

Deputy Director Childcare, Play and Early Years Division



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

To:  
CSSIW  
Social Care Wales  
SkillsActive  
Play Wales  
CWLWM Childcare Consortium  
WLGA  
AWARE  
Local Authority Chief Executives  
Local Authority Play Co-ordinators  
Local Authority Childcare Co-ordinators  
Family Information Services

11 September 2017

Dear Colleague,

**Circular Letter WGC 006/2017**

**Future changes to the *National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare for children up to the age of 12 years (April 2016)* regarding Standard 13: Staffing.**

This letter is issued with the agreement of the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children. Please ensure that its contents are communicated to all interested parties as soon as possible.

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The purpose of this Circular Letter is to provide advance notice about future requirements which will form part of the *National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare for children up to the age of 12 years (NMS)*.

These relate to Standards 13.6(DC) and 13.7(DC) Day Care. They concern the qualifications that are required for persons in charge and non-supervisory staff working in regulated childcare and play settings for children aged 0 to 12 years.

The requirements have been agreed in conjunction with Social Care Wales and SkillsActive, the sector skills councils covering the childcare and play sectors in Wales. Greater detail is available on the Social Care Wales *List of Required Qualifications to work within early years and childcare in Wales* and the SkillsActive *List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales*.

**Annex 1** - links to the documents covered in this letter.

**Annex 2** – Welsh Government Circular Letter WGC 004/2015 – Temporary amendment to Standard 13.6(DC) of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care 2012, in relation to holiday play schemes.

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## **1. NMS and previous circular letter**

The NMS April 2016 (i) and Circular Letter WGC 004/2015 (ii) gave notice of:

- (i) changes to the qualifications requirements for both:
  - a. persons in charge and
  - b. non-supervisory staff

in registered childcare and play settings which provide for children up to the age of 12 years, which would be notified at a later point.

- (ii) a temporary relaxation in relation to qualifications required for the person in charge of a holiday play scheme.

## **2. Extension of regulated childcare for children up to the age of 12 years and summer play schemes**

In April 2016, the registration of regulated childcare for children up to the age of 8 years was extended to cover childcare and play settings providing for children up to the age of 12 years. The National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare (NMS) underwent some amendment to ensure that they are appropriate for childcare for children up to the age of 12 years, which has now come under regulation.

This circular gives notice of amendments relating to:

- (i) the play qualifications which persons in charge and other staff will be required to hold where the setting provides care for children up to the age of 12 years;
- (ii) a further amendment in relation to the qualification requirements for a person in charge of a holiday play scheme.

In respect of Childminders, there are no changes to the requirement within Standard 13.2(CM) to complete an appropriate pre-registration course.

## **3. Persons in charge: requirements about play qualifications following extension of registration**

### **Current**

Standard 13.6(DC) currently requires the person in charge to have at least a level 3 qualification which is appropriate to the setting and which is recognised on either:

- (a) the Social Care Wales *List of Required Qualifications to work within early years and childcare in Wales*, **or**
- (b) the SkillsActive *List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales* (or any lists which supersede them).

### **From September 2021**

Where a childcare setting provides for children between the ages of 0 to 12 years, the person in charge should hold **both**:

- (a) a level 3 childcare qualification recognised on the Social Care Wales List, **and**
- (b) a level 3 playwork qualification **or** a smaller award as recognised on the SkillsActive List.

The person in charge of a registered play setting for children up to the age of 12 years should hold a level 3 playwork qualification recognised on the SkillsActive List.

The person in charge of a holiday play scheme should hold:

- (a) a level 3 playwork qualification, as set out in the SkillsActive List,  
**or**
- (b) a level 3 qualification in a related sector, **and**  
the *Managing a Holiday Play Scheme Award*, as set out in the SkillsActive List.

## **4. Non-supervisory staff**

### **Current**

Standard 13.7(DC)(a) currently requires that at least 50% of the non-supervisory staff hold a qualification which is appropriate to the post and which is at least at level 2 either from:

- the Social Care Wales *List of Required Qualifications to work within early years and childcare in Wales* **or**
- SkillsActive's *List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales* (or any lists which supersede them).

At least half of these should have a qualification at level 3, ie 25%.

Standard 13.7(DC)(b) for full day care settings currently requires that at least 80% of the non-supervisory staff hold a qualification which is appropriate to the post and which is at least at level 2 either from:

- the Social Care Wales current *List of Required Qualifications to work within early years and childcare in Wales* **or**
- SkillsActive's *List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales* (or any lists which supersede them).

At least half of these should have a childcare qualification at level 3, ie 40%.

### **From September 2021**

Additional to the current requirements set out in section 4 above, from September 2021 the following requirements will apply.

