

THE THIRD SECTOR ROLE IN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (ELC) IN GLASGOW

The Everyone's Children project was established in 2013 by Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS) to promote, support and connect Third Sector organisations in Glasgow that provide services to children, young people and families. The project is funded by the Scottish Government and seeks to enable stronger links between the Third Sector and the local authority in Glasgow to inform policy, planning and service development.

In 2016 the Scottish Government launched a consultation on its plans to expand childcare provision. The paper entitled *A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland*, proposed increasing childcare entitlement from 600 hours to 1140 hours per year, for all three and four year olds, and vulnerable two year olds. The consultation resulted in a **Blueprint 2020 Action Plan 2017-18** that commits the Scottish Government to a series of actions designed to support the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.

GCVS believes that the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) expansion provides a real opportunity for Third Sector organisations to develop and grow. The Third Sector can offer the flexible and responsive services needed to meet changing need, particularly in more deprived areas that may not be attractive to the Private Sector.

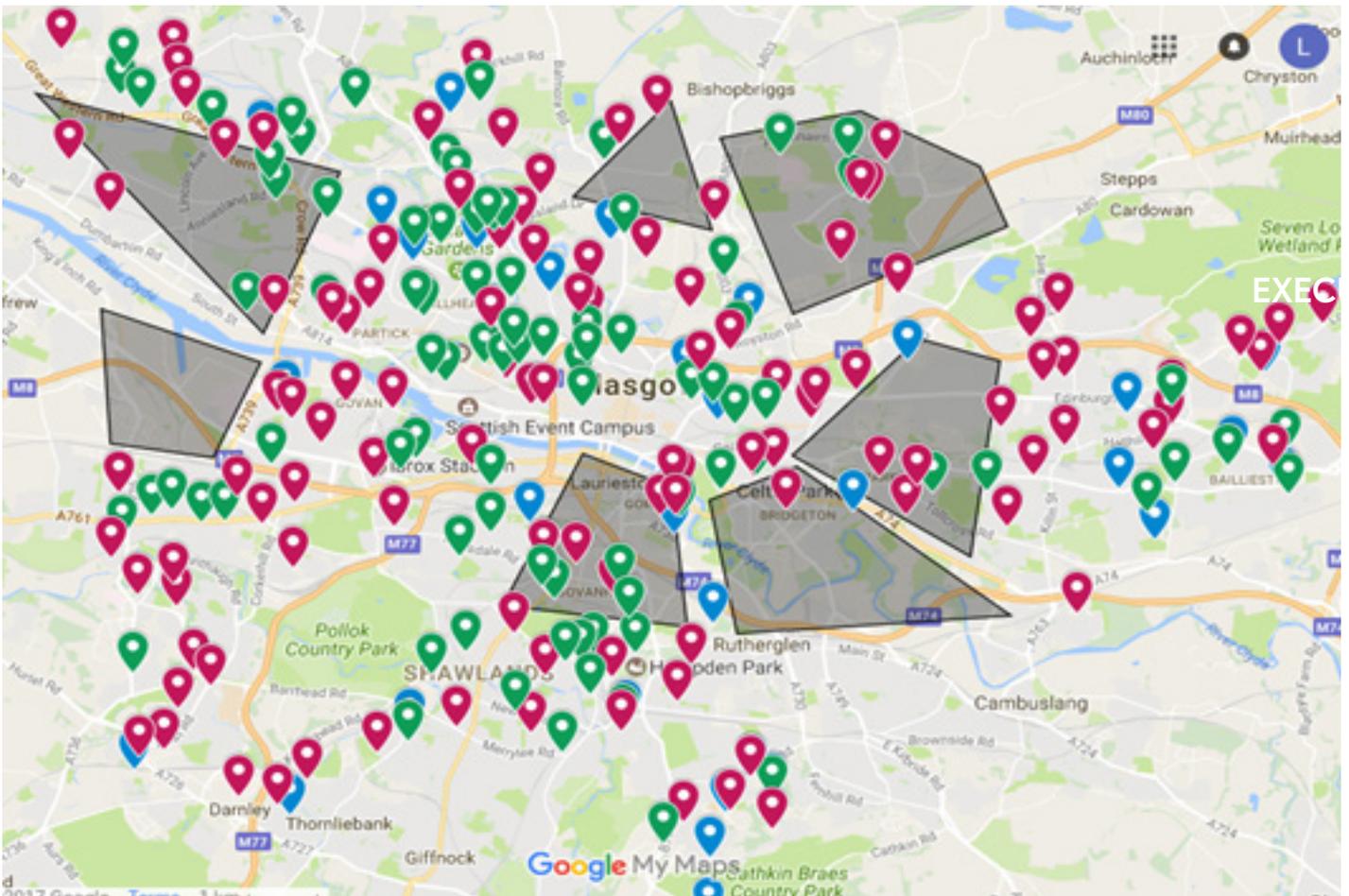
In response to the Blueprint, Everyone's Children undertook research between January 2017 and June 2017. Specifically this research sought to:

