

# Summarised inspection findings

**Lennoxtown Primary School and Early Years Centre**

East Dunbartonshire Council

14 March 2023

## Key contextual information

Lennoxtown Early Years Centre (EYC) is in the grounds of Lennoxtown Primary School. Children access a small, well-resourced outdoor area from their playrooms. The current EYC roll includes 80 children aged three to five years, 13 two to three year olds and 11 children under two years. Children attend the setting between the hours of 8 am and 6 pm on a variety of attendance patterns. A few children also attend other settings as part of a split placement. The large team includes a deputy head of centre (DHOC), two senior practitioners, full and part-time practitioners, a teacher, clerical and domestic staff. The headteacher of the primary school is actively involved in the leadership and work of the centre. The DHOC was appointed to her permanent post in April 2022 following a period of frequent staff changes. The DHOC is part of the wider school leadership team.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

**good**

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

- The team have been resilient and focused on the needs of local families, as they provided a service for children in the village and surrounding areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. Practitioners implemented many changes to practice during periods of restrictions. The team managed risk effectively and frequently updated working practices in line with national guidance. Parents and children enjoyed home learning activities such as recordings of songs and stories. Contact and relationships were sustained. Admirably, all of this was achieved in an extremely challenging staffing context. Significant, unavoidable, periods of staff absence did not prevent children and families attending the centre. From August 2021 until April 2022 the school and EYC experienced significant challenges due to child and staff absence as a result of COVID-19. This has had a negative impact of the pace of change withing the school. The headteacher, supported by officers from the local authority, worked tirelessly to ensure there were enough adults to meet children's needs.
- Across all playrooms, practitioners know children very well as individuals. Relationships between practitioners and children are loving, caring and attentive. Practitioners have created nurturing, welcoming learning spaces for children and families. Most children are settled, purposeful, and motivated throughout their day. Children spend extended periods of time exploring interesting resources and learning experiences. The team draw effectively on focused professional learning, modelling, and coaching to inform their practice.

### Children under three

- Babies and toddlers are happy and feel secure within their playrooms. Practitioners and children interact well using gestures, visual prompts, and children's developing vocabulary. The team use a sensitive, responsive approach to anticipate and respond to all children's behaviour and forms of communication. Practitioners understand what is unique and important for individual children. Practitioners plan routines and engaging learning experiences appropriate

to children's individual stage of development. Babies and toddlers use all their senses to explore interesting open-ended resources. The team have rightly adapted how they plan for, and record learning experiences for the youngest children. Practitioners are beginning to develop new ways to record how children experience success.

### **Children aged three to five**

- Most children explore experiences freely and with confidence throughout their day. Children play and co-operate well together. Children develop resilience and independence as they get ready to play outside or assist at snack and lunch time. Practitioners' changes to planning and increased use of learning walls improves the balance between adult-directed and child-initiated learning. Most children sustain interest for extended periods of time during free play. Practitioners have rightly adapted routines to minimise interruptions to children's free play. A few adult-directed group activities do not yet engage all children. The team should continue to develop their planning to ensure all experiences support children to develop further their skills in planning experiences well matched to children's stage of development.
- Most practitioners are skilled in offering well-judged support to children to explore their questions and interests as they play. The team understand the importance of providing children with opportunities to try things out for themselves, explore resources in new ways and take risks. Children ask for help when they need it. Most practitioners ask open ended questions to explore children's views. The team should continue to develop further their use of open ended, higher order questioning and commentary to support children to extend and develop their thinking in more depth.
- Practitioners record and share children's progress and achievements in an online record. Parents value regular updates about what children have been learning about and a few are beginning to use this to share learning at home. Most practitioners apply ideas from professional learning to improve the quality and focus of their observations of children's learning. Practitioners should continue to develop further their skills and confidence in identifying and recording observations of significant learning.
- Senior leaders and practitioners have rightly identified the need to streamline documentation. The team recognise the need for a more manageable and proportionate approach to planning, monitoring, and tracking children's progress. Initial work shows positive signs of improvement. Parents and children's increased involvement in identifying, progressing, and reflecting on next steps is important. Senior leaders and practitioners rightly pay careful attention to tracking and monitoring the progress of children who require additional help with their learning. The team should continue to use this information to inform their planning of experiences, spaces, and interactions.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school 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.

### 3.2 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

#### Children under three

- Babies and toddlers develop confidence, independence and resilience because of the caring and sensitive interactions of practitioners. They spend time making playdoh, looking at books, climbing, and singing familiar songs. They communicate well with practitioners and each other. Children enjoy drawing pictures using crayons and paints. They investigate early number, volume and shape through their exploratory play. Older children are beginning to count and recognise numbers.

#### Children three to five

- Most children are making good progress in communication and early language. In the three to five room most children readily listen well, engage in conversations with adults and their friends. Most children recognise their name, and a few know initial sounds. Almost all children are developing an interest in early writing skills. Most children know that writing has a purpose. A few can write their name. Almost all children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. A few enjoy retelling a story from a familiar book to a group of children and can recite rhymes. Increased opportunities through play to sing songs and play rhyming games will support children's continued development of key literacy concepts.
- Children are making good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. Most of children count to 10 and a few beyond. Most can recognise numbers 1-10. A few order numbers 1-10 and can count out items up to 10. Outside children use their counting skills well to play bowls. They use appropriate mathematical language in context, when supported by practitioners. Children can order objects by size, shape and colour. Most children can name and recognise basic shapes. They enjoy measuring themselves, adults and objects around them. Most children handle money in the centre and understand that money is used to buy things. A few can name coins. Children would benefit from developing further their skills in information handling and using money in meaningful contexts.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing, with all children presenting as happy and settled in their environment. Most children play well with each other and are developing friendships. They talk about their emotions particularly within the cosy corner where emotional boards are displayed. It would be useful for children to self-register when starting their session and choose an emotion which represents their feeling. Most children identify how to keep safe and almost all children develop physical skills well during outdoor play as they run and balance in the outdoor play area. They talk well about food which keeps them healthy.

Most children are independent as they get dressed for outdoors, cut their food, wash their hands, and pour their own milk.

- The centre has an inclusive ethos where children and their families are valued and respected. Practitioners celebrate children's achievements by displaying them on the achievement tree and presenting children with achievement certificate. They recognise they need to continue to encourage parents to share children's achievements out with the centre.
- Practitioners know children and their families very well and have a sound knowledge of the socio-economic context. They understand and take action where children experience barriers to learning as a result of poverty. Parents speak very positively of the family support they receive which discretely provides support through advice, signposting them to appropriate resources and access to food.

## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity 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.