

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar



INTEGRATED EARLY YEARS STRATEGY



2005 - 2008

Western Isles

Integrated Early Years Strategy

Purpose

The purpose of this Strategy is to set out a framework for the effective provision of universal and targeted services for children and their families, from birth to 14. The strategy will draw together childcare, education, health and social care services which are directed at the early years of a child's life and at the parents and families of these children. By aligning Scottish Executive policies on early years we can capitalize on the complementary role that services play in securing the best start for all our children and promoting their well-being and the well-being of families and wider communities. integrated services are designed to:

- reduce the fragmentation of service provision;
- improve the co-ordination of inputs;
- develop greater efficiency and thereby expand the range and nature of provision available;
- provide a more effective high quality universal service available to all with targeted input for those most at risk of exclusion.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Children Services Plan underpins this approach. The Integrated Early Years Strategy will be incorporated within this plan.

Introduction

In May 1998 the Government published "Meeting the Childcare Challenge: A Childcare Strategy for Scotland". This Strategy recognised that good quality childcare benefits children by promoting their development and learning, and benefits parents by enabling them to work. As a result Childcare Partnerships were set up in every local authority area bringing together all those with an interest in childcare to promote its expansion in line with parental demand. There is a commitment to support families and children by ensuring that good quality affordable childcare is available to meet the needs of all parents and children aged 0-14. The Scottish Executive is also committed to universal public provision of high quality, part-time pre-school education. The Partnership recognises that as well as allowing parents to go out to work or study, good childcare should meet the needs of the children and ensures a safe and stimulating environment within which they can grow and develop. In addition, the Sure Start Scotland initiative helps disadvantaged families with very young children.

Over the past 5 years the expansion and quality of provision has been a success. However, current provision may not be offering parents and young people the range of services they require and the flexibility that they and their children need

A number of factors have contributed to this situation:

- Financial viability of centres.
- Constraints due to amount of staff and accommodation arrangements.
- Reducing numbers.

- The Scottish Executive's recommendation, and funding, for a pre-school place to be delivered over 33 weeks rather than fitting in with school term times.
- The incremental nature of the expansion and funding due to the Scottish Executive policies and funding.

During a 9 month consultation process the Comhairle has reviewed:

- How many childcare/pre-school places to provide?
- What range of services is required?
- Where to provide services?
- How best to integrate them with childcare provision?
- Which hours to provide?
- How to make provision for the most vulnerable?

Population Decline in the Western Isles

In 2001 the Western Isles had a total population of 26,502 of which 4,052 were under 18 and 1,293 were under 5. (GRO Census 2001).

The Comhairle's population projections suggest that if the population continues to decline at the same rate as it has over the past 10 years, the number of children under 5 will be 1,141 by 2006. This figure will decrease to 944 by 2012 and to 820 by 2016. Detailed information can be seen in Appendix C

Providing universal services for children when numbers are declining is a challenge for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CNES).

Current Childcare/Pre-school Provision in the Western Isles

Current Provision

There are currently 43 Childcare/Pre-school centres and 47 childminders providing childcare/pre-school services within the Western Isles. Appendix A provides maps detailing the location of each type of provision and Appendix B provides a list of the stock of suppliers in January 2004.

The number of children attending childcare/pre-school centres can range from as few as 1 to as many as 71. These figures fluctuate on an annual basis. The Comhairle subsidises pre-school groups with less than 8 children by topping up to 8 places. Only 3 pre-school providers provide childcare for children aged 0-3 and 5-12. While there is adequate pre-school education provision throughout the islands in the majority of cases the only option for all day care and afterschool care is to extend existing provision, increase the number of childminders and/or provide sitter services (a description of this type of service can be seen in Appendix D).

Rurality and sustainability problems are not unique to the Western Isles. However as these issues affect the whole of the geographic area the provision of all day care, afterschool and holiday care in line with parental demand is a challenge.

In order to establish demand for childcare services throughout the Western Isles, the Childcare Partnership commissioned an extensive, island wide audit of childcare services. The results from this audit were published in March 2004 and a summary of results can be found in Appendix E.

National Policy Context and Need for Strategy

In addition to the Scottish Executive's Childcare Strategy and Sure Start Initiative the following national policy context outlines the need for a local Integrated Early Years Strategy.

