sets out recommendations on screening, surveillance and health promotion. This includes ensuring that every pre-school has a Link Health Visitor with whom to liaise (*see also Sections 2 & 3*). *Health for All Children 4* is 'based on the principle of universal access to NHS services, but recommends that the way in which those services are delivered must be tied much more closely to identified needs. In other words, universal access to NHS services does not necessarily have to mean uniform provision

of those services.’¹ A leaflet for professionals about the Child Health programme is available from the Childcare & Early Education Service.

Birth to Three: supporting our youngest children is the national guidance, produced by Learning and Teaching Scotland, which defines the key features of supportive approaches to 0-3 year olds. It emphasises the importance of early experiences, based around three themes: ‘Relationships’, ‘Responsive Care’ and ‘Respect’. *Birth to Three* is not a curriculum, but provides a set of values around which those working with 0-3 year olds can assess and develop their practice. More information is at:

www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears/about/birthtothree/guidance.asp

Other main national and local strategies relating to early years practice are:

National

- Better Health, Better Care (2007)
- Equally Well Implementation Plan (2008)
- Achieving our Potential (2008)
- Towards a mentally flourishing Scotland (2008)
- A Curriculum for Excellence
- Healthy Eating, Active Living: national action plan, 2009-2011

Highland

The Highland Community Planning Partnership has agreed 15 Local Outcomes with the Scottish Government to address that National Outcomes.

The outcome particularly relevant for early years services is:

‘The cycle of deprivation is broken through intervention in early years’.

For Highland’s Children 3 is our integrated children’s plan for 2009-2012.

It’s vision is that:

“All of Highland’s children have the best possible start in life; enjoy being young; and are supported to develop as confident, capable and resilient, to fully maximise their potential.”

¹ Health for All Children:4 Getting it right for Scotland’s Children, Scottish Executive, 2005

The Early Years Framework priorities are embedded as ‘Improvement Objectives’ in ***For Highland’s Children 3***. The table below sets out the theme, the number and the Improvement Objective. Specific actions are planned to address each of these objectives. The plan will be amended and updated to reflect progress: the latest version will be available at www.forhighlandschildren.org

<i>For Highlands’ Children 3: Early Years Improvement Objectives</i>		
<i>Theme and number</i>	<i>Objective</i>	
Nurtured 1	Develop an Implementation plan for the Early Years Framework and embed within the community planning processes.	
Nurtured 2	Develop a balanced range of accessible and adaptable family support, childcare & early years’ services.	
Healthy 15	Develop capacity within universal services and promote early intervention to ensure that children and families get the help they need, when they need it	
Achieving 8	Ensure a competent qualified staff group, promoting the development of an integrated workforce.	
Healthy 16	Review the provision of and ensure the development of a quality, comprehensive family information service.	
Active 3	Improve the accessibility & quality of children’s play	
Included 17	Build on and embed joint partnership working between the public, voluntary and private sectors across Highland.	

As well as the Early Years Framework priorities, there are also national health-based targets to which early years settings can contribute:

- 80% of all three to five year old children to be registered with an NHS dentist by 2010/11.

- Undertake child healthy weight intervention programmes with 5-15 year olds by 2010/11.
- Increase the proportion of new-born children exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks from 26.6% in 2006/07 to 33.3% in 2010/11.

The **Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007**

requires changes that place health at the heart of school learning and school life. The Act recognises that healthier children are happier and safer, they find learning easier and they carry good health habits into adult life. While this legislation does not apply directly to pre-school education settings, the Act is an important part of the Scottish Government's drive to create a healthier future for Scotland's people and to reduce health inequalities by focussing on children's wellbeing.

Underpinning all registered services are the **National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16.**

The Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care ('Care Commission') works to ensure these Standards are met. If your service is registered with the Care Commission, the Standards are a good basis for a health-promoting setting. For details, see their website: www.carecommission.com. From 2011 a new care scrutiny body will take on the existing responsibilities of the Care Commission, called Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS).

Creating and maintaining a 'health-promoting early years setting'

A health-promoting early years setting is one that:

- Has a positive ethos;
- Works closely with families and the wider community;
- Takes a rounded view of the emotional, physical and social needs of children and families;
- Takes steps to address those needs;
- Collaborates with others;
- Takes care of the staff and volunteers who work there.

Your policies should address basic health and safety issues as well as equal opportunities and child protection.

Last, but not least, is the way in which your setting influences the health and wellbeing of the adults involved – staff, volunteers and parents/carers. The **Healthy Working Lives (HWL) Awards Programme** builds on the earlier Scotland's Health at Work (SHAW) scheme. The programme encompasses a wide range of topics enabling organisations to select those most relevant to its workforce, including health promotion, occupational health and safety, health and the environment, mental health and well-being, community involvement and employability – see www.healthyworkinglives.com

If your group or centre is a member of the Care and Learning Alliance or managed by Highland Council, you will already have your policies in place. If you are unsure, please contact your umbrella organisation in the first instance. If you do not belong to any organisation or need further information, please contact the Childcare and Early Education Service, tel. 01463 711176.

Depending on the type of service you provide, the need for policies may vary. For example, a playgroup operating in a community hall will already abide by the No Smoking and Fire regulations for that building. As a guide, the key health-related policies and procedures you are likely to need are overleaf:

KEY POLICIES/PROCEDURES	<i>For more information see:</i>
Working with families	Section 2
Sharing Information	Introduction
Equal Opportunities	Section 2
Child Protection	Section 4
Health & Safety:	
No Smoking Policy	Section 4
Head Lice	Section 5
Nappy Changing	Section 5
Food Safety	Section 6
Risk Assessment/Injury Prevention	Section 7
First Aid	Section 7
Fire Procedures	Section 7
Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction)	Section 7
Food and Health	Section 10
Additional Support Needs	Section 13

Other policies or guidelines you are likely to have in place if you are registered include:

- Code of Conduct
- Recruitment
- Induction
- Complaints
- Whistle-blowing
- Confidentiality
- Admissions
- Consultation with Children
- Parental Involvement
- Transition
- Adverse Weather arrangements

Contact the Childcare & Early Education Service or Care and Learning Alliance if you require advice.

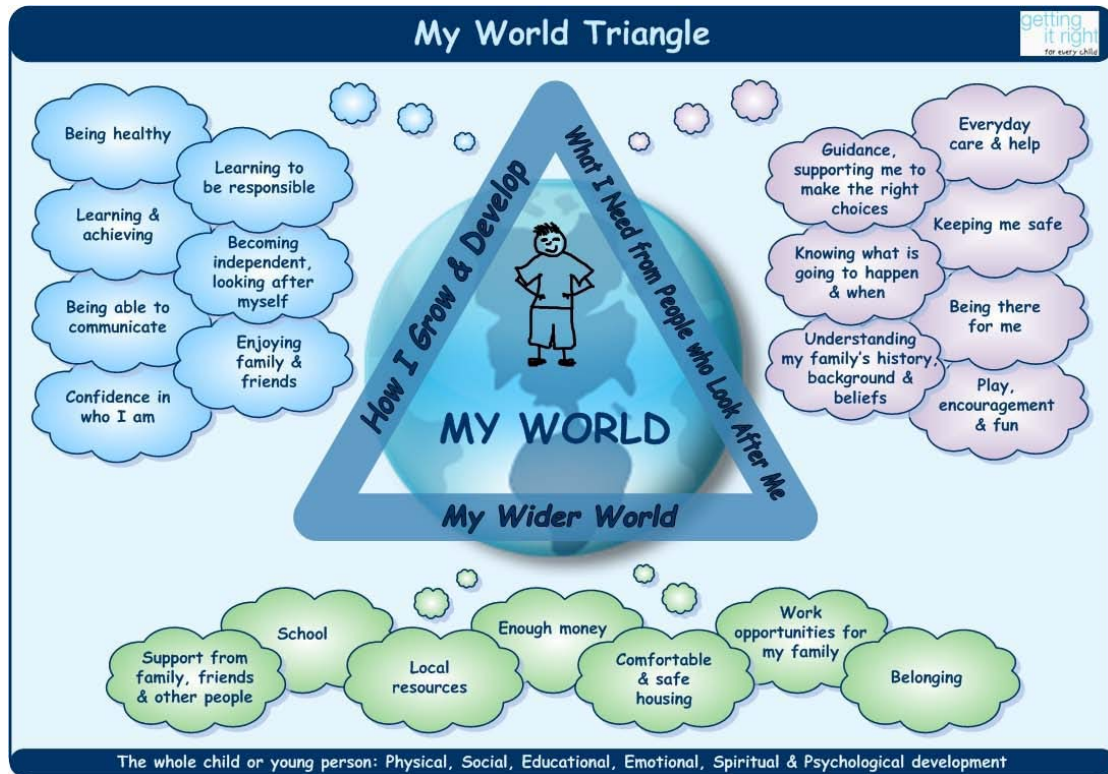
To be effective, all these strategies and guidance rely on agencies working closely together in an integrated way, so that children and families are at the centre of our efforts. Working directly with 0-5 year olds and their families is a vital piece of the jigsaw of services which support families. Early years services have an important role to play in contributing towards addressing our local and national priorities.

Integrated working often requires agencies to share information so that services can be put in place quickly to help children and families. The Highland Policy on Sharing Information has been updated to meet the national standard (*see later in this Section*).

Registered childcare and pre-school education providers are required to address children's needs for physical and emotional wellbeing to meet the Care Commission's National Standards and elements of the Curriculum for Excellence. All practitioners must register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) in order to practise in future *see also Training – Section 14..* A good understanding and knowledge about the developmental needs of children will help towards meeting the level of knowledge required for SSSC registration and to maintain accordance with the National Standards.

As a summary, BAECE (British Association for Early Childhood Education) has a very useful leaflet, Healthy Young Children – promoting the health and well-being of young children by Dr. Helen Zeally, see www.early-education.org.uk

Getting it right for every child assessment tool used to help identify the strengths and pressures in a child's life



OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN	
All children in Scotland should be:	
Confident Individuals; Effective Contributors; Successful Learners; Responsible Citizens	
Safe	Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.
Healthy	Having the highest attainable standards of physical & mental health, access to suitable health care & support to make healthy & safe choices.
Achieving	Being supported & guided in their learning & in the development of their skills; confidence & self esteem at home, at school & in the community.
Nurtured	Having a nurturing place to live, in a family setting with additional help if needed or, where this is not possible, in a suitable care setting.
Active	Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation & sport, which contribute to healthy growth & development at home and in the community.
Respected & responsible	Should be involved in decisions that affect them, should have their voices heard and should be encouraged to play an active and responsible role in their schools & communities.
Included	Having help to overcome social, educational, physical & economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live & learn.

Glossary of common terms used in early years services

NHS/ Public Health Nurses	
Public Health Nurse (PHN)	New name for Health Visitor and School Nurses
'Family Health Visitor'	Child's own Public Health Nurse
CHP	NHS Highland Community Health Partnership: North, Mid and South-East Highland areas
Hall 4	UK child health programme: sets out core contacts
Core, Additional, Intensive	Health Plan Indicators: indicate level of need
Schedule of Growing Skills	NHS Assessment process
Red Book	Personal Child Health Record
Childsmile	National oral health programme
Pre-school Education Practitioners	
Child at the Centre	Pre-school education self-evaluation framework
Child's Profile	Pre-school education assessment record
Curriculum for Excellence	Framework for learning for 3-18 year olds
Literacy, Numeracy, Health & Wellbeing outcomes and experiences	Highland priorities in Curriculum for Excellence
ASN	Additional Support Needs
SVQ3	Minimum qualification level for early years practitioners
10:1	Child: Staff ratio for pre-school education
HMIe	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education: regulatory body for education services
Care Commission	Regulatory body for registered childcare services (to 2011)

Glossary of common terms used in early years services - continued

Integrated working: agencies working together to support a child and family	
GIRFEC	<i>Getting it right for every child</i> : good practice in integrated working
SHANARRI	Acronym for Scottish Government vision that all children should be: S afe, H ealthy, A chieving, N urtured, A ctive, R espected, R esponsible, I ncluded
Named Person	From birth to school entry, this is their Family Health Visitor. The Named Person acts as the focal point for agencies in the first instance. On school entry, the Named Person will usually be the Head Teacher
Request for service	New term for 'making a referral' or 'referring on' = retaining child and family at centre of actions, not 'sending them' on through services
Lead Professional	Where a Child's Plan is required to co-ordinate multi-agency support, a Lead Professional is appointed to ensure Plan is carried out. This is usually the professional most involved with the child
CSW (EY)	Children's Service Worker (Early Years): Trained to SVQ3 level. Employed via Social Work and directed by them or Public Health Nurse to support a child's development
FSW	Family Support Worker: employed via Social Work and directed by them or Public Health Nurse to provide practical support to child and family
Highland DSP	Highland Data Sharing Partnership: comprises representation from Highland Council, NHS Highland, Northern Constabulary and Argyll & Bute Council. It produces procedures for practitioners and advises on protocols (working arrangements) for sharing data between agencies
Highland CPC	Highland Child Protection Committee: Produces inter-agency guidance on child protection procedures and arranges training

Sharing information to benefit children and families

Information that is shared effectively between professionals enables them to get a picture of a child's needs and how to address them, enables timeous action and avoids parents having to repeat details to different agencies. To comply with legislation, all staff must treat personal information carefully and respect confidentiality where appropriate. The welfare of the child is always the paramount consideration.

**If a child appears to be at risk of harm,
Child Protection Procedures must be followed.**

Parents in Highland are introduced to the benefits of integrated working in the Personal Child Health Record (the child's 'Red Book'). Pre-school education centres have been provided with a statement (below) on joint working and information-sharing, that can be included in parent information and displayed on noticeboards.

Statement for use by pre-school education centres

Getting it right for every child **Working together: Statement for parents**

All pre-school education centres work closely with NHS Highland and other agencies so that the resources and information we have will bring the most benefit to families. The aim is to ensure we have the right services for your child at the right time.

Early Education services and NHS Highland collaborate to plan services and offer interventions, such as the Childsmile Oral Health Programme and the Pre-school Vision Screening Programme. To assist the administration of these programmes, we confirm your child's name, date of birth and address to NHS Highland.

We have a Link Health Visitor, who visits the centre at least once a term. Their main role is to offer advice on children's health and development. They will also liaise with your own Family Health Visitor if necessary.

Our centre's Link Health Visitor is: _____

Tel. No. _____

If your child would benefit from help from other agencies, you will be asked for permission so that relevant information can be shared. This enables staff to get a rounded picture of your child and means you won't keep being asked for the same information by different people. If your child's immediate safety or welfare is at risk, information may legally be shared without your consent.

This statement is available in Gaelic and Polish and can be provided in other languages and formats, on request to the Childcare & Early Education Service .

(July 2010)

Sharing information

Professionals may often want to discuss informally a child's welfare or progress with colleagues in other organisations – indeed this is a function of integrated children's services. Only relevant information should be discussed and only with those that need to know. It is often helpful initially to discuss a concern without naming a child, to gauge what action, if any, might be appropriate. When a specific child's wellbeing is being discussed and actions planned, the parents/guardians should be involved and asked for their permission, unless there is a child protection concern.

'Key Guidance' is below. Detailed guidance on information-sharing titled *Data Sharing across the Highland Data Sharing Partnership: Procedures for Practitioners* is available at:

<http://www.forhighlandchildren.org/html/girfec/girfec-agencydocs.php>

If you have any queries about information-sharing, contact your line manager.

KEY GUIDANCE: *Sharing Information to benefit children*

1. Explain to the parent/guardian (*unless you do not intend to seek their permission) :

- what information you wish to share
- why this would help the child
- who you would share the information with
- if necessary, the possible consequences of not sharing information

2. Gain consent from the parent/guardian to share the information.

Note in the child's record that the parent has given consent, or with-held consent, for the information to be shared. *In certain circumstances it may be necessary to share information with others even if consent has not been given, in order to prevent harm or prevent or detect a crime.

3. Share appropriately

Share the relevant information carefully, only with those that need to know.

Sharing information

STRUCTURES AND RESOURCES

The network of services, agencies and staff can be confusing!

Below is a brief overview of the structures followed by details of contacts in Highland Council, NHS Highland of voluntary organisations.

Key structures relating to early years services

In the Highlands, the council, NHS and other agencies are committed to working closely together to try and help all children get off to a good start.

The **Joint Committee on Children and Young People** is responsible for taking decisions on how services are organised and oversees our children's services plan, *For Highland's Children 3* (see also *Introduction*)

Highland Child Protection Committee is responsible for reviewing cases and produces the inter-agency Child Protection Guidelines and other materials.

