

# Summarised inspection findings

**Garnock Valley Early Years Centre**

North Ayrshire Council

12 June 2018

## Key contextual information

The centre is situated in Kilbirnie. The centre has the capacity to offer play sessions to a maximum of 22 children at any one time. It offers places for young children accessed through the scheme for eligible two year olds.

Support to families is offered through play sessions, individual and group work within the centre and on an outreach basis in their own home or local community. All children transfer to their local nursery following their third birthday, although the timing of this can be flexible and tailored to individual need.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

good

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 vision, values and aims of the setting have been developed and implemented by parents, management, practitioners and a few partners. They are appropriate and reflect the uniqueness of the setting within the local community. The management team and practitioners are highly committed to the setting and work hard to make sure vision, values and aims are realised.
- The management team and practitioners responded positively to the professional dialogue during the inspection. There is a strong culture of reflection within the setting and as a team they are strongly committed to improving their practice to make a positive impact on learning outcomes for children. Practitioners are developing their understanding of national guidance, How good is our early learning and childcare? (HGIOELC?) and how this supports self-evaluation. They are beginning to use the challenge questions to support professional dialogue particularly in their regular collegiate sessions. As part of the self-evaluation cycle it will be important to fully consider and demonstrate the impact of change on improving outcomes for children.
- A quality assurance timeline is established that involves a range of activities and links to national quality indicators. Good use has been made of national guidance, Building the Ambition, to facilitate specific and targeted audits. However, management and practitioners recognise that they now need to continue to develop these processes to ensure they are more robust. This will help to evaluate what is working well and what needs to improve in a more structured way through the identification of specific, clear measurable targets. Together this will help secure a pace of change that will continue to make a positive impact for children and families.
- Practitioners access a range of professional learning opportunities to increase their knowledge and to continually improve their practice. As a result of specific courses, they have developed a deeper understanding of how to support children who require additional support with their learning. The management team values practitioners' contributions, making effective use of their individual skills and interests to create individual leadership roles for all

practitioners. There is scope to include more evaluative work as part of these roles. There is also scope to increase the opportunities for children to adopt leadership responsibilities.

- The improvement plan clearly sets out key development priorities relevant to the setting. This details the drivers for change and how these will be implemented. As this is delivered it will be important that improvements are evidenced robustly to ensure the impact of change is measured appropriately.
- The setting benefits from a range of inputs and supports from the local authority including quality assurance visits. They also provide helpful managers' meetings which focus on relevant aspects such as improvement planning. Other recent inputs have been supporting the development of assessment, planning and tracking children's progress.

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience 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

### **Children aged from birth to two years.**

- Relationships between practitioners and children aged from birth to two years are kind and caring and as a result children were observed to be settled and secure in their environment. A flexible and responsive routine allows practitioners the opportunity to meet the needs of individual children. A wide range of natural and open-ended resources increasingly allow allows children to play, learn and investigate using their senses. Practitioners use a range of strategies with children as they develop their communication and language skills. Children experience the outdoors on a daily basis through opportunities to play in the garden area.

### **Children aged from two to three years**

- Children aged two to three years benefit from positive and nurturing relationships with practitioners and are observed to feel valued, safe and secure. Children have opportunities to engage in a wide range of planned and spontaneous learning experiences. As a result children are developing their independence, creativity and resilience. Children are observed to be motivated and engaged in their learning, in particular in the outdoor space. They are able to flow freely between indoors and out and are observed choosing with confidence their preferred learning experience.
- Practitioners are supportive and caring towards children as they learn through play. They use praise during their interactions, which is helping to build children's self-esteem and confidence in learning. In the best examples, practitioners skilfully used questioning to promote curiosity and inquiry learning, however this was inconsistent at times. Practitioners listen carefully to children and respond appropriately. We discussed with managers the need to further develop approaches to questioning ensuring consistency across the team.
- There is a flexible and responsive routine, which supports children to have time and space to deepen their learning. Overall children were observed to enjoy the experiences offered both indoors and outdoors, for example exploring in the mud kitchen. Age appropriate opportunities to engage in digital technology are offered through the use of a tablet computer.
- Practitioners know individual children well as learners and use their observations to inform next steps in learning. The recording of observations is inconsistent and does not always focus on significant learning. Children's learning journals record their involvement in experiences. Practitioners would benefit from further support in this area of their work. Approaches to capturing and recording children's progress in learning is leading to improved outcomes for children. However, they should continue to develop their work on clearly demonstrating the

progress children are making in their learning. Parents receive regular updates on their child's progress in learning and are supported to contribute to their profiles.

