

Summarised inspection findings

**Brookland Nursery (early learning and
childcare standalone setting)**

West Dunbartonshire Council

SEED No: 8316112

09 May 2017

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change.

- The manager and practitioners are currently revisiting their vision, values and aims to ensure they reflect the views and aspirations of all involved with the setting. They have begun to consult with practitioners and have plans to involve both children and parents in this exercise. These consultations should be used to support the development of a vision that reflects their desire for all children to receive a high quality experience of early learning and childcare.
- The setting has implemented many changes in recent months as part of their drive to improve children's experiences, the learning environment and planning for learning. Practitioners should now ensure that changes are consistently well-informed, planned and implemented. At present, many changes have not yet had time to lead to desired improvement and require continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure positive impact.
- The manager has been in post for less than two years and spends time each day in the play rooms, providing effective support and direction to practitioners. A few practitioners have begun to take responsibility for leading development within the setting. Leadership roles include eco work with children, transition arrangements, Spanish and family learning. Changes to aspects of the curriculum have also been well led. For example, practitioners have developed the way in which they support children's literacy skills in relation to stories. Some of these leadership roles are at an early stage and should be kept under review to ensure they support positive outcomes for all children. There is a need for more practitioners to take on roles that contribute to the improvement of the setting.
- The setting has an annual improvement plan which identifies specific priorities taking account the views of all stakeholders. The manager regularly reviews progress and makes amendments where appropriate. The 'children's committee' also meets regularly with the manager which allows children to take an active role in supporting improvement within the setting, for example, in developing the outdoor area. Their views are effectively listened to and used to effect change. This process should now involve all stakeholders in reviewing and assessing progress in overtaking the specified targets. Progress in taking forward priorities should be shared with families and children.
- Practitioners access a wide range of professional learning opportunities and visit other settings to identify and share good practice. This is supported by a positive start to making use of national guidance, for example, using *Building the Ambition* to review aspects of the learning environment for babies and toddlers. Approaches to self-evaluation, as planned, should be strengthened to develop a shared understanding of high quality learning through play and early learning pedagogy.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring.

- Babies enjoy positive, caring relationships with practitioners. They benefit from developmentally appropriate resources and activities and are gaining confidence in exploring the environment around them. They enjoy participating in songs and rhymes, sharing books with practitioners and exploring sensory play materials. Interactions throughout the session appropriately promote nurture and the building of relationships.
- Toddlers engage well with the range of learning opportunities on offer. They enjoy sensitive relationships with practitioners and are relaxed within the environment as they develop their independence through play. They enjoy sharing stories with each other and practitioners and sing songs which promote their early communication and language skills. Toddlers access the outdoor learning environment each day and make use of local parks for active play. As planned, practitioners should now continue to develop self-evaluation approaches to support continuous improvement.
- Within the room for young children aged 3-5 years, children also benefit from positive relationships with practitioners. Most children are confident in expressing their needs and sharing their ideas. They are beginning to develop an awareness of what it means to be respectful of others and the environment. This should be continued to ensure children's ownership of the learning environment is developed and promotes a stronger sense of responsibility.
- Children are mostly enthusiastic about their learning and enjoy their time in the setting. They are motivated to learn and show an interest in the world around them. Children are confident in the environment both indoors and outside and benefit from a range of learning experiences. In a few examples, practitioners use questions appropriately to support children to extend their thinking. These approaches now need to be more effective and consistent across the team. This will help ensure that there are less missed opportunities to support children to lead their own learning and explore their questions. Practitioners should develop consistent strategies to provide children with appropriate levels of support and challenge in their learning. The team should also continue to review and develop the learning environment so that it supports higher levels of engagement in learning through play and offers more opportunities for investigation, creativity, curiosity and problem solving.
- Practitioners make observations about children's learning which are recorded in their individual profiles. These document the range of learning experiences that children are involved in over time. Practitioners are beginning to use these to assess and identify aspects of significant learning. This now needs to be developed further to ensure effective and high quality observations lead to children receiving the appropriate support, challenge

and depth of learning. Practitioners require ongoing support to ensure learning experiences are appropriately matched to children's developmental stages and that judgements about progress are sound. Children would benefit from having more focused conversations about their learning to reflect on their achievements and plan for what they might learn next. Children's involvement in and contributions to their own learning profiles should also be increased. Children are ready to take more responsibility for leading their own learning.

