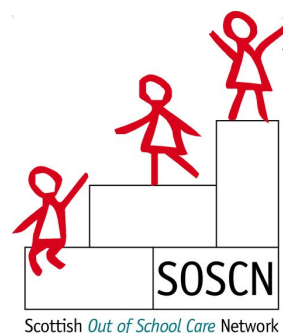


Out of School Care

The Benefits of School Age Childcare



There are 1,199 school age childcare services in Scotland, providing nearly 33,000 childcare places (Scottish Government, 2010). It is the second largest provider of childcare places in Scotland .

There is a mix of voluntary sector, independent and public sector managed out of school services. Childminders and sitter services also cater for some children of school age.

The economic argument for the provision of school age childcare

There is a need to maintain and create employment opportunities for parents who are expected to work, or train for work, especially with recent welfare reform.

Too many families are experiencing poverty and hardship and need more support in the community.

Parents want the best for their children and peace of mind while they work so they need high quality childcare for their children, which is available, accessible and affordable.

Children's rights approach to the provision of school age childcare:

There should be a place for every child who needs it. Places for children from both working and non working households, so that children in need access activities their families may not be able to provide.

Children with disabilities, in need of extra support, and from rural and economically or socially disadvantaged communities may need access to play care and learning after school and during the holidays, whatever the working status of their parents.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, and school age childcare:

Children's rights to care, play and leisure needs are met and children are protected.

Children's rights are promoted and children participate in making decisions at all levels of service provision.

Parents are supported in bringing up their children, and are enabled to take up work or training.

School age childcare links clearly with the UNCRC, Article 31: Children's Right to Play.

Current Issues

Local authorities are closing down directly managed services and reducing subsidies, or increasing school letting charges as part of current cost cutting measures, which we believe will seriously impact on local economic development and children's welfare. Local authority employed local development officer posts are also being lost. If services close down, we will not be able to meet demands for places from working parents, and to meet the aims of Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) for all children.

There should be ongoing investment and support for workforce development, given that all staff must meet Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration requirements and develop new skills.

There is a need to address serious gaps in provision, for children with disabilities and older children.

What can Scottish political parties and government do?

Refresh the Scottish Childcare Strategy, including "Schools Out" to tie in with related objectives such as the Early Years Framework, Achieving Our Potential, Getting it right for Every Child (GIRFEC), Equally Well, Additional Support for Learning and Curriculum for Excellence.

Support SOSCN's work and provide a strategic lead to local government in maintaining and supporting school age childcare, and key agencies such as SCSWIS and Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) in supporting quality and workforce development. For example, SOSCN's quality assurance scheme could offer additional reassurance that services are developing quality.

Earmark specific resources to protect existing vulnerable services and to address gaps in provision for children and parents.

Work with external funding agencies, such as the Big Lottery, to include school age childcare in future grant programmes.

Work with the UK government to ensure support to parents with tax credits for childcare.

What can local government do?

Use existing resources in challenging economic times

Provide "in kind" support by opening up access to education and leisure resources and premises at free or low cost.

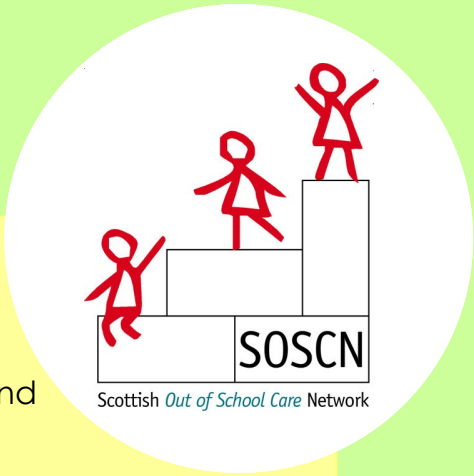
Produce policy guidance for schools and community planning partnerships, on how to include the needs of the school age childcare services in planning local provision and sharing local resources. Recognise that schools and school age childcare serve the same children and community. These measures could include, for example, *sharing support staff for children who need extra help.*

Commission places for children in need and embed school age childcare in local health, learning, social inclusion, equality, play and GIRFEC strategies.

Deliver workforce development subsidies to ensure quality and to retain a professional workforce.

Provide information on childcare, tax credits and childcare vouchers.

Benefiting families



Inspiring children & supporting wellbeing

- Explore new horizons and expand their range of interests and skills
- Have fun and relax with peers
- Meet and make friends of all ages
- Understand their own rights and responsibilities
- Learn how to take measured risks
- Learn through informal games and play activities
- Access to physical activity, playing outdoors
- Healthy and interesting food
- Sharing with each other and learning social skills

What children, parents & staff say

SOSCN interviewed children, parents and staff in out of school care services about the importance and benefits of out of school care. The interviews have been compiled into a short film, below is a small selection of the comments.



"I feel all the children are really happy here" Staff member

"We give children opportunities that parents maybe can't." Staff member

"Some children have made best friends at out of school care with children they wouldn't have at school." Staff member

"I think the children find they can speak to the workers here better than they can to the teachers, I think they become friends." Parent

"I think the interaction is very good." Parent

"I think staff are supportive, they keep things fair." Child

"The staff are absolutely excellent." Parent

What comes into your head when you think of "out of school care"?

"Craftroom"

"Big hall"

"Play"

"Cake!(On birthdays)"

"Exciting"

"Staff"

"Love it!"

"People"

"Brilliant. Fun!"

"Love, love, love it!"

About SOSCN

About the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN)

The Scottish Out of School Care Network is the national organisation promoting and supporting the development of high quality play, care and learning services for children and young people out with school hours.

The organisation has charitable status and currently receives funding from the Scottish Government. All of our work is underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.

SOSCN provides information and advice; conducts research; responds to and disseminates policy information and consultations; provides training and quality development support, and a range of resources, publications and events. We work in partnership with a wide range of agencies.

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SOSCN is a Registered Charity in Scotland SC020520

SOSCN promotes high quality school age childcare services

Staffed with caring and suitably trained, experienced and qualified professionals, with decent pay, conditions and status.

Out of school care needs to be recognised as an excellent form of early intervention to support children and families. The professionals involved need to acquire or maintain the skills needed to provide this support.

Services must remain affordable to parents while at the same time recognising the need to ensure staff are properly paid. Subsidies may be required in order to achieve this, as without subsidies, in many cases, staff are subsidising services through lower wages.