Standard 13.7(DC)(a) 50% of non-supervisory staff caring for children between the age of **8 to 12** years, should hold:

- (a) a level 2 playwork qualification as recognised on the SkillsActive List.

Standard 13.7(DC)(b) 80% of qualified staff in a full day care setting caring for children up to the age of 12 years, should hold **both**:

- (a) a level 2 childcare qualification recognised on the Social Care Wales List **and**
- (b) a level 2 playwork qualification or smaller award recognised on the SkillsActive List.

At least half of these should have a childcare qualification at level 3, ie 40%

## **5. Childminder**

### **From September 2021**

In respect of Childminders, there are no changes to the requirement within Standard 13.2(CM) to complete an appropriate pre-registration course as this already takes account of the needs of older children.

## **6. Person in charge of a holiday play scheme**

The temporary relaxation under Circular Letter WGC 004/2015 in relation to qualifications required for the persons in charge of holiday play schemes, has been made permanent. The required qualifications have been formalised and added to the SkillsActive List of qualifications.

## **7. Need for timely response**

Although a generous lead-in time for obtaining the required qualifications is given, providers and relevant workers are urged to plan ahead to ensure they will be in a position to meet all the qualification requirements by the September 2021 deadline. In doing so, they will need to take into account the availability of relevant courses and the length of time required to complete them. New applicants for registration in the intervening period will be asked about the steps they are taking in advance to achieve compliance.

## **8. Reasons for change in requirements**

The Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children recognises the importance of childcare and play provision, including holiday play schemes, for children and their parents. He wishes to ensure that the childcare and play workforces have the appropriate qualifications, skills and experience to provide high quality provision across the different types of settings and for the full age range of children cared for.

The purpose of this Circular Letter is to set out the future changes to the NMS to qualifications which will be required for persons in charge and non-supervisory staff working in settings for children aged 0 to 12 years. This is to reflect the different requirements needed to work with older children and to take account of their increased independence, behaviour and interests.

The lead-in time for the childcare and play workforces working with children from the age of 8 – 12 years, to attain the required play qualifications has been set at September 2021. This is to allow a realistic timeframe for completion of the courses; consideration of staged release of staff with regards to settings' staffing requirements; possible cost implications; and in recognition of the capacity of training providers to deliver the required qualification courses.

In relation to holiday play provision, Circular Letter WGC 004/2015 recognised that there had been a significant reduction in holiday play scheme provision due to the difficulty in recruiting persons in charge (PiCs) holding a level 3 Diploma in Playwork. A concession was notified about acceptance of a relevant level 3 qualification plus attainment of the accredited *Managing a Holiday Play Scheme Award* specifically designed for this role. This has shown to be a suitable arrangement in continuing good quality holiday play provision and has now been formalised through amendment of the SkillsActive list of qualifications.

Links have been provided to the key documents mentioned in this letter, to facilitate stakeholders' understanding and compliance with the requirements.

We appreciate the important job that childcare and play staff are doing with regard to the well-being of our children and support for their families. We hope that this letter clarifies the legal requirements for childcare and play settings and request that you share it with your stakeholders.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Owain Lloyd". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Owain Lloyd  
Deputy Director Childcare, Play and Early Years Division

## **Annex 1 – Links to named documents**

### **Regulation and inspection of childcare**

<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/parenting-support-guidance/childcare/regulation/?lang=en>

### **The National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare for children up to the age of 12 years (April 2016)**

<http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/cyp/160411-regulated-child-care-en.pdf>

### **Social Care Wales List of Required Qualifications to work within early years and childcare in Wales**

<https://socialcare.wales/learning-and-development/early-years-and-childcare-qualifications>

### **SkillsActive List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales**

<http://www.skillsactive.com/country/wales/list-of-required-qualifications-for-wales-playwork>

### **Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) Inspection framework for childcare and play**

<http://cssiw.org.uk/about/strategic-plan/changing-the-way-we-inspect/childcare/inspection-framework-for-childcare-and-play/?lang=en>

## Annex 2 - Circular Letter WGC 004/2015

Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr Plant, Pobl Ifanc a Theuluoedd  
Deputy Director Children, Young People and Families



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

To:  
CSSIW  
SkillsActive  
Play Wales  
CWLWM Childcare Consortium  
WLGA  
Local Authority Chief Executives  
Local Authority Play Co-ordinators  
Local Authority Childcare Co-ordinators  
Family Information Services

11 June 2015

cc. Care Council for Wales  
Groundwork Wales

Dear Colleague,

### **Circular Letter WGC 004/2015– Temporary amendment to Standard 13.6(DC) of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care 2012, in relation to holiday play schemes.**

Please note under agreement from the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, this Circular Letter will come into effect from the date of this letter.

