



# Celebrating ELC Awards

Better outcomes for children & families



## Introduction

This guide provides information for early years providers interested in applying for a Celebrating ELC Award from the ELC Academy.

### It will:

- clarify the principles underlining the Celebrating ELC Awards;
- set out the criteria for each of the awards;
- suggest possible sources of evidence;
- outline the process to apply for an award.



## Background and context

The Scottish Government is expanding the provision of funded early learning and childcare (ELC) for all three and four year olds and eligible twos from 600 hours to 1140 hours from August 2020, ensuring that the expansion prioritises high quality experiences for children, recognising the significant contribution that universally accessible ELC can make to a child's development and to closing the attainment gap.

'A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in Scotland - ELC Expansion Planning Guidance for Local Authorities' issued in March 2017 by the Scottish Government set out local authorities' responsibility for the implementation and delivery of an expanded entitlement to 1140 hours of funded ELC. The National Standard published in December 2018 provides the quality assurance background to meet these responsibilities. This guidance is all underpinned by the principles of Quality, Flexibility, Accessibility and Affordability.

The Scottish Government estimates that 11,000 people will need to be recruited across Scotland to support the ELC expansion<sup>1</sup>.

Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils as well as Training Providers, employment stakeholders and practitioners from across the North East of Scotland formed an ELC Academy. In the context of the ELC expansion and our need to attract and retain staff, the key aims of the ELC Academy are to promote ELC careers and support the recruitment and retention of quality ELC staff.

The "Celebrating ELC Awards" have been developed to recognise, reward and value practice across the sector. The aim is to create multiple mechanisms to share knowledge and practice, drive collaboration and improve quality and outcomes for children and families.

### **Consulting our workforce raised a number of challenge questions:**

- What kind of strategies can we employ to incentivise high quality ELC across all funded providers?
- How do we create an environment that encourages and supports knowledge-sharing across a varied service landscape and vast geographical region?
- How do we build a culture of recognition?

In response to these questions, we have co-constructed an awards scheme with our practitioners which will recognise, value and reward our teams for their expertise.

<sup>1</sup> A blueprint for 2020: the expansion of early learning and childcare in Scotland - 2017-2018 action plan.

## Purpose

Better outcomes  
for children  
& families

### Key Drivers are:

- Building health and wellbeing capacity in our children and families.
- Building capacity in our ELC Practitioners to engage in reciprocal relationships with all stakeholders.
- Creating collaborative platforms for knowledge-sharing within the sector.
- Strengthening and supporting confidence and wellbeing in ELC professionals.
- Enabling children's rights adhering to the UNCRC



## What will the Celebrating ELC Awards do?

The Awards programme will recognise the drive to make changes in your setting in an identified area.

**We are all one ELC sector**



**Building health and wellbeing capacity in our children and families.**

- Wellbeing for all
- Nurturing relationships
- Secure attachments



**Building capacity in our ELC Practitioners to engage in reciprocal relationships with all stakeholders.**

- Investing in the sector
- Increasing professional confidence
- Evidence based practice



**Creating collaborative platforms for knowledge-sharing within the sector.**

- Knowledge-sharing
- Informal networking
- Breaking down barriers



**Strengthening and supporting confidence and wellbeing in ELC professionals.**

- Building trust
- Specific recognition
- Engaging with self-evaluation



**Enabling children's rights adhering to the UNCRC**

- Health, wellbeing and safety
- Meaningful learning and development
- Sense of agency

## Principles of Awards

Our awards recognise and celebrate the impact ELC Practitioners and teams have in ensuring the children in Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City and Moray experience high quality ELC that meets the needs of all children, parents and families.

### The work of the team applying will be:

- Achievable
- Visible
- Creative
- Sustainable
- Collaborative

## Award Categories

- Team
- Working in Partnership
- Indoor Environment
- Outdoor Environment

### Who can apply?

The Celebrating ELC Awards are open to all funded providers (including local authority, private, and third sector nurseries, playgroups and preschools) across Moray, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The awards application process will be open to settings once every year.

### Can I apply for more than one category?

ELC settings can apply for one category in 2019. This may change in future years.

### If we aren't ready to apply this year, can we apply next year?

Yes, the awards programme will run annually.

### How do I apply?

You can apply directly through [www.elcacademy.scot](http://www.elcacademy.scot)

### Where can I find out more?

You can find examples and more information at:  
[www.elcacademy.scot](http://www.elcacademy.scot)

### Key dates

Awards open - 9th September 2019

Awards close - 4th October 2019

Advised of shortlist - week beginning 28th October 2019

Visits to settings between the 4th - 22nd November 2019

Awards announced - January 2020

## Award 1

### Team

Professional learning and personal strengths are encouraged and used to benefit the life and work of the setting

### Criteria:

**Nomination for an award in this category will require evidence of changes implemented in your setting, reflecting:**

- A nurturing ethos based on a foundation of wellbeing for all (children, families & staff).
- Use of national and local guidance to take account of current research.
- Close attention has been paid to achieving challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance.
- Distributed leadership is evident at the setting.
- All staff are supported in their personal/professional development (eg SSSC registration, reflective practice).
- Practitioners have a strong commitment to family engagement in learning.
- Professional learning is relevant to ELC setting needs and improvement plan.

