



PRESS RELEASE
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‘Extend nursery provision to full-time’

Children in Scotland has asked the Scottish Parliament to press for a full-time, subsidised pre-school place for every three and four-year-old in Scotland as part of a national inquiry into pre-school education and care.

Ensuring that all children of all socio-economic groups have access to the same high quality services will help address inequality and reflect the growing recognition of the importance of the early years.

Children in Scotland’s evidence has been submitted to the Scottish Parliament’s Education Committee, to inform its Early Years Inquiry. The inquiry will examine the progress the Scottish Executive has made in delivering education and childcare in Scotland and explore how the sector might develop in the future.

The Westminster Government has already set out a ten-year strategy, which promises 3,500 children’s centres in communities throughout England and Wales by 2010 and all children in England and Wales, by 2010, will be entitled to 15 hours of a publicly funded nursery place, up from the current 12.5 hours.

Bronwen Cohen, chief executive of Children in Scotland, said: “The commitment to provide free part-time pre-school education for all three and four-year-olds in Scotland has been delivered with a positive impact on the lives of young children and their families in Scotland. Scotland now needs its own clear vision of what is being aspired to with a strategy that builds upon existing services and policies, and works towards achieving universal services for children that integrate care and learning.

“The most logical first step would be to extend the current part-time nursery provision to full-time.

“We believe that all children of all socio-economic groups should have access to the same high quality affordable services which meet the needs of both children and parents.”

Children in Scotland's evidence also reiterates the important role that the workforce plays in providing high quality services and calls for clear and realistic targets to improve pay and conditions in the sector.

Notes for editors

- Children in Scotland is the national agency for voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland. It exists to identify and promote the interests of children and their families and to ensure that relevant policies, services and provisions are of the best possible quality and able to meet the needs of a diverse society.
- The deadline for submitting written evidence to the Scottish Parliament Education Committee's Early Years Inquiry is April 8
- If you would like a copy of Children in Scotland's full written evidence, contact Nicola Pay on 0131 2222419