- A new approach to planning, tracking and monitoring has been introduced across the setting. Practitioners are becoming increasingly familiar with the new approach, however more time is needed to fully embed all elements of the process. Planned experiences are developmentally appropriate and take account of children's individual needs, including those needing additional support.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Across the setting, planning for children's learning takes account of national and local guidance. Pre-Birth to Three, Building the Ambition and local authority guidance are used to support planning for children aged from birth to three. Children who are three or require additional challenge are supported through Curriculum for Excellence. The newly adopted system for planning needs time to become fully embedded, allowing practitioners to become confident in its use.
- A key worker system is in place allowing continuity of care for very young children. Information from home is shared via an 'All about Me' document, which helps to support children settle and transition into the setting. This helpfully informs an initial child's plan which contributes to the settling in evidence collated in a child's profile. Individual learning plans are discussed with parents on a regular basis and are updated termly or when there is a significant achievement or development in learning.
- Transitions into, across and out of the setting are well-managed with key information captured and shared between parents, practitioners and partners. This supports continuity and progression for children's learning. During inspection the local nursery lead, from the nursery the children will attend, gave details of the successful transition programme, including the opportunity for practitioners from Garnock Valley Early Years Centre (EYC) to accompany children and stay as part of settling in if required.
- Practitioners make daily use of the outdoor space and children have opportunities to engage in a range of experiences. Further use of the local community could be explored.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Parents and carers are encouraged to engage in the life of the setting through a variety of initiatives and events. These include, stay and play sessions, book bug, 'I can' bags. The weekly community brunch initiative is having a positive impact on developing life skills for families within the local area.
- The setting should continue to work in partnership with parents to ensure there is a shared understanding of the positive impact that their involvement is having on the children's progress and achievement.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

- The setting submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion **very 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

- All children attending the setting are observed to be very settled, confident and happy. The setting's ethos is welcoming and inclusive. Strong attachments are evident between practitioners and children. Relationships are warm, nurturing and respectful. Practitioners use a wide range of appropriate materials to discuss with children the importance of feelings. They also deliver a more structured programme to support children's emotional intelligence and resilience. They fully understand the Getting it right for every child wellbeing indicators and recognise the importance of their role in supporting children's health and wellbeing. Children would benefit from more meaningful and developmentally appropriate experiences to enable them to become aware of how the indicators relate to them as individuals. Practitioners should continue to encourage the children, in an age appropriate way, to be aware of their rights by promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Home visits, close partnership working and community engagement fosters respectful, supportive relationships with families. These ensure practitioners have a very good knowledge of the individual circumstances of each child. They use this very well to provide support for children who face additional support needs. Parents speak very positively about being included in the setting's community and receiving an extremely high level of support from management and practitioners. Effective partnership working improves the delivery of individual plans and strategies. Family learning and work within the community empowers parents to support their own children's wellbeing. The management team and practitioners work closely and effectively with partners to promote health and wellbeing and to meet the care and learning needs of individual children.
- The management team and practitioners actively engage and comply with statutory duties. There is very detailed and robust planning using the local authority staged intervention process for children with additional support needs. Individual plans are very effectively monitored and reviewed to ensure each child makes appropriate progress and has access to the support they need. Practitioners have undertaken a range of training to comply with statutory duties and to ensure they have the skills they need to support all their children.
- The management team are very aware of the context and needs of the local community. The setting is proactive in providing opportunities for families to meet together, develop friendships and become active members of their community. Practitioners use their knowledge to skilfully work with children to ensure they are fully included in all aspects of the setting and make progress in their learning. There is a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and their families.