The **Early Years Strategy Group** brings together a wide range of agencies involved in services for 0-14 year olds and their families. It is responsible for developing the Highland response to The Early Years Framework, as part of *For Highland's Children 3*. An implementation group works on the actions.

A **Childcare and Family Resource Partnership** operates in each of the three Highland council areas, as a forum for all those involved in working with children 0-14 years and families.

Highland Childcare Information Service provides information on a wide range of childcare, family support and early education services through a website www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk, telephone line: 0845 6011345 or email childcareinformationservice@highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council

www.highland.gov.uk

tel. 01463 711176 for contacts

or use telephone number provided

Childcare & Early Education Service

The service is responsible for supporting services for 0-14 year olds outwith formal schooling. It is home to the Highland Childcare Information Service, the Resource Manager (Early Years) and Childcare & Family Resource team, the Early Education team, the Early Years Health Development Officer and Midwifery Development Officer.

Childcare & Family Resource Officers (CFRO) cover each administrative area of Highland (North, Mid and South-East), supporting the local Childcare & Family Resource Partnership and local services. Gaelic medium provision is also assisted by a specialist CFRO.

Quality Improvement Officer (Early Years) and Early Years Education Officer support pre-school education providers, working with **Nursery Co-ordinator Teachers**.

Social Work Services work with children and families experiencing difficulties. Specific areas of responsibility are: child protection, fostering and adoption and children who are looked after by the local authority. **Integrated Services Officers (ISOs)** supervise local teams of **Children's Service Workers (Early Years)** and **Family Support Workers (Early Years)**.

Pre-school Teaching Service for Children with Additional Support Needs is available across Highland through a team of teachers, who work with families where children are experiencing early problems. Children are referred through the Highland Council Education Service's Psychological Service.

Tel. Barbara Simons, 01478 613697

Environmental Health Officers (EHOs)

EHOs, based in each council area, register food providers and offer advice on a range of topics, including injury prevention and food hygiene.

tel. Highland Council HQ on 01463 702000 for your nearest EHO or see *Section 7 - Controlling Infection*.

Health Promoting Schools Development Team encourages schools to develop healthy approaches, assists them to work towards accreditation and supports School Nutrition Action Groups.

Contact: Health Promoting Schools Manager tel. 01463 702066

Active School Co-ordinators

These work with associated school groups and local communities to develop physical activity opportunities.

Contact: Area Sports Development Manager (North) tel. 01478 614063
(South) tel. 01463 663808

Library Services

Bookbug (formerly BookStart) is a national programme that gifts free books for young children, to encourage early enjoyment of listening and reading. Packs are distributed by Health Visitors, via libraries and pre-school education centres.

Contact: Library Support Unit tel. 01463 251256

Family Bookshelf

Each library now has a **Family Bookshelf** dedicated to resources on a wide range of topics, including child development and parenting.

For more information, contact: your local library

Adult Literacy

The Highland Council service offers information and awareness-raising sessions as well as direct support.

Adult Literacies Co-ordinator: tel. 01463 251276

NHS Highland www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk	tel. 01463 717123 for contacts
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NHS Highland comprises three Community Health Partnerships in the Highlands:

North Highland	Caithness and Sutherland
Mid Highland	Ross, Cromarty, Skye, Lochalsh and Lochaber
South East Highland	Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey

General Practitioners

All communities in the Highlands have access to GPs, based in local Health Centres.

Public Health Nurses (Health Visitors and School Nurses)

Public Health Nurses is the new name for Health Visitors, who work principally with children and families from 0-5, and School Nurses. They are the main source of community-based health advice and are able to work with groups as well as individuals. To contact your nearest Public Health Nursing Team, ask at your local health centre or:

NHS Women & Child Health Service tel. 01463 701318

Oral Health Promotion

An oral health team works with 0-5s services to implement Childsmile, the national programme to improve oral health. Contact:

North Highland CHP	tel. 01955 609945
Mid Highland CHP	tel. 01349 868779
SE Highland CHP	tel. 01463 706701

Therapists

Speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists are based around the Highlands and often work closely with consultants, families and early years services.

NHS Women & Child Health Service tel. 01463 701318

NHS Highland Health Promotion Department

This offers advice, support, and training on all aspects of Health Promotion.

Contact: NHS Highland Health Promotion Department, tel. 01463 717123

Health Information and Resources Service (HIRS)

This is part of the Health Promotion Department and provides leaflets and posters, games, teaching packages, DVDs and books on all aspects of Health Promotion. Anyone who registers with HIRS can access these materials, which can be sent out to you. An online catalogue and booking services is available.

Contact: tel. 01463 704647 or www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/HIRS

Health and Hygiene

The Health Protection Nurse Specialist provides up to date advice on a range of issues, including prevention of infection guidance, head lice, E.coli, meningitis.

Contact: NHS Highland, tel. 01463 704886

Parenting skills

Courses and sessions to help parents develop their skills are available at different times and places across the region. For information on what is available in your area, contact your local Public Health Nursing Team or Childcare & Family Resource Officer.

A Highland parenting support framework is being developed.

Child Protection

Highland Child Protection Committee

The committee comprises representatives from The Highland Council, Northern Constabulary, NHS Highland and the voluntary sector. It produces the Highland Inter-Agency Child Protection guidelines.

www.protectinghighlandschildren.org

Child Protection training is available through the Childcare & Early Education Staff Development Programme and Keeping Children Safe (*see below*).

Keeping Children Safe (KCS)

Keeping Children Safe provides training for independent and voluntary sector groups. The project works alongside statutory agencies in developing and delivering a range of training programs in Child Protection and Getting it Right for Every Child. Courses in all areas of Highland and can be viewed and booked in advance on the website

Training and Development Officer: tel. 01463 235285

Email: highlandkcs@aol.com

Website: www.kcs-highland.org.uk

Safe Strong and Free

The Safe Strong and Free Project (ssf) believes that every child has the right to grow up safe, strong & free and that preventing sexual assault and exploitation of children is the responsibility of the whole community. Ssf works with children in the year before they commence primary school, their parents and carers. Awareness raising information is distributed to parents initially, followed by a meeting so that parents can preview the children's programme and discuss the issues we raise. Three workshops are then presented to the children, which covers how to react to bullying; staying safe around strangers; and staying safe around adults that the child knows. The main methods used in the workshops are talking with the children, listening, problem solving and puppets.

Telephone/Fax: 01463 712669 or email: info@ssf-project.org.uk

Website: www.ssf-project.org.uk

Family support and childcare organisations

In addition to health, education and social work services departments, many voluntary organisations work in the Highlands to support families with children. Some operate in specific areas, others are Highland-wide. Families can often contact organisations directly, or may be offered their assistance via agencies such as Social Work Services or Health Visitors. Support groups for children with additional needs can be found via CHIP+ (see below).

Early years providers can contribute to this support network by:

- Being aware of resources available to help families and signposting
- Publicising contact information
- Building links with voluntary organisations

Contacts for main organisations are below – see also the ‘**Connections**’ website which is an umbrella group for some of these organisations:

www.connections-highland.org.uk

If you require more information, please contact your local Childcare & Family Resource Officer.

Care and Learning Alliance

Umbrella group for voluntary pre-school groups including playgroups, parent & toddler groups and out of school clubs. In addition CALA manages around 35 early years partner centres commissioned to provide pre-school education sessions for 3 & 4 year olds and 13 Out of School Clubs.

CALA office@careandlearningalliance.co.uk tel. 01463 703033

www.careandlearningalliance.co.uk

Direct Childcare

Direct Childcare provides professional crèche services through three mobile facilities, sitter services and playworkers throughout the Highlands. Services can be provided for training programmes, education courses, family support groups and all types of meetings and seminars. Staff are suitably trained and checked and sourced from the Care and Learning Alliance staff bank. Commercial crèches for weddings, conferences and events, hotel and holiday home babysitting and “plus1” helping hands for new and expectant mothers can be provided through the sister company ‘Smart Childcare.’

Direct Childcare info@directchildcare.co.uk tel. 01463 703036

www.directchildcare.co.uk

Home-Start

Operates in Ross & Cromarty and Caithness.

UK wide voluntary organisation, with local projects managed by committees.

Paid staff recruit, train and support volunteers, who befriend with families with children. Support includes home visits, groups, crèches and outings.

Ross & Cromarty homestartrandc@btconnect.com tel: 01349 883484

Caithness h-scaithness@btconnect.com tel: 01955 606222

Family First and Families in Focus supported by Care and Learning Alliance

Family First offers a support service in some areas to families with at least one child 0-3 years through a flexible home visiting service and facilitating parent groups. Families can apply for this service by contacting the local Co-ordinator or talking to their health visitor or other professional.

Family First (East Sutherland)

office@careandlearningalliance.co.uk tel: 01463 703033

Families in Focus (West Coast and Skye)

familiesinfocus@sky.com tel. 07979 600609

Action for Children (formerly NCH)

UK wide organisation which provides a range of support to families using paid, trained staff. Services include home visiting, group work, crèches, pre-school play sessions. Currently in Inverness (Smithton Family Project and Building Blocks playgroup in Merkinch), Alness and Lochaber.

Project Manager tel: 01463 794404

TAIC (*incorporating CNSA - Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Araich/Gaelic Pre-school Council*)

Umbrella organisation offering help, support and advice to all types of voluntary Gaelic medium pre-school groups, including commissioned partner centres providing pre-school education for 3 & 4 year olds, playgroups and parent and child groups (0-3 year olds) on pre-school, Gaelic issues and Gaelic Medium Education.

www.gaelicworld.co.uk tel. 01463 225469

Scottish Childminding Association

Umbrella group providing training, resources and support for prospective and registered childminders.

North Team Manager: Katie.Adam@childminding.org tel. 01463 715545

CHIP+ (Children in the Highlands Information Point)

Provides information about additional support to families, children and professionals.

info@chipplus.org.uk tel. 01463 711189

www.childreninthehighlands.com

Highland Children's Forum is a parent/carer led organisation that seeks to hear the voice of children in need and that of their parents/carers and to have that message influence the design and delivery of services.

Contact: Calum Munro calum.munrohcf@btconnect.com tel. 01463 223000
or Gillian Newman, gillian.newmanhcf@btconnect.com
www.highlandchildrensforum.org.uk

MP33, Inverness

Community project that includes sessions for teenage parents, based in Merkinch. tel.01463 717639 www.mp33.org.uk

HAPIS

Highland Ante/Postnatal Illness & Depression Support (HAPIS), is a voluntary group offering advice, information and a chance to link up with others.

www.hapis.org.uk and Helpline 0775 468 7423

Toy Libraries

Highland Mobile Toy Library runs Monday to Thursday 9 - 4 and covers a 50mile radius in Inverness-shire. Based at the Family Resource Centre, Limetree Avenue, Dalneigh, Inverness.

Email: hm.tl@live.com Mobile: 07592 018642
www.hmtl.co.uk

Lochaber Childcare & Family Resources Partnership Toy Library
Based at An Drochaid, Claggan Road, Claggan, Fort William, PH33 6PH.

Contact: Lorraine Wheelan tel. 01397 706044

Highland Society for Blind People tel. 01463 233663
www.highlandsocietyforblindpeople.co.uk/toylib.asp

Churches

Some churches run family support groups and out of school activities. For details, please contact your local churches.

One Parent Families Scotland

National organisation with helpline, useful publications and website.
www.opfs.org.uk tel. 0131 556 3899
Free Helpline 0808 801 0323 and www.loneparenthelpline.info

Highland One World Group

Provides resources and support to help children appreciate our fast-changing world and to encourage good communication and co-operative skills based on positive self-esteem and respect for others. A bank of resources can be loaned termly, including books, posters, photographs, instruments. Highland OWG also offers in-service workshops and library resources for childcare students. tel. 01349 863441 (Tuesdays) 01381 621265 (Other times)

www.globaldimensions.highlandschools.org.uk

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Family support may come from many sources, from family members and friends to community groups and agencies. It may be directed primarily at parents or at children but either way, the outcome is likely to affect the family as a whole.

Here, the term 'family support' refers to services that offer practical and/or emotional help through health and social work services, voluntary groups working with parents, toddler and playgroups, childcare and pre-school education groups. Many changes have taken place both nationally and locally in the past five years in approaches to family support – and more are planned. Early years services of all kinds are now recognised as important settings where families and practitioners can interact, to the benefit of children, parents and the wider community.

The Early Years Framework and *Getting it right for every child* will lead to closer working across agencies, so that all children and especially those who are vulnerable, get the best start possible. As yet, there may be some gaps in family support services in parts of the Highlands. However, much can be done within our existing structures to improve the flow of information and to create a stronger support net for families. For example, if you think a parent is struggling at home and would like help, do you know a local contact to offer them? Might a parent have literacy problems? Are there ways in which your service could encourage parents to gain confidence in their parenting skills?

Involving Families

The national guidance in Birth to Three, A Curriculum for Excellence and The Child at the Centre all emphasise the importance of professionals and volunteers working together with families and the need to ensure that this is at the foundation of any service. Early years practitioners will be experienced at engaging with parents and other family members. Overleaf is a selection of ideas, gathered from staff, on some practical ways of working with families. At the end of this Section is a checklist for you to consider of the main points that your Equal Opportunities Policy should cover.

INVOLVING FAMILIES: PRACTICAL IDEAS

- **Display photographs** of staff and/or volunteers, with names/titles.
- Wear **name badges** for staff and/or volunteers.
- Give a **statement of your aims** to parents/carers when they join you.
- **Involve parents/carers and children** in planning and undertaking evaluations of your service's activities.
- Provide **regular updates** to local parents/carers with information about your service's activities and other useful information eg. head lice control advice, planning the transition into pre-school and onto P1.
- Offer a **standing invitation** to parents/carers to discuss any concerns.
- Produce a handy **list of local numbers** for families to keep eg. GP, Public Health Nurse team, Chemist, Helplines, Family Support contacts, Childcare Information Service.
- Display **local information** of interest to parents/carers eg. local learning opportunities, Healthy Start outlets, library and sports centre events.
- **Arrange events** for parents/carers, such as presentations on specific topics e.g. child development, potty training, healthy eating, parenting, injury prevention. Inform the local Public Health Nurse team and where appropriate involve them in planning and/or delivering sessions.
- **Involve families in fund-raising, projects and social activities.**

Parenting skills

Parenting groups and courses operate at different times in different venues across the Highlands. A Highland Parenting Support Framework is being devised which will set out the services and information that should be available to families. For up to date information on local support, please contact your Public Health Nursing Team (Health Visitors) or Childcare & Family Resource Officer. The *play @ home* booklets (see also Sections 11 & 12) and associated baby massage sessions together with the Bookbug programme aim to encourage positive family communication from the start.

Early years groups are able to help families by:

- Sharing information and ideas with parents and carers
- Consulting parents/carers on what would help them
- Publicising and/or hosting local activities for parents and carers
- Building links with local family support services

Involving fathers and other male carers

Early years services are still predominantly staffed by women and usually connect primarily to mothers or female carers. Services should consider ways of encouraging the involvement of fathers and other male carers. In some situations it may be productive to target information or activities specifically at them. At the end of this section is a checklist produced by the Childhood and Families (CAF) Research and Development Centre at the University of Strathclyde that can help you review how you involve both dads and mums.

Children with additional support needs (see also Section 13)

The term 'additional support needs' is used to describe children who need extra support, for whatever reason. This may be due to family circumstances (temporary or long-standing), children at risk of exclusion due to race, culture or language, or to children affected by disability. It may include children from families who have a first language other than English. A range of staff play a role in working to reduce disadvantage by giving extra support, including pre-

school education staff, Social Work Services, Public Health Nurses (Health Visitors), specialist NHS staff and the voluntary sector.

The **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004** introduced duties on education authorities to benefit children, young people and parents – *see also Section 14*.

CHIP+ (Children in the Highlands Information Point) is a valuable source of information and contacts.

Highland Children's Forum actively seeks the views of children and young people with additional needs and represents these to policymakers.

Childcare services

Registered childcare services are listed in the **Highland Childcare Information Service** www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk

Some other family support services and organisations are also listed on the website: this section is to be developed from 2010 onwards.

KEY GUIDANCE: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Your service should ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, additional needs, rurality or ability.