**During the visit made to the setting the following may be used as sources of evidence:**

- Vision, values and aims
- Documentation of reflective practice
- Dialogue with practitioners, children and families
- Dialogue with others who contributed to the initiative
- ELC Planning and Improvement plan
- Documentation which demonstrates the impact of training on outcomes for children and families
- Evidence of professional learning reflected in practice.

### Resources to support;

- Supporting improvement - It's everyone's business
- Building the Ambition
- HGIOELC
- Health and Social Care Standards
- Personal reading
- National Improvement Hub <https://education.gov.scot/improvement>
- Care Inspectorate Hub <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/>

## Award 2

### **Working in Partnership**

A strong community partnership fosters positive outcomes for all.

#### **Criteria:**

**Nomination for an award in this category will require evidence of changes implemented in your setting, reflecting:**

- A nurturing ethos based on a foundation of wellbeing for all (children, families & staff).
- Use of national and local guidance to take account of current research.
- Close attention has been paid to achieving challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance.
- Developments have included input from children and families.
- Distributed leadership is evident at the setting.
- Multi-agency working is evident at the setting.
- Meaningful links are made with the local community.

**During the visit made to the setting the following may be used as sources of evidence:**

- Vision, values and aims
- Documentation of reflective practice
- Dialogue with practitioners, children and families
- Dialogue with others who contributed to the initiative
- ELC Planning and Improvement plan
- Documentation which demonstrates the impact of training on outcomes for children and families
- Media: photographs/videos of visits/events/shared project

#### **Resources to support;**

- Supporting improvement - It's everyone's business
- Building the Ambition
- HGIOELC
- Health and Social Care Standards
- GIRFEC
- Professional reading
- National Improvement Hub <https://education.gov.scot/improvement>
- Care Inspectorate Hub <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/>

## Award 3

### Indoor Environment

The indoor environment supports an open ended, engaging approach to learning.

#### Criteria:

**Nomination for an award in this category will require evidence of changes implemented in your setting, reflecting:**

- The space is used effectively to respond to the learning and care needs of children.
- A wide range of resources including natural and open ended, support development and progress across all areas of learning and are well matched to the needs of the children.
- Practitioners recognise the need to ensure skills for learning and life are embedded in children's learning in meaningful and relevant contexts.
- There are opportunities for children to be creative, make choices and decisions, investigate, problem solve, develop resilience and independence.
- Developmentally appropriate literacy and numeracy learning opportunities are evident across the environment and reflected in daily routines and real life tasks.
- Practitioners use observations and assessment information to plan responsively around children's interests and ideas promoting challenge and inquiry.
- Children are highly motivated and fully engaged by the range of rich, challenging experiences and opportunities that are on offer in the environment.

**During the visit made to the setting the following may be used as sources of evidence:**

- Documentation of the development/improvement and demonstrating the impact.
- Self-evaluation
- Inspection reports
- Practitioner research findings
- Photographs showing 'before' and 'after' improvements made over time
- Floor books/Learning Walls
- Staff meeting/discussion minutes
- Resources audit

#### Resources to support;

- Supporting improvement - It's everyone's business
- Building the Ambition
- HGIOELC
- Health and Social Care Standards
- Examples of professional reading books
- National Improvement Hub <https://education.gov.scot/improvement>
- Care Inspectorate Hub <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/>

## Award 4

### Outdoor Environment

The outdoor environment allows children to demonstrate and practise different skills in creative ways and practitioners offer children regular experiences in different contexts including the natural environment.

#### Criteria:

#### Nomination for an award in this category will require evidence of changes implemented in your setting, reflecting:

- A nurturing ethos based on a foundation of wellbeing for all (children, families & staff).
- Creative solutions are found to ensure free-flow access to outdoors.
- Children have the opportunity to spend time outdoors within a natural environment such as woodlands, forests, beaches, hillsides but also public parks, gardens, and open green areas.
- The outdoor space is developed to offer different real and meaningful learning opportunities to indoors underpinned by the principles of curriculum design.
- The benefits and risks of outdoor learning are promoted and discussed with parents and children.
- Well planned management of the outdoor space is evident.
- Innovative and creative use of available space and local Environment is evident.
- Children are motivated and fully engaged by the range of experiences and opportunities on offer.
- Children are dressed appropriately at the setting.