Please ensure this amendment is communicated to all relevant parties and is put into effect forthwith.

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### **Circular Letter WGC 004/2015 – Temporary amendment to Standard 13.6(DC) of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care 2012, in relation to holiday play schemes.**

#### **Registration and Inspection of holiday play schemes**

- 1. Present Legal Position**
- 2. Amendment to Standard 13.6(DC)**

### **3. Reason for Amendment**

#### **1. Present Legal Position**

The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 made under Part 2 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 set out the requirements for the range of registered child minding and day care provision, including open access and holiday play provision.

Schedule 1 paragraph 28 of the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 requires *“the person in charge has the qualifications, skills and experience necessary for the role they perform in relation to the looking after of children under the age of eight”*.

Regulation 14(1) requires *“the registered person must have regard to the national minimum standards which relate to the type of care provided by the registered person”*.

The National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care, 2012 (NMS) in Standard 13.6(DC) states *“The person in charge has at least a level 3 qualification recognised on the Care Council for Wales’ current list of Accepted Qualifications for the Early Years and Childcare Workforce in Wales or Skills Active’s Integrated Qualification Framework for Playwork (or any lists which supercede them), which is appropriate to the post”*.

#### **2. Amendment to Standard 13.6(DC) of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care 2012**

##### **Stage 1 – to come into effect from June 2015 – September 2016**

For the period stated, **Standard 13.6(DC)** will read:-

*“The person in charge is required to hold at least a level 3 qualification recognised by the Care Council for Wales List of Required Qualifications to work within the Early Years and Childcare Sector in Wales or the SkillsActive List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales (or any lists which supercede them), which is appropriate to the post.*

##### **For a holiday play scheme**

*The person in charge of a holiday play scheme should have the appropriate qualifications, skills and experience to undertake this role. The accepted qualifications will include a level 3 qualification recognised on the Care Council for Wales’ current List of Required Qualifications to work within the Early Years and Childcare Sector in Wales or SkillsActive’s List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales (or any lists which supercede them), which is appropriate to the post, or a teaching, youth work, or other relevant qualifications at level 3 or above. The post holder should also have the relevant managerial skills and experience to effectively manage a holiday play scheme.”*

##### **Stage 2 – to come into effect from September 2016 – September 2018**



For the period stated **Standard 13.6(DC)** will read:-

*“The person in charge is required to hold at least a level 3 qualification recognised by the Care Council for Wales List of Required Qualifications to work within the Early Years and Childcare Sector in Wales or the SkillsActive List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales (or any lists which supercede them)”, which is appropriate to the post.*

***For a holiday play scheme***

*The person in charge of a holiday play scheme should have the appropriate qualifications, skills and experience to undertake this role. The accepted qualifications will include a level 3 qualification recognised on the Care Council for Wales’ current List of Required Qualifications to work within the Early Years and Childcare Sector in Wales or SkillsActive’s List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales (or any lists which supercede them), which is appropriate to the post, or a teaching, youth work, or other relevant qualifications at level 3 or above. The post holder should also have the relevant managerial skills and experience to effectively manage a holiday play scheme.*

*Where the person in charge of a holiday play scheme does not hold a level 3 Playwork qualification, they should also hold the level 3 unit in “Managing a Holiday Play Scheme.” \**

\*During the summer of 2015, an Award in Managing a Holiday Play Scheme will be developed. This will provide an interim qualification which will be added to the SkillsActive List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales, specifically for persons in charge of a holiday play scheme.

**Stage 3 – to be in effect from September 2018**

From September 2018, **Standard 13.6(DC)** will read:-

*“The person in charge is required to hold at least a level 3 qualification recognised by the Care Council for Wales List of Required Qualifications to work within the Early Years and Childcare Sector in Wales or the SkillsActive List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales (or any lists which supercede them), which is appropriate to the post.*

***For a holiday play scheme***

*Standard 13.6(DC) applies to holiday play schemes as to other provision under the The National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care, 2012.”*

**3. Reason for the Amendment**

A proportion of holiday play providers are experiencing difficulties in meeting the qualification requirements set out in the NMS. This is particularly the case for the Person in Charge holding a level 3 Playwork qualification. This has already led to a reduction in registered holiday play provision and raises concerns about the further loss of provision.

The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty recognises the importance of holiday play provision for children and their parents. To avoid further loss of this valued provision, whilst ensuring the ongoing achievement of level 3 playwork qualifications for persons in charge of holiday play schemes, the Minister is issuing Circular Letter WGC 004/2015.

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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MS', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martin Swain  
Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr Plant, Pobl Ifanc a Theuluoedd  
Deputy Director Children, Young People and Families