All children (and adults involved in the service) should feel secure, included and valued. Aspects to consider include:

- Establishing respect and trust with all children and their parents or carers
- Modelling respectful behaviour to others through staff policies and practices
- Treating each child as an individual and providing equality of opportunity within your setting
- Encouraging self-confidence and a positive approach towards themselves and others
- Modifying activities, where necessary, or providing additional equipment or resources to ensure children are not excluded
- Promoting a respect for diversity
- Avoiding discriminatory practice or stereotypical images
- Including activities relating to a range of religious, ethnic and cultural traditions
- Engaging with parents' and children's ethnic, religious and cultural heritage and their home experiences
- Valuing the local community and environment as a source of learning opportunities

Supporting Families

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

All children are entitled to Government-funded pre-school education during the two years before they start primary school. Enrolment information available from the Childcare & Early Education Service explains how a child's birth date determines when they are eligible to begin pre-school education sessions. If your service provides pre-school education sessions, you will be familiar with the guidance *The Child at the Centre* and from August 2010, the 'early level' of the *Curriculum for Excellence*. Both documents include the promotion of children's health and wellbeing.

The information in this Guide is designed to complement the curriculum framework and should assist you in meeting the national Quality Indicators (see below). The following indicators are particularly relevant when trying to develop and sustain a health-promoting setting:

The Child at the Centre – Quality Indicators (from 2008)

- 2.1 Children's Experiences
- 2.2 The centre's success in involving parents, carers and families
- 5.5 Expectations and promoting achievement
- 5.6 Equality and fairness
- 5.7 Partnership with children and parents
- 5.8 Care, welfare and development
- 8.1 Partnership with the community, educational establishments, agencies and employers
- 8.3 Management and use of resources and space for learning
- 9.1 Vision, values and aims

The **Curriculum for Excellence** is the new national framework for a single curriculum for all young people aged 3-18 years. Through active learning, it aims to create:

- **Successful learners**
- **Confident individuals**
- **Responsible citizens**
- **Effective contributors**

The early level of Curriculum for Excellence spans pre-school and primary as it is designed to meet the needs of most children from 3 years until the end of Primary 1, promoting better continuity and progression of learning across the sectors. Many of the core messages of Curriculum for Excellence will already be familiar to early years practitioners, as they relate to the importance of:

- active, experiential learning
- a holistic approach to learning
- smooth transitions
- learning through play

Within the new curriculum, which is being introduced from 2010, three components are seen as being the responsibility of all educators:

◆ **Health and wellbeing** ◆ **Literacy** ◆ **Numeracy**

See www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears for more information.

Registered childcare providers or pre-school education centre will also be following the Care Commission's appropriate **National Care Standards**. For more help on any of the above, please contact the Early Education team (tel. 01463 711176) or the Care and Learning Alliance (tel. 01463 703033).

THE LINK HEALTH VISITOR

Every pre-school education centre has a named Public Health Nurse with whom they can liaise – their '**Link Health Visitor**' (see also *Aims and Introduction* and *Sharing Information*). This relationship forms an important part of an integrated approach, where services work closely together to benefit children and families and offer early support where difficulties arise. It should be noted that:

'...there is no assumption that nursery nurses or other pre-school practitioners are to become experts in child health and development. Rather, the proposal is to build on and use more effectively the work that these

*practitioners are already doing and to ensure that readily accessible advice is available for staff when they are concerned about a child.*²

Health for all Children, the child health programme sets the minimum that every child can expect from the Primary Care Team, which includes GPs and Public Health Nurse Teams – see below. Some contacts will be at home, GP surgeries and clinics or may be by telephone or letter.

Parents/carers may also contact their Public Health Nurse at any time. A leaflet for professionals about the Child Health Programme is available from the Childcare & Education Service.

Health for all children: core contacts for 0-5 year olds	
Soon after birth	Full physical health check including hearing test.
Within 10 days of birth	Blood spot test for particular illnesses and a general check to make sure there is no cause for concern.
6-8 weeks after birth	Full physical health and development check, including weight.
2 months, 3 months & 4 months	Weight check, immunisation and health promotion information around weaning and dental health.
12 months	Weight check and immunisation.
13 months	Immunisation.
2 years	Letter to parent detailing child's immunisation status and giving health promotion information and Public Health Nurse contact details.
Between 3 & 5 years	Weight check and immunisation.
Between 4 & 5 years	Eye sight test at pre-school education centre
4-6 years (school year P1)	Health check including height, weight, BMI and Dental check

² Health for All Children:4 Getting it right for Scotland's Children, p.37 Scottish Executive, 2005

The role of the Link Health Visitor is contact pre-school education centres at least once a term and to offer advice and support to practitioners. They may also offer health promotion information or arrange for NHS colleagues to do so. Where necessary they will also liaise with a child's Family Health Visitor.

Each centre and Link Health Visitor will develop their own relationship but as an example, the following work can be valuable:

- Sharing information about children due to start sessions
- Working together to support families experiencing difficulties, such as sleep, behaviour problems, toilet training or other issues
- Sharing the 'Needs Identified' information
- Sharing assessments of need and how to address this
- Working together to raise parents' awareness of hand hygiene and dealing with head lice
- Joint liaison with the primary school staff and school nurse about children due to enter P1

Requests for specialist help, such as speech and language therapy or educational psychological services, may be made directly by the pre-school education centre or by the Link Health Visitor, whichever is most relevant in the circumstances. Where appropriate, both should keep each other informed of such requests. A good practice guidance leaflet on integrated working between pre-schools and Link Health Visitors, based on Highland examples, was sent to all pre-school education centres in 2009. Copies are available from the Childcare and Early Education Service.

ORAL HEALTH and VISION SCREENING – see Section 9.

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS

Every school should be 'health promoting' in the widest sense, by developing a positive environment for children, staff and families. Pre-school education centres (school nurseries and partner centres) are part of this ethos.

The Schools (Health promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 is now in force. While the legislation does not apply to pre-school education centres, it is useful background information, particularly for school nurseries:

The overall aim of the Act is to make every school a **health promoting school**. A 'health promoting school' takes a positive approach to improving physical, social, mental and emotional wellbeing through every element of the curriculum and every aspect of school life, involving pupils, staff, parents and the wider community.

Food and health (*see also Section 10*)

Under the Act, the food and drink served in schools, as well as being tasty and appealing, must meet nutritional standards laid down by the Scottish Government. This applies not just to school lunches but to food served in breakfast clubs and after school clubs, and sold in tuckshops and from vending machines.

The health promoting school: culture, ethos and environment

In a health promoting school, staff recognise that all decisions taken by the school have an impact on health and wellbeing. Effective procedures for child protection are in place, and staff are encouraged to work with families and others to meet the health and wellbeing needs of the wider community. Opportunities for healthy eating, physical activity, play, socialising and privacy are made available beyond the normal school day and to the wider community.

School grounds and facilities are clean, safe and well maintained, which of course encourages pupils to use them. Cycle racks, secure lockers and changing areas are provided, to encourage active travel and other physical activity. Breakfast clubs and after school clubs give consistent messages about healthy eating and oral health – and as part of this, pupils are rewarded with alternatives to sweets and chocolate.

It is up to centres to decide how to put the changes into practice. The Act doesn't dictate – quite the opposite. It looks to encourage staff, parents and community groups to come together and contribute to policies and practice.

ECO SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

Pre-school education centres encourage children to care for their environment and to learn about the wider world. The Eco Schools programme can help children to understand how they can play a part in improving and sustaining their environment.

The programme is a national initiative to encourage all schools and partner centres to promote actions for improvement through a staged award scheme. It also helps us all to understand environmental and sustainable issues through a range of relevant activities.

How can Eco-Schools Help You?

The programme can help centres to:

- Improve the local environment
- Reduce litter and waste
- Devise efficient ways of travelling to and from nursery
- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Encourage active citizenship
- Build strong partnerships with a variety of community groups
- Develop international and global links

Eco-Schools in Highland

In April 2010 all schools were registered with the programme and need to achieve bronze, silver or Green Flag status by 2011. One playgroup has already achieved bronze status. Both bronze and silver awards are self-assessed and you may well find that you already meet most of the criteria for bronze status!

All partner pre-schools are encouraged to register and there is a very user-friendly website which provides information, advice and support including some case studies.

More information is available from: www.ecoschoolsscotland.org and the Early Education team.

SECTION 4

CHILD PROTECTION

Everyone has a duty to ensure children are safe from harm and to act if they are concerned about a child's safety or long-term wellbeing. All statutory, voluntary and private childcare and pre-school education providers should be working to the Highland Child Protection Policy Guidelines (2009). Private providers should have a Child Protection Policy in place, which includes knowing what to do in cases of unexpected absences. Key guidance is below.

All providers should have a **Designated Child Protection Contact**, a member of staff with responsibility for passing on any concerns about a child's safety to Social Work Services, ensuring their agencies carry out relevant procedures and contributing to child's protection plan meetings and reviews.

If you do not have a procedure in place and need help in devising a policy, contact your umbrella organisation, the Child Protection Development Officer at Highland Child Protection Committee or for the voluntary sector: Keeping Children Safe. Contacts are below.

Copies of "*Child Protection Guidance for Your Community Group*" and of "*Highland CPC Child Protection Interagency Guidelines*" are available to download from: www.protectinghighlandchildren.org

Unregistered informal services, such as toddler groups, or individuals, should contact their local Social Work Services office if they have concerns about a child. Please insert your local office number in the **Our Key Contacts** page, above the printed emergency out-of-hours telephone number.

You may also call:

Highland Child Protection Line tel. 01463 703488

National Child Protection Line tel. 08000 223222

KEY GUIDANCE

Child Protection Concern

If you are concerned that a child is at significant risk of harm and you are unsure what you should do:

1. Ensure you know which person in your group or service is the **Designated Child Protection Contact** and speak to them.
2. If you do not have a Designated Child Protection Contact or cannot speak to them, contact your local Social Work Services office or the emergency out of hours number (see 'Our Key Contacts' page at the front of this folder)

Unexplained absence

If a child is unexpectedly absent from pre-school education sessions but there are no concerns that a child is at risk:

Local authority nursery: follow your school's policy.

Partner centre: follow your agreed policy.

If you have any concerns then you must follow your Child Protection policy.

The Scottish Executive's report '*It's Everyone's Job to make sure I'm Alright*³' is a valuable starting point to understanding the importance of ensuring we have strong child protection systems in place (available from The Stationery Office Bookshop tel. 0870 606 5566 or at

www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/iaar-00.asp

³ Report of the Child Protection Audit and Review, Scottish Executive, 2002

The Scottish Executive produced two documents in 2004:

A Children's Charter

Thirteen statements of what children and young people expect when they are in need of protection. It is the voice of children and young people, and what they can expect to feel safe and supported.

Framework for Standards

This sets out what agencies should endeavour to achieve to protect children. It comprises eight Standards, covering how professionals should act, information sharing and partnership working.

Copies are available from the Childcare & Early Education Service or at:
www.scotland.gov.uk/childrenscharter and
www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/pcypfs-00.asp

Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003

The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 came into force in January 2005. The Act creates a list of people unsuitable to work with children. The measures contained in the Act are designed to ensure that people who have harmed children in the past - or exposed them to harm - are not able to work with children, in paid or voluntary work.

It is now a criminal offence to knowingly employ someone in a paid or unpaid 'childcare' position who is disqualified from working with children. A check should be processed through Disclosure Scotland to determine whether the person is barred or in any other way unsuitable to work with children. In addition:

- It is an offence for an individual who is disqualified from working with children to apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work (paid or unpaid) in a child care position. If an applicant for a childcare post is disqualified then carrying out a disclosure check will alert the authorities to this fact and they will both inform the agency running the check and take action against the applicant.

- If an organisation 'Disclosure' checks an existing child care employee and discovers that this person is disqualified from working with children, that employee must be removed from the child care position and from contact with children. It is an offence to fail to do so.
- If an individual harms a child or places a child at risk of harm and is dismissed, resigns or moved away from contact with children as a consequence, the organisation has a duty to refer the individual to Scottish Ministers for inclusion on the Disqualified from Working with Children List. It is an offence to fail to do so.

A guide and training pack for the voluntary sector to help in implementing the Act has been developed. The pack can be downloaded from The Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS) website: www.crbs.org.uk/
The CRBS has also launched a helpline for the voluntary sector, 01786 849777, option 4. Work is currently under way to simplify this process and a new, national membership scheme will be introduced in November 2010.

Childcare & Early Education Staff Development Programme

Child Protection training is arranged as part of the annual programme to ensure that each member of staff from council and commissioned pre-school centres has been trained. Places can be booked online at <http://highland.cpdservice.net/>

Keeping Children Safe (KCS)

KCS supports, trains and communicates with the voluntary sector in Highland with regard to all aspects of keeping children safe. The aim of KCS is to build on the past good practice and trust that has developed within agencies working in partnership in relation to child protection needs.

Tailored programmes are available that can be delivered across the Highlands through a range of methods, including directly to larger voluntary agencies and to smaller voluntary sector groups such as child care and family support providers, sports groups, youth clubs and other organisations who recognise their responsibility in the area of child protection. Training is

provided free of cost, and can be for an organisation alone, or it can bring together a number of different groups in the area.

A Certificate of Basic Child Protection Awareness will be issued to those who attend the training.

Keeping Children Safe represents the voluntary sector on the Lead Officers' Group of the Highland Child Protection Committee and can also offer advice on many aspects of Child Protection.

For further information on Child Protection, contact:

- Your umbrella organisation
- Keeping Children Safe tel. 01463 235285 www.kcs-highland.org.uk
- Your local Childcare & Family Resource Officer

Or go to the Highland Child Protection Committee website:

www.protectinghighlandschildren.org

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse may be more common than you think. The vast majority of domestic abuse is experienced by women and perpetrated by men – in approximately 90% of all cases. In Highland, as in Scotland, 1 in 5 women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. This abuse can be physical, mental, sexual, financial or a combination of these. Domestic abuse is only one form of violence against women – others include rape and sexual assault, child sexual abuse and prostitution.

Children can also be affected by domestic abuse. During attacks on their mothers, in 90% of cases, children are in the same or next room. Studies looking at links between domestic abuse and child abuse have found that where women are physically abused by their partner's, children are also directly abused by him in 40-60% of cases. There are clear links between abuse of women and abuse of children that we need to be aware of.

Domestic abuse is a crime and will be treated as such by the police. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, please contact your local police officer or Women's Aid group for information and support.

Further information is available by telephoning:

Domestic Abuse helpline	0800 027 1234
Inverness Women's Aid	01463 220719
Lochaber Women's Aid	01397 705734
Ross-shire Women's Aid	01349 863568
Caithness & Sutherland Women's Aid	0845 408 0151
Northern Constabulary	01463 715555

No Smoking Policy

Children should not be exposed to tobacco smoke or other dangerous fumes. Adults responsible for their care are influential role models, whether paid staff, volunteers or parents. Legislation bans smoking in all enclosed public places.

You should have a No Smoking policy in place. Some groups (such as most parent and child groups) meet in premises that will already be bound by No Smoking rules and therefore do not need to adopt a separate policy.

CONTROLLING INFECTION see also Section 6: Food Safety

This section summarises NHS Highland Guidance on:

- **controlling infection**
- **infections requiring exclusion**
- **head lice**
- **E.coli awareness**
- **vaccination awareness**
- **nappy changing**

For Food Safety, see later and in Section 6.

Controlling infection

NHS Highland produces *Infection Control Guidance for the Pre-school Setting*. This describes Standard Infection Control Precautions and recommendations for cleaning and disinfection. It also includes an A-Z of communicable diseases. Copies of the guidance were posted to all registered groups in January 2005 and updated Exclusion Guidelines in December 2006. The guidance is available on the NHS Highland website: www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Publications/Pages/publications.aspx and on request by telephoning 01463 704886.

Overleaf is a summary of important points from the Guidance.

KEY GUIDANCE: Infection Control

**Handwashing
is the single most effective practice
that prevents the spread of germs
in the childcare setting.**

- Cover cuts and lesions with a waterproof dressing.
- Take simple protective measures to avoid contamination of person or clothing with body fluids. Wear disposable gloves as a protective barrier if you are doing any job in which there is the potential for your hands to have contact with blood or body fluids, for example when administering first aid.
- Try to prevent children from biting and scratching.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of safe first aid procedures.
- Clean up blood or body fluid (faeces, urine and vomit) spills immediately.

As part of regular good practice:

- Children should always wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.
- If you are concerned about a child with an infection please contact the Health Protection team for advice.
- Clean toys as frequently as possible and when visibly soiled.
- Clean and disinfect toys during an outbreak of illness.
- Contaminated soft toys that cannot be laundered should be disposed of.
- Only soft toys that can be laundered should be in use.

Helping children to learn about hand hygiene

National Hand Hygiene Campaign packs were sent to all pre-school education providers in September 2007. Electronic copies in English and Gaelic are available to download from: www.washyourhandsofthem.com/

See also www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears which features a discussion forum where people can exchange views and information.