1. In October 2002 the Scottish Executive highlighted the need for better integration of services for children in their report "For Scotland's Children".
2. In 2002 a new regulatory body "The Care Commission" was established to take over the regulation of care including childcare.
3. In March 2003 the Scottish Executive issued a new draft Early Years Strategy. This set out proposals for provision of universal and targeted services for children and their families from pre-birth to age five.
4. In 2003 the Scottish Executive launched "Schools Out" a framework for development of good quality childcare and activities for school age children and young people. It made three recommendations for local authorities and childcare partnerships.
5. Early in 2004 the Scottish Executive, issued "Health for All Children" a draft for consultation. This sets out proposals on health promotion, primary prevention and targeting effort on active intervention for families and children at risk.
6. In 2006 all staff working within early education and childcare will be required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). To register with the SSSC all staff must fulfill the minimum qualifications criteria for each job category.

Local Integrated Early Years Strategy

In February 2004 the Comhairle approved a report from the Department of Education to enable consultation on the Integration of Early Years Provision. An update on the consultation process was given in April 2004 and it was agreed that further consultation was required. The consultation process took place in two phases and was completed in September 2004. A summary of results are contained in Appendix D.

Integrated Early Years Provision – Service Proposal

Over the past 5 years the expansion and quality of childcare and pre-school provision has been a success. However the Audit of childcare services identified some important gaps. In some areas current provision is not providing parents and young people the

range of services that they require or the flexibility that they and their children need (Appendix I details the number of parents who require each service by area). In addition, the consultation of the Integrated Early Years Strategy highlighted problems with sustainability, accommodation and the increased pressure on voluntary management committees (this is highlighted in Appendix G). Whilst some centres are thriving and would like to expand others are struggling to survive.

In order to fulfill our commitment to parents and children within the Western Isles, take forward the Scottish Executive's Policy Objectives, whilst maintaining best value, the Comhairle needs to review current service provision. The following issues will have to be considered:

- Direct and indirect management support services to voluntary management committees.
- Evaluation of suitability of premises.
- Additional financial support where necessary.
- Merging of some of the less economically viable groups or groups which could share accommodation.
- Sitter services to provide for the needs of families in the more remote areas.
- Continuation of the drive to recruit new childminders.
- Development of family centres in locations where this type of service would be viable (a description of this type of service is contained in Appendix H).
- Additional training provided to allow providers to meet the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council.
- Long term maintenance of pre-school provision, thus fulfilling the Comhairle's statutory obligation.
- Develop Sure Start services for vulnerable families (children 0-3).

Future Funding and Support to Childcare and the Pre-school Sector

Allocations for childcare/pre-school education are as follows.

	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Pre-school/ Childcare/Sure Start	£1,368,805.34	£1,388,315.33	£1,408,154.20

The figures above include additional funding allocated by the Scottish Executive which allows the expansion of an Integrated Early Years Service enabling the Western Isles to meet National Policy objectives.

Support to the Childcare/Pre-school Sector

Support will continue to be offered through the following:

- Internal and external support workers employed to offer advice and guidance.
- Financial support through main place pre-school funding and Early Years, Childcare and Sure Start grants.
- Comprehensive funded training programme.
- One to one support workers funded for children with additional support needs.
- Childcare Information Service.

Action Plan 2005-2008

The following action plan covers the period 2005/2008. Throughout this period the Department of Education will: carry out consultation exercises, undertake feasibility studies, progress new developments and evaluate service provision.