## 3.2 Securing children's progress

very 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

### Children aged birth to two years

- Relationships between practitioners and children aged birth to two years are warm and nurturing. This is supporting children as they develop their emotional, social, physical and cognitive skills. Children explore a variety of natural materials and sensory opportunities within their relaxed, well-resourced environment. Spontaneous singing during play engages children to listen and join in the actions. Communication and language strategies, for example 'signing' helps children settle into their routine. Children are observed counting and repeating numbers as they climb the stairs to the chute indoors and play outdoors with a variety of open-ended resources.

### Children aged two to three years

- Children aged two to three years are making very good progress in their learning with almost all developing confidence within the playroom environment. The learning environment benefits from a range of new resources, which have been carefully considered to meet the needs of individual children, taking account of their age and stage of development. The outdoor environment has been carefully constructed allowing children freedom to explore and investigate a range of experiences and natural resources.
- Overall children are making very good progress in communication and language. Opportunities to develop and extend vocabulary are evident in children's individual plans as well as in room plans. Children demonstrate good listening skills and are able to follow simple instructions, for example as they prepare for snack. Strategies for developing early language skills are used to support the development of communication, for example children are observed engaging in age and stage appropriate conversations with practitioners and peers. Opportunities for singing spontaneously are evident as children played outdoors. Children enjoy books and benefit from a wide range of text, including picture books and short stories. Opportunities for mark making are available through a variety of media, including large chalk and paints.
- Children are making very good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. They are developing an awareness of shape and mathematical concepts through playing with malleable materials, loose parts and blocks. Children explore size and measurement outdoors, using pipes to roll different sizes of logs into a container. They are observed to reciting colours and counting, for example as they negotiated the stepping-stones. Resources to support and

enhance opportunities for children to further develop their skills in numeracy and mathematics are evident across the setting.

- Overall children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing with children observed to be happy and settled in their environment. Children are developing their physical skills as they focus on balancing indoors and out, running and climbing the stairs to the chute. Children had fun with their peers as they explore outdoors, for example developing their coordination as they climb in and out of large cardboard boxes. Children are supported to share and take turns as they play in the mud kitchen and on the chute. Children are becoming aware of personal hygiene routines, for example, confidently washing their hands for snack.
- Children are observed becoming increasingly confident and developing a sense of responsibility, for example taking risks in their play, in particular outdoors. Practitioners know children well as individuals and are continuing to work on identifying significant learning and next steps. They use praise well to encourage children to develop a sense of independence and celebrate success. Children's achievements are captured and shared through their profiles. Practitioners are continuing to improve the way that achievements are captured and shared in their profiles. Children's progress is shared termly with parents through meetings in the setting or at home. We have asked practitioners to consider ways in which to celebrate wider achievements across the setting, fully involving parents in the process.
- Equity is promoted across the setting with a supportive and inclusive ethos, as a result there is a climate of mutual respect and trust. Practitioners know their children and families well and take good account of their socio-economic background.

## Setting choice of QI: 2.5 Family Learning

- Engaging families in learning
- Early Intervention and prevention
- Quality of family learning programmes

- The setting has a vision that ‘families can access a wide range of supports to empower individuals and build community capacity.’ Practitioners have established positive and supportive relationships with families and work hard to ensure they feel welcome and supported. Practitioners respond promptly to any changes in family circumstances offering targeted support, if required, in a sensitive manner. They are continuing to work on innovative ways for families to have increased opportunities to discuss their child’s learning needs with practitioners and for personal achievement to be celebrated.
- Practitioners recognise the importance of early intervention and prevention. The weekly parenting group sessions are very well attended by families from the surrounding community. They are relevant and enjoyable with a clear focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The setting should continue to consult with families to ensure they are meeting their needs and inform next steps.
- The setting provides a varied programme of family learning opportunities where parents and carers can support their child’s learning together both at home and within the setting. The team should explore ways of effectively recording programmes used and evaluating the impact of these initiatives on children’s learning.

## Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.