

Childminders, home based day care and young children's transitions

Transition and Socialization in Early Childhood

Aline-Wendy Dunlop

University of Strathclyde

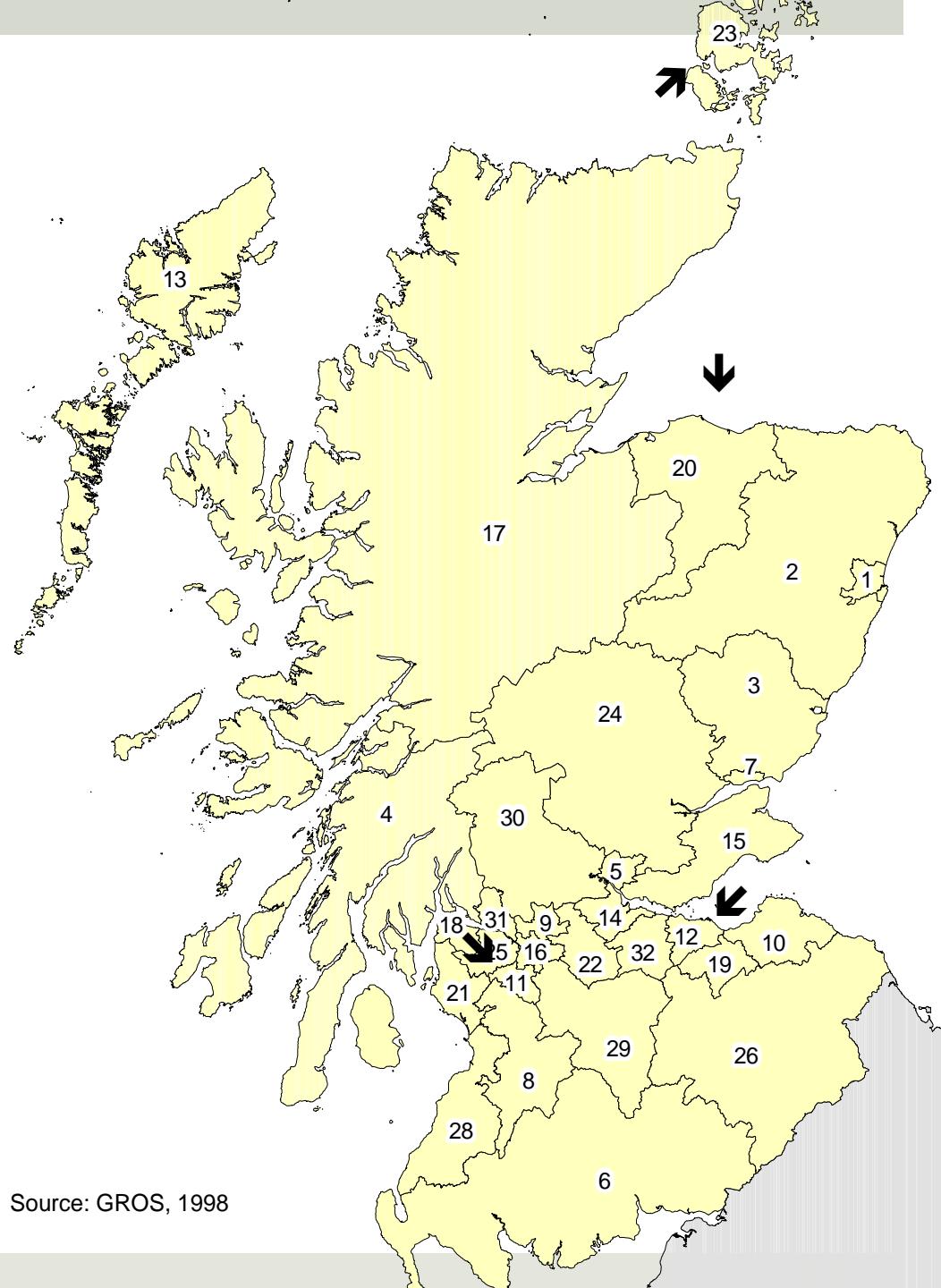
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Transition expectations

- From the moment of registration to become a childminder in Scotland transitions are emphasized when prospective childminders are asked what they will do “to develop positive relationships with parents and carers which allow children to move easily and happily from one caring situation to another, particularly between the home and the childminder”