- Gain an understanding of the issues currently faced by Third Sector ELC organisations and challenges posed by the expansion to 1140 hours
- Establish whether GCVS and the Third Sector Interface partners have a role to play in the sector in supporting Third Sector ELC organisations through the provision of training, advocacy or other support

ELC IN GLASGOW

Glasgow faces considerable challenges in expanding childcare. There are over 35,000 children aged 0-4 in the city. There are high levels of poverty and high numbers of children with an additional language in some areas. The council currently provides 11,000 free places for 3-5 year olds in Local Authority nurseries and a further 3,000 in partner providers. The Council estimates that there are around 4500 ELC workers in Glasgow and an estimated 2,000 additional staff are required to meet expansion needs.

The Glasgow Family Information Service (GFIS) website shows that there are 253 registered nurseries and childcare organisations within the Glasgow City Council boundaries. The council runs 120 of these; 38 are Third Sector organisations and the other 95 are private businesses. We mapped this data to show the location of each facility and indicating whether they are Public, Private or Third Sector. This mapping shows that there are geographic gaps in provision in 7 areas of the city.



The council has established a number of pilots to look at ways of expanding services but, to date, has only involved a small number of Third Sector providers.

RESEARCH METHODS

With this context in mind, in undertaking our focused research we used a number of methods, including:

- A review of relevant local and national research and policy relating to Early Learning and Childcare
- A qualitative study of Third Sector ELC organisations in Glasgow, involving in-depth face to face interviews and a consultation event
- A desktop review of training provision for ELC workers in Glasgow and discussions with external training providers
- An e-survey on training needs to Third Sector ELC organisations
- A review of the capacity and capability of GCVS, Volunteer Glasgow and GSEN to provide support and training

KEY ISSUES AND BARRIERS

The literature review, interviews with managers and consultation event identified a consistent number of key issues for the ELC in Glasgow's Third Sector.

The key findings were:

- **Funding models:** Currently, the Scottish Government provides funding to local authorities to provide childcare. Many respondents suggested that the funding should follow the child, giving parents more flexibility and choice.
- **Access to funded places:** Third Sector respondents noted that not all organisations meet the statutory definition of "early learning and childcare" in order to qualify for funded places. Family support providers and childminders can provide greater flexibility for parents and would seek to be part of the funded places mix.
- **Local authority spending:** The National Day Nursery Association (NDNA) survey said that payments to partner providers don't cover the costs of funded places. Many Third Sector interviewees agreed. Organisations without funded places stressed the difficulties around the annual Integrated Grant Fund (IGF), and the time spent fundraising and submitting applications for grants to ensure organisational viability.
- **Staffing:** Skills Development Scotland and the NDNA note that the terms and conditions for ELC staff are less attractive in the private and voluntary sector, with around 80% of practitioners in partner settings paid less than the Living Wage - a factor that contributes to in-work poverty. Third Sector interviewees also expressed concern about the wage differentials with local authority ELC staff and the effect of this on staff retention. Expansion in the statutory sector could increase staff turnover unless this issue is addressed.