The NHS Highland Information and Resource Service (HIRS) tel. 01463 704647 or email: hirs.mailbox@nhs.net can provide a wide range of leaflets and resources, including:

Hand Inspection Cabinet

A fluorescent lotion is applied to the hand and then washed off. When the hands are placed in the cabinet, any remaining lotion will fluoresce under the lamp. Children can thus see any parts of their hands that haven't been properly washed, and how germs can be passed on. Childcare & Family Resource Officers and EHOs may also be able to loan you a cabinet.

'Learn To Wash Your Hands Well'

This flipchart has been developed as a visual teaching aid to be used for promoting children's hand-washing. It is suitable for use in pre-schools and primary schools. The accompanying booklet includes photocopyable resources.

Communicable diseases

The Health Protection Team at NHS Highland can offer advice: tel. 01463 704886. Information leaflets about the following are available from the team.

Except for the leaflet on hepatitis, the leaflets are also available at

www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk and use the 'Search' facility:

Campylobacter	Meningococcal disease
Cryptosporidiosis	MRSA
E. coli O157	Norovirus
Flu	Salmonella
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Scabies
Head Lice	Scarlet fever
Hepatitis A, B and C	

Infections requiring exclusion

There are many common infections where exclusion is recommended, for example chickenpox, mumps and measles. A table detailing appropriate exclusion times is appended to the Infection Control Guidance and can also be obtained from the Health Protection Team (see above).

Head Lice

Head lice are a constant problem but early years practitioners are in an ideal position to draw parents' attention to methods of tackling infections. Pre-school education centres are now responsible for distributing head lice detection combs and leaflets to parents. Please see the key guidance below for details.

NHS Highland's *Policy for Managing Head Lice Infestation* (December 2009) has been sent to all registered pre-school education and childcare providers. A copy is available from the Health Protection Team (tel. 01463 704886) or from the NHS Highland website - see above.

NHS Health Scotland's leaflet 'Head Lice - Information for Parents' is a useful short guide. Copies are available from the Childcare & Early Education Service, tel. 01463 711176. It can also be downloaded from:

www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/headlice.pdf

Key Guidance is overleaf.

KEY GUIDANCE: Head Lice Control

Head lice control should be based upon the regular provision of information to parents on how to detect and treat head lice. Written information and training sessions for staff and parents are helpful. Contact your Link Health Visitor/Public Health Nurse for advice.

- At any time, there are likely to be children with head lice in a group.
- Head lice cannot be prevented.
- Regular wet-combing (as part of weekly hair washing) increases the chance of discovering an infection early on.
- Treatments should only be used if live lice are found (not dead lice or eggs). Head lice may become resistant to lotions if they are used too often.
- A child should not be excluded if they are suspected of having head lice.
- Parents should be advised to check their child's hair and scalp and commence treatment if live lice are found.
- Information about wet combing / Bug Busting treatment is available at www.nits.net
- Supplies of combs and leaflets for distribution to parents by pre-school education centres are available from:
NHS Highland Information and Resource Service (HIRS)
tel. 01463 704647 for or email: hirs.mailbox@nhs.net

E.coli O157 awareness

E.coli O157 is an organism that can be transmitted to humans and can cause severe illness in young children. Very low numbers of E.coli O157 can cause infection. See Advice at end of this section.

NOTE: Early years services may grow and eat produce, providing health and safety precautions are followed – see also Food and Health - Section 10

Vaccinations

Early years providers should remind parents of the vaccination programme by including the following note in their Welcome Pack information:

Is your child up-to-date with their vaccinations?

Children receiving out-of-home care, including nurseries and playgroups, have more opportunities to come into contact with infections so it is especially important to make sure that they have had all the vaccinations due.

It is never too late to have your child immunised. If they have missed one, you don't have to start the course from the beginning again. Contact your health visitor/GP for further advice.

Hepatitis B immunisation for staff

In some circumstances, staff may perceive themselves to be at risk of infection from children who habitually bite others. While the risk of infection being passed on in these circumstances is low, there is nonetheless a theoretical risk. If there is concern about transmission of infection, staff may be offered immunisation against hepatitis B infection. GPs are likely to charge for the costs of the vaccine and administering it. In this situation vaccination would be required because of a potential occupational hazard and so could be deemed to be the responsibility of the employer.

Nappy Changing

Below is **Key Guidance** which can form your centre's policy.

Make sure that parents are fully aware of these guidelines and include them in your parents' handbook. The Scottish Office Education & Industry Department document 'Helping Hands' (1999) is aimed at those working with children and young people with disabilities but the advice is useful for all situations. It can be downloaded at: www.scotland.gov.uk/library2/doc02/hhgs-00.htm

KEY GUIDANCE: Nappy Changing

- The nappy changing area must not be in the same room where food is prepared or eaten.
- Staff should inform colleagues that they are going to change a child. When possible, staff should ensure that they are in sight and hearing of others.
- Only staff should be involved in changing a child.
- A parent who is visiting the service can only change his or her own child.
- Dispose of the soiled nappy in a tightly covered container that is lined with a disposable liner and operated by a foot pedal.
- Non-disposable nappies should be placed directly into a plastic bag to give to parents. Solid faecal matter may be disposed of into the toilet.
- Never rinse or wash non-disposable nappies because the risk of splashing may cause germs to spread to staff or children.
- Follow hygiene advice on hand-washing and cleaning spills and surfaces

Information on cotton washable nappies is available from:

Highland Real Nappy Project, tel. 0845 201 2609 or email:

infor@hrnp.org.uk

Advice on E.coli O157

What is E.coli O157?

E.coli are a type of bacteria found in the human intestine, most of which are quite harmless. However, E.coli O157 produces toxins that can cause severe disease in man.

Where does E.coli O157 come from?

E. coli O157 can be found in animals and can contaminate water supplies and certain types of food. Contact with faeces of an infected person can cause person to person spread. Billions of bacteria can be shed by an infected child during bouts of diarrhoea.

What Are the Symptoms?

Symptoms of E. coli O157 infection include bloody diarrhoea and severe stomach cramps. In its mildest form, the symptoms often clear up within about eight days. Unfortunately, a low number of cases develop kidney disease or failure (Haemolytic Uraemia Syndrome – HUS). Children under 10 are most susceptible to HUS.

There are four crucial areas to prevent the spread of E. coli O157 infection in your childcare facility:

1. Toilet and Hygiene Practices

- Always wash your hands in warm soapy water:
 - Before and after preparing food
 - After changing nappies
 - After going to the toilet.
- Children should be taught to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and after direct contact with animals. This should be supervised.
- Soiled nappies and used wipes should be disposed of hygienically.

2. Avoid the Spread of Infection between Children

- Children and staff who are suffering from sickness and/or diarrhoea should be kept away from the childcare facility until at least 48 hours after their symptoms cease.
- If a child has vomited or has suffered a bout of diarrhoea in the childcare facility, the affected area should be cleaned and disinfected at once. The child's parents should be contacted to collect the child immediately. All children should be kept out of this area until it has been cleaned and disinfected. Those cleaning the area should wash their hands thoroughly afterwards.

3. Food Preparation and Storage

- Wash your hands regularly
- Keep the storage and preparation of raw and cooked food strictly separate.
- Avoid unnecessary handling of food – use spoons or tongs wherever possible.
- Keep perishable food refrigerated.
- Do not prepare food too far in advance.

Controlling Infection

- When cooking or reheating food ensure it gets piping hot. Care must be taken to ensure foods cool down to be safe eating temperature before serving.
- Clean as you go. Keep all equipment and surfaces clean.
- Keep yourself clean and wear clean clothing.
- When cooking burgers or minced meat, make sure you cook thoroughly so that the juices run clear.
- Pay particular attention to preventing cross contamination of ready-to-eat foods with bacteria on raw meat. Store these foods separately and use separate utensils. Clean equipment and surfaces thoroughly and immediately after preparing raw meat.

4. Safe Water Supply

If your childcare facility is served by a private drinking water supply you should ensure that the water is safe and that it complies with legal drinking water standards. Please contact your local environmental health office for further information.

NHS HIGHLAND HEALTH PROTECTION TEAM: 01463 704886

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AREA OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Wick	01955 607737	Nairn	01667 458540	Dingwall	01349 868604
Portree	01478 612727	Kingussie	01540 664501	Golspie	01408 635322
Inverness	01463 703968	Fort William	01397 707007		

See also: *Shedding light on E.coli O157 – what you need to know*, at

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/37428/0012529.pdf

FARM VISITS

NHS Highland's *Infection Control Guidance for the Pre-school Setting* has advice in Section 9 on 'Farm and Wildlife Park Visits'.

See also the Health & Safety Executive advice sheet *Avoiding ill health at open farms – Advice to farmers (with teachers' supplement)*

www.hse.gov.uk/campaigns/farmsafe/ecoli.htm

FOOD SAFETY

All childcare services regulated by the Care Commission who prepare food and/or drinks will require to be registered with their local Environmental Health Officer (EHO) – see contact numbers in *Section 5*. If you are not already registered, please contact your nearest EHO.

Under the *Food Hygiene Regulations* there is a statutory obligation for anyone who handles food to notify the person in charge immediately if they are suffering from diarrhoea, salmonella or other germs likely to cause food poisoning, skin infections, nose or throat infections, ear or eye discharge.

The regulations set out a number of structural requirements such as the standards for lighting, walls, floors etc. One structural item which can cause issues is the provision of a sink designated only for hand washing. This wash hand basin should not be used for food preparation/dishwashing. It is preferable that separate facilities are provided for food preparation and equipment washing. It is however accepted that in smaller operations one sink may be used for both equipment and food washing, provided that both activities can be done effectively and without prejudice to food safety. The feasibility of this will vary depending on the type of food preparation being carried out. If you have any concerns on this matter or other structural issues please contact your local EHO. Often local solutions can be found.

The centre needs to look at the way food is prepared and to put controls in place to ensure that their practices do not prejudice food safety (risk assessment). Centres considering refurbishment or planning action as a result of a Care Commission inspection should discuss this with their local EHO - see *Section 5* for local contacts.

KEY GUIDANCE : Key Rules of Hygiene

1. Keep the storage and preparation of raw and cooked food strictly separate.
2. Avoid unnecessary handling of food.
3. Keep perishable food refrigerated.
4. Do not prepare food too far in advance.
5. When reheating food ensure it gets piping hot.
6. Clean as you go. Keep all equipment and surfaces clean.
7. Keep yourself clean and wear clean clothing.
8. Always wash your hands:
 - before handling food
 - after using the toilet
 - after handling raw foods or waste
 - before starting work
 - after each break
 - after blowing your nose
9. Do not smoke, eat, or drink when preparing food, and never cough or sneeze over food.
10. Ensure cuts and sores are covered with a waterproof, high visibility dressing.
11. Tell your supervisor, before commencing work of any skin, nose, throat, stomach or bowel trouble or infected wound.
12. Follow any food safety instructions either on food packaging or from your supervisor.
13. If you see something wrong - tell your supervisor.

Certificated Training

Every member of staff must be fully aware of the key rules for food hygiene as listed above. These must be explained to all new members of staff as part of their induction training before they become involved with any food preparation.

Food Safety

If staff are involved in the preparation of high risk foods such as sandwiches then at least one member of staff in a centre should hold the *Elementary Certificate in Food Hygiene* or an equivalent qualification. The one-day certification course is usually offered in the Early Education staff development programme and is also available from local training providers.

The Food Standards Agency website also has useful information, including sections on cleaning and food safety: www.food.gov.uk

INJURY PREVENTION

Unintentional injury

Unintentional injury is one of the main causes of death and emergency hospital admissions for children. In the Highlands 342 children aged under 15 were emergency admissions to hospital as a result of an unintentional injury in the year ending December 2009.

The *Growing Up in Scotland* longitudinal study that is tracking the lives of a cohort of Scottish children found that children were 'more likely to have had an accident or injury if their family had spent some time in poverty'⁴.

Childcare and early education providers have a duty to ensure children's safety as far as possible and also play a valuable role in helping children to learn how to assess risks.

All registered childcare centres must use a risk assessment system which identifies hazards and measures the level of risk. Control measures must be included and risk minimised. This also applies to any risks to practitioners, for example from lifting.

You should have in place:

- A **Health & Safety policy** and conduct **regular risk assessments**. Older children can be valuable partners in assessing any likelihood of dangers: they may spot possibilities that adults might miss, because they are not as tall and also because they bring different viewpoints to the process.
- **Accident Procedure** – typically this will cover: details of the qualified First Aider(s) in your group, who should be informed and how to record the incident.

⁴ Growing up in Scotland: the circumstances of persistently poor children, National Centre for Social Research, 2010

It is a challenge to early years staff to find ways of enabling children to learn to assess and manage risk, rather than preventing children from gaining the skills necessary to avoid injury (see also *Section 12 - Play*). Highland Council Childcare & Early Education Service and the Care and Learning Alliance are able to advise practitioners on procedures and policies.

The Health and Safety Executive has some straightforward advice on dispelling misconceptions, such as children not being allowed to throw snowballs or play conkers – see www.hse.gov.uk/myth

FIRE PROCEDURES

Your group will probably already have a policy in place and you should regularly practise your fire drill with the children.

Groups that meet in community halls or other rented premises should check and practise the venue's own fire procedures. These are normally on the wall in the meeting room and tell you the location of the nearest fire door and where to gather when you leave the building.

For advice, contact Highland & Islands Fire Brigade, tel. 01463 227000

SUN SAFETY

Skin cancer is the fastest rising cancer in Scotland, with over 7,000 new cases each year. Sunburn in childhood increases the risk of malignant melanoma in later life, so it is very important to protect children. For short sessions, parents should be asked to apply a sunscreen with a sun protection factor of 15 or more to their child before they attend. For longer sessions, where staff may need to administer sunscreen, parents should be asked to:

- Provide a letter giving full and clear instructions
- Provide a sunscreen with a sun protection factor of 15 or more, labelled with their child's name.

General advice is: avoid being out in the sun between 11am and 3pm; sit in the shade; wear a long-sleeved shirt or t-shirt and a wide brimmed hat.

OUTINGS

There is no fixed adult:child ratio for outings.

Your risk assessment procedure should be applied to decide on the safe level of supervision and any other precautions to be taken. For example, a walk out with 10 similarly-aged children along a safe footpath to a nearby playground may require two adults. However, the same number of children including three very young ones having to cross two busy roads to reach the playground may require a different approach. Therefore the arrangements you make should be appropriate to the capacity of the children involved, the activity and the environment.

We can't do that..... because the Care Commission says we can't!

Extract from Learning + Teaching Scotland website

There are urban myths about many things. These occasionally include fables about demands by inspectors when they are looking at risk assessment of day care for children.

One such urban myth was that nursery staff should tie children to a tree when they were out fishing! While it is easy to discount such strange urban myths, we know that some providers and staff worry about how the Care Commission will approach risk taking and risk assessment.

A clear statement of aims and objectives

We are committed to regulating in a way that supports best practice, provides assurance and does not stifle innovation. The first expectation is that a service has a clear statement of aims and objectives. This ensures that parents and staff have a shared understanding of what the service provides and how it will go about providing it.

A statement of aims and objectives helps to set the context in which risk-assessed activities will take place. Opportunities for young children to engage in physical activities outdoors and indoors need to be a part of that context.

Managing risks

The importance of appropriate risk taking in children's physical and emotional development is crucial. All activities will have some degree of risk associated with them. What is important is that the service has

thought carefully about the risks involved, considered best practice and guidance, consulted the children's parents, assessed that the risks are not unacceptable, and planned to control and manage any risks.

Ideas for new activities or ways of doing things should not be discounted simply because an element of risk may be involved. We want to encourage good risk management, not risk aversion.....

Ronnie Hill, Director of Children's Services Regulation, Care Commission

For further information on injury prevention:

Highland Council Community Safety Officer tel. 01463 702246

Other useful sources of information are:

Child Accident Prevention Trust www.capt.org.uk

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents www.rosipa.com

ROAD and IN-CAR SAFETY

Road traffic accidents are the major cause of accidental deaths for children and young people in Scotland. Road Safety education has a vital role to play in ensuring that children stay safe on our roads. It needs to start at an early age and must be developmentally appropriate.

The main Road Safety Issues in relation to under 5s are that they:

- Require constant supervision
- Are unable to see/be seen because of their height
- Go through the motions but lack comprehension
- Are unable to control attention and concentrate on more than one thing
- Have difficulty judging speed or distance until 8 years old

One effect of greater car usage is that children may now have little experience of how to be a safe pedestrian on roads and pavements.

Nursery Co-ordinator Teachers have the DVD *Steps into Road Safety* to loan to groups.