**Integrated Early Years Strategy
Action Plan - 2005/2008**

Target	Strategy	Success Criteria	Timescale
Investigate the feasibility of CNES taking over the management of the following voluntary run pre-school groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Castlebay Playgroup 2. Croileagan Bhaigh a Chaisteil 3. Croileagan Nis 4. Croileagan an Taobh Siar 5. Point Community Pre-school 6. Tong Playgroup 7. Little Lochies Playgroup 	Liaise with CNES legal and personnel sections, other Local Authorities and the groups concerned. Submit feasibility report for each pre-school group to Comhairle. Consider additional take over requests as and when required.	CNES statutory obligation to provide pre-school education maintained.	Aug 2005 Aug 2005 Aug 2006 Aug 2006 Aug 2006 Oct 2005 Aug 2006
Develop family centres in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Balivanich 2. North Uist (Saoghal Beag) 3. Harris (Sir E Scott) 4. Lochs (Sgoil nan Loch) 5. Stornoway 6. Point 7. South Uist (Chinn a Deas) 	Consult local communities. Draw up plans. Produce business plans. Adapt/purchase buildings. Liaise with colleagues in Education, Health, Sustainable Communities and Social Work to expand service provision. Submit report to Comhairle.	Integrated Service provision to meet the needs of parents and children.	March 2006 Aug 2006 Aug 2006 Aug 2007 March 2006 Aug 2006 Aug 2008 Aug 2006
Make urgent repairs to CNES owned buildings and provide grant funding for repairs to pre-school centres in the voluntary sector.	Prioritise based on: Requirements from the Care Commission and HMI; Health and Safety; future viability and cost.	Good quality pre-school/childcare provision.	Ongoing March 2006.
Work towards all staff having qualification requirements of SSSC prior to 2009.	Identify suitable qualifications for managers and fund training organisations to deliver training. Continue to fund accredited qualifications on an annual basis.	All staff able to register with SSSC in 2006.	Ongoing

Target	Strategy	Success Criteria	Timescale
Rationalise pre-school education to meet the current demand: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bernera/Carloway/Bhreascleit 2. Borge/Barvas 3. Point 4. Stornoway 5. Tarbert/Scalpay 6. North Uist 7. South Uist 	Identify unviable pre-school provision and suitable alternatives. Liaise with local communities. Submit report for approval to Comhairle.	Pre-school/childcare provision maintained within budget allocation.	March 2006 August 2005 August 2008 August 2008 August 2007 August 2007 August 2007 August 2005
Work in partnership with other agencies to take forward the Scottish Executive's Integrated Strategy.	Focus group meetings arranged after the launch of this document in October 2004. Development plan drawn up. Report submitted to Comhairle.	Work in partnership to meet Scottish Executive national policy objectives and meet the needs of parents and children.	November 2004 March 2006
Continue to provide an afterschool and holiday club in Laxdale Primary School.	Continuation of Senior Playworker and Playworker posts on a permanent basis.	Good quality affordable childcare to meet the demand of parents.	April 2005
Develop all day care provision for 3-5yr olds in Stornoway Primary.	Pilot project run from Aug-June 05. Monitor attendance figures, income and expenditure. Report submitted to Comhairle.	Good quality affordable childcare to meet the demand of parents.	Pilot commenced
Develop Sure Start Services for Vulnerable Families (Children 0-3) including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play Sessions 2. Outreach Support 3. Parent Support Classes 4. Resource libraries for parents 5. Toy Libraries 6. Support Groups for parents 7. Play at home project 	2 members of staff employed to develop services throughout Islands.	Equal opportunities for children from vulnerable families.	September 2005 April 2006 April 2006 April 2005 April 2006 April 2006 April 2006 April 2006

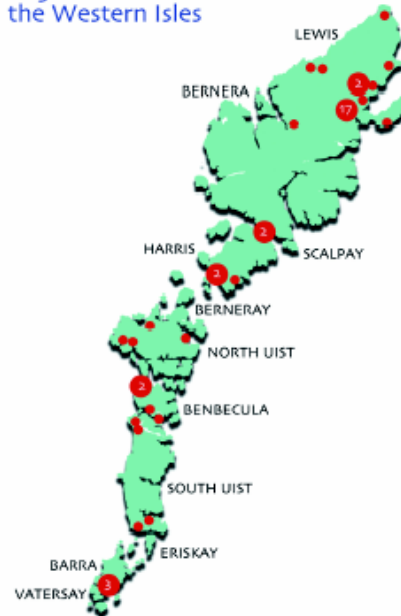
Target	Strategy	Success Criteria	Timescale
Develop childminding services to fill gaps in service provision.	Liaise with SCMA to establish areas of demand. Extensive advertising campaign. Support to individuals going through the registration process and existing childminders. Subsidise childminders in rural areas.	Childcare services in areas where childcare centres are unviable.	August 2005.
Conduct a feasibility study of a Sitter Service in Western Isles	Liaise with colleagues in Education, Health and Social Work. Produce a business plan. Submit a report to Comhairle.	Outreach childcare service to meet the demand. Support to vulnerable families and children with ASN.	March 2007
Take forward the Schools Out Action Plan as approved by Committee in September 2004.	Through the Childcare Partnership working group.	Out of School services organised to meet demand.	2007