- **Premises:** Some organisations reported that their premises restricted them from offering more places and they were looking for alternatives in order to grow. Others were exploring the idea of outdoor nurseries as a way of extending provision.
- **Additional Support Needs:** There were concerns raised about the accessibility of additional support funding and support for ASN. Many interviewees had made significant investments in staff training and specialised equipment for ASN; however, they noted that they had had to raise funds for these themselves. The city's ELC plan must protect existing ASN assets, and support and resource further needs.
- **Support for ethnic minorities and new communities:** Some Third Sector organisations provided significant family and childcare support to ethnic minorities. This often requires English as an Additional Language (EAL) support.
- **Care Inspectorate:** Third Sector opinions on the Care Inspectorate were mixed. Some organisations wanted more support with quality improvement and briefings on the new National Care Standards.
- **Universal Credit:** The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) has raised concerns that the transition from Working and Child Tax Credit to Universal Credit will affect childcare providers. Parents will have to provide proof of their childcares costs to the DWP on a monthly basis. This will put pressure on nurseries to invoice to meet the Universal Credit schedule for each parent.
- **Expansion of ELC:** Third Sector Organisations supported the idea of the expansion of childcare but were concerned about the timescales.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Any expansion of ELC in Glasgow will need to factor in the skills development needs of the Third Sector workforce. However, our research identified a number of barriers.

Our desktop review of training providers found that there are a number of organisations providing CPD training at varying prices, with both online and face to face training available.

Third Sector organisations said that they had limited resources and found it difficult to allow staff to attend during nursery hours. There was, however, support for provision of evening courses at affordable prices.

To test the robustness of demand for particular courses and evening training, we conducted an online survey. This found that the most popular topics were:

- Understanding Autism
- Child Protection
- Challenging behaviour
- Child Development
- GIRFEC/Named person
- Understanding ADHD
- Children's Rights

SUPPORT REVIEW

Our research also assessed the extent to which GCVS and Third Sector Interface partners could support Third Sector organisations as they respond to the expansion of ELC. From the responses, it is clear we have a role in providing:

- [Employers Advice Service](#) - for legal and HR support
- [Capacity Building](#) - for start-up, governance and funding support
- [Community Learning and Development](#) - for support to parents and carers
- [SVQs and Learning](#) - for accredited childcare and training qualifications
- [Specialist Everyone's Children project support](#) - for data, information, advocacy and training

Other Third Sector support is provided by our TSI partner agencies:

- [Volunteer Glasgow](#) - in sourcing and developing volunteers
- [Glasgow Social Enterprise Network \(GSEN\)](#) - in supporting social enterprise development

Our Third Sector survey asked respondents which GCVS services would be most helpful, in addition to training. The most popular services were support with grants and funding (59%) and SVQ qualifications (46%).

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The research highlighted a series of key issues that need to be addressed in order for the Third Sector to contribute to the expansion of ELC in Glasgow.

It also established that GCVS and the Third Sector Interface (TSI) have a clear role and contribution in supporting Third Sector ELC organisations as part of this expansion.

Further support can be provided through advocacy, training, SVQs and support with grants and funding.

NEXT STEPS

In order to take forward our conclusions, GCVS will:

1. Reinforce key issues from the research by:

- Making the case for longer term funding to provide stability and greater job security
- Campaigning for funding to allow nurseries to pay a living wage
- Advocating the widening of the scope of ELC funding to family support with the Scottish Government and the Council
- Establishing a sub-group of the Children, Young People and Families Citywide forum to provide advice on ELC issues

2. Supporting measures to address gaps in provision by:

- Leading a pilot project to stimulate third sector provision in areas where there are geographic gaps
- Advocating for the creation of a National Care Standards advisor to support organisations with quality improvement

3. Supporting workforce development by:

- Seeking GCC partner status for its SVQ centre to provide childcare and play qualifications.
- Running a pilot ELC training programme from September 2017, with sessions in the early evening
- Running briefing sessions on the new National Care Standards.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on this report or on the Everyone's Children project you can contact the team: everyoneschildren@gcvs.org.uk

You can find us at www.gcvs.org.uk or on Twitter [@EC_GCVS](https://twitter.com/EC_GCVS)



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