

# Summarised inspection findings

**Madras Family Centre**

East Renfrewshire Council

29 November 2022

## Key contextual information

Madras Family Centre is part of the Neilston and Madras Learning Campus. The family centre and primary school are managed by the same headteacher. A principal teacher has responsibility for the family centre and Primary 1. The school, family centre and St Thomas's Primary School will move into a new building together in 2024. This is currently being constructed around Neilston Primary School. Children from Neilston, Uplawmoor and Barrhead attend the setting.

The setting provides 1140 hours of early learning and childcare for children aged two to five years of age between 8 am and 6 pm. A range of placements provides families with sessional, full day, term time and 52 week provision. The practitioner team has increased and changed significantly through the move to 1140 hours. The nursery teacher and senior practitioner are relatively new in post. The setting has experienced significant disruption in the first months of 2022 due to COVID-19 related practitioner absence.

At the time of the inspection there were 26 practitioners, one full time teacher, a depute head of centre and a senior practitioner. The setting is registered for 95 children at any one time. There are currently 133 children on the roll.

### 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

- Senior leaders have ensured that practitioners across the family centre and Neilston Primary School share the same vision, values and aims. They are skilled at focusing on improving outcomes for all children attending the setting. Senior leaders' care and compassion has sustained the work of practitioners through times of change and challenge. They demonstrate, through their actions, that they are committed and responsive toward their family centre community.
- The move to providing 1140 hours of early learning and childcare for children aged two to five has brought significant change to senior leaders and practitioners. Children attend on different patterns and the practitioner team has increased considerably in number. Taking forward these changes continues to be a focus for improvement. Senior leaders and practitioners adapt and make changes as necessary to ensure children and their families make full use of the provision.
- Senior leaders and practitioners experienced challenges at times in sustaining enough practitioners as a result of COVID-19. This has affected plans they had in place for continuously improving their work. More recently, senior leaders and practitioners reviewed these plans and improvement activities are underway. For example, enhancing the outdoor area further and enriching children's early mathematical skills. Many of the activities involve parents and the community to ensure they are involved fully. At all times, senior leaders and

practitioners maintain their focus on ensuring children are safe and cared for. They show dedication to their work and resilience during times of challenge.

- Practitioners proudly take responsibility for leadership tasks, which they know will improve the quality of children's learning experiences. For example, interventions to support children's confidence in listening and talking. They are building important skills in leading others through change. Practitioners readily seek out relevant research and link with key partners, which will support them to be successful. They use their skills and talents well as they work alongside their colleagues.
- Senior leaders and practitioners are progressing improvement tasks in a measured way. They are trying out initiatives with smaller groups of children and families and evaluating their success. This is helping senior leaders and practitioners find out the benefits to children and families and if their approaches are sustainable in the longer term. Improving children's progress in early language and communication and early mathematics are a continuing focus for practitioners.
- Senior leaders and practitioners work well together. They are continuing to use national practice guidance including 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (2020) to evaluate their work. It is timely for senior leaders, as planned, to re-establish more formalised mentoring and the modelling of practice for the practitioner team. Practitioners would benefit from opportunities to receive support and challenge through professional review. This would help facilitate greater consistency in learning and teaching approaches throughout the setting.

## 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

- There is a welcoming ethos in the setting. Children are confident in their environment and are encouraged to develop independence. They make choices from a variety of well-presented learning experiences and most engage fully in their learning. Children have time and space to sustain and revisit their play. They are happy and secure, interacting positively with each other.
- Practitioners know children and their families very well. Across the age groups, children benefit from practitioners' warm and supportive interactions.
- Children are keen to speak to their friends and to adults. They willingly share thoughts and ideas. From the youngest children onwards, children have opportunities to engage with role-play, books and stories and mark-making experiences. Children explore early mathematical concepts, particularly in construction and exploratory areas. They demonstrate an interest in applying their skills as they play. Practitioners lead focused group times and targeted interventions well to help children talk and work together.
- Children make good use of sensory experiences such as a sand area on the floor, where children step in with bare feet. This is helping them learn new words and express their feelings. Natural materials and loose parts are incorporated very well into play spaces. Practitioners have organised these materials carefully to promote meaningful learning.
- Children enjoy digital learning through, for example, using large touch screens and programmable toys. Practitioners share tablet computers with children to access information in all areas of the setting. There is scope to develop further children's access to digital technology, to help them to record their own learning.
- Children take part in planned and spontaneous learning experiences indoors and outdoors. Planning for learning processes include 'sparks', ideas that children bring, as well as intentional plans linked to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Practitioners are keen to continue to refine how they support and extend learning through meaningful conversations. This will encourage children to reflect on and talk about their learning. Children would benefit from greater consistency in the skills of thoughtful interactions across the practitioner team. Practitioners should continue to engage with national guidance to develop consistently high quality interactions across the team. As agreed, continue to develop planning processes to support children as leaders of their own learning, helping them develop their own ideas in more depth.
- Helpful systems are in place to check children's progress over time. Linked to this, practitioners make clear observations about what children can do. Observation of play and learning is helping practitioners take a closer look at the progress children make. A broader focus across

