

To: Education Policy Board

On: 5 March 2015

Report by: Director of Children's Services

**Heading: Education Scotland Inspection of Hugh Smiley Pre 5 Centre,
Paisley**

1. Summary

- 1.1. Hugh Smiley Pre 5 Centre in Paisley was inspected by Education Scotland, in November 2014, as part of a national sample of pre-five education. The letter to parents and quality indicator evaluations, published by Education Scotland on 6 January 2015 are attached as appendices to this report. The letter to parents is also available from the director of children's services or from the Education Scotland website www.educationscotland.gov.uk
- 1.2. The purpose of the pre-five inspection was to evaluate the quality of education and care. Inspectors assessed the nursery, with a focus on five quality indicators which were: improvements in performance; children's' experiences; meeting learning needs; the curriculum; and improvements through self-evaluation. The Care Inspectorate also graded the nursery in four areas. The quality of care and support; quality of environment; quality of staffing and quality of management and leadership.
- 1.3. This was a very positive inspection by Education Scotland and the letter to parents identified four key strengths of the nursery. These were:
 - children who show a joy of learning in all of their playrooms;
 - partnerships with parents, other professionals and the community who contribute to the excellent approaches to meeting children's learning needs and the quality of learning experiences;
 - the quality of the whole staff team and their use of professional learning to provide high quality learning and teaching for all children; and
 - the head of centre who has inspired success and made a difference to so many over a number of years.

- 1.4. The report identified one area for further improvement. This was to:
- continue with the priorities which have been identified within the current plans for improvement.
- 1.5 Education Scotland was confident that the school will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, it will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.
- 1.6 Children's services has an agreed set of procedures for responding to inspection reports. The nursery and the service will prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the point for action in the report, and share this plan with parents. In addition, the centre will be supported in its improvement by quarterly monitoring visits by the link education officer. Within two years of the publication of the report children's services will inform parents of the progress made by the pre-five centre in addressing the main point for action.
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2 Recommendations

- 2.5 Members of the education policy board are asked to note the key strengths and the area for improvement in the Education Scotland report on Hugh Smiley Pre 5 Centre.
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3 Background

- 3.5 Education Scotland reports are circulated to the local elected members, staff, parent council members and are made available on-line to the wider parent body. Copies are also sent to local and central libraries.
- 3.6 The report includes one recommendation for improvement. This recommendation will be addressed through an action plan, produced by the pre-five centre and supported by children's services staff.
- 3.7 Progress on the action plan will be monitored by children's services staff on a proportionate basis. A report will be prepared within two years of the original inspection, detailing the progress made in implementing the action plan. This report will be made available to parents.
- 3.8 Children's services welcomes the process of audit undertaken by Education Scotland as supportive to continuous improvement in Renfrewshire establishments. The inspection report will be used by the pre-5 centre and the service in the context of supporting and developing the quality of educational provision.
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Implications of this report

1. **Financial Implications**
None.

2. HR and Organisational Development Implications

None.

3. Community Plan/Council Plan Implications

Children and Young People

- High standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society.

Community Care, Health and Well-being

- By providing an environment which encourages care, welfare and development, establishments play a crucial role in developing children and young people so that they become responsible citizens. The school and nursery's success in promoting healthy lifestyles is evaluated as part of the quality assurance process.

Empowering our Communities

- High standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society.

Greener

- Participation in the eco-schools programme encourages young people to become environmentally aware.

Jobs and the Economy

- The quality assurance process contributes to our young people becoming successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

4. Legal Implications

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000.

5. Property/Assets Implications

None.

6. Information Technology Implications

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only.

8. Health and Safety Implications

None.

9. Procurement Implications

None.

10. Risk Implications

None.

11. Privacy Impact

None.

List of Background Papers

(a) None.

*Children's Services
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20 February 2015*

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6 January 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

Hugh Smiley Pre 5 Centre Renfrewshire Council

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's early learning and childcare setting. Throughout our visit we talked to parents and children and we worked closely with the head of centre and staff. We wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the early learning and childcare setting supported children to do their best. The head of centre shared with us the early learning and childcare setting's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the early learning and childcare setting's recent work including Forest Schools, digital profiling and parental involvement in the life of the setting. As a result, we were able to find out how good the early learning and childcare setting was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what we found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

We found that Hugh Smiley is a very happy, nurturing environment in which your children feel safe, valued and are eager to learn. Babies have a very strong bond with the staff who work with them. They make their needs known and use their senses to explore interesting textures, sounds and pictures. Toddlers are gaining confidence and show determination in making their own choices. They use their senses to bake bread and explore mini-beasts under logs in the garden. Toddlers take pleasure in looking at and talking about in their own way, their photographs around the room and in their profiles. Children aged three to five are lively, purposeful and show the same determination to learn as the younger children. We saw that they choose to work in small groups with their friends and that they like the feeling of an adult close by. Children and staff work in partnership to plan and organise exciting activities. They record these in big books and on electronic personal learning plans which children demonstrated to us. All children have their own learning journeys which show what they want to learn next and we saw that you talk with staff about them. Explorations in the forest are helping children become resilient and able to demonstrate observational skills as they walk to and from their setting. Children like using their imagination to tell stories and solve problems. Many take part in extended role-play throughout the centre which is helping them cooperate and negotiate with their friends.