2.2 Curriculum: theme 3 learning and development pathways

- Within the setting there are opportunities for children to develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These now need to be developed to provide children with a range of meaningful contexts to develop and apply their knowledge. As approaches to planning and the use of floor books move forward, the team should take full account of curriculum design principles, with particular attention to personalisation, depth and challenge.
- Satisfactory outdoor learning experiences are accessed by children on a daily basis and the team have worked to improve this area over time. These experiences now require continued review and development. Outdoors, children have opportunities to develop their awareness of risk and explore the natural environment. Children are also developing an understanding of their role in promoting sustainability through their eco work.
- Use of the local area and visitors to the setting give children the opportunity to learn about the world of work. For example, children have worked with the local park ranger to look after the environment and a parent attended the setting to talk about their job in the construction industry.

2.7 Partnerships: theme 3 Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- The setting currently engages with a few local partners to support children's learning. Practitioners recognise that there is potential to further develop this area of work and have made links with a local care home and local businesses to plan meaningful ways to enhance their curriculum.
- Information is regularly shared with parents about children's learning in both formal and informal ways. Useful newsletters, e-mails, texts, social media and a new parents' forum are increasingly informing families about children's learning. The manager is very open to involving parents in sharing their views. Parents gave examples of how their views are valued and used to improve the setting.
- Partnerships with parents and family members are beginning to increase opportunities to share learning between home and the setting. This has included parents coming in to share skills from their workplace and participating with children in music and Spanish classes. Plans are in place to re-establish home learning opportunities and develop new opportunities for family learning with a focus on literacy and numeracy.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The setting submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant practitioners and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the setting and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- Wellbeing
- Fulfilment of statutory duties
- Inclusion and equality.

- Relationships between children and practitioners are warm, caring and positive. As a result, children are observed to feel secure, valued and respected. The importance of attachments and relationships is recognised by practitioners who value each child as a unique and capable individual. Families feel well supported and practitioners focus on how they can support children to develop.
- The team have a good knowledge of the wellbeing indicators of *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) and incorporate these in their practice with children and parents. There is a GIRFEC policy for parents to share the approach used within the setting. The wellbeing indicators are used when planning for children, sharing a concern or reviewing their development. As planned, the team should develop children's understanding of these indicators in a meaningful way to support them to share their feelings and experiences.
- The manager leads a 'children's committee' to provide a way for children to share their views. Older children consult with their peers to ensure everyone has an opportunity to put forward ideas and suggestions. Children understand that practitioners value their ideas and can share examples of times their views have made a difference. They understand their role and take this responsibility seriously. This provides a sound foundation for developing further children's understanding of rights and promoting children's voice throughout all aspects of the setting.
- Practitioners know children's personal preferences and their home circumstances well, which allows them to meet their individual needs effectively. This includes managing transitions according to children's developmental stages, using communication techniques, providing support for behaviour and providing translators when appropriate. Flexible and personalised approaches meet the needs of children and families effectively. Where children have an identified additional need, records are up to date, completed correctly and regularly reviewed. As a result, care and support is effective.
- Children under three years of age show consideration and warmth for others appropriate to their stage of development. They have formed caring relationships with practitioners and one another and are beginning to show empathy when they comfort a friend who is upset. Most children aged three-five years understand and can explain the setting's rules that they helped develop. A few children require support to show consideration to other children and practitioners and to negotiate sharing independently.
- Practitioners actively engage with legislation and national guidance in order to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities and develop their practice. The manager uses regular meetings and training to reinforce this commitment and ensure understanding of statutory

duties within the team. In particular, practitioners are clear about their responsibility to promote children's wellbeing.

- Practitioners value and celebrate children's individual beliefs, traditions, culture and family circumstances equally. They are responsive in meeting the needs of new children with specific needs. Resources are reflective of the diversity of Scottish society. The team are aware of the need to plan learning about equality and diversity with children and challenge discrimination in a way that is meaningful to them.