the curriculum would enhance this further by illustrating the skills children are developing in all areas of the setting.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Practitioners have been very successful in improving the learning spaces for children to ensure they promote literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing. Practitioners use self-evaluation and research to create a stimulating, attractive environment. Children learn through play across the curriculum. Learning spaces enable children to benefit from a breadth of experiences. Natural materials, many of which are recycled, promote curiosity and enquiry. These help create a calming atmosphere.
- Spaces to promote creativity facilitate exploration with colour. Children use the floor space well to create art through exploring pattern, printing and making models. Practitioners provide musical experiences indoors and outside so children have the opportunity to sing and create sounds. Role-play areas resemble the home, with open-ended opportunities through the availability of fabrics, props and quiet spaces. The 'Stem Den' promotes problem solving and enquiry.
- Practitioners work closely with the community to help children learn about the world of work. Senior leaders, practitioners, local farms and businesses have worked in partnership very well to develop the garden areas.
- Children's individual needs are the focus for planning for transitions into the setting and on to school. Parents are grateful to senior leaders and practitioners for ensuring seamless transitions during periods of challenge.

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

- An established parents' group contributed to the current vision, values and aims. The group meet regularly to discuss the work of the setting and provide valuable feedback to senior leaders and practitioners. Parents are working with senior leaders to enhance further how they find out about their child's progress and which approaches work best.
- Parents are responding well to 'stay and play' sessions which were paused during the pandemic. They enjoy freedom to play alongside their child in all areas of the setting. Sessions are offered on different days to enable as many parents as possible to take up the opportunity. A lending library is provided alongside 'themed' bags to support parents to engage with their child at home.
- Senior leaders and practitioners encourage grandparents to join a nursery session, engaging with their grandchild as they learn about the play spaces and learning experiences provided by practitioners. Post pandemic, this is hugely welcomed.

## 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

- Children aged two to three years of age are settled very well in their playroom environment. They benefit from close relationships with practitioners who know and understand them. Practitioners effectively support children's wellbeing by taking account of their stage of development and individual care needs. They are attentive to children's preferences and their need for social interaction. Children are learning about wellbeing in a supportive environment. Practitioners support sharing, turn taking and children's independence skills very well. They are proactive in considering parents' views.
- Children aged three to five years demonstrate their values of being respectful, honest, safe, responsible, ambitious and ready within the playroom and throughout their play.
- Most children demonstrate a strong sense of self and the warmth of friendship, which is very important to them. A few children are new to the setting and are building confidence at their own pace. Children show that they are learning to manage their own emotions and recognise how others feel. They seek out quiet spaces confidently, to rest as needed. Practitioners guide them well during their play to do this.
- Practitioners provide regular and familiar routines, which contribute meaningfully to wellbeing. Children prepare snack, bake, set tables for lunch and dress for wet weather outdoor play confidently. They come together in their key group to talk, learn more about each other and share their thoughts. This is helping them feel secure and that they belong. Mealtimes, whilst busy, provide opportunities for children to exercise choice and preference. Children are unhurried and take part in conversation at the table.
- Children learn about their rights through focused activity. They share their views, make choices based on their interests and are respected by practitioners who care deeply for them. Practitioners are continuing to enhance their expertise in how to help young children understand their rights.
- Senior leaders and practitioners are meticulous in how they respond to statutory duties. They understand and demonstrate how to safeguard and protect children. In doing so, they have gained the trust of families.
- Where children need additional support to enable them to progress at their own rate, senior leaders work in partnership with families. They create individualised plans, which outline carefully the support children need and who should provide it. Through the work of senior leaders and practitioners, the setting ensures that all children make very positive progress in their learning and development. Senior leaders readily reach out to outside professionals to ensure children have access to as much support as is necessary.

### 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 are making good progress in their learning. Practitioners understand the impact that the pandemic has had on children's progress. A number of children are new and a few have changed their pattern of attendance.
- Most children communicate using a wide vocabulary. A few younger children are gaining in confidence to share their ideas and needs. Children engage in conversation and listen well to their friends and practitioners. They listen positively to new information and instructions. Children respond very well to stories. They know how to access information from books and other media. Children understand their early writing skills are important. Most are confident in providing a commentary to help their friends and practitioners read their work.
- Most children demonstrate a strong interest in number. They approach practitioners to help them make sense of number as they solve problems and apply their skills through play. A few children are ready to experience more challenge. Outdoors, children measure the distance their car travelled down a slope. They use programmable toys well to create a sequence of movement, demonstrating that they understand positional language.
- Almost all children demonstrate creativity as they paint using their own mixes of colours. They use natural materials to create three-dimensional artwork. Outdoors, children use role-play well to show their imagination and create games. They actively engage in problem-solving, making effective use of the carefully selected materials and toys. Older children have experienced success in growing vegetable and flowers. They use their produce in cooking and baking.
- Senior leaders and practitioners continue to build their confidence in using the East Renfrewshire Council Early Years Tracking Tool to make judgements about children's progress. Practitioners link their observations of children's progress to tracked outcomes. This is helping them to connect informal observations and those they record on a digital platform for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Children demonstrate through their play that they are ready for greater challenge in their learning.
- Senior leaders support practitioners very well in evaluating how well planned interventions contribute to equity for children. Universal and targeted interventions are enhancing children's wellbeing. Practitioners worked with a small group of children to improve their skills and confidence in listening and talking. This was very successful and children's progress is better

as a result. Senior leaders work hard to remove any barriers parents face to ensure children make progress.

## 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.