(Care Commission: Childminding registration documentation}

- 31,720 children (0-15) cared for by childminders in family based care
- 6,185 childminding services are registered with the Care Inspectorate
- Supported by SCMA - a membership association
- A scoping consultation in preparation for a Scotland wide study of childminders' contribution to child & family transitions
- Four different communities
 - Island Community
 - Country town
 - City
 - Village



Context for the study

- ▣ 'Transitions as Tools for Change': the focus is on three strands: children's transitions journeys, family engagement and practitioner beliefs and practices.
- ▣ It is in this context that there is an opportunity to look at the more hidden contributors to children's well-being and successful navigation of early childhood:
- ▣ Currently the contribution of childminding is less visible than it should be.
- ▣ Family day-care: licensed home-based ECEC, which is most prevalent for children under the age of 3 (OECD, 2015).

Recent research into childminding

- Evans (2013) found that childminders attributed their outstanding practice to training, supportive childminder colleagues, formal and informal childminding networks and LA development officers and support.
- Brooker (2014) finding most of the research into childminding in the UK happened in the 1980s, investigated the perceptions held by childminders of statutory frameworks in England.
- Stephen & Duncan (2014) explored the roles, practices and values of community childminders in Scotland as well as stakeholder perspectives. In Scotland much of the support for childminders is provided by SCMA.

Examples of transitions

- ❑ Home environment to first childcare service
- ❑ Community childminding placement to nursery
- ❑ Community childminding placement to delivery of 600 hours for eligible twos'
- ❑ Partnership working between childminder/nursery
- ❑ Funded preschool provision for 3 and 4 year olds and transition into school
- ❑ Transitions across the day and week

Theoretical background

- Bourdieu - social capital
- Bruner - spiral curriculum
- Transitions networks*
- Transitions ease*
- Transitions readiness*
- Transitions capital*

* Dunlop, A-W (*Longitudinal Study, 1997-2015*)

Practical interruptions

Lack of flexibility in Community Childminding Service Provision, compounded by-

- ❑ Little access to additional funds to allow child to remain in childminders care (eg transport issues)
- ❑ Lack of continuity for the child if there is a mismatch of timing between services
- ❑ Lack of consideration of gap between a placement with a Community Childminder which ends prior to the child turning two (and then able to access 600 hours funding)

Approach

- ❑ Scoping childminding practices in relation to transitions
- ❑ Consultation process undertaken - 4 Focus Groups
 - with 17 childminders & two development staff
- ❑ 4 locations
- ❑ Nominal Group Technique (introduction, main question, individual writing time, round of statements, clarification, discussion of overlaps, defining master statements (including fit of a given statement into a number of masters statements), rating)
- ❑ Drawing out survey questions & case study approach

The process

Group 1

Child at 2 or 3 hours (before start care) - (morning), (evening)
With a mum who wants to do it out - Mummy's finding teaming
had (8-13x 3 days) was easy to have the settling in session just
between previous childminder & new. Child hasn't greeted - till
Mum's gone. (Erica goodbye routine) • Boyfriend with parents
(mummy's, differently training)
Child in pre-school with temper control problems (staff & other parents)
C'm give him a hug - deep breath 'Benton' - Benton - didn't
complain at pre-school. Give them space - not pushed on. Think how
to deal with behaviour. Listen hard what he'd done but not
blame - helped negativity (around regulation) • Ambassador - Strategies
Transition to parents - I believe just having the child in school &
not just running my food, whatever, all like. Ask parents if
anything worried about - guarantees will phone if need to. Used
& their a photo & said (we not anymore don't have problem)
(You do you answer you ask with Care Committee?) / Parents sign off in D.D.
Has a settling in questionnaire - some basic take longer - either 1st
month or 2nd month to ask parents how they feel the C.H.P.S settled + how
(including kids) they feel about the service you're providing. Talk, morning
& night, talk frequently. (Not same time w/ a nursery) • Redbook found
(various) increase numbers - example. A mother who needs more from you
(or less) not happy at nursery
Transitions (since 1992) - child 18 - door's still open - clearly break up -
family support wrap round complete family care. Grandparents
needed hospital care support for family - life support to (some families)
child - call upon you - place a lot of trust. How different here than
in the south - thinking one big family/community • Presence in the
community. E.g. it's different, you work assess, you respond. • Individual staff

