

PE1430/H

Response to Petition PE1430

Petitioner: Mr Ewan Cameron

Petition text:

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to consider new legislation to ensure that child minding businesses of more than six children operate on equal terms when competing with more regulated preschool nurseries.

Questions from Committee

- What is your response to what the petition seeks?
- Please clarify the position on whether a childminding service may look after more than six children on domestic premises?

Scottish Government Response

This petition calls on the Scottish Government to consider new legislation to ensure that that child minding businesses of more than six children operate on equal terms when competing with more regulated preschool nurseries.

The regulation and monitoring of childminding services is the responsibility of the Care Inspectorate, and not that of the Scottish Government.

The staff to child ratio, set by the Care Inspectorate, for a childminder is 6 children under 16. However of this 6, only 3 can be under school age, and only one child can be under 1 year old. A childminder may have more than 6 children if they have a registered Assistant on the premises.

The latest published statistics from the Care Inspectorate from October 2010, show that from 5,529 registered childminders, 8.7% of childminders have one assistant and 2% have 2 or more. This equates to around 50 childminders having 2 or more assistants in Scotland.

In conclusion

The Scottish Government believes that the current regulations placed on childminders, by the Care Inspectorate, adequately ensure the quality of service provided to children in their care. Childminders form part of the range of service providers, including pre-school nurseries, offering early learning and childcare services to children and families, and no change, or additional legislation, as suggested by the petitioner, is required.