

1 February 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education are currently carrying out visits to some schools and early learning and childcare settings across Scotland. When we wrote to you after the last inspection of Bright Beginnings Nursery, we said that we would engage with the setting to report on progress. We recently engaged in discussion with practitioners and the local authority and carried out a visit to the setting. Our engagement helped us learn more about how children and their families have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic. We also heard about approaches that have been working well to support children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress. We discussed with the operations manager and local authority officers the setting's progress in taking forward the recommendations from our original inspection.

This letter sets out what we found during our visit.

### **Supporting children, young people and families through COVID-19**

The nursery closed for almost six months during the first period of remote learning, resulting in practitioners being furloughed. Practitioners used this time to undertake professional learning remotely. The setting remained open to provide a service for children of key workers during the second period of remote learning. There has been a clear focus on the wellbeing of children, practitioners and families, both during periods of remote learning and upon return to the nursery building. Practitioners felt very well supported throughout both these periods as senior leaders provided regular wellbeing calls, video calls, emails and texts. Families also valued the regular contact from nursery staff. This has supported children to transition back to the nursery building very well.

On reopening, practitioners have altered and extended settling in procedures to support the needs of very young children who may not previously have spent time away from the family home. Parents and children unfamiliar with the setting, have been supported well through outdoor visits and by video footage of the indoor environment. Parents feel confident about health protection arrangements in place to keep their child safe at nursery. They also welcome the detailed, individualised feedback delivered outdoors at collection times.

Practitioners have taken time to reconnect with children and assess progress in learning with a particular focus placed on relationships and wellbeing. As a result, next steps in learning were identified and taken forward for individual children. There has been a significant increase in the amount of time children spend outdoors. This includes exploration of the local community with children of all ages. Practitioners should continue to offer this range of outdoor experiences to children and embed the free flow indoors and outdoors routine.

Senior leaders and practitioners have been creative in facilitating nursery events while adhering to health protection guidance. The 'drive by' graduation allowed children, families and practitioners to celebrate children's achievement before moving on to primary school.

## Progress with recommendations from previous inspection

The staff team has changed significantly since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new operations manager. Families and practitioners respect the operations manager and recognise the positive impact she is having on the continued development and improvement of the setting. The team are proud of the improvements they have continued to make and have an increased professional confidence. The operations manager and practitioners appreciate and benefit from the support received from Glasgow City Council officers, particularly from the leader of early learning. This partnership continues and is having a very positive impact.

Self-evaluation approaches continue to be refined and are developing well. The operations manager is actively increasing her knowledge of effective self-evaluation through focused professional learning. She is introducing practitioners to various aspects in a measured and considered way. Positive examples of self-evaluation are evident. This includes changes made through a review of transition arrangements to support children as they move between playrooms. Everyone contributes to the informal evaluation of the setting. With their increased professional confidence, the practitioner team are now ready to develop their understanding of national self-evaluation frameworks. This will support them to identify what is working well and what needs to improve. Children are consulted increasingly about their nursery, with their ideas being taken forward in planning for learning. Practitioners also consult with parents and families through the use of social media and emails. The operations manager and practitioners should now ensure they gather the views and thoughts of as many stakeholders as possible through creative and inclusive ways.

Practitioners, through sensitive interactions, have created a calm, consistent learning atmosphere. Throughout the day, children play in small groups with practitioners and are confident to spend some time exploring an interest by themselves. Children are enthusiastic, imaginative and enjoy close bonds with each other. Practitioner's conversations with children are now much more effective. They spend quality time with children discussing what is capturing their interest. Practitioners now know how to observe children much more closely so they can see and hear what children do and talk about. As a result, activities are joyous and sustain children's interest for longer periods of time.

Learning and teaching approaches are a continuing focus for improvement for the setting. As a result of the leadership of the operations manager and the high quality input from the leader of early learning, practitioners have made significant progress. Working with the leader of early learning is giving practitioners confidence and a deeper understanding of the improvements they are making. Their questioning is more open-ended and challenges children's thinking. Play opportunities are of a higher quality, are meaningful and are rooted in real-life contexts. Practitioners embrace professional learning opportunities. Strong teamwork and enhanced knowledge is enabling them to lead their own improvement journey. Approaches to planning for learning are effective and manageable. The 'planning wall' outlines what children want to learn about and how practitioners will support the learning. Weekly planning meetings enable practitioners to talk about the progress children are making. They also talk about how they can provide the right level of challenge to support children to build on their skills. Approaches to observing children as they play and recording their progress are now much more consistent amongst the practitioner team. The operations manager has clear expectations of practitioners in relation to recording children's progress.

This is enabling more effective monitoring and tracking of children's progress. As a result, the setting is in a much better position to meet the learning needs of individual children.

### What happens next?

Understandably, Bright Beginnings Nursery has been responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These have had a significant impact on the work of the setting. Practitioners are implementing plans to support recovery. They are addressing the recommendations from the original inspection successfully. As a result, we will make no more visits to Bright Beginning's Nursery in connection with the original inspection. Glasgow City Council will continue to inform parents about the settings progress as part of its usual arrangements for reporting on the quality of its education service.

Barbara Daly  
HM Inspector