3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- Progress in communication, early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing
- Children's progress over time
- Overall quality of children's achievement
- Ensuring equity for all children.

- Babies benefit from the caring relationships they have with the practitioners who look after them. Considered use of voice, song, tone and gesture enables babies to feel included and develop their early communication skills, appropriate to their stage of development. The learning environment encourages babies to explore and to develop physical skills such as crawling and walking.
- Toddlers are developing their early language and communication skills well and show a keen interest in songs, rhymes and books. They are curious about the world around them and enjoy developing their physical skills through use of the outdoor area and local park. Toddlers show a growing independence in the environment and are becoming familiar with nursery routines. Exploration of sensory play materials, malleable materials and resources enable a few children to develop their early mark-making skills.
- Overall, almost all young children aged three-five years are making good progress in communication and early language. Most are able to share their thoughts in conversation with practitioners and a few are able to talk about their learning. Most children listen well when sharing stories. Practitioners believe that new approaches which encourage children to extend their thinking in relation to texts are having a positive impact. Most older children demonstrate a well-developed vocabulary and an interest in learning new words. A few children demonstrate an interest in early writing and mark-making. Practitioners now need to ensure that children are consistently encouraged to access resources for mark-making across the playroom. Real life and meaningful opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills through play across the curriculum should be strengthened.
- Almost all children are making good progress in mathematics and numeracy. Most count with growing confidence during play when exploring resources such as building blocks and when playing outdoor games. Most children also recognise a few two dimensional shapes and show an interest in learning more about shape. Children use remote controlled toys to explore direction and a few describe controlling their cars with appropriate directional language. Children use mathematical language to compare size and amount when playing at the water tray. There is scope to effectively integrate more opportunities for children to develop and apply these skills across the curriculum both indoors and outside. This will support children to make the best possible progress in learning.

- Almost all children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. The majority are developing an awareness of ways to keep healthy and a few can describe foods that are good for you, as well as the benefits of tooth brushing. Children are developing physical skills through yoga activities, use of the outdoor play equipment and other active play resources. Most demonstrate an awareness of risk when playing outdoors and naturally assess this for themselves. The majority of children demonstrate consideration for others and an ability to work cooperatively. Practitioners should now continue to develop children's ability to listen to each other and work together successfully during play.
- Most children show an enthusiasm for learning languages and participate in Spanish lessons as part of the curriculum. They demonstrate a growing vocabulary and recall prior learning as they revisit words, songs and phrases. Practitioners could now establish opportunities to integrate this learning into children's experiences within the playroom and daily routines to support children's progress and celebrate their learning.
- Most children enjoy exploring the outdoors when given the opportunity to do so. Practitioners should ensure children are able to make the best use of all garden areas to support their learning and progress. Children can name various insects they find outside and a few ask questions about what they see. Most show an interest in learning about space as part of a planned learning context. A few can name different planets and their characteristics. Practitioners now need to ensure that their own knowledge and available resources appropriately enable children to build on prior learning and extend their thinking.
- Children are confident individuals and are supported to share their ideas and opinions. Practitioners use praise well to recognise children's individual efforts and achievements within the setting. As planned, the team should now ensure that information about children's wider achievements is used to build on prior learning. This will support children to make the best possible progress.
- The setting's supportive ethos helps all children to feel included and respected. Practitioners are proactive in identifying and addressing any barriers to learning and take full account of the individual circumstances of children and families. The setting is beginning to use available data to evaluate the effectiveness of particular interventions in securing children's progress and promoting equity for all children over time.

