

Scottish Out of School Care Network

Policy Newsletter, February 2011



"Supporting play, care and learning"

SOSCN News

SOSCN Funding

Despite securing another year's funding from the Scottish Government towards a percentage of core operations, funding for our Glasgow City Development Officer post will finish at the end of March 2011. From April 2011 SOSCN shall be operating with a staff team of three: Irene Audain, Andrew Shoolbread and Finlay Wright.

As the whole of Scotland still remains our remit we shall be relying more heavily on internet and technology to communicate. We would encourage everyone to regularly check our website (www.soscn.org), blog (www.soscn-updates.blogspot.com) and twitter (soscn) for updates and information.

Surveys

Over the coming months SOSCN will be conducting a couple of surveys, one of which is our annual workforce survey, now in its fourth year- we would encourage the dissemination and completion of this survey when it is available to ensure a good response.

Manifesto for Out of School Care 2011

SOSCN will be launching our manifesto for out of school care in early March. This will be available electronically, and again we would encourage people to distribute it widely and not just to service providers but parents as well.

News

Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme

The implementation of the PVG Scheme which replaces the current Disclosure system will come into operation on the 28th February 2011. The PVG scheme is managed by Disclosure Scotland and all new members of staff working with children should go through the PVG scheme from the start date. For all existing staff, they will become registered with the PVG scheme in a phased approach over the next three years. All services which are currently registered with Disclosure Scotland should have received information about the PVG scheme.

For further information visit the Disclosure Scotland website:

www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/about/vulnerable-groups/

Or visit:

<http://www.pvgschemescotland.org/>

The Central Registered Body in Scotland will register voluntary services for the PVG scheme, see the CRBS website for further information.

<http://www.crbs.org.uk/>

Transition from Care Commission to SCSWIS

On the 1st April 2011, SCSWIS will take over from the Care Commission as the regulatory body for out of school care, and childcare services in Scotland (in addition to other social care and social work services). We have been assured that all current data held with the Care Commission will be

Online Consultation

Throughout March there will be a web-based consultation running alongside the workshops. So if you are unable to attend the workshops you will still be able to contribute to the Feasibility Study by responding to the same questions and discussion documents as workshop attendees, on line. You will be able to access these documents in March through the SSSC's Workforce Solutions Portal. <http://workforcesolutions.sssc.uk.com>

Publications

Scottish Government

Tackling Child Poverty – consultation responses

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/01/28152742/0>

SOSCN's response

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/340246/0112705.pdf>

Progress Report on Early Years Framework

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/01/13114328/0>

This document provides an update on progress made on the Early Years Framework, two years on from publication of the original document.

National Guidance for Child Protection 2010

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/12/09134441/21>

The guidance provides a national framework within which agencies and practitioners at local level – individually and jointly – can understand and agree processes for working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

In relation to Child protection, the **Multi-Agency Resource Service (MARS)** is an organisation which aims to support professionals and agencies working in child protection by developing communities of expertise and sharing practice knowledge across Scotland. For further information and to become a member visit: <http://www.mars.stir.ac.uk/index.php>

Action for Children

The organisation Action for Children is encouraging individuals to sign-up to their online petition as part of their 'Take your action for children' neglect appeal. Action for Children are petitioning UK governments to wake up to neglect and pursue a policy of early intervention:

<http://tinyurl.com/6xvm55v> or visit www.actionforchildren.org.uk

Children in Scotland

The Costs of Childcare in Scotland Report 2011

Children in Scotland, in association with the Scottish Out of School Network (SOSCN)'s report *The costs of childcare in Scotland*, published on 9th February 2011, revealed that while the number of registered childcare centres and the number of centres providing preschool education has gone down by over 3% in the last three years, the number of children under 5 has risen by approximately 5%.

The figures highlight the problems surrounding implementation of the Framework, and point to the need for more resources and greater priority to be accorded to the support of services at a time when the birth rate is rising. They also make worrying news for parents, who are already dealing with other aspects of the economic downturn.

The report, which brings together information from service providers across Scotland and places the cost of childcare in the context of access to services, highlights inconsistencies with costs and

charging structures across the country, with costs per week for 25 hours care ranging from £58 to £107 in private and local authority nurseries, and £80 to £110 for childminders. Rural areas mostly offer cheaper prices, but fewer choices. Parents of children with disabilities have least choice of services, with 48% not offered a choice for their child. The figures are backed by recent findings from the Daycare Trust, which show Scottish childcare to be the most expensive in Britain.

Children in Scotland's chief executive Bronwen Cohen said: "With today's final Budget debate, it is vital that adequate provision is made for accessible and affordable childcare, and to address the unhelpful split that exists between the way childcare and early education are funded."

"Childcare costs and access issues contribute directly to the high levels of child poverty in Scotland, with nearly half of all children and young people living in poverty aged under 5. Affordable, strong early years provision that is accessible to all families is crucial not only in combating child poverty, but also for supporting parents, and encouraging economic recovery."

Irene Audain Chief Executive of The Scottish Out of School Care Network agrees: "It is essential both for children's wellbeing, and the national economy, that non-statutory childcare services are protected, so we are calling for the budget to include measures to sustain and protect these in Scotland."

"While some services, including some out of school care, are surviving on parental fees, others need subsidies to support children with disabilities, or those living in poor or rural areas. This leaves them extremely vulnerable to cuts in local government funding, which could lead to service closures, and parents without access to the childcare that is vital to them remaining part of the workforce."

Children in Scotland's Policy Development Manager Sarah Burton said: "The high costs of childcare in Scotland shown in our survey are a cause for concern, particularly in the current economic climate where children's services are vulnerable to cuts. Parents are facing a postcode lottery in costs and charging structures, with less access to tax credits and support. Access to services is likely to worsen as the population of under 5s rises."

The costs of childcare in Scotland: a special report brings together data from local authorities, a survey of private nurseries, and published and unpublished data from other organisations. It is available free to members of Children in Scotland. For further information: www.childreninscotland.org.uk

Health Protection Scotland Handwashing Pack

<http://www.washyourhandsofthem.com/the-campaign/childrens-pack.aspx>

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Nicola Sturgeon and Chief Medical Officer, Dr Harry Burns, recently highlighted the importance of good handwashing amongst children to help stop the spread of infections and seasonal illnesses.

Health promotion is an important issue and this includes raising awareness about hand washing to help reduce the spread of germs. Health Protection Scotland's aim is to raise the awareness of hand hygiene as early as possible to encourage children to get into the habit of washing their hands regularly. Hand hygiene is extremely effective in helping to prevent transmission of infection such as colds and flu. The Children's Pack is full of ideas and materials to encourage children to make hand washing part of their everyday routine.