

Summarised inspection findings

Hazeldene Family Centre

East Renfrewshire Council

28 March 2023

Key contextual information

Hazeldene Family Centre offers early learning and childcare (ELC) in a converted building. There are two playrooms on the ground floor, with an additional room on the first floor. Both ground floor playrooms have direct access to outdoor learning spaces. Children attend from the age of three until they start primary school. Parents choose from a variety of attendance patterns. The current family centre roll is 88 and all children have lunch in the setting. A team of 20 staff includes a headteacher, depute, teacher, two senior child development officers and a team of child development officers (CDOs) and playworkers. A core group of staff have long periods of service. The team have experienced changes in leadership and to practice throughout the transition from nursery school to family centre.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, staff supported children and families effectively. The team staffed local services for children of keyworkers in childcare hubs. Parents and children enjoyed home learning activities. The team sustained contact and relationships with families through regular phone calls.

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 headteacher has a clear vision for improvement. The team work well together to focus on ensuring a high-quality experience for children. The headteacher has a realistic, focused, strategic plan for improvement. This plan builds on the strengths of the setting over time. Senior leaders support practitioners and children effectively to use the values and aims of the setting to inform their work. Practitioners are thoughtful and reflective as they work with children to support them to develop a deeper sense of belonging to the setting. The headteacher rightly plans to increase the range of opportunities for children and families to lead improvements. Practitioners are now well placed to develop further recent improvements to the planning and assessment of children's learning.
- Practitioners are positive about their work and they willingly try out new ways of working. Throughout the team, there is an enthusiasm for implementing ideas from professional learning and enquiry. Almost all practitioners have completed additional qualifications and professional learning linked to planned improvements. Practitioners should continue to work with senior leaders to evaluate the impact of changes they have made on children's learning. Senior leaders and practitioners should continue to look outwards to develop their skills and confidence in using focused self-evaluation. This will support all staff to measure progress against their agreed improvement priorities.

- Senior leaders and practitioners are progressing improvement in a carefully planned programme. This builds confidence across the team and ensures changes are implemented in a sustainable way. The team work well together. Increasingly, they use national practice guidance including 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (2020) to influence their work. The headteacher and teacher helpfully gather, share and use data to produce 'tracking stories' for groups of children. Keyworkers benefit from focused meetings with senior leaders, using this information to discuss the progress of individual children. Practitioners quickly identify children who need targeted support. All staff need continued support to improve their confidence and skills in gathering, analysing, and using data to inform their practice. The team shares information from new ways of working with colleagues in their cluster. The senior leadership team should continue to support the team in forming and moderating professional judgements of children's progress.

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

- Caring, nurturing relationships between children, families and practitioners are a key feature of the family centre. Most children explore spaces and resources with confidence and interest throughout their day. Children take turns and cooperate well in small groups. Most children choose to spend extended periods of time drawing and exploring creative materials. After lunch, a few children take time to find activities that motivate them to play for longer periods. Practitioners should continue to review and adapt routines to minimise interruptions to children's free play.
- Practitioners are responsive to children's needs and interests. The team know children well as individuals. Practitioners are patient and attentive as they respond promptly to children's requests and interests. Children are beginning to explore their ideas in more depth as they respond well to open ended questions. Practitioners are skilled in using their tone of voice, body language and facial expressions to engage younger children in play. Practitioner's changes to spaces and routines, improves the balance between adult directed and child-initiated learning. A few adult directed group activities do not yet challenge all children to build effectively on their prior learning. The team should continue to develop further experiences that support children to lead their own learning and apply their skills.
- The leadership team have initiated significant changes to how practitioners plan for learning. Hard working practitioners are enthusiastic about their new floor book approaches. The team use new techniques well to record and develop children's 'big questions' about things they are curious about. Children value these books, seek them out in their play and use them to recall and explore their experiences. Practitioners should continue to improve their skills in identifying and recording observations of significant learning. The team have improved their digital skills to successfully introduce an online platform. The headteacher monitors the learning achievements of all children to ensure each child is making appropriate progress. Practitioners create and share a profile of each child's progress and achievements with parents. A few parents share what children have been learning about at home. The team recognise that it is necessary to improve how online journals identify and celebrate children's progress and next steps in learning.
- Senior leaders lead interesting work to increase practitioners' use of developmentally appropriate assessments to build a picture of children's progress. Practitioners use a local authority tracking system to link observations of children's progress to specific skills in literacy and numeracy. Increasingly, the team use information about children's skills in numeracy, mark making and receptive language to inform professional discussions about what children need from spaces, experiences, and interactions. The team should continue to build a valid, holistic picture of children's strengths and needs, that informs all aspects of their work.

- The senior leadership team supports practitioners to regularly focus and reflect on the progress of children who require additional support with their learning. Staff's improved use of data, regular meetings and implementation of specialist strategies is informed by discussions with parents and other professionals.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The work of the family centre is based on play spaces and experiences that develop children's skills and knowledge across a wide variety of curricular areas. The team are confident in using the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence to inform their work. Children have opportunities to develop the four capacities through their play. Parents, children, and the team enjoy the events, celebrations, outings and group activities reintroduced over recent months. Children experience success and are becoming responsible citizens. The team have made important improvements to how they plan for children's learning. Practitioners demonstrate how these new ways of working are developing an improved, shared understanding of pedagogy across the team.
- Children are supported very well in the transition into the setting as they settle into their learning. Practitioners apply their knowledge of children's interests, preferences, and stage of development well. Senior leaders, practitioners and partners across the cluster create and share important information on children's progress with local primary schools. The headteacher has quickly established credibility and positive, collaborative working relationships with colleagues within and outwith the setting. A well designed programme of transition activities supports progression and consistency for children across the early level.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- The very caring and respectful relationships that practitioners have developed with families, means that parental engagement on a daily basis is very positive. Parents are actively involved in an increasing range of opportunities within the setting. Practitioners used feedback from parental consultation to reintroduce coffee and chat groups, BookBug and stay and play sessions. Senior leaders have submitted evidence to the local authority to apply for advanced 'gold' accreditation for approaches to family support.
- Parents and children can borrow a variety of home learning bags. Practitioners ensure the contents of bags focus on specific skills to target children's needs, for example, children who are bilingual. Parents are very happy to share the enjoyment of this experience at home with the setting. Practitioners should consider how children's learning at home can be built upon within the setting and reflected in greater depth using online journals. This will capture what children learn out with the setting and celebrate the engagement of the family in children's learning.
- Children have developed their understanding of global issues through the Eco-Schools Scotland programme. A local community business supports children and practitioners to increase their knowledge of Fairtrade and recycling. Children are responsible and successful in their learning as they work together to create resources to gather rainwater using recycled materials.