Setting's choice of QI: 2.5 Family Learning

- Engaging families in learning
 - Early intervention and prevention
 - Quality of family learning programmes
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- All practitioners value the contribution families make to children's learning. They work hard to develop positive, trusting relationships with families. As a result, they have a good knowledge of children's needs and use this knowledge to offer appropriate support. They work in close partnerships with a range of relevant local agencies and professionals such as health visitors, educational psychologists and speech and language therapists to agree and implement strategies to support learning. Children's specific learning needs are promptly identified and regularly reviewed in partnership with parents. Practitioners sensitively respond to individual family circumstances.
 - Families benefit from the setting's strong collaboration with colleagues throughout the local authority to ensure appropriate referrals to and from services. The team should now explore how they can use the indicators from *How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare?* to support the evaluation of the impact of such interventions.
 - The team are keen to develop inclusive approaches to support family learning that will engage as many families as possible. In order to ensure practitioners are meeting the needs and interests of working families, it would be useful to establish a shared view of the rationale, vision and aims of family learning. Creative techniques to support families to share learning at home in a fun and accessible way will support parents to be involved in a way that best suits their interests and needs. Re-establishing previous home learning opportunities and developing an annual plan for family learning including outdoor learning, sustainability, science, as well as literacy and numeracy could offer exciting possibilities for adults and children to learn together. Practitioners need to work with all stakeholders to evidence the impact of family learning activities on children's learning over time in order to measure and celebrate their achievements.

1 Quality of care and support

Care Inspectorate grade: Good

- The friendly and nurturing staff team knew the children well and used this knowledge to care for them. Staff worked well with parents, who found them responsive and helpful. They used handover times to talk about how best to care for children and to share information.
- All children had individual personal plans and systems were in place to review these. Parents completed children's routine sheets however staff were not clear about some of this information and needed to clarify this with parents. Some plans did not include children's personal preferences and information about their family. Some of the plans did not include up to date purposeful observations of children's development and clearly identified next steps. See recommendation one.
- There was scope for continued development of staff communication systems to ensure children's quality of experience and care routines are not disrupted by staff tasks and change over times.
- We saw younger children reading together and sharing stories with their friends. Most of the children treated each other with respect and some of the older children told us about the Golden Rules. Staff should continue to provide opportunities to encourage children to cooperate with each other and develop friendships.
- Appropriate medication arrangements were in place. Where children had particular allergies important steps had been taken to reduce risks throughout the service.
- Staff recorded accidents and parents were informed. Systems were in place for monitoring accidents and dealing with any emerging patterns.
- Some incidents had not been recorded. We discussed the importance of parents being kept fully informed about incidents relating to the care of their children.
- Children had opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles, for example, they knew about the importance of washing their hands and brushing their teeth.
- Staff were not always vigilant in encouraging children to wipe their nose when needed. Children in the outdoor area had to return inside to access paper tissues. This interrupted children's play unnecessarily. Staff should provide easily accessible paper tissues for the children in all areas. This will help prevent the spread of infection and encourage children's independence.

2 Quality of environment

Care Inspectorate grade: Adequate

- It is acknowledged that the provider had made important changes to enhance the environment. For example, the upgraded the nappy changing areas resulted in more privacy for children and provided improved hand washing facilities. We discussed how further improvements could be made to enhance infection control arrangements.
- A secure controlled door entry system helped staff to monitor those entering and leaving the building.
- The provider and manager were currently developing the outdoor play areas. Parents' and children's suggestions had been included. Different areas had been created to encourage children to investigate and explore, for example, a mud kitchen was available at times. Some of the children played in the story hut, reading books and listening to stories. We noticed some of the children did not appear to engage with the resources available in this area. Current arrangements did not support children to move freely between indoors and outdoors or between garden areas. We discussed good practice documents, including 'My World Outdoors' and a number of ways to help reduce barriers for children accessing outdoor areas. See recommendation two.
- Staff discussed the importance of promoting safety. A framework of health and safety procedures and risk assessments supported staff practice. We discussed how some risk assessments could be further improved. For example, risk assessments in relation to the new tree house did not include full information. See recommendation three.
- Staff had developed the variety of sensory and natural resources for children. They should continue to do this so that children have a richer variety of open ended and natural materials to support curiosity and creativity.
- Staff took children for regular interesting walks to the local park. Children were clearly familiar with their local community and enjoyed discussing points of interest.
- Younger children's achievements were celebrated and displayed on the playroom wall. Low level soap and paper towel dispensers helped children become more independent. However, new cloakroom arrangements reduced some children's opportunities for independence as some coat pegs were out of their reach.
- We discussed cleaning and storage arrangements with the manager and staff and made some suggestions for improvements.