Children are making very good progress in all aspects of their learning. They take their place within their community through selling items in their Friday Shop. Children know how to walk to and use their local library and museum. We saw that children have a love of books and like to listen to or tell stories throughout their day. This is inspiring them to want to write in their own way and they have displayed their work beautifully all around the centre. Most children are very keen to talk to each other and to an audience. Staff are skilled in supporting children who are not yet confident or who are learning the words they need to express themselves. Children often choose games and puzzles involving number and simple problems. Most count with enthusiasm and have fun with number lines. Children concentrate very well when exploring sand and water. They use the right words to sort tools and talk about size. We saw that the observational skills children have are benefiting their art work. A focus on the works of Monet is encouraging children to demonstrate different techniques to represent the same picture. The attractive café is a great place for children to talk about health and wellbeing. They described to us which foods are good to eat and how to keep clean and healthy.

How well does the early learning and childcare setting support children to develop and learn?

All adults who work in Hugh Smiley share the same values and demonstrate a deep understanding of children as individuals. Children who need extra help are guided by support staff who are determined to ensure they are as independent as they can be and take part in all of the activities. The head of centre ensures that children and their families have access to any outside professional who can provide support. Children under three are supported by staff who are in tune with their needs and recognise every step of success. We recognise that you are very much involved in working with staff to ensure your child's wellbeing and learning needs are met. Staff who work with children over three are also skilled in ensuring every child makes progress. Staff plan learning which meets children's emotional, social and learning needs effectively. They review children's progress continuously to ensure they challenge children enough. The collective work of staff, parents and outside professionals to respond to and meet the learning needs of all children in Hugh Smiley is outstanding.

Staff provide a curriculum which best fits the needs of every child. All of the playrooms are beautifully presented and inspire children to want to learn. Younger children benefit from experiences which enable them to communicate, be curious, creative whilst ensuring their wellbeing. We saw that 'Rhyme Time,' stories and conversation with staff is key to promoting communication skills. Children over three are learning through rich experiences planned using Curriculum for Excellence. Staff pay particular attention to health and wellbeing to ensure children are able to learn. An approach, using characters for each key area of learning, is helping children to understand the different skills they are developing. Literacy and numeracy are embedded consistently well across all of the experiences staff provide. Partnerships within the local area are enhancing learning. Children and staff are on track to reach their first green flag for their work on sustainability. We saw how many of you are involved in this to help make it a success.

How well does the early learning and childcare setting improve the quality of its work?

Staff continuously improve the quality of their work and recognise that each child brings something new to the setting. Their strong values underpin everything they do. They understand that you, as parents, are crucial to making Hugh Smiley a success for all of your children. The head of centre is a strong leader who, over the years, has created a setting which families recommend to other families. So many of you came to tell us how important Hugh Smiley is to your family and the difference it has made and continues to make. The depute head of centre has a key role in supporting children and staff and she does this very well. Other promoted staff lead with enthusiasm and ensure the playrooms run effectively. Playroom staff are experienced and committed. They too show a determination to offer children the very best. Together the staff team are reflective and supportive of each other. Their approaches to evaluating their own work have become more focused. The levels and extent of professional learning amongst the staff is commendable. Children are benefiting from their knowledge and understanding of the best learning. In continuing to work with you and build on its strengths, Hugh Smiley has a strong capacity to sustain continuous improvement and share their success with others.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations.

Our inspection of your early learning and childcare setting found the following key strengths.

- Children who show a joy of learning in all of their playrooms.
- Partnerships with parents, other professionals and the community who contribute to the excellent approaches to meeting children's learning needs and the quality of learning experiences.
- The quality of the whole staff team and their use of professional learning to provide high quality learning and teaching for all children.
- The head of centre who has inspired success and made a difference to so many over a number of years.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the early learning and childcare setting. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue with the priorities which have been identified within the current plans for improvement.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the early learning and childcare setting's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this inspection. During the inspection, we identified aspects of innovative practice which we would like to explore further in order to share the practice with others. These are the approaches to working with families using the 600 hours and the Friday Shop. As a result we will work with the early learning and childcare setting and local authority in order to record and share more widely the innovative practice.

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Quality indicators help pre-school centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the pre-school centre. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *Child at the Centre(2)*¹. Following our inspection of each pre-school centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish pre-school centres are doing.

The Care Inspectorate publishes quality grades to better inform people and the Scottish Government about the quality of care services. Awarding grades at inspections is aimed at encouraging providers to identify and address areas for improvement. The Care Inspectorate also uses the grades to ensure our inspection activity is targeted and proportionate. The grades at inspection are awarded against four quality themes, details of which can be found on the Care Inspectorate website.

Here are the evaluations for **Hugh Smiley Pre 5 Centre**

Improvements in performance	very good
Childrens' experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	excellent

We also evaluated the following aspects of work of the pre-5 centre

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for Hugh Smiley Pre-five Centre

Quality of care and support	excellent
Quality of environment	very good
Quality of staffing	excellent
Quality of management and leadership	excellent