Appendix A

A1 PreSchool providers in the Western Isles



A2 Registered Childminders in the Western Isles



A3 All day care for babies and children up to 5



A4 Out of school care for primary age children



Appendix B

Western Isles
Stock of Childcare/Pre-school Suppliers
January 2004

Stock of suppliers	
Local Authority Nursery Schools And Nursery Classes	1
Nursery Centres	0
Community Nurseries	0
Private Sector Day Nurseries, Nursery Schools & Voluntary Sector Day Nurseries	5
Nurseries Attached To Independent Schools	0
Family Centres	1
Playgroups	32
Out Of School Clubs	7
Registered Childminders	47
Total	93

Source: Childcare information Service, CNES

Western Isles
Population Projections based on GROS Census Data

Year	Total 0-16	0-2	3-4	5-11	12-16
2000	5688	786	615	2421	1866
2006	4864	652	489	2017	1706
2012	4071	534	410	1696	1431
2016	3574	455	365	1513	1241

Source: Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

What is a Sitter Service?

A sitter service provides childcare in a child's own home as and when required. Often they provide services for low income families, families where parent(s) work a typical shift patterns or are attending further education (e.g. night classes). Some parents of children with additional support needs also find this type of provision useful.

Childcare Agencies such as sitter services can be registered to provide care in a child's own home. Staff will undergo inspection process including an Enhanced disclosure check and will be expected to meet the relevant National Standards which are designed to ensure that the service provided is of a high quality.

Staff are employed to work a certain number of hours per week or can be employed on an as and when basis.

The advantage of this type of service in the Western Isles:

1. Staff can travel to different areas to provide a service instead of waiting for work to come to them.
2. Children have continuity of care (similar to the home help service).
3. Social Work can access this service.
4. Childcare/pre-school providers can use sitter service staff as a bank for relief staff.
5. Parents have the flexibility of having a service that meets their needs.
6. Older children are less likely to be against someone coming in to their own home to look after them compared to going to a childcare centre.
7. Children of all ages within the family are looked after within the same care setting.
8. This service will provide a childcare service in areas where other types of provision are unviable.

**An Audit of Childcare Services in the Western Isles
Summary**

Nature and scale of the Audit

Four questionnaires were distributed to parents/carers, childcare users, childcare providers and to schools. In addition the views of children were sought. 1050 questionnaires were returned representing a 37.9% return.

The general picture

An analysis of which type of childcare parents/carers use showed that a very large number of children are catered for by friends and neighbours. Throughout the islands the general satisfaction figure was very high. Only 19% of parent/carers said that they had unmet childcare needs.

There was a correlation between unmet needs and smaller communities. The five greatest needs were, in order of importance:

- Holiday clubs
- After School Clubs
- Childcare near home or work
- Childcare in the home
- Activities for the 12+ age group

Nine per cent of respondents pay for hours over and above funded pre school sessions. A significant gap was a perceived lack of childcare for the under 3's.

Reasons for accessing childcare services

The overwhelming reason was to enable parents/carers to work on a full or part time basis. Social and educational reasons also rated highly.

Factors influencing choice of childcare

Location was without question the greatest factor. Links with school and home, and the recommendations of friends or relatives, also influenced choice. More than three times the number of respondents would prefer childcare to be located near to their place of work rather than near their home. There was an even spread of need across earlier starts and later finishes, weekend and holiday provision. The common factor was the need for flexibility.

Transport issues

Although only 4.5% of respondents claimed that transport was an issue it was apparent from the comments received that for those few affected it is a profound problem that impacts on employment options.

Gaelic

The language issue gave rise to many strongly worded comments. Comparison with the 1995 audit suggests that whereas the preference for Gaelic has stayed largely the same, there has been a distinct increase in the number of respondents who expressed a preference for both languages.

The Motiv8 Programme

In general the statistics revealed both high awareness of, and satisfaction with, the Motiv8 Programme a significant number of replies advocated an extension to the range of activities that are currently offered.