3 Quality of staffing

Care Inspectorate grade: Good

- There was a friendly, nurturing and well established staff team working in the service. Staff felt supported by colleagues and management. We observed that staff responded to the children with warmth. Staff were eager to learn and develop their practice and were keen to improve children's experiences.
- Staff were registered or registering with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and

were aware of their responsibilities for continued registration.

- We examined a sample of staff recruitment files and found organised procedures were in place for references and checks that had been carried out for prospective staff, including checks through the 'Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme' and SSSC. We found the provider needed to update the recruitment procedure in line with best practice, 'Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment'. The provider downloaded this document and agreed to update the service's practice and procedure to reflect this guidance.
- There were some opportunities for staff to attend training and visit other early learning and childcare centres. Staff were keen to share the changes they had made since the visits. For example, they discussed the positive impact of using more sensory and natural materials in improving outcomes for the babies.
- Staff spoke about the benefits of taking part in child protection training and the *Building the Ambition* training session the manager had delivered.
- The manager and staff acknowledged that staff would benefit from more training opportunities and a training plan had been put in place to address this. We made some suggestions about training that may assist staff in their continuing professional development. The manager updated the training plan to reflect our suggestions.
- We discussed our Hub and how staff could access this range of resources aimed at supporting improvements. Staff were enthusiastic and keen to take this forward.

4 Quality of management and leadership

Care Inspectorate grade: Good

- The provider, management team and staff were keen to provide the best possible care for children and their families. They had formed an improvement plan, which identified developments for the service. We found that they were enthusiastic, motivated and were observed to be professional in their interactions with each other.
- The current management team was the manager and three team leaders. Plans were in place for a deputy manager to join the team. This will provide further support for the manager.
- All of the parents we spoke with told us they found the manager to be supportive and were confident about speaking with the manager and staff if they had concerns. An appropriate complaints procedure was in place and easily accessible to parents.
- Staff had opportunities to meet as a team and this meant that they were being consulted on new ways of working and discussing changes.
- Through discussion with the management team it became clear that there were some informal and formal ways that monitoring and quality assurance were carried out in the service. This inspection highlighted some areas that would benefit from closer monitoring. See recommendation four.

- We noticed that arrangements for the older children's self-service style lunch resulted in children lining up for an extended period of time. We asked the manager to observe this and establish if outcomes for children could be improved.
- It is acknowledge that the provider and management team had already started to make some of the improvements we suggested.

To be completed by the Care Inspector and inserted into the letter

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and nine recommendations. From these, three recommendations have been met, five partially met and one not met. Outstanding issues relating to personal plans, children's experiences and monitoring arrangements are carried forward in this inspection. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and four recommendations.

Recommendations:

- Staff should make sure each child's personal plan includes up to date information and details of how the development needs of the child are being supported, assessed and reviewed.
National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 3: Health and wellbeing.
- The manager and staff should use good practice to guide them in the continued development of children's outdoor learning experiences.
National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 5: Quality of experience and Standard 2: A safe environment.
My World Outdoors hub.careinspectorate.com.
- Risk assessments should fully identify any potential risks and detail how these will be addressed.
National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 2: A safe environment.
- The management team should continue to monitor and look at ways to improve children's personal plans, children's outdoor play experiences, risk assessments and cleaning arrangements. This will help improve outcomes for children.
National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 14:
Well-managed Service.

Particular strengths of the setting

- Confident, motivated children who are making good progress in their learning and enjoy their time at Brookland Nursery.
- Positive and enthusiastic leadership from the manager who provides support and direction to practitioners in order to continue to improve outcomes for all children.
- A team of practitioners who work well together, are caring and supportive of children and families and are keen to improve their practice through professional learning.

Agreed areas for improvement for the setting

- Continue to develop practitioners' understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy to ensure all children experience high quality learning. Particular attention should be paid to developing practitioners' professional judgement about children's learning and progress.
- Develop approaches to self-evaluation and monitoring across the setting with a clearer focus on learning. Practitioners' use of national practice documents to support reflection and development should be improved.
- Continue to review and refresh the learning environment both indoors and outdoors to maximise the potential of learning for all children. More effective use should be made of the outdoor environment to support children's learning across the curriculum.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are confident that the setting has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. West Dunbartonshire Council will inform parents/carers about the setting's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its settings.

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