



Early Learning and Childcare Recruitment Improvement Sessions

OUTLINE OF TOOLS UTILISED

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
APPROACH	3
PHASES	4
PHASE ONE - DISCOVER THE SITUATION	4
PHASE TWO - DEFINE THE PROBLEM	4
PHASE THREE - DEVELOP THE SOLUTION AND DELIVER THE PLAN	5
ADDITIONAL READING	6

This document should be read alongside the other resources in this series:

Case Study: Improving Early Learning and Childcare Recruitment in Orkney →

This case study examines work undertaken by the ELC expansion programme at Improvement Service and Early Learning and Childcare Leads & Managers from across Orkney, between December 2022 and March 2023, to explore approaches to improving local ELC recruitment levels.

ELC Recruitment Improvement : Overview of Sessions in a Rural, Island Council →

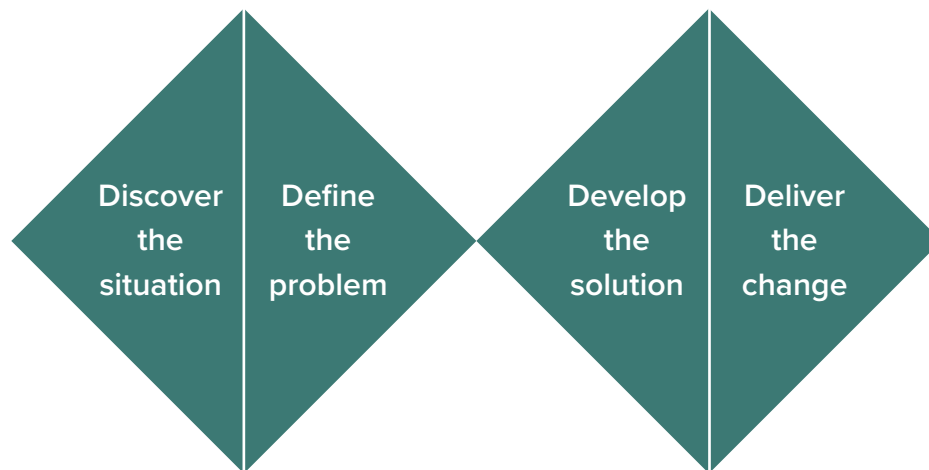
This document includes the output from the sessions undertaken to examine the question ‘How can we improve recruitment in Orkney Early Learning and Childcare’

Thinking about a career in Early Learning and Childcare? Recruitment Video →

This video, developed by the ELC Team in Orkney, reflects some of the change in thinking brought about by a deep dive consideration of alternative approaches, informed by data.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the outline is an overview of the tools and approach taken during sessions undertaken by a group of ELC managers to examine and address the difficulties faced in recruiting a sustainable workforce.



Approach

‘How can we improve recruitment to ELC?’ was the overriding question - meaning the amount of interest, quality and number of candidates.

The **overall principle** behind the approach, from the Scottish Approach to Service Design, was ‘we explore and define the problem before we design the solution’.

The **improvement group** consisted of stand-alone setting managers, managers of ELC in schools and central team managers. Facilitation was provided by the Improvement Service.

Specific improvement tools were utilised to build an understanding of the situation, then move towards exploring solutions and an action plan.



PHASES

Phase One - Discover the Situation



SWOT

Strengths Weakness Opportunities Threats within the current situation. The starting point – enabling discussion and formulating thinking.

[View the output from Phase One →](#)

Phase Two - Define the Problem



Questions Discussed

'Why would someone **want** to apply to work in the Council ELC?' AND 'Why would someone **not** want to work in the Council ELC?'

Discussion was supported by:

Recruitment Data – a spreadsheet of My Job Scotland advert data (Jan 2020 to Sep 22). Applicants and hires broken down by: role; location; type of contract; whether advert re-advertised.

Staff Profile Data – spreadsheet listing and summarising: gender; age band; years in ELC; qualifications; employment previous to ELC.

Staff survey - documents detailing discussion on: 'What attracted you to work in ELC'; 'What has Encouraged you to Stay'; 'What do you like about your job'; 'What do you not like about your job'.

Reasons for leaving – information (limited) was also gathered from those who had left during the last year, or were planning to leave – reasons for leaving.

Discussing the questions alongside data and evidence gave the group the opportunity to challenge some of their previous assumptions, as well as the time and space to explore the current situation in more detail.

[View the output from Questions Discussed →](#)



Further examination of the type(s) of person working in ELC

Utilising Personas (i.e. representative character types of those recruited into ELC).

Members of the group spoke about an individual (anonymised) who most represented a different ‘type’ within the workforce – answering questions such as their age, gender, education and qualifications, likely background, characteristics and values. What would drive them to work in ELC? What are they likely to think about ELC? How do they find out about ELC vacancies? How are they likely to apply? What will they feel about the application process? What will they feel about working in ELC? What Social Media do they use.

The Personas were very helpful in creating an understanding of different ‘types’ to target in future recruitment marketing; the ease or difficulty in applying and how certain groups had less conventional routes into the profession.

[View the output from Utilising Personas →](#)

Phase Three - Develop the Solution and Deliver the Plan



How Might We

Moving away from exploring the situation but before specific actions were committed to a Delivery Plan, the group explored ‘How Might We’ solutions. This tool provides a way of turning challenges into exploring opportunities. The group reviewed the key themes developing from the exploratory phase and considered emerging questions. This was an iterative process of considering themes, asking questions, then considering possible solutions without committing to specific actions.

Some questions asked were:

How might we:

- Increase early interest in and understanding of ELC as a career?
- improve how people hear about jobs?
- Make better use of trainee posts and support workers?

[View the output How Might We →](#)



The detailed output from the ‘How Might We’ discussions was then transferred into an **ELC Improving Recruitment Action Plan**. This is a working document for the team to take forward.

The key questions from the ‘How Might We’ discussions framed the plan.

[View the output from Recruitment Action Plan →](#)

Additional Reading

[Early Learning and Childcare Recruitment Improvement – Overview of Sessions in a Rural, Island Council →](#)

[Orkney Recruitment Improvements Case Study →](#)