Working Tax Credit

Few parents/carers were unaware of the Working Tax credit and just under half were receiving payment.

Out of school hours learning

Although not counted as Childcare this range of provision was included in the audit many children clearly benefit from the various programmes. It was apparent however that in the main the activities are targeted at children of upper primary school age; often run for only one day per week; and do not necessarily run throughout the full year. NB This result may change as this part of the audit is ongoing and not all results had been received.

The Children's view

When asked to identify the activities they would like to take part in during the school holidays the children identified a vast range of leisure and learning pursuits. A large number wanted outdoor activities.

Service Users' Views

All childminders, pre school providers and all day nurseries were asked to distribute questionnaires to users. The questions covered activities, premises, staffing, other features of the service and the children's view. The returns provided conclusive evidence that almost all users were satisfied with all aspects of the service they received.

Other needs

Users were also asked which other services they would use if they were available. The findings reflected those described elsewhere in the report with preferences expressed for holiday clubs, out of school clubs and family centres. A correlation between expressed need and geographic area is contained in the main body of the report.

The providers' views

Four providers stated that transport was a problem. Thirteen providers had problems relating to their premises. Six providers had found supporting children with special needs to be problematic. Nine providers had experienced difficulty with recruiting and retaining staff.

Staff figures and pay

The main area of discrepancy was in the salaries of the Play Leaders.

The consultation and auditing process

Many respondents declared their approval of the consultation process.

The Children's Services Plan

The vast majority of respondents endorsed the Childcare Partnership's objectives.

Common misconceptions

Misconceptions apparent in some replies in relation to training, communication and screening issues are specifically addressed in the penultimate section of the report.

Information Service

Statistics compiled over the last year reveal healthy degrees of interest in the Childcare Information Service.

Integrated Early Years Strategy

Consultation Results – Summary

Overall response

Pre-school providers

37 Pre-school providers were consulted, 78% responded by answering a questionnaire, attending a private meeting or by writing in to the Department of Education.

Afterschool Care providers

3 were consulted (remaining 4 also provide pre-school education and are included within results above). All responded by answering a questionnaire, attending a private meeting or by writing in to the Department of Education.

Other childcare providers

3 were consulted. All responded by answering a questionnaire, attending a private meeting or by writing in to the Department of Education.

Umbrella Organisations

SCMA, SPPA, CNSA Roinn nan Eilean and OOSCF were consulted. All responded by answering a questionnaire, attending a private meeting or by writing in to the Department of Education.

Childminders

50 Childminders were consulted in the first consultation round and 16% responded.

Western Isles Childcare Partnership

The Partnership was consulted at the meeting 18th February 2004. A copy of the draft report for consultation was distributed to all present. Appendix 1 was highlighted. The Partnership agreed to the proposals detailed within the Integrated Early Years Consultation Paper.

General Picture

60% of individuals, groups and umbrella organisations consulted agree that CNES should investigate the potential for developing integrated early years service and support change in structure and service delivery. The remaining 40% highlighted specific issues relating to their own group and not the strategy as a whole.

Common Issues

Strain on Management Committee

Of those who responded, 26 groups had a voluntary management committee. 31% Stated that the burden on their voluntary management committee was overwhelming. The majority of those who felt this pressure asked for the Comhairle to take them over.

Inadequate buildings

Of the 35 pre-school/childcare groups that responded, 40% indicated that there was an issue with their accommodation. Issues included: buildings in very poor repair; difficulties with maintenance of buildings; shared accommodation; lack of space; lack of outside play area and lack of storage. These issues match those already identified within the "Audit of Childcare Services in the Western Isles – March 2004".

Transport

Of all the childminders, groups and umbrella organisations consulted only 6% raised an issue with transporting children between villages.

Gaelic

The majority of Croileagan, CNSA and CNSA Roinn nan Eilean stated that care should be taken to preserve the Gaelic language within any future service provision. There should be no integration of Gaelic and English provision. CNES should investigate different models of language acquisition and that there should be greater communication and participation in the planning process.

Pressures on Voluntary Management Committees

Parents who act as office bearers on voluntary management committees are considered to be the managers of the childcare/pre-school service.

