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Douglas Ross MSP
Convener
Education, Children and Young People Committee
The Scottish Parliament

By email: ecyp.committee@parliament.scot

22 September 2025

Dear Convener

I am writing to provide the Committee with an update on the collaborative work undertaken by the Care Inspectorate and His Majesty's Inspectors of Education to develop a shared Quality Improvement Framework for the early learning and childcare, childminding and school age childcare sectors.

I am pleased to inform the Committee that the inspectorates published the new framework [Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors | Inspection frameworks | Inspection and review | Education Scotland](#) on the 18th of September. It will be implemented jointly by the Care Inspectorate and HM Inspectors from 22 September 2025.

This shared framework has been developed in direct response to concerns raised by the early learning and childcare sector regarding duplication of effort and unnecessary burdens, issues that were clearly highlighted in Professor Muir's independent report of March 2022.

In addressing these concerns, the Care Inspectorate and HM Inspectors have worked closely to streamline their approaches. The number of Quality Indicators has been reduced from 28 in the previous frameworks to 11 in the new shared framework. This simplification is the result of extensive stakeholder engagement, including early dialogue, a robust piloting process involving 55 settings, and input from over 2,600 practitioners across the sector.

This framework exemplifies the strong cooperation between both inspectorates. It reflects a shared commitment to delivering proportionate, streamlined and effective inspections that support improvement and reduce burden on providers.

The inspectorates have confirmed their commitment to supporting the sector throughout the implementation phase. This will include ongoing opportunities for providers to engage directly with inspectors, helping to build capacity and confidence across the system.

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In line with this development, the Scottish Government has updated the [National Standard](#) for the delivery of funded early learning and childcare to reflect the introduction of the new framework.

I trust the Committee will find this update helpful and I would be happy to provide further information or clarification if required.

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Don-Innes MSP
Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise

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