Highland Councils' Road Safety Team can offer advice on Road Safety Education, developing Safer Routes to School, equipment loans and small grants. **Contact: Road Safety Officer** **Tel. 01463 702690**

Detailed advice on choosing, using and fitting child care seats is also available at www.childcarseats.org.uk

Road Safety Scotland (RSC) has useful resources on a wide range of issues. Tel. 0131 472 9200 www.road-safety.org.uk

Children's Traffic Club Scotland (CTCS)

Road Safety Scotland has administered the Children's Traffic Club Scotland which was aimed at 3 & 4 year olds. Some CTCS packs for nurseries and playgroups are still available from the Childcare & Early Education Service. From 2011 a new scheme called 'Go Safe!' will be in place:

From Road Safety Scotland's website:

Go Safe! – Ziggy's Road Safety Mission

Introducing the innovative new Scottish Government approach to Early Level Road Safety Education.

The road environment still represents the single highest cause of death and injury to young people in Scotland. Road Safety Scotland is currently developing an innovative new approach to road safety education for young children **from birth through to the early level** of *Curriculum for Excellence*. This approach has been influenced by research, consultation and recent scientific insights into early brain development. It aims to inspire, involve and motivate children. Just as importantly, by working across curricular areas and involving multi-sensory learning, it is also geared to engage the adults involved in children's lives who look after and educate them.

The multi-media approach encompasses key aspirations of the *Early Years Framework* and *Curriculum for Excellence*. It aims to encourage and inspire experiential learning through partnerships between home and educational settings. It recognises the importance of early intervention in developing positive attitudes and behaviours for life; enabling children to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

In-Car safety

A study by Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents found that 40% of Child Car Seats are either incorrectly fitted or not fit for their purpose. Having an appropriate car seat that is correctly fitted saves lives. Early years providers should ensure their own seats are safe and are in a position to encourage parents to check their own car seats too.

For advice on child car seats, contact:

Road Safety Officer, tel. 01463 702690

Other sources of information are:

Child Accident Prevention Trust	www.capt.org.uk
Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents	www.rospa.com
RoSPA specialised site	www.childcarseats.org.uk
SRCSite on In-Care Safety	www.protectchild.co.uk

FIRST AID

including dealing with ASTHMA and ANAPHYLAXIS

Every early years setting should aim to have at least one person trained in administering First Aid to children. It is recommended that the First Aid Certificate should be retaken every three years. A guide to the contents of your First Aid Box is overleaf. Parents, together with your local public health nursing team and/or GPs, should be involved in helping your service to manage a child's known conditions. *See also Section 13 - Additional Support Needs*

Asthma attacks

Guidance on managing asthma is available via your Public Health Nursing Team or Link Health Visitor. Asthma UK (formerly National Asthma Campaign) has information: www.asthma.org.uk Helpline 08457 01 02 03

Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction)

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction. The body's immune system reacts in response to the presence of substance it perceives as a threat. These substances are not normally perceived as a threat and do not affect the majority of the population, therefore this may be an unexpected response. Common causes include food such as peanuts, tree nuts (eg. almonds, walnuts), sesame, fish, shellfish, dairy products and eggs. Non-food items include wasp/bee stings, natural latex (rubber), penicillin or other drugs. For children with a known allergy, pre-loaded adrenaline injection kits ('Epi-Pens') are available on prescription. Staff must be trained in their use. Guidance on managing anaphylaxis is available via your Public Health Nursing Team or Link Health Visitor.

The Anaphylaxis Campaign's website www.allergyinschools.org.uk includes a pre-schools section. The site includes a sample management plan, practical advice on reducing risks and information on common allergens.

See also Section 13 – Additional Support Needs: administration of medicines.

Food Allergies

See Section 10 - Healthy Eating

KEY GUIDANCE: First Aid Box

There is no mandatory list of contents for First Aid boxes. Below are suggestions, based on Health and Safety Executive advice.

A First Aid box should be easily accessible and placed if possible near to handwashing facilities. All first aid containers must be identified by a white cross on a green background. They should contain only the items that a first-aider has been trained to use, and nothing else.

A minimum stock would normally be:

- Leaflet on basic 1st Aid, e.g Health & Safety Executive leaflet *Basic Advice on First Aid at Work* available from www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg347.pdf
- One pair of disposable gloves
- Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings x 20 (assorted sizes)
- Two sterile eye pads
- Four individually wrapped triangular bandages (preferably sterile)
- Six safety pins
- Six medium sized (approx. 12cm x 12cm) and two large (approx. 18cm x 18cm) individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings

Where mains tap water is not readily available for eye irrigation, at least a litre of sterile water in sealed disposable containers should be provided. Once the seal is broken, or expiry date is passed, the containers should be disposed of. Containers should not be kept for re-use.

Additional items if space allows:

- Scissors
- Adhesive micropore tape
- Disposable aprons
- Individually wrapped moist wipes
- Plastic disposable bags for soiled items

Contents should be examined frequently and restocked as soon as possible after use.

Care should be taken to discard items safely after the expiry date has passed. Medicines, including tablets and antiseptic creams, should not be stored in the first-aid container.

POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Enabling a child to become confident and establish positive self-esteem gives them the foundations to move forward and develop their potential. All policies relating to children emphasise the importance of encouraging good mental health from birth. In particular, we have a national action plan for 2009-11 called *Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland*. The first of the plan's five priorities is directed at infants, children and young people:

“PRIORITY 1

Our early years play a large role in determining our mental health for life. A mentally healthy child is one with a clear sense of identity and self-worth, the ability to recognise and manage emotions, to learn, play, enjoy friendships and relationships, and deal with difficulties. A wide range of interrelated factors play a role, such as individual, family, wider society and environmental issues. Scotland's Chief Medical Officer explained the connection between early years and a range of physical and mental health outcomes in his *2006 Annual Report*' (see extract below).

In the early months and years it is crucial that each child has the opportunity for a warm reciprocal relationship with a small group of special adults who respond to the child's varying needs for stimulation or soothing, shape his or her later relationships and emotional self regulation, and give the capacity to learn and develop empathy.

The most dramatic changes in brain structure that take place during the early years of life are seen in the area involved in social behaviour. There is increasing evidence that children's early experiences can influence the way the brain develops.

Creating a favourable environment for Scotland's babies, toddlers and preschool children is therefore a key for society as a whole.

Health in Scotland Annual Report 2006, Chief Medical Officer

Particular emphasis was given to the importance of pregnancy and parenting in defining health outcomes. Exposure to high levels of parental stress, neglect and abuse can have a severe effect on brain development. There are clear differences between the development of children in these situations and those in less stressful households.

This informed the priorities and actions outlined in the *Early Years Framework* under which the Scottish Government and COSLA have committed to:

- promote positive mental health through a social marketing campaign which promotes the value of parenting and parenting skills;
- move to a parenting model of ante-natal and post-natal support that will promote parenting skills and attachment;
- build the capacity of universal services to meet additional needs through mental health training for front line professionals;
- include skills that promote positive mental health within the planned review of training and continuing professional development needs for early years workers;
- support relationships between parents and children as part of the work we are proposing on workforce values.'

The Scottish Government and NHS Health Scotland has made a commitment to '*work with partners and existing networks to develop by 2010 a web portal on mental health improvement for those working with infants, children and young people.*'

The Scottish guidance for the very early years, 'Birth to Three', focuses on three key aspects: **Responsive Care, Respect and Relationships**. Childcare and early education providers with a positive ethos make an important contribution to maintaining and improving good mental health in the centres and in the wider community (see also Section 1). The '**Health and wellbeing**' strand of Curriculum for Excellence also has a strong emphasis on building children's confidence.

At all stages, practitioners who model positive behaviour are in a position to have a valuable impact on both children and their parents/carers.

The mental health of parents and carers inevitably has an effect on children's development. In addition to liaising effectively with their Link Health Visitor where there are any concerns, early years services may often be in a position

to provide opportunities for parents/carers to join in activities with children and to meet with professional staff (for example, health, social work or benefits advisers) who can offer advice or support.

There are many ways of promoting mental well-being and developing resilience in children and young people. For example, physical exercise contributes towards feelings of wellbeing: a simple and effective way of assisting positive mental health is to encourage children (and their parents) to enjoy being physically active together.

The **play @ home** booklets for 0-5 year olds and families, which all parents receive, include many activities that encourage family bonds and communication as well as physical exercise (see *Section 11 – Physical Activity* for more details).

Local singer Christina Stewart has produced *Kist of Dreams* and *Bairn's Kist*, CDs of traditional Scottish and Gaelic lullabies: www.kistodreams.org

The creative arts offer many ways to stimulate children and help to develop their self-confidence, imagination and communication skills. Many arts activities, from energetic dance and drama to puppet-making, combine encouraging expression with developing physical and mental skills.

Artsplay Highland brings together artists and childcare practitioners to explore ways of developing children's creativity in variety of art forms. For more information: www.spanglefish.com/ArtsplayHighland. Members now have access to a dedicated website with resources and contacts –see *Play – Section 12*.

Sharing stories is an excellent way of encouraging communication between children and adults. The Scottish Book Trust gifts book to children through the **Bookbug** programme (formerly Bookstart) – see www.scottishbooktrust.com Libraries are developing their services for very young children, including family rhyme-time sessions. For more information, contact your local library.

Further sources of information on promoting positive mental health:

Learning Teaching Scotland Birth to Three guidance and references for supporting infant mental health www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears/

The **HandsOn Scotland online toolkit** provides information for workers who offer support to children and young people with troubling behaviour: www.handsonscotland.co.uk

Young Minds, a charity committed to improving the mental health of all children and young people, offering publications, email links and a parent helpline: www.youngminds.org.uk

Why Love Matters: how affection shapes a baby's brain

Sue Gerhardt, Routledge £9.99

www.whylovematters.com or available to loan from Health Information and Resources Service email hirs@mailbox@nhs.net

Talk to your Baby: an initiative by the National Literacy Trust to encourage parents and carers to communicate with children from birth to three.

Tel. 020 7828 2435 or www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk

ORAL HEALTH

The good news is that the oral health of young children in Highland is improving! Just over 60% of children in P1 showed no signs of obvious decay, in the latest report from the National Dental Inspection Programme. Early years services should be proud of their contribution to this improvement, which is evidence of changes in snack policies, toothbrushing practice and modelling for parents and carers, together with oral health team input.

However, there are still a large number of children with early tooth decay and a dental problem is the single most common reason for admitting a child to hospital for a general anaesthetic. As this procedure carries a certain degree of risk, it is paramount that this number is reduced. Although tooth decay can affect any child, those in the following groups are most at risk:

- Children living in deprived areas and those in low-income families;
- Children with vegetarian/ vegan diets;
- Minority ethnic groups at an increased risk of nutritional problems due to cultural or religious beliefs.

To promote good oral health there are four key messages.

1. **DIET:** reduce consumption and especially the frequency of intake of drinks, confectionery and foods with sugars. In addition the frequent consumption of acidic drinks, such as fruit juice, squashes and carbonated drinks should be avoided to help prevent erosion.
2. **TOOTHBRUSHING:** clean the teeth thoroughly at least twice every day with a fluoride toothpaste. Fluoride toothpaste, which came into general use in the British Isles in the early 1970's, is now recognised as a development of greatest importance to oral health. It is the most cost effective topical fluoride agent for personal use and is thought to be the main reason for the decline in dental caries (tooth decay) prevalence in Europe during the last thirty years.
3. **FLUORIDE:** fluoridation of the water supply is a safe and highly effective public health measure. Water fluoridation should be targeted at communities with higher dental caries (tooth decay). Where it is not technically feasible other fluoride strategies should be employed, such as programmes to promote the use of fluoride toothpaste, containing effective levels of at least 1000 parts per million fluoride.
4. **REGULAR ORAL EXAMINATIONS:** Children may need to be seen more frequently than adults - at least once a year, as advised by your dentist.



Childsmile is a comprehensive programme to improve the oral health of children in Scotland, funded by the Scottish Government,

Childsmile is made of four key components:

- ◆ Childsmile Practice
- ◆ Childsmile Nursery
- ◆ Childsmile Primary
- ◆ Core Toothbrushing Programme

Childsmile Practice: In the first instance Childsmile Practice is being targeted towards designated communities within Highland. These are informed by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) in addition to the location of “target” primary schools involved in the core toothbrushing programme.

Childsmile Practice targets children from birth, or those born on or after 1st January 2005. The health visitor will provide all families of newborn children within the target area with information surrounding Childsmile Practice and will advise that an Oral Health Support Worker will be in contact with the family when the child is around three months old. The family health visitor may also recommend that other children in the family born after the 1st Jan 05 are also taken into the scheme.

The child may also be enrolled into the scheme by local Childsmile dentists. Similarly, if a child is identified within Childsmile Nursery/ School as not having a local dentist, the child will be linked into Primary Care Dental Services.

The Oral Health Support Worker will contact every child at the age of 3 months. This contact will include an oral health promotion session and linking the child into Primary Care Dental Services. Childsmile dental service appointments will start at aged 6 months. However, families requiring additional support will receive enhanced home visiting and community support via the Oral Health Support Worker during the first year of life and linked into Primary Care Dental Services at aged 12 months.

From the age of two years onwards fluoride varnish will be applied to the child's teeth on a six-monthly basis.

Additional Features Unique to Highland: In addition to the two care pathways used on a national basis, children living within designated areas in Highland may be referred onto the scheme by contacting the NHS Highland Dental Helpline whereupon their details will be passed on to the relevant Oral Health Support Worker.

Childsmile Nursery and Primary: Childsmile Nursery and Primary are being targeted towards the nursery and primary schools that fall within the designated Childsmile areas.

The parents of all children within these schools and nurseries will be asked to consent to their child participating in the Childsmile Nursery/Primary scheme. As a participating member of the scheme the child will have fluoride varnish applied to their teeth on a six monthly basis within the school or nursery setting.

This fluoride varnish will be applied by extended duty dental nurses. A team consisting of an oral health support worker and 2 trained dental nurses will facilitate the programme within the nursery/primary school.

Any children identified within Childsmile Nursery/ School as not having a local dentist, will be linked into Primary Care Dental Services.

Core Toothbrushing Programme: The Childsmile Toothbrushing Programme is a major Scotland-wide initiative to help improve the health of children's teeth. Free toothbrushes and fluoride toothpaste are provided, with key staff working with nurseries to encourage children to brush their teeth with a fluoride toothpaste.

The Programme includes both local authority, voluntary and private partnership playgroups and nurseries. In addition, children who attend primary school in targeted communities are offered daily supervised toothbrushing in both P1 and P2 classes.

Children who are at greater risk of tooth decay may be given additional supplies of free toothpaste and toothbrushes – usually via their Health Visitor or other professional groups. During their first year of life, children are also provided with a free drinking cup to encourage healthy weaning. Every child who attends a nursery should be offered free daily supervised toothbrushing with fluoride toothpaste from age 3 upwards.

Further information is available, including the National Standards for Toothbrushing Programme at www.child-smile.org

Useful local & national information

Dental Help Line phone number: 0845 6442271

NHS Highland Dental Services Oral Health team

North area (Caithness & Sutherland) *to be confirmed*

tel. 07818002388

Mid area (Ross & Cromarty, Skye & Lochalsh and Lochaber, including Fort Augustus)

Miranda Moodie miranda.moodie@nhs.net tel. 07818002388

South East area (Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey)

Kirstin Edmiston kirstin.edmiston@nhs.net tel. 07824599514

An action plan for improving oral health and modernising NHS dental service
www.scotland.gov.uk

Prevention and management of dental decay in the pre-school child
SIGN 83 www.sign.ac.uk

DVD for parents on 'how to care for your child's teeth'
www.healthscotland.com

Adventures in Foodland is the national resource pack for those working with 0-5s and includes information on oral health (see Section 10). All Highland pre-school education providers were provided with a copy.

The Singing Kettle produced a CD with support from NHS Scotland, called **Brush Up Your Smile - singalong songs to smile about.**

PRE-SCHOOL VISION SCREENING

NHS Highland is working in partnership with Highland Council to offer all children a **Pre School Orthoptic Vision Screening (POVS)** test in the year before they start school, starting in 2010. This important test will replace the eyesight check which school nurses have carried out in P1 in the past. It is therefore the **only** vision test the children will have. All pre-school education centres will receive information about the new test.

The POVS tests pick up eye problems, most of which can be easily corrected with glasses (spectacles) and/or an eye patch. It is important that the screening test is carried out at this age, before full visual development has taken place, so that any necessary treatment for eyesight problems has a better chance of success. It will also allow time for treatment to be started before the child starts school.

Orthoptists are trained to test for and treat eyesight problems in young children so are considered the most appropriate professional to carry out the screening tests.

What does the test involve?