1. They must have a thorough knowledge of employment law and health and safety regulations.
2. They must have knowledge of the curriculum and other relevant standards set by the Education Department.
3. The Chair person is legally responsible for the group and the Care Commission require this individual to have an enhanced disclosure check, a medical check and 2 references prior to taking up post.
4. The committee must ensure that enhanced disclosure checks are carried out on all staff working within the service.
5. The Care Commission require the committee to be aware of the aims and objectives of the service provision, the Care Commission Standards, Scottish Social Service Councils Code of Practice and Scottish Statutory Instrument 114.
6. There is a conflict of interest on the management committee as they are both service users and managers.
7. Continuity of committees is difficult as the majority of parents only remain on the committee the length of time their child attends; this is usually a maximum of 2 years.
8. Treasurers are responsible for maintaining accounts and paying staff, this is a problem to anyone who does not have a financial background.
9. The role of the pre-school committee is excessively time consuming and a very specialised job which carries considerable responsibility.

What is a Family Centre?

A family centre is a multi purpose centre that is adapted to suit the needs of families within a community.

The range of services that could be offered includes:

1. Pre-School Education (Separate Gaelic and English Medium Units).
2. Childcare before and afterschool and for the under 5's.
3. Childcare/Respite for children with ASN.
4. Respite and/or childcare for vulnerable families.
5. Resource library for parents.
6. Toy library.
7. Parent support classes.
8. Access to a range of visiting professionals e.g. Health Visitors, Social Work, Educational Psychologist, links with schools.
9. Youth Cafés.
10. Holiday Clubs.
11. Mother and Toddler Groups.

It is accepted that some rural areas will have limited demand and will not be able to sustain this type of service. It is therefore hoped that family centres will also have childminding networks and sitter services linked to them. These services will provide an outreach service in the more remote parts of the islands. Some pre-school centres will also operate in isolation as there may not be a demand for any other type of provision in the area.

Appendix I

An Audit of Childcare services in the Western Isles

March 2004

Number of parents who require each service by area

	Breakfast Club	Weekend Childcare	Childcare Nr Home	Activities for 12+	ASN	Afterschool Club	Holiday Club	Gaelic Childcare	English Childcare	Childcare in Home
Ness	3	1	4	1	1	5	6	3	1	2
Westside	5	0	7	6	1	9	8	3	1	8
Uig & Gt Bernera	0	0	3	2	0	1	3	0	3	0
Broadbay	0	2	6	3	0	12	8	0	1	1
Stornoway	5	8	4	7	2	12	19	2	0	8
Point	0	0	1	3	1	1	2	1	0	2
N Lochs	1	0	5	1	1	9	4	2	1	3
S Lochs	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	0
Harris & Scalpay	0	2	3	3	0	4	9	1	0	1
N.Uist & Berneray	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	2	0	0
Benbecula	1	2	5	2	0	6	8	1	0	4
S Uist & Eriskay	0	1	2	1	0	3	4	1	0	0
Barra & Vatersay	0	2	4	2	3	2	3	1	1	2
Total	15	18	44	32	10	67	78	19	8	31

**Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
"School's Out" Action Plan**

Schools Out

Recommendation 1

Local Authorities should review Out of School Care (OSC) provision in their areas during 2003-2004, with the Childcare Partnerships, to set targets for growth and to establish what local action is needed to address issues of availability, sustainability and quality.

Target	Responsibility	Action	Timescale
Carry out a demand assessment to highlight gaps in provision.	Childcare Partnership office staff. Childcare Partnership. Key Stakeholders. External Consultant.	Carry out extensive local audit of childcare services.	March 2004
An assessment of the sustainability of different models for the delivering OSC.	Childcare Partnership office staff.	Complete mapping exercise of existing OOSC services.	April 2004
An assessment of the sustainability of each existing club.	Childcare Partnership office staff. Childcare Partnership Financial Sub Group.	Analyse financial information submitted to Childcare Partnership Office when requesting sustainability grants.	Ongoing
A consideration of workforce training to ensure staff can work confidently and effectively with children with special needs or with additional support needs.	Childcare Partnership office staff. Department of Education. NHS Western Isles. Local training providers.	Complete annual training survey. Provide training in line with demand.	Annual Survey (January) Ongoing
An examination of the quality of provision, taking into account the range of activities provided, the range and type of facilities such as equipment and open space, the experience of staff, and flexibility and reliability of the service.	Childcare Partnership office staff. Out of School Care Federation. Care Commission.	Obtain Care Commission Inspection reports and identify areas of concern. Provide support when needed.	Ongoing