Group 3

To build confidence the early learning
and independence by ourselves

- To build the child's confidence before starting school to be more
independent - by ourselves
- Agree with parents ^{work} make best prepare the child for school / nursery
together with in that year - ^{work} (ambition &
independence
learning)
- & for the child up to now
- To support the children have the transition through outcome for
SUPPORTING PARENT (and in next year)
every day
- Some children feel comfortable with changing environments
- Welcoming parents each day to make them become each day & offering
giving information on their child's better from second hand info
 (from school or nursery)
- Strong relationship from nursery
- Good relationship with the nursery
- Being with a childminder often means a child will have visited numbers
to meet with other
in which area can't make others/
other areas

Master Statements - Group 1 (n=3)	Score
1. Marking/reassuring about parent's return	0
2. Existing children's wellbeing	3
3. Preparation is all	6
4. Boundaries with parents	0
5. Providing strategies	11
6. Reassuring role	0
7. Importance of feedback from parents	0
8. Presence in the community	0
9. Transitions into preschool	0
10. Continuity role	15
11. Building familiarity	3
12. Transitions for childminder before & after	6
13. Supporting the supporters	0
14. Own family transitions	1

Group 1

The idea of thinking about transitions seemed novel to the group so we held an opening discussion. As a group they decided to go through their day in the 10 minute note taking session.

- (2 new babies) Introducing babies slowly – talking with existing children about babies who are coming – a new baby will change routine (2) existing children)
- Gave him a strategy – “Ben Ten” “Ben Ten” (normally counting to ten!) – explained at preschool. Gave him space, not picked on following this – transition to do with behaviour

Master Statements - Group 2 (n=4)	Score
1. Providing reassurance, safety & trust	20
2. Links with the community	2
3. Starting in a new setting	4
4. Relationships	8
5. Coping with changes in the setting	
6. Ability to use knowledge & skills in different ways (flexibly)	6
7. Building relationships, showing <u>commitment</u> & effect of this on families	4
8. Forces Families advice & support	3
9. Rules set up with children	
10. Policy in place	1
11. Feedback to parents	4
12. Parents support, parent advice, helping parent to take a step back	8

Group 2

Links with the community

The childminders' links in the community were seen as important and valued – it was good to have forged relationships with the doctor, the nursery and the school. One childminder was a coopted member of the Parent-Teacher Council and talked about the benefits for the children and families she supported. She had more contact with the school than many of the families whose children she cared for.

Master Statements Group 3 (n=5 + 1)	Score
1. Communication	27
2. Stability	9
3. Needs	14
4. Dispositions	2
5. Boundaries	1
6. Routine	2
7. Continuity	5
8. Contingency	0
9. Consistency	4
10. Support	21

Group 3

Supporting in this way gives the best outcome for children and families (clarified that the best outcomes for all is that children are happy, confident, able to mix socially, self-assured (to be themselves), feel able, their dispositions. 10, 3, 1, 4

Agree with parents how to best prepare their (families and children are different) child for school/nursery and together work on that plan – eg independence, socialising...to set the child up for success. 1, 10, 2, 3

Master Statements Group 4 (n=5 + 1)	Score
1. Feeling secure	13
2. Continuity of care	25
3. Socialisation, boundaries & house rules	0
4. Understanding parental anxieties	4
5. Development, independence & confidence	10
6. Being joyful	0
7. Communication with parents & other services	9
8. Communication with the child	0
9. Supportive, flexible, approachable	4
10. Developing trust	11
11. Relationships with older after school care children	0
12. Confidentiality	0
13. Individuality of children	10
14. Focus on the settling in period	2

Group 4

- (2) Continuity of Care (Texts, separation, work out with parents, resilience, children cope very differently – example of child whose parents are separated, 2 full days with another childminder, time with 2 sets of grandparents, time with each parent, 2 days a week with this childminder – Tu & Thurs)
- (5) Help them be independent and supporting development eg, making choices (empowering), putting shoes or jacket on, playing games and helping

Emerging main study questions

- ❑ What do childminders do to support children in transition?
- ❑ What do childminders do to support parents in the transitions their children are experiencing?
- ❑ How do childminders provide continuity as children and families navigate change?
- ❑ What informs childminder knowledge of transitions?
- ❑ In what ways does the knowledge of individual children held by the childminder support children's transitions?
- ❑ In what ways could childminders share their approaches to transitions with other childminding practitioners?

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