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

- Highly positive, respectful relationships between staff, children and their families are very evident within the centre. Practitioners have developed strong nurturing, attachments with children and know them all very well. They view children as unique individuals with a wide range of knowledge and skills. Staff consistently respond to children in a calm and loving manner. All practitioners use praise very effectively to promote children's self-esteem. As a result, children are happy, relaxed and confident within the nursery environment. During focused groups, practitioners support children very well to express their thoughts and feelings. The impact of this approach is clear as children demonstrate kindness and compassion to their friends, being aware of their emotional wellbeing.
- Almost all children are very confident in their daily routines. They are given time to enjoy their snack and lunch in a relaxed environment, where conversation with peers and practitioners is encouraged. Regular visits to the local woods motivate children to enjoy nature and explore the challenge risky play in the outdoors provides. Children, parents and staff are enthusiastic about continuing to develop outdoor learning opportunities. Weekly visits from Hamish, the wellbeing pet, is creating an opportunity for children to discuss and understand the needs of others.
- Pre COVID-19, staff had embedded the practice of creating a holistic overview of individual children using the 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators. Parents completed this with senior leaders prior to children entering the setting. As planned, the senior leadership team should restore this practice. This should provide the senior management team with an opportunity to regularly discuss the wellbeing of all children with practitioners. This will help to strengthen staff's connection to care, learning and development.
- All children that have been identified as requiring additional support have an individualised plan. Positive relationships are established between practitioners and parents to guide those children's learning and development effectively. Children who require extra help are supported very well by staff to thrive and make very good progress through well-planned multi agency working. Staff implement highly effective individual strategies to ensure that solution focused approaches inform prompt interventions. This helps support children who have potential barriers to their learning. The comprehensive strategies allow them to make considerable progress at a pace that matches their stage of development.
- Senior leaders and practitioners have a sound understanding about their statutory duties in relation to early learning and childcare. They take part in appropriate training to help keep children safe. They know their roles and responsibilities to support children's health, care and wellbeing needs. To minimise the impact of recent infectious childhood illnesses, the team continues to prioritise prevention of infection in all aspects of their work.

- Children and parents benefit greatly from the family inclusive ethos within the centre. Diversity is valued and everyone is treated with respect, which promotes equality and inclusion. Practitioners demonstrate respectful relationships throughout the setting and the wellbeing of all is a priority. Differences are celebrated, and children have the freedom to explore, reflect and exhibit these through their learning. This allows them to make connections and form an understanding of the world around them.

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

- Almost all children communicate very effectively with practitioners and their friends. Children new to the setting enjoy using toys and puppets to join in with songs. A few children enjoy playing with language as they change the words of familiar rhymes. Almost all children demonstrate a keen interest in mark making. Most children demonstrate a high level of skill as they represent their ideas through detailed drawings and imaginative use of creative materials. Children have a well-developed understanding of print as they write in floor books, develop stories or make displays. All children explore fiction and non-fiction books frequently in their play. Almost all children listen attentively to stories, enjoy discussing characters and predicting what might happen next. A few children would benefit from continued opportunities to apply their skills in more challenging contexts.
- Almost all children develop their numeracy and mathematical skills very well. Children make very good use of resources to explore measure. A few children recall prior learning and read scales accurately as they balance items. Younger children enjoy exploring volume in sand and water play. A group of children use positional and directional language with understanding while using programmable toys. Children use their knowledge of number accurately during play. Children confidently gather and organise data about how they travel to the family centre, or about pets they have. A few children would benefit from increased opportunities to apply their skills independently in the routines of the day.
- Children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing. Almost all children develop further their understanding of the importance of healthy eating as they discuss the lunch menu or help make soup. Most children confidently learn to use cutlery and pour water and milk during their sociable lunch experience. Almost all children are confident and knowledgeable when talking about their own feelings. Children contribute well to discussions and activities and explore how to resolve conflicts. A few children show empathy for others as they check how others are feeling and share experiences.
- Almost all children make very good progress in exploring early concepts of science and technology. Children use toys, spinners, ramps and objects to explore forces, speed and distance. Children work well on their own or in a small group to build towers, ramps and construct complex structures together. Small groups of children enjoy responding to sound and rhythm, as they create music together.

- Staff value and respect all children and their families equally and there is an inclusive ethos. Practitioners celebrate children's achievements by displaying them in the setting. The team recognise they need to use these achievements more fully to influence their planning and inform the online profile of children's learning.
- Practitioners know children and their families very well and have a sound knowledge of their local context and community. Children participate in recently introduced group activities, targeted to those who need additional support, for example with speech and language. Practitioners should continue to measure and assess the impact that targeted interventions have on children's 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.