

SSERC in Partnership with The Scottish Childminding Association

At SSERC we pride ourselves on providing excellent STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) focused Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities for educators across Scotland.

From the early years all the way through to college we support teachers, classroom assistants and technicians to keep up-to-date and improve their knowledge and skills. Now we are delighted to be extending our work to provide childminders in Scotland with STEM training and resources in partnership with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA).

The 2017 STEM Education and Training Strategy for Scotland [1] recognises the importance of early intervention, stating “The early years are crucial in providing a foundation in STEM skills and in inspiring and igniting children’s enthusiasm.” With the 2020 deadline fast approaching for the early year’s expansion in Scotland, which will see all children over the age of three eligible for 1140 free hours per year of early education and childcare, childminders are being recognised more than ever as an integral part of this provision [2]. Maree Todd the MSP for Childcare and Early Years reiterated this recently when she announced the provision for more training and development for childminders.

Part of this provision comes in the form of STEM learning and development. Head of Childminding Services in Scotland Janine Ryan worked with SSERC to apply for funding under Education Scotland’s Enhancing Professional Learning in STEM grant scheme. With funding approved, work is now well underway between SSERC and SCMA to deliver on phase one of the proposal which includes providing both e-learning modules and face-to-face training for childminders as well as a bank of resources.

It is important to remember that parents don’t choose childminders to provide a formal education but to allow their children to enjoy the care and play opportunities which are unique to a home setting. Play-led learning is gaining an increased recognition as the best way for young children to learn, after all, even Einstein said, “play is the highest form of research”. This means that any training needs to link to the Curriculum for Excellence and suit a play-based environment with supporting resources being readily available in any home or park, so out with the magnets and motors and in with the play dough and pinecones.



Training modules filled with childminder friendly ideas and activities and the science behind them have been produced and will be available online at www.childminding.org for members of SCMA by June 2019. The modules include; an Introduction to STEM, Senses, Science Inquiry and STEM Outdoors. We will also be welcoming childminders from across Scotland to SSERC for face-to-face training on 29 June 2019.

We look forward to continuing to work with the SCMA to support the amazing work that childminders across Scotland do. <<



References

- [1] Gov.scot. (2017). Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: education and training strategy - gov.scot, available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/science-technology-engineering-mathematics-education-training-strategy-scotland/> (accessed 12th May 2019).
- [2] Consult.gov.scot. (2016), available at https://consult.gov.scot/creating-positive-futures/expansion-of-early-learning-and-childcare/user_uploads/451371_blueprint-2020.pdf-1 (accessed 12th May 2019).