The test is designed to be simple for pre-school children. It takes about 10 minutes and involves matching letters and looking at a light and at small pictures. No eye drops are used. If a child is unable to perform the test it can be repeated at a later date.

How will pre school orthoptic vision screening be arranged?

A member of the Pre School Orthoptic Vision Screening (POVS) team will phone to arrange a suitable date for the Orthoptist's visit. A POVS Pack will be then sent out, consisting of

- A list of children due to be screened
- Information forms for parents/guardians will be sent to the nursery for distribution by the nursery staff to parents/carers. These forms will include an option for parents to opt out of the screening programme.
- A poster for display will sent to the nursery to let the parents/carers know when the eye tests are taking place.

The frequency of Orthoptist visits will depend on the number of children to be tested and how smoothly the sessions run. The intention is to test approximately 15-18 children per visit.

For more information about the Pre-school Orthoptic Vision Screening services, please tel. 01463 704443.

FOOD AND HEALTH

(see also *Food Hygiene - Section 6* and *Physical Activity - Section 11*)

Food is much more than nutrition. Meals, snacks and drinks form part of our culture, social times, pleasure, satiety and as such form an important part of children's experiences and education. But providing children with good nutrition can improve their ability to play, learn and socialise well, helps to ensure good growth and development and can protect against the development of heart disease, certain cancers and becoming overweight.

Also, many people are involved in the production and preparation of food. So decisions like supporting local businesses, making fair-trade choices, selecting organic/non organic, can support the health of others through providing a secure income, ensuring a safe working environment, reducing food miles etc.

A new resource from NHS Highland is now available: *Maternal and Child Nutrition: best practice guidance*. This is aimed at all agencies working with pregnant women, parents/carers and children 0-5 years. It does not introduce new policies but combines existing legislation and guidance into one coherent format. Sections can be downloaded at www.forhighlandschildren.org

The two key national resources available to help childcare and early education providers – sent to all registered providers - are:

- **Nutritional guidance for early years: food choices for children aged 1-5 years in early education and childcare settings.** This provides detailed advice on food and nutrition. All registered early years providers were sent a copy in 2006. NHS Highland has added a supplementary sheet on sweeteners, included later in this section.
- **Adventures in Foodland:** a comprehensive pack for those working with 0-5 year olds. It complements the national nutritional guidance (above).

Childcare providers have many decisions to make on food, including:

- which food and drinks to serve
- how to involve parents and carers
- what to advise parents
- the use of food as rewards and treats
- birthdays
- eating out
- whether to support promotions of certain foods

The best way to make sure that children in your care get access to healthy foods on a consistent basis is to set out a **Food and Health Policy**. The *Nutritional guidance for early years* and *Adventures in Foodland* include policy ideas which can be adapted to your own setting. A sample Highland Council policy is included at the end of this section.

NOTE: The Schools (Health promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 does not apply to pre-school education providers, who should follow the *Nutritional guidance for early years* recommendations. However, out of school clubs operating on school premises are expected to abide by the legislation.

See also **KEY GUIDANCE: Infant Food** in this Section.

In the beginning....

Breastfeeding is one of the most effective early interventions to achieve healthy children. It reduces the risk of respiratory, gastrointestinal, urinary tract and ear infections. Breastfed children are less likely to develop allergies and asthma, or to become obese. Adults who have been breastfed are also less likely to become obese or to develop Type II diabetes or heart disease. Breastfeeding can also improve the bond between mother and child, and help the child to feel more emotionally secure.

The Scottish Government strongly supports breastfeeding, aiming that all areas should increase the number of babies breastfed at 6 weeks old. The

Scottish Parliament passed legislation in November 2004 which makes it an offence to prevent breast or bottle feeding of an infant under the age of 2 in public places (*The Breastfeeding [etc.] Scotland Act, 2005*).

Early years providers can play a vital role in encouraging a positive attitude towards breastfeeding and supporting breastfeeding mothers.

Becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Nursery

- Welcome breastfeeding by mothers and volunteers, and make a suitable space available for them if they would like it.
- Join the Highland Baby Friendly sticker scheme and put up Breastfeeding Welcome signs. (contact 01463 704842 for information)
- Positively support breastfeeding mothers, including safely storing and using breastmilk if available.
- Never give breastfed babies supplementary feeds of formula milk or water unless the parent made a fully informed choice to do this.
- Never use bottles or dummies with breastfed babies as this can affect their ability to suckle from the breast and can also mask feeding cues. If you have been instructed to, give supplementary feeds use feeding cups or spoons unless the parents have given consent to use a bottle and teat.
- Remember that the World Health Organisation states that breastfed babies do not need any food other than breastmilk for up to 6 months.
- Bring the idea of breastfeeding into play, so that children are encouraged to see breastfeeding as a natural part of a baby's life.
- Have posters on the wall which give a positive image of breastfeeding. (Contact Health Information and Resources 01463 704647 for materials).

- Do not use toy baby bottles, but replace with toy feeding cups. Remove all books or other materials which reinforce bottle feeding as the normal way to feed a baby. Images can be found in unexpected places!

Here are 4 questions which provide a useful checklist to evaluate resources:

- Does the resource demonstrate individuals using bottles as if this is the normal way to feed babies?
 - Are bottles, teats and dummies used as symbols for babies?
 - Do dolls come with bottles?
 - Do the toys promote bottle-feeding as the cultural norm?
- Do NOT use any materials or leaflets which promote any formula milk company. This would contravene the WHO UNICEF International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. Health Information and Resources can supply appropriate materials instead: tel. 01463 704647 or email hirs.mailbox@nhs.net.

KEY GUIDANCE: Infant food

There is evidence to suggest that early weaning is linked to an increased risk of asthma, eczema, digestive diseases, allergies and obesity in later life.

Six months is the recommended age for introduction of solid food, as an infant's energy and nutrient needs begin to exceed that which can be fulfilled by breast or infant formula milk alone. Infants will vary in their readiness for weaning, but there are developmental signs which indicate readiness, including the ability to sit up, eye-hand coordination to reach out and grasp an object and an increased interest in food being eaten.

The introduction of solids should be gradual, starting with one or two teaspoons of cooked and mashed vegetables, mashed not pureed fruit or baby rice/ other gluten free cereal once daily using a plastic spoon. (see *Fun First Foods* leaflet available from Health Information and Resources (HIRS) tel. 01463 704647 or email: hirs.mailbox@nhs.net)

'Finger foods' can be introduced any time after six months, and some infants enjoy food better when they can pick it up and feed themselves eg. slices of apple or toast, carrot sticks, cubes of cheese. New foods should be introduced gradually at 3-4 day intervals, and by 12 months, infants should be eating three meals and two in-between meal snacks, and enjoying a full range of foods and a variety of textures.

Full fat cow's milk can be used in cooking, but should not be introduced as a drink until 1 year. Breast milk or a whey-protein dominant infant formula should be used until this age and remains an important part of the weaning diet. Infants should be drinking about 1 pint per day once weaning has been established.

All children need to consume adequate energy for growth and development – this can be challenging in children under two years of age as they eat relatively small volumes of food. Therefore, full fat versions of dairy products should be offered.

From two years a gradual introduction of low fat dairy products should be considered for children who are growing well and eating a varied diet. Semi-skimmed milk or water should be offered in pre-school education settings.

By the age of five most children should be eating in accordance with the Eatwell plate model of healthy eating.

Free milk

Registered childcare and pre-school providers can claim free milk for children under five years old. If you are a local authority nursery, please contact Childcare & Early Education Service, tel. 01463 711176 for details of how to claim. Other providers can find further information from the Welfare Food Reimbursement Unit, tel. 020 788 71212.



is the national scheme to support and encourage an improvement in nutrition among pregnant women and families on low incomes. The scheme makes provision for maternal and infant vitamin supplements, and vouchers with a fixed monetary value which can be exchanged for fresh fruit and vegetables or formula milk at listed retailers and food co-ops. Further information and application forms are available from the website or Midwives and Public Health Nurses. (NHS outlets no longer issue formula milk). For information: www.healthystart.gov.uk

Fun with Fruit & Veg is a resource for pre-school groups, with a sum provided annually by NHS Highland for buying in fresh food, complemented by resources provided by the Early Education team and NHS colleagues. Centres are encouraged to buy food from local producers where possible.

Growing your own food provides lots of opportunities for fun and learning especially when you get to eat the results! The Care Commission has no regulations concerning the growing and eating of food in pre school groups and does not object to such activities providing that the usual risk assessment and health safety precautions are followed. In particular, centres should:

- Ensure the growing medium and the growing environments are safe
- Be aware of any possible contamination from animals e.g. cats
- Wear gloves if necessary
- Wash hands after gardening and before preparing food
- Scrub and or rinse food before cooking/eating

NHS Highland/Highland Council leaflets on healthy lunch boxes (Rising Stars), food for celebrations, snacks and healthier home baking are available. Although aimed at school-age children they may also be useful for pre-school providers. Copies are available from Childcare & Early Education Service

School food: opportunities for pre-schools

As part of preparing for the transition to P1, pre-school education centres can play a valuable part in enabling children - and their parents – to learn about the food that will be available in primary school. The Catering Service is happy to assist schools who wish to initiate activities, for example by providing a sample lunch in the school canteen for parents and children, or inviting them to the increasingly popular 'Midsummer Picnics'. A *Welcome to School Meals Pack* is available to all new P1s at the beginning of term.

Note for pre-school education providers on processed meats, yoghurts and snack portion sizes.

Queries have been raised by practitioners about how much and what type of processed meats (particularly ham) and yoghurts are recommended and portion sizes for snacks. Below is advice from NHS Highland, which is in line with the *Nutritional guidance for early years*.

Snack is an opportunity for children to try different foods, explore textures and discover tastes. Limiting very salty or sweet foods helps to avoid distorting children's palates.

Processed meats including ham, bacon, sausages, spam, hot dogs and corned beef are often high in salt and nitrites which are used as preservatives and sometimes high in fat.

- Processed meat should not be offered more than once a week
- If using ham, choose a product with no more than 850mg of sodium per 100g.
- Not every snack needs to be rich in protein – dairy, fruit & veg and starchy based snacks are fine.
- Alternative proteins include: beans, canned fish, lean uncured meats and eggs.

Yoghurts & dairy snacks

Natural or fruit based yoghurts, fromage frais or quark should be offered - please no novelty (straw/cartoon/celebrity/corner) or confectionery type yoghurts! Choose yoghurts that are:

- no more than 4g fat per 100g
- no added sweeteners
- low or medium total sugar = less than 15g/100g

Portion sizes: guidance can be found in the *Nutritional guidance for early years*. A simple way to check amounts is to use cups, spoons or containers that will give the correct portions of different foods. Practitioners can decide on these, using the national guidance in the first instance and perhaps produce a chart to give a quick guide.

Supplementary memo on Artificial Sweeteners and the Nutritional Guidance for Early Years

The guidelines rightly warn against the use of drinks and some foods high in added sugar. Such drinks and foods, if consumed frequently, can lead to tooth decay.

Please be aware however, that many soft drinks (fizzy and still) are free from added sugar, but instead contain artificial sweeteners. We believe it may be unwise to provide these drinks either. The reasons for this are outlined below:

1. Drinks containing artificial sweeteners (or added sugar) may help children develop a taste for very sweet foods, meaning that the more subtle natural sweetness of fruit and vegetables taste bland by comparison.
2. There has been some research and anecdotal reports suggesting that some artificial sweeteners may be harmful to the health of some vulnerable children.
3. Some artificial sweeteners are not permitted in foods marketed for children under 2 years of age.
4. Some parents are concerned about the use of these sweeteners and other food additives, and would prefer these not to be given to their children.

Applying the precautionary principle, we advise therefore that foods or drinks containing artificial sweeteners are not provided for pre-school children in child care settings, and that parents and carers should not be encouraged to purchase them.

Instead, we suggest that three types of drink are provided. Namely milk (anytime), water (anytime) or pure fruit juice (or "Smoothies") in a cup, not a bottle, (at mealtimes only). Look out for artificial sweeteners in low fat yoghurts too. These are best avoided. Plain or fruit flavoured is better.

Further advice on food additives in foods is available from David Rex, Child Health Lead Dietitian, NHS Highland Email: david.rex2@nhs.net or tel. 01463 701314.

From NHS Highland Health Protection Team, February 2009:

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a first list of product ranges from food manufacturers, caterers and retailers that have voluntarily withdrawn six food colours associated with possible hyperactivity in young children. The colours are:

- " Sunset yellow FCF (E110)
- " Quinoline yellow (E104)
- " Carmoisine (E122)
- " Allura red (E129)
- " Tartrazine (E102)
- " Ponceau 4R (E124)

Parents and carers should check labels, especially in the case of products with a long shelf life, but further detail of manufacturers is available from:

www.food.gov.uk/safereating/chemsafe/additivesbranch/colours/colourfree

Healthy Eating Policy

Nursery

Snack time is an integral part in the social life of the nursery. It is also a time to reinforce children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating.

We hope to achieve this by ensuring that:

- All meals and snacks provided are nutritious and varied, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings.
- As a general rule, snack food will be provided by the nursery.
- Children's medical and personal dietary requirements are respected.
- Parents of children who are on special diets will be asked to provide as much written information as possible about suitable foods.
- Menus are planned in advance and food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced.
- A multi-cultural diet is offered to ensure that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and that all children have the opportunity to try unfamiliar foods.
- The dietary rules of religious groups and also of vegetarians/vegans are known and met in appropriate ways.
- If a main meal is offered, the following elements are included:
 - protein for growth
 - carbohydrate for energy
 - essential minerals and vitamins in vegetables, salads and fruits
 - water, semi-skimmed milk or fruit juice to drink
- Dairy foods: whole milk yoghurts, plain natural yoghurt, plain fromage frais and hard cheese can all be offered. Lower fat cheeses are also useful e.g. cottage cheese.
- Semi-skimmed milk or water will be served with morning and afternoon snacks
- Water will be available if children are thirsty

- The Healthy Eating Policy and snack menus are shared with parents. Nursery recipes can be available on request.
- Parents or guardians will be advised if their child is not eating well.
- Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners and will be given plenty of time to eat.
- Withholding food will not be used as a form of punishment.
- Carers will sit with children while they eat and will provide a good role model for healthy eating and if rolling snack is in place, an adult will be monitoring the area.
- Food will be prepared and served in accordance with food hygiene guidelines.

Signature

Role

Signature

Role

Date_____

LOCAL RESOURCES

Highland One World Group has resources to loan on food topics that incorporate learning about other cultures.

Contact: Janis Keast, tel. 01349 863441 (Tuesdays) or 01381 621265

janis.keast@hcs.uhi.ac.uk

Highland Environmental Network: member organisations are able to offer a range of advice and support on growing food.

Food 1st is a healthy eating initiative for the Inverness area which promotes healthy eating to low income and vulnerable communities www.pfw.org.uk

REAL Foods is a social enterprise based at Inverness High School which grows and sells its own produce, including an online service

www.realfoodsih.com

Health Information & Resource Services www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/hirs

Other sources of information on food and health topics are:

Community Food and Health (Scotland) supports local communities to tackle inequalities in diet and health. It provides a free newsletter, website and a small grants scheme. Tel. 0141 226 5261 or www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

NHS: www.5aday.nhs.uk

Food Standards Agency (includes food labelling) www.food.gov.uk

Food and physical activity: www.healthyliving.gov.uk

BBC: www.bbc.co.uk/food/ and www.bbc.co.uk/health/healthy_living/nutrition

Growing up in Scotland: research summary on Food and Activity, Scottish Centre for Social Research, The Scottish Government, 2009
available at: www.growingupinScotland.org.uk

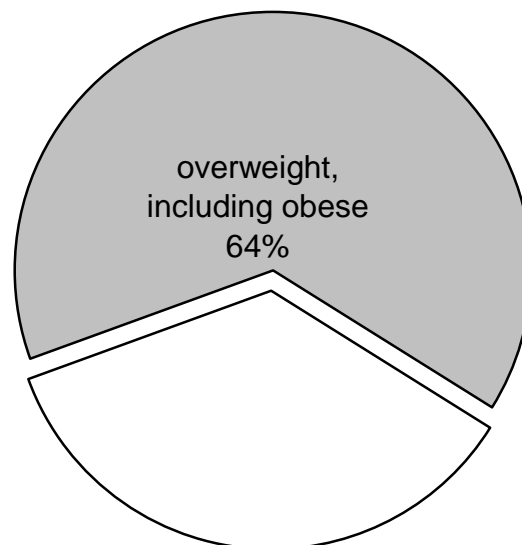
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

As a country we have become less active at the same time as the amount of fat and sugar in our diet has increased. Our children grow up with this lifestyle and it should come as no surprise that they are increasingly overweight from an early age. We must all change so our children grow up in an environment where people eat well and move more.”