Recommendation 2

During 2003-2004, local authorities working with Childcare Partnerships, should examine the scope for using local authority premises, taking account of the main messages in the school-estate strategy, 'Building Our Future: Scotland's School Estate'

Target	Responsibility	Action	Timescale
Audit of out of schools learning activities within all schools.	Childcare Partnership office staff. Department of Education. All Schools.	Audit completed and results analysed.	March 2004.
Review all service provision for potential expansion, issues facing service providers and inclusion of service within family centres.	Department of Education Childcare Partnership.	Integrated Early Years Strategy produced and put out for consultation. Consultation results and Integrated Early Years Strategy – Service proposal put forward to Committee.	March 2005 June 2005
Identify suitable premises within schools and demand for service.	Department of Education. Childcare Partnership office staff.	Audit completed and results analysed. Consultation with local communities and schools.	March 2004 Ongoing.
Review the Comhairle's school letting policy, thus ensuring children and young persons groups have free school lets.	Department of Education. All schools.	Schools letting policy reviewed and put out for consultation. Consultation results and policy proposal put forward to Committee.	August 2004 October 2004

Recommendation 3

Local authorities should work with Childcare Partnerships to develop, by March 2004, a local action plan of short-term and longer-term help and support to clubs, and to improve sustainability.

Target	Responsibility	Action	Timescale
Development of local strategy to spread good practice.	Childcare Partnership office staff. Local out of school clubs.	Identify good practice within clubs. Set up local OOSC network support group to look at common issues, policy and procedures.	Ongoing March 2004 Quarterly Meetings Held
Help for clubs with funding applications.	Childcare Partnership office staff. Childcare Partnership Financial Sub Group. Western Isles Enterprise. Out of School Care Federation.	Childcare Partnership provides grant support to OOSC clubs. Childcare Partnership Development Officer supports providers when making applications for funding.	Quarterly Ongoing
Financial support to clubs for training initiatives and financial support to local OSC networks which provide essential practical support to clubs.	Childcare Partnership Financial Sub Group. Childcare Partnership office staff. Western Isles Enterprise. Out of School Care Federation.	Annual training programme produced and web site updated. Training bid produced for funding from Western Isles Enterprise. All training needs funded by the Childcare Partnership. Out of School Care Federation funded for support work undertaken within the Western Isles.	Ongoing September 2004 Ongoing April 2004 April 2005
Provide or consider subsidising, suitable premises for OSC services.	Department of Education.	School let policy review.	October 2004
Encourage clubs to charge realistic fees and promote	Childcare Partnership Office staff.	Network meeting to discuss fees.	August 2004

benefits such as the childcare tax credit.	Employment Plus. Local OOSC Network.	Information provided to all parents on tax credits.	Ongoing
Provide improved business support to the parent-led management committee model or outsource certain functions including payroll and recruiting staff.	Out of School Care Federation. Department of Education.	Integrated Early Years Strategy – Review management structure within all childcare/pre-school settings. Solutions to management problems to be submitted to Comhairle and Childcare Partnership.	June 2005. Ongoing.

Recommendation 4

In support of these recommendations, the enterprise networks (Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise) should, between now and 2006:

- Work with Childcare Partnerships to exchange information on relevant aims and objectives;
- Advise local authorities and Childcare Partnerships about any future demand for childcare (including OSC) as a result of new businesses setting up and/or the expansion of existing businesses in local areas;
- Support and further development of OSC by applying its range of business support and advice in relation to, for example, workforce development and business set up.

Target	Responsibility	Action	Timescale
To work with Childcare Partnerships to exchange information on relevant aims and objectives	Western Isles Enterprise. Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Childcare Partnership Office staff. Childcare Partnership.	Local information shared at Partnership meetings. Information shared at bi annual meeting with HIE.	Quarterly Bi-annual
To advise local authorities and CPs about any future demand for childcare (incl. OOS) as a result of new businesses setting up and/or the expansion of existing businesses in local areas.	Western Isles Enterprise.	Local information shared at Partnership meetings and Financial Sub Group meetings.	Quarterly