#### During the visit made to the setting the following may be used as sources of evidence:

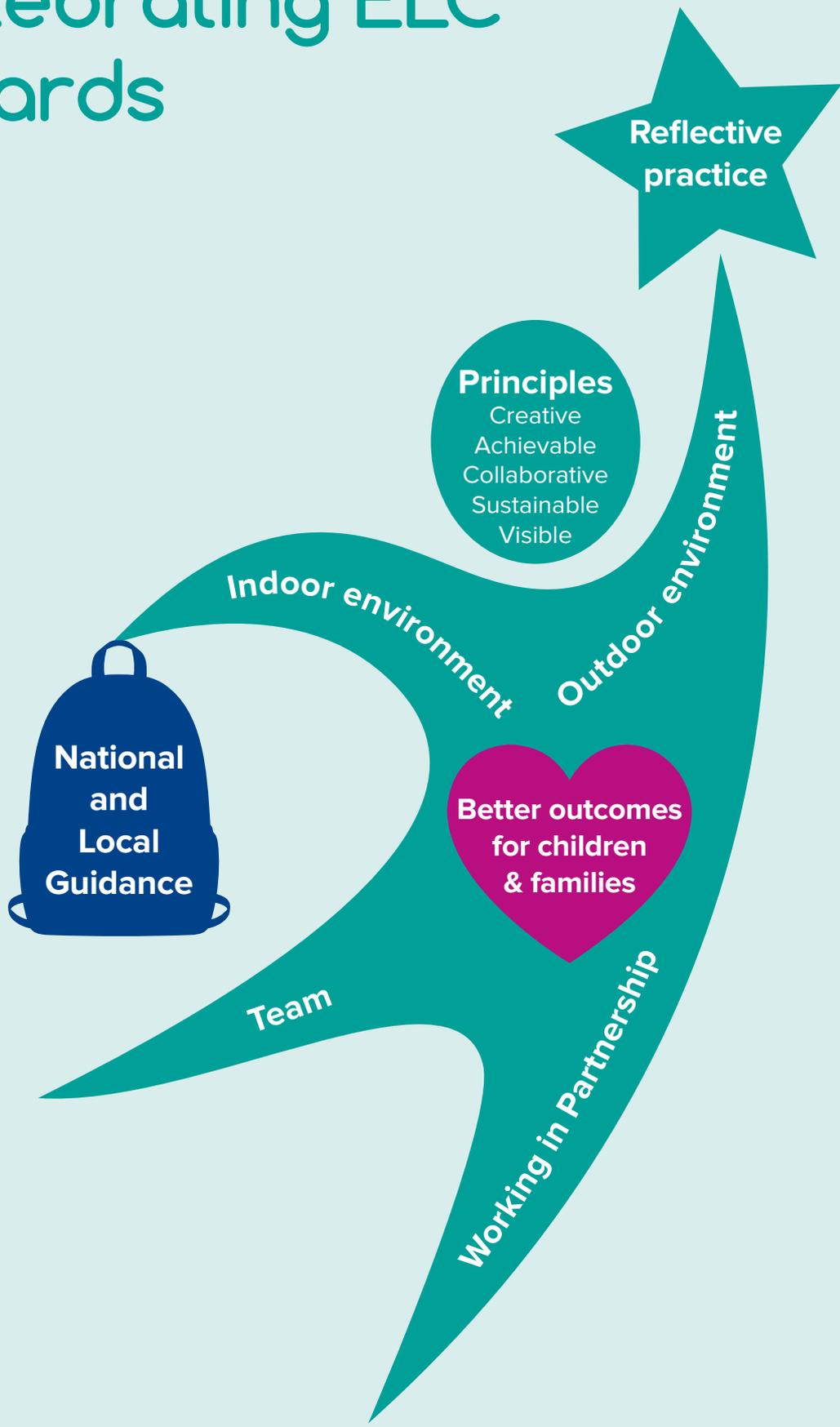
- Self-Evaluation
- Inspection reports
- Stakeholders feedback
- Practitioner research findings
- Photographs showing 'before' and 'after' improvements made over time
- Floor books/Learning Walls
- Documentation and planning
- Monitoring and evaluation of practice
- Staff meeting/discussion minutes
- Records of impact of Continuous Professional Learning
- Displays
- Resources audit

#### Resources to support;

#### Out to Play - creating outdoor play experiences for children: practical guidance:

- Building the Ambition
- HGIOELC
- Health and Social Care Standards
- Examples of professional reading books
- National Improvement Hub <https://education.gov.scot/improvement>
- Care Inspectorate Hub <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/>
- Loose Parts Play: A Toolkit, Active Learning in the Early Years
- My World Outdoors - Care Inspectorate

# Celebrating ELC Awards



**If you would like more information please contact:**

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 [www.elcacademy.scot](http://www.elcacademy.scot)