Dr. Eric Bajjal, Director of Public Health, NHS Highland, 2008

There is growing concern in developed countries over children’s lack of exercise, because of its relationship to the short and long-term increase in the risks of heart disease, obesity, type II diabetes and cancers. According to the latest national report, over two-thirds of Scottish adults over 25 were overweight or obese:

Proportion of overweight adults in Scotland over 25 yrs old, including those obese



Source: Scottish Health Survey 2003

Being overweight as a child is a growing problem in Scotland and the UK. According to guidance from the Royal College of Physicians, *‘Most children are not obese because of an underlying medical problem but as a result of their lifestyle’*⁵.

⁵ Management of obesity in children and young people, SIGN Quick Reference Guide, www.sign.ac.uk

Helping Highland's children to maintain a healthy weight

Obesity in the early years is on the increase, mainly due to environmental and behavioural changes related to diet and inactivity. A survey of a sample of children in NHS Highland area in 2008/09 found that up to 13% of P1 and 22% of P7 had body mass index measurements indicating they were overweight.

While many of the factors causing overweight need to be addressed at a government level, parents, childcare providers and family support practitioners all have a key role to play in enabling children to maintain a healthy weight. Current Scottish guidance on the management of obesity in children is summarised in NHS Highland's *Maternal and Child Nutrition* guidance (See Section 10 Food and Health).

**Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes
of moderate activity on most days of the week**
moderate = slightly out of breath

Young children's physical and mental health, fitness and co-ordination can be developed by regular appropriate physical activity. Research is showing that physical activity also plays an important role in the development of brain function from birth onwards and that exercise helps children to develop their reflexes and co-ordination. The latest Scottish clinical guideline recommends that parents are made aware that more than two hours per day of sedentary behaviour for children, particularly of screen time, should be discouraged (see *reference end of Section*).

Scientists at Glasgow University published a report in early 2004 detailing research that showed the low energy expenditure of a sample of three-year-old children⁶. On average more than three-quarters of their time was spent in sedentary behaviour. Only 2% of their time was spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

⁶ Total energy expenditure and physical activity in young Scottish children: mixed longitudinal study 2004 J.J. Reilly, D.M. Jackson, L.A. Kelly, C. Slater, S. Grant, J.Y. Paton, summarised in *The Lancet* 2 July 2010

The major longitudinal study, *Growing up in Scotland*, is producing valuable information on children's early lives. This includes examining the range of childhood experiences of healthy eating and physical activity:

www.growingupinScotland.org.uk and see 'Research Summaries'.

Scotland's national action plan to 2011, *Healthy Eating, Active Living* includes increasing activity in the early years as a priority. This priority is reflected in *The Early Years Framework* (see also *Introduction*).

What's happening in Highland?

A ***Healthy Weight Strategy*** for Highland has been developed, that involves health, local authority and other partners and includes:

- Promoting breastfeeding and appropriate weaning
- Encouraging good nutrition and exercise in the early years
- Offering interventions for 5-15 year olds along with their families, so that they can maintain a healthy weight
- Supporting health promotion activities in communities and schools

NHS Highland's *Maternal and Child Nutrition: best practice guidance* (see Section 10) includes information on physical activity:

www.forhighlandschildren.org

Highland Physical Activity and Sports Strategy (PASS) 2009-2014

This includes actions on several issues affecting the early years and access to play and activity. Two particularly relevant items are:

- *Provide 120 minutes of good quality PE per week for all pupils aged 3-18 years.*
- *Encourage young people and families to participate in play and physical activity from an early age.*

More information: www.highland.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/sportsfacilities/pass

play @ home

All Highland parents of 0-5 year olds are offered the *play @ home* booklets, aimed at encouraging early enjoyment of exercise through active play and positive family communication. The programme comprises a series of three spiral-bound books for parents/carers, covering the 0-5 years stages.

Each book has ideas for simple activities that encourage children's development and gives advice on infant massage. The emphasis is on building parents' confidence and helping them to recognise the benefits of playing, using their own skills and everyday household items or inexpensive toys. An update *play @ home in the Highlands* is distributed approximately twice a year by the Childcare & Early Education Service.

Baby book (0-12 months) All babies born in Highland receive the book free of charge from their Health Visitor

Toddler Book (1-3 years) is posted to families just after their child's 1st birthday.

Pre-school Book (3-5 years) is offered to families when children start pre-school education sessions. A leaflet suggesting ways of centres making the most of the Pre-school Book is sent out each year. This offers ideas on how activities can be included in sessions to contribute towards the Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and also consider how to use it as a tool to aid transition between home and pre-school sessions.

Gaelic

- A CD of Gaelic songs and rhymes to accompany all three *play @ home* books, *Cluich Comhla*, is available to families free of charge;
- Gaelic songs and rhymes are included in the Highland Baby book;
- A complete Gaelic version of the Toddler book;
- A booklet with Gaelic songs and rhymes to march the Pre-school Book

Polish

The Toddler Book has been translated in Polish, available in electronic format. The Care and Learning Alliance has produced activity cards with games and songs in Polish.

Training to promote *play @ home*

A half-day training course introducing practitioners to *play @ home* is available. For details or more information about the programme, please contact Childcare and Early Education Service, tel. 01463 711176

Rain Starts Play All Highland's pre-school education centres are equipped all-in-one suits and wellies to encourage more outdoors activity – see also *Section 12, Play*.

Active School Co-ordinators are based in schools throughout the Highlands. While working mainly in primary schools, increasing physical activity and giving advice on healthy living, they are also a source of advice in communities and can train and support early years staff.

Start to Play is an active play programme from the Youth Sport Trust (replacing **TOP Tots/TOP Start**), aimed at those working with children between 0 and 5 years old.

As part of Start to Play, an early years outdoor play programme called *Playzone* is being developed to provide creative outdoor play opportunities for children within early years settings. More information is at www.youthsporttrust.org/subpage/playzone/index.html

Start to Play activities complement the *play @ home* resources we have in place. Training is not compulsory for *Start to Play* and trainers already familiar with the previous TOP Tots and TOP Start will be able to use the new resources and equipment to support their existing training. Check the Early Years CPD Calendar for training opportunities.

The *Start to Play* equipment bags may be loaned through your Active Schools Co-ordinator.

School travel plans are in place in some areas – you may want to link up with these and/or introduce them to parents in preparation for starting in P1.

National resources

Active Scotland national website showing local opportunities for physical activity: www.activescotland.org.uk

Growing up in Scotland: research summary on The impact of children's early activities on cognitive development and Food and Activity, Scottish Centre for Social Research, The Scottish Government, 2009 Available at: www.growingupinScotland.org.uk

Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning
www.ltscotland.org.uk/outdoorlearning/curriculumforexcellence/index.asp

Management of obesity: A National Clinical Guideline No.115
SIGN 2010 <http://www.sign.ac.uk/guidelines/fulltext/115/index.html>

At least five a week – evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health, A Report from the Chief Medical Officer (England & Wales) is a useful reference: available at www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/fs/en and go to the Chief Medical Officer website > Other Reports

Active Nation - as part of the build up to the 2014 Commonwealth Games, Active Nation aims to inspire people in Scotland to get more active
www.ouractivenation.co.uk/

PLAY

Play is a crucial part of childhood, valuable in its own right, without any extrinsic goals.

Play is also recognised as key to positive development for children, from encouraging physical skills and establishing healthy enjoyment to developing intellectual, social and emotional maturity.

ARTICLE 31

The child's right to play is enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention, ratified by the UK government in 1991. This states that signatories will:

'recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.'

For many of you working with 0-5 year olds, play will form the core of your activities. The quality of children's play experience is often in the hands of adults: the physical setting, the level and type of encouragement, the amount of risk enabled, the duration of play and types of equipment are usually controlled by adults and all affect the richness of children's play.

The Early Years Framework (see Introduction) includes play as one of its ten priorities for action, with a particular focus on improving outdoor play opportunities for all children. *For Highland's Children 3 (2009-2012)* includes an action to **'Improve accessibility and quality of children's play'** (Active: Improvement Objective 3 see www.forhighlandschildren.org)

play @ home (see also Section 11 – Physical Activity)

play @ home books contain hundreds of play ideas for children aged 0-5s and their families. These are simple games that don't require any special equipment or knowledge, just adult confidence to start them off. But the games encourage communication and children's all-round development. All new parents in Highland receive a Baby, Toddler and Pre-school Book. While the books are aimed at parents, childcare practitioners, health and family support staff are also able to use the ideas in groups or with individual families.

Two resources that are aimed at Primary Schools but have useful ideas that could be adapted for younger children are:

- *Inspiring Inclusive Play* from P.Inc (Play Inclusive Project), produced by Scotland Yard Adventure Centre and the Scottish Executive. Copies of the pink pack were sent to all primary schools and Active School Co-ordinators. A few copies remain in stock: please contact Childcare & Early Education Service, tel. 01463 711176.
- *Active Playgrounds* The British Heart Foundation guide for primary schools. It includes traditional games and can be downloaded from www.bhfactive.org.uk

Artsplay Highland provides workshops on play and the arts to childcare practitioners and teachers and groups. More information is at: www.spanglefish.com/ArtsplayHighland

An **Artsplay Highland Members** website is also now available at www.aphmembers.org.uk/ for a small fee.

The website enables formal and informal educators, carers and artists to meet up and exchange ideas about the arts and children. Members can view and workshop notes, videos, images and a database of artists.

Outdoor play

Indoor environments can make it difficult to encourage active physical play and learning through boisterous games that allow children to let off steam. The natural environment also offers valuable aesthetic experiences.

**Wherever possible, outdoor play
should be considered as the first option.**

Through the *Rain Starts Play* project, all Highland pre-school education centres now have a stock of all-in-one suits and wellies. The aim is to ensure all children can experience outdoor play, no matter how parents have dressed them. Sheltered areas, such as a den, lean-to, play hut or large porch can be excellent places to allow children to play in the open air with a little protection from the sun, rain or wind.

For pre-school education groups, outdoor play will offer many opportunities to work on aspects of the curriculum. Learning+Teaching Scotland is emphasising the value of outdoor activities: see in particular:

Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning

www.ltscotland.org.uk/outdoorlearning/curriculumforexcellence/index.asp

A sample Outdoor Play Policy for pre-school education groups is overleaf, together with a grid to help staff work on its implementation.

While encouraging outdoor play, please also be aware of the guidance on controlling infection, see Section 5.

It is important that children should be given the opportunity, on a regular basis, to enjoy energetic activity both indoors and out and the feeling of well-being that it brings. Outdoor play provides an environment that responds to individual learning styles. It complements and enhances all aspects of children's development and learning through its physical and open-ended nature.

Learning Outcomes:

To enjoy regular outdoor activity including energetic, physical play, throughout the seasons

To investigate and experiment with a variety of natural resources

To make discoveries using senses

To use language to describe, explain, predict, ask questions and develop ideas

To develop an appreciation of natural beauty and a sense of wonder

To learn about personal safety

We do this by:

- Ensuring the outdoor area is adequate, safe and secure
- Modelling a positive attitude to outdoor play
- Raising parental awareness of the benefits of the outdoors
- Encouraging parental involvement in outdoor activities
- Interacting with the children to extend their learning
- Providing resources that cover all aspects of the curriculum
- Ensuring a range of outdoor toys is supplied such as small/large apparatus and wheeled toys
- Presenting resources in a stimulating manner
- Providing resources that allow children to make choices
- Endeavouring to provide outdoor activities on a daily basis
- Dressing the children appropriately for all weather conditions
- Providing resources for the outdoors in the nursery
- Encouraging activities stated in the nursery to be extended in the home environment
- Planning appropriately in order to respond to children's needs and interests

Date: _____

Outdoor Play Policy/Implementation

Support grid for staff teams to create their own policy and ways of working in outdoor environments. Each section introduces an aspect that should be addressed within the policy.

Area of Content	Questions to discuss
Rationale Aims (broad) Objectives (detail)	Why do you feel outdoor play is important? Why are you encouraging children to go out? What references are there to outdoor play in the curriculum documents?
Time	How often would you like children to be outside? How long do you feel they should be outside? 15 min, 60 minutes. All morning? To what extent should children be outside throughout the year?
Weather	What preparations will you make for rainy, cold, hot weather? Will children be allowed to go out in poor weather?
Curriculum	Which aspects of the curriculum do you wish to cover when you are outside?
Planning	How will planning link indoor and outdoor learning? How will you consult children about their plans/ideas?
Observation	What system will you use for observations outside?
Methodology/Organisation of resources	How will staff make sure that there is self selection and choice outside? How will staff involve children in setting out equipment?
Adult Role	What are the adults expected to do when they are outside?
Risk Assessment/Vandalism, etc	Who will monitor the safety of the ground/equipment? How will equipment be stored?

Play

Grounds for Learning (GfL), the school grounds charity has an 'Early Years Practitioner' section. Topics include:

- Can we use the grounds to deliver the curriculum appropriate to our children?
- What sort of play equipment is the best for our age group?
- How often should we cut the meadow grass?
- How can parents get involved in our grounds project?

All GfL programmes are free to participants and many include benefits such as teaching and learning resources, training and funding.

For more information: Grounds for Learning, tel. 01786 445922

www.gflscotland.org.uk

The Highland Council's Countryside Rangers are experienced at combining outdoor activities with learning about the environment.

Local contact details are available from your Library or Service Point or www.highland.gov.uk.

Some other sources of information and resources:

www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears and search for 'Outdoor learning'

www.creativestarlearning.co.uk

www.gameskidsplay.net *US website with instructions for simple games*

Scottish Natural Heritage tel. 0131 446 2277 www.snh.org.uk

Forestry Commission tel. 0131 334 0303 www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland

RSPB tel. 0131 311 6500 www.rspb.org.uk/youth/

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This section incorporates a short introduction, some sources of advice and information and summaries on the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004), Administering Medication and Accessibility.

Introduction

Each child develops at her/his own pace and most will meet their milestones at the appropriate time. However, for a few, there may be some concerns and it may be difficult in very young children to be sure if these concerns are likely to be ongoing. The term 'Additional Support Needs' may be used to identify any support that a child needs, whether due to physical, emotional or social difficulties. If you are worried about a child's development in any area, discuss your concerns with a senior staff member initially. **Parents should be involved in discussions before requesting a service from any other agency** (see also Section 1A – Sharing information)

Children with diagnosed conditions will already have a designated therapist or social work contact. Link Health Visitors and/or School Nurses have a role in working with pre-school education providers to identify children requiring additional support to flourish. Assessment of the child's needs should identify what outcomes are sought and what type of support is required to address this, following the *Getting it right for every child* process.

Daycare and after-school care services should contact their local Childcare and Family Resource Officer for advice..

Advice/ information

A workbook has been produced by Highland Council and the Care and Learning Alliance: *Training for Group Support workers in the Pre-school Sector* (November 2009). Contact the Childcare & Early Education Service if you require a copy.

The Highland Council's **Pre-school Teaching Service** for Children with Additional Support Needs may be able to offer informal consultancy

Contact: Barbara Simons tel. 01478 613697

CHIP+ (the Children in the Highlands Information Point) has a wealth of information and links for families and professionals.

Tel. 01463 711189 (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)

Email: chip.birnie@ukgateway.net or www.childreninthehighlands.com

Highland Children's Forum is a parent/carer led organisation that seeks to hear the voices of children and that of their parents/carers and to have that message influence the design and delivery of services. Contact: Calum Munro tel. 01463 223000 or calum.munrohcf@btconnect.com or Gillian Newman, gillian@highlandchildrensforum.org www.highlandchildrensforum.org

Support groups in Highland include:

Highland ADHD Support Group tel. 01456 450358

Highland Developmental Co-ordination Disorder Group tel. 01463 709907

National Autistic Society: Information & Support Officer based in the Highlands. The role includes offering autism awareness raising sessions: tel. 01463 258802

ENQUIRE is the national advice service for special educational needs in Scotland, hosted by Children in Scotland. It offers independent information and advice. Helpline: 0845 123 2303 or www.childreninscotland.org.uk

Hearing problems

Deafness in the early years can have wide ranging adverse effects on all areas of a child's development. In particular, the pre-school years are vital ones for learning language and the way we use it. Language competence is the foundation upon which more specialised areas of learning are built.

It is estimated that 1 in 4 children in a primary school class will suffer with conductive hearing loss in at least one ear at any given time.

Staff can assist with surveillance by being aware of the likely signs and symptoms, liaising with parents, referring appropriately and adopting strategies to minimise difficulties (see checklist below for babies).

