

30 August 2022

Dear Colleague

**Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate  
Early learning and childcare inspection programme 2022/23**

Together, the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland are committed to taking a coordinated approach to inspection activity in early learning and childcare settings.

Before we begin our 2022/23 programme of inspections, Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate want to provide some clarity to the sector about what each inspection focuses upon and the shared inspection process – for the Care Inspectorate the focus is the quality of care and learning and for Education Scotland it's the quality of education.

In addition, we are committed to working closely with you to ensure that children, parents and carers, and practitioners are clear on the purpose, roles and remits for the single and shared inspection process.

We undertake a shared inspection where a setting provides funded early learning and childcare. During these visits our inspectors will bring together their respective professional knowledge, experience and skills to focus on the quality of children's care, learning and the quality of their education.

We have worked together to address concerns about early learning and childcare settings being over inspected and have increased the period between inspections to 18 months. This means if you have been inspected by the Care Inspectorate then you will not receive an inspection from Education Scotland within 18 months. The same timescale applies if you have been inspected by Education Scotland. The exception to this is if risk and intelligence indicates that an inspection needs to be carried out sooner.

We know that this change has implications for primary school nursery classes because Education Scotland inspects the early learning and childcare setting and the primary school at the same time. Therefore, if you are a headteacher of a primary school with a nursery class, and you are notified of an Education Scotland inspection within 18 months of a Care Inspectorate inspection, we will not inspect the education provision within your nursery setting unless you choose for this to happen. We would encourage you to discuss this option with your local authority.

In response to Professor Muir's recent review, 'Putting learners at the centre', the Scottish Government has also launched a consultation about a shared inspection framework and we are committed to making further changes following the outcome of this consultation. We therefore encourage you to continue sharing your feedback by completing the consultation form on the Scottish Government [website](#).

We hope this letter has given you some insight to our shared position and approach to inspections in the coming year. We would like to thank you for your continued and valued work in delivering the best possible outcomes and experiences for children in Scotland.

Yours sincerely,



Edith Macintosh  
Interim Chief Executive Care Inspectorate



Gayle Gorman  
HMI Chief Inspector for Education Scotland