Checklist for REACTION TO SOUNDS

Shortly after birth - a baby

Is startled by a sudden loud noise such as a hand clap or a door slamming. Blinks or opens eyes widely to such sounds or stops sucking or starts to cry.

1 month - a baby

Starts to notice sudden prolonged sounds like the noise of a vacuum cleaner and may turn towards the noise.
Pauses and listens to noises when they begin.

4 months - a baby

Quietens or smiles to the sound of a familiar voice even when unable to see speaker and turns eyes or head towards the voice.
Shows excitement at sounds e.g. voices, footsteps etc.

7 months - a baby

Turns immediately to familiar voice across the room or to very quiet noises made on each side (if not too occupied with other things).

9 months - a baby

Listens attentively to familiar everyday sounds and searches for very quiet sounds made out of sight.

12 months - a baby

Shows some response to own name. May also respond to expressions like "no" and "bye bye" even when an accompanying gesture cannot be seen.

2. Checklist for MAKING SOUNDS

4 months - a baby

Makes soft sounds when awake. Gurgles and coos.

6 months - a baby

Makes laughter-like sounds

Starts to make sing-song vowel sounds e.g. a-a, muh, goo, der, aroo, adah.

9 months - a baby

Makes sounds to communicate in friendliness or annoyance. Babbles (e.g. “da da da”, “ma ma ma”, “ba ba ba”). Shows pleasure in babbling loudly and tunefully. Starts to imitate other sounds like coughing or smacking lips.

12 months - a baby

Babbles loudly, often in a conversational-type rhythm. May start to use one or two recognisable words

Where children already have a diagnosed hearing problem, staff will need to work closely with families to devise effective communication methods and strategies. For information and advice, contact your Link Health Visitor or :

Highland Deaf Education and Hearing Support Service, works in partnership with parents, council staff and voluntary agencies to support deaf and hearing impaired children: tel. 01349 862882

Highland Deaf Services and Hearing Support Team can offer support to people with significant deafness and their families, including advice and specialist equipment: tel. 01349 868711.

Speech, Language and Communication

Communication skills are crucial for a child’s intellectual, educational, social and emotional development. Practitioners working with young children are in a good position to be aware of a child’s speech, language and communication development. If a child has difficulty understanding what you say, has difficulty using words and sentences, making specific speech sounds, or appears to have a difficulty with social communication and relationships, then it may be appropriate to seek professional advice.

The Speech and Language Therapy Service based at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness has an open referral system, which means anyone can contact them for help: telephone 01463 705424. Council nursery staff should make their concerns known to their Head Teacher or Support for Learning Teacher. Parental permission should be obtained prior to requesting support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service.

The ICAN Early Talk Scheme provides training for early years centres to obtain accreditation in their skills in supporting children's speech, language and development: see www.ican.org.uk . For information about training in Highland, please contact Childcare & Early Education Service.

The TalkingPoint website provides advice and practical strategies on children's communication, for both parents and professionals:

www.talkingpoint.org.uk/

Children with a first language other than English

An increasing number of families from outwith the UK have chosen to settle in the Highlands.

- Highland Council and NHS Highland are able to arrange for interpretation and translation of material in some circumstances and have information to download. Further details are available from their websites.
- Highland Council's education service offers advice on supporting children with English as an additional language.
- Highland Libraries stock books and other material - including the Bookbug packs - in a range of languages.
- The Literacy Trust produces free leaflets for parents in a variety of languages, downloadable from:
www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby/quicktips.html

- Many public service leaflets in Polish can be downloaded from www.polishinformationplus.co.uk/index.aspx

Vision see also Section 9; *Pre-school Orthoptic Vision Screening*

If you think a child is having difficulties seeing, appears to have a squint/turn in one eye or has a strong family history of glasses (parents and/or siblings) please ask the parent/carer to contact their GP, family Health Visitor and/or School Nurse, as soon as possible.

Specific conditions

For more information about specific conditions, see CHIP+ Children in the Highlands Information Point, for links www.chipplus.org.uk or contact Childcare & Early Education Service.

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

This legislation places a duty on education authorities to meet the needs of all pupils in their schools. The Act introduced new duties on education authorities to work with other agencies to support children, young people and parents. **This includes local authority pre-school education centres and commissioned partner centres together with NHS Highland.**

Children and young people may need this help to assist them with reading or writing; to improve their access to the school and its facilities; or to support their learning through difficult family or other circumstances. Additional support needs can be short or long term. For instance, additional support may be needed for a child or young person who:

- is being bullied
- has behavioural or learning difficulties
- is deaf or blind
- is particularly gifted
- is bereaved
- is not a regular attender.

Education authorities:

- must make adequate and efficient provision **for each child or young person** with additional support needs for whose education they are responsible;
- must also provide appropriate additional support for disabled children under 3 (or under 5 if not in a public or partnership nursery), where the child has been referred by a health authority and has additional support needs;
- must make arrangements to identify additional support needs;
- must publish information about provision for identifying and addressing additional support needs;
- must provide those children or young people who need it with a Co-ordinated Support Plan (see below) and keep this under regular review;
- where there is disagreement, they must provide independent and free mediation services for all parents of children with additional support needs and publish information on these services.

Parents have new rights, including to:

- request the education authority to find out whether their child has additional support needs;
- request the education authority to find out whether their child needs a Co-ordinated Support Plan or to review an existing plan;
- request a specific type of assessment and/or examination;
- request the use of mediation services.

Young people will also have these rights on their own behalf.

- In addition, education authorities will be able to help other children and young people with additional support needs who are not in education authority schools, for example those being educated at home or who are receiving private education. This is not a duty, but parents of these
- children will have a right to request assessment of their child's needs and the authority may provide advice, information and help.

The Act also introduces a new duty on other bodies, such as Health Boards, to help education authorities to identify and support children's and young people's learning needs.

Summaries of the duties of early education practitioners and health care staff are available from ENQUIRE: www.enquire.org.uk/pcp/pub/proguides.php and look up the relevant Factsheet.

Administering medication

The Highland Strategic Steering Group for the Administration of Medicines in Schools issues guidance that is appropriate for use in local authority pre-school education settings. Guidance on Anaphylaxis and Allergy, Asthma, Cystic Fibrosis, Diabetes and Epilepsy is available at:

www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Services/Pages/MedicinesInSchools.aspx

and go to '**Guidance & Conditions**'.

For other providers, a policy should be in place - check with your umbrella organisation. For further information please contact your local Public Health Nursing Team or Childcare & Early Education Service.

Accessibility

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and subsequent associated legislation imposes duties not to discriminate against disabled pupils or prospective pupils in the provision of education and associated services in schools, and in respect of admissions and exclusions. The associated Code of Practice applies to all schools and local authorities and sets out what schools and authorities should do to comply with the Acts.

Part III of the DDA covers access to goods, services, facilities and premises and gives disabled people important rights of access to everyday services that others take for granted. This applies to children as well as adults and means that services must take reasonable measures to remove barriers that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to access services.

Early years services should review their physical accessibility to children, families and also staff and volunteers with disabilities. In schools, this would be the responsibility of the Head Teacher.

For more information, contact your umbrella organisation or:

Jane Baines, Development Officer Support for Learners, tel. 01349 868219

Information on the Disability Discrimination Act: www.disability.gov.uk

Additional Support Needs

TRAINING

People working with young children require suitable training and skills to be able to fulfil their important role. Practitioners are now required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) which is responsible for registering staff and regulating their education and training. The childcare and early education workforce is included under the category “Day Care of Children”.

From the SSSC website www.ssc.uk.com:

“To guarantee registration in time, workers must have their applications in to the SSSC by the submission dates below.

	Application to be submitted to the SSSC	Date of required registration
Managers and lead practitioners of day care of children services	31 May 2010	30 November 2010
Practitioners in day care of children services	30 September 2010	30 September 2011
Support workers in day care of children services	31 December 2013	30 June 2014

What does required registration mean to me?

Required registration means that from the dates above to continue in your job you need to be registered with the SSSC or another relevant regulatory body like the General Teaching Council.

What happens if I’m not on the SSSC Register by the set date?

If you are not on the Register it will be an offence for an employer to employ you to do these jobs. The legislation says that employers will be guilty of an offence if, without reasonable excuse, they employ a person as a manager, a practitioner or a support worker in a day care of children service who is not registered with the SSSC or registered with another relevant regulatory body, eg the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

What happens if my application is submitted after the deadline for my type of worker?

If your application is submitted after the deadline we will process it after we have processed all the application forms received by the deadline. If your application is submitted after the deadline it is unlikely to be processed before required registration.

Registering without a qualification

Workers who apply to register but don't already hold the relevant qualification(s) can still be registered. We can register a worker who meets the rest of the registration criteria subject to the condition that they gain their qualification(s) within a specified period of time. This will normally be the first three years of their initial registration period."

To contact the Scottish Social Services Council, tel. Lo-call 0845 60 30 891 or www.sssc.uk.com

Highland Council, in partnership with local training providers, funds a range of qualifications for staff working in the childcare and early education sector. For more information on how to apply, please contact the Childcare and Early Education Service, tel. Lo-Call. 0845 60 11 345.

The service also co-ordinates an **Early Years Staff Development Programme** providing a range of training opportunities for example, child development, first aid, child protection, food hygiene etc., which can be accessed through the electronic staff development calendar at <http://highland.cpdservice.net/> or calling 01463 711176.

For other types of services, training may be available through umbrella organisations, statutory agencies or through Inverness or North Highland Colleges, the University of the Highlands & Islands network and private training providers.

For information on local training opportunities, please contact your local Childcare and Family Resource Officer – tel. 01463 711176 if you require the contact details.

RESOURCE LIST

Entries are in alphabetical order, by topic

Additional Support Needs

CHIP+ (Children in the Highlands Information Point)
Contacts, advice, links and Parent Information Packs
chip.birnie@ukgateway.net Tel. 01463 711189 (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)
www.childreninthehighlands.com

Highland Children's Forum
Contact: Calum Munro tel. 01463 223000 or calum.munrohcf@btconnect.com

ENQUIRE national advice service: www.childreninScotland.org.uk/

Child Development

Learning + Teaching Scotland www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears/
Early Years site has a wide range of information, including:
Reggio Emilia approach to early years education (1999)
ISBN 1 85955 672 8
Downloadable or to buy at £3.50. Tel. 08700 100 297

The British Association for Early Childhood Education (BAECE)
www.early-education.org.uk publications and leaflets

Play and Learning for under 3s (2001) Jennie Lindon
£9.99 Nursery World ISBN 1 84122 010 8

Scottish Book Trust site includes a database of recommended books, sorted by age: www.scottishbooktrust.com

Nursery World site with features and booklist: www.nursery-world.com

Games and activities to help children develop basic literacy, numeracy, ITC skills, with advice for parents and teachers.
www.funwithspot.com

NHS Health Scotland hosts the Early Years Learning Network: available via www.healthscotland.com/topics/stages/early-years/index.aspx

Child Protection

National reports:
www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/children-families/17834

Highland information: www.protectinghighlandschildren.org

Environmental activities

Highland Environmental Network: advice on a wide range of resources, including practical tips from the Plot to Pot project

www.highlandenvironment.org.uk

Local food producers: www.hilocalfood.net

Scottish Natural Heritage: www.snh.org.uk

Highland Council Ranger Service: www.highland.gov.uk or call your local Service Point.

National Trust: children's web-pages: www.trusty.org

Highland One World Group contact Janis.keast@highland.gov.uk or www.globaldimensions.highlandschools.org.uk

Equal Opportunities

An Equal Start – promoting equal opportunities in the early years

Commission for Racial Equality in Scotland/Disability Rights

Commission/Equal Opportunities Commission Scotland

Includes 'Creating an inclusive environment'.

Available from Childcare and Early Education Service.

Equal Opportunities Commission www.eoc.org.uk

First steps to Rights – activities for 3-7 year olds

UNICEF publication. Also regular newsletter for pre-school practitioners.

Both available from Highland One World Group,

tel. Janis Keast, 01349 863441 or 01381 621265

Scottish Development Education Centre

Resources and links www.globaldimensions.highlandschools.org.uk

UK disability information www.disability.gov.uk

Family Support - national

Ideas to help with early enjoyment of books at home, sponsored by the

Scottish Executive: www.readtogether.co.uk

Parentzone – Scottish Executive sponsored site with information for parents and carers

www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk

One Parent Families Scotland 0131 556 3899

www.opfs.org.uk

Free Helpline 0800 018 5026 operating:

Tues & Fri 1am – 1pm and 2 - 3pm; Thurs 12.30pm - 3.30pm

Resource List

BBC website has a wide range of practical advice covering child development and parenting : www.bbc.co.uk/parenting/kids

Parentline 0808 800 2222

National Family & Parenting Institute
www.nfpi.org and parents' website at www.e-parents.org

The Parent Centre – information on helping children to learn
www.parentcentre.gov.uk

First Aid / Unintentional Injury

Child Accident Prevention Trust www.capt.org.uk
Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents www.rospa.com
Both sites carry extensive information and downloadable leaflets.

Healthy living

Your Choice to Healthy Living
www.forhighlandschildren.org/html/your-choice-to-healthy-living/your-choice-to-healthy-living.php

Learning Teaching Scotland pages on health promoting schools
www.ltscotland.org.uk/healthpromotingschools/

Healthy Living: NHS Health Scotland/Scottish Government site, promoting Scotland's healthy living programme, with advice on food and exercise.
www.healthyliving.gov.uk

Wired for Health: Government website. Section for 5-7 year olds has useful information: www.welltown.gov.uk

Food Standards Agency www.food.gov.uk
British Heart Foundation www.bhfactive.org.uk

Infection, illnesses, allergies

Meningitis Association
www.meningitis.org and 24 hour freefone 080 8800 33 44

Head Lice www.nits.net/bugbusting/

NHS Scotland www.show.scot.nhs.uk

Asthma UK www.asthma.org.uk and Helpline 08457 010203 Mon-Fri 9-5

The Anaphylaxis Campaign. Information about severe allergic reactions
www.anaphylaxis.org.uk and Helpline 01252 542029.

National Eczema Society www.eczema.org

Oral Health

Childsmile: national programme www.child-smile.org

Play

Artsplay Highland www.spanglefish.com/ArtsplayHighland

Play Scotland www.playscotland.org/

Exercising muscles and minds: outdoor play and the early years curriculum
Marjorie Ouvry National Early Years Network, £9.50
ISBN 1904787 010

P.Inc (Play Inclusive)

A practical guide to supporting inclusive play for primary age children
Scotland Yard Adventure Centre and the Scottish Executive
Tel. 0131 476 4506 email: info@syac.org.uk

Standards

National Care Standards: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16
Care Commission www.carecommission.com

Scottish Social Services Council
Lo-call 0845 60 30 891 or www.sssc.uk.com

Birth to Three and Curriculum for Excellence
Learning Teaching Scotland www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears/

Training See Section 14.

INDEX	Section	Section
Accidents <i>see</i> Injury Prevention	7	Health Promoting Schools
Additional Support Needs	13	Healthy weight
Anaphylaxis (Severe allergic reaction)	7	Health Promotion Department
Asthma	7	Health Visitor
Birth to Three guidance	Intro	Hearing
Bookbug (<i>formerly Bookstart</i>)	1	Infection Control
Breastfeeding	10	Information Sharing
Car Seats	7	Injury Prevention
Care Commission	Intro	Languages
Child at the Centre	3	Libraries
Childcare & Family Resource Officers	1	Link Health Visitor
Childcare & Family Resource Partnerships	1	Literacy
Child Protection	4	Medication
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Disability Discrimination Act	13	Mental Health
Domestic Abuse	4	Nappy changing
E. coli O 157	5	Oral Health
Early Education Team	1	Outdoor Play
Early Years Framework	Intro	Outings
Emergencies	7	Parents <i>see</i> Family Support
Environmental Health	1	Physical Activity
Environmental Awareness	15	Play
Epilepsy	13	play @ home
Equal Opportunities	2	Polish <i>see</i> Languages
Exercise <i>see</i> Physical Activity	11	Pre-school Education
Family Support	2	Public Health Nurse
Farm visits	5	Registration
Fathers	2	Resource List
Fire Safety	7	Road Safety
First Aid	7	Scottish Social Services Council
Food Additives	10	SHANARRI <i>see</i> Getting it right
Food and Health	10	Sun Safety
Food Safety	6	Sweeteners in foods
For Highland's Children 3	Intro	Teeth <i>see</i> Oral Health
<i>Getting it right for every child</i>	Intro	Training
Glossary of terms	Intro	Vaccination
Hand Washing	5	Vision Screening
Head Lice	5	Working Together Statement
Health for All Children (<i>Hall 4</i>)	Intro	