
To: Education Policy Board

On: 5 March 2015

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Education Scotland Inspection of Foxlea Pre 5 Centre,
Paisley

1. Summary

- 1.1. Foxlea 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; childrens' 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. The letter to parents following the inspection by Education Scotland identified two key strengths of the nursery. These were:
- friendly and motivated children who are keen to learn; and
 - commitment and drive of the senior management team to work with staff to improve learning experiences for children.
- 1.4. The report identified four areas for further improvement. These were to:
- improve teamwork and develop a shared vision for improvement;
 - improve the curriculum to ensure all children receive their entitlement to a broad general education;
 - improve opportunities for children to develop their early mathematical skills; and
 - establish effective and robust approaches to self-evaluation.

- 1.5 As a result of the inspection findings Education Scotland concluded that Foxlea Pre-Five Centre needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. The area lead officer will discuss the most appropriate support in order to build capacity for improvement, and Education Scotland will maintain contact to monitor progress. A progress report will be submitted to Education Scotland who will return to carry out a further inspection within 18 months of the publication of the letter to parents. It will then issue another letter to parents on the extent to which the early education and childcare setting has improved. This letter will be submitted to the education policy board.
 - 1.6 Children's services has an agreed set of procedures for responding to inspection reports. The nursery and the service has developed an action plan indicating how it is addressing the points for action in the report. In addition, the centre is being supported in its improvement by weekly monitoring visits by the link education officer.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members of the education policy board are asked to note the key strengths and the areas for improvement in the Education Scotland report on Foxlea Pre 5 Centre.
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3. Background

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. The report includes four recommendations for improvement. These recommendations will be addressed through an action plan, produced by the nursery and supported by children's services staff.
- 3.3. Prior to the inspection taking place, the service had undertaken a review of Foxlea Pre-Five centre and had already begun to support the centre in its improvement. As a result of the review an acting head of centre was appointed to take forward the action plan for improvement.
- 3.4. Since the inspection the authority has put in place a number of measures to support improvement at Foxlea Pre-Five Centre, including the head of centre returning from a secondment and weekly support from the link education officer and link manager. Progress on the action plan is being monitored by children's services staff on a weekly basis. When Education Scotland returns to the centre, the report will be submitted to the education policy board.
- 3.5. 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-five centre and the service in the context of supporting and developing the quality of educational provision.

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.

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TMcE/AK/GMcK/LG/RN
18 February 2015*

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6 January 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

Foxlea Pre 5 Centre Renfrewshire Council

Recently, as you may know, my colleague 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 acting headteacher 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 acting headteacher 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 learning profiles, outdoor learning and new approaches to planning. 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?

Across the playrooms, children are friendly and sociable. Most are beginning to form friendships and have positive relationships with adults and other children. Babies and toddlers are supported well by staff to explore and investigate their environment. They have fun and enjoy taking part in experiences such as crawling and tasting new foods. Toddlers are beginning to develop their independence and are encouraged to make some choices, for example which songs to sing. Children aged three to five are motivated to take part in the increased range of activities and play experiences on offer. There have been extensive recent changes to the learning environment that are encouraging children to make more decisions about what they want to learn. When these experiences are sufficiently interesting, the majority of children are able to sustain their concentration well. It is important that children are consistently well supervised as they become more confident and independent moving between playrooms and accessing the toilet area. Children like to be able to use their imagination when playing in the home area or in the new mud kitchen outdoors. A few children enjoyed making a fruit salad together and talking about healthy eating.

Learning profiles have been recently introduced and children show interest in looking at photographs and talking about their learning when given the opportunity to do so. At times, children were unnecessarily interrupted or directed in their play causing them to lose interest. Staff need to be more responsive to children's experiences and interests. Floor books have been recently introduced to help capture views and plan learning but these are at early stage of development. Children would benefit from having opportunities to be responsible for helping with nursery routines, for example at snack.

Children aged three to five are making appropriate progress developing early language skills. Most children take part in conversations with adults and other children. They enjoy listening to stories and a few older children will talk about authors and illustrators. Recent changes to routine, to help children to develop their early writing skills by inviting them to sign in on arrival, is generating an interest in letters. Children will benefit from increasing these meaningful opportunities to develop their early writing skills through all aspects of their play. The majority of older children can count and recognise numbers well. However, children's progress in early mathematics is too limited. Staff need to provide experiences of early mathematics in real-life settings to help children make better progress. Children enjoy exploring in the outdoor area that provides them with a wider range of experiences across a range of curriculum areas.

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

Staff are not yet meeting the learning and development needs of all children well enough. Most staff know children and families and are kind and caring. Those working with children under three plan an appropriate range of learning experiences. Care plans for the youngest children contain detailed information about children based on information from parents and staff observations. Across the nursery, staff need to improve the quality of interaction and questioning to help support and extend children in their learning. Staff working with older children have recently introduced a more focused way of planning learning. This is at an early stage of development. Overall, the pace of curriculum change is too slow and does not provide children with sufficient breadth, depth or progression in their learning. A few children would benefit from greater levels of challenge in order to better meet their learning needs. Parent volunteers help in the playrooms and staff value their contributions. A few parents who spoke to us during the inspection would like more information about their own child's progress. They also told us they appreciated the recent curriculum evening that helped develop a better understanding of Curriculum for Excellence. Staff work appropriately with other agencies to provide support for children needing additional help in their learning. The home link worker provides valuable advice and support for families. There is a well organised plan to support children's pastoral needs for children starting nursery with home visits being offered as a starting point. Arrangements to move children into new playrooms are based on individual needs and phased accordingly. There is a programme of transition events for children moving to P1 that helps them feel confident. It will be important that information shared also helps build on children's prior learning.

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

The recently appointed acting head and senior management team have a clear understanding about the current strengths and needs of the service and have worked hard in a short time to address some of the areas needing attention to help children engage more fully in their learning experiences. A few parents felt communication could be improved as not everyone was able to access the website or always got a copy of the newsletter. The senior management team are aware that there is scope to improve communication and have plans to introduce more home learning links with parents. The new parent committee are keen to support the nursery and build on previous successful fundraising activities. There is scope to develop and expand the role of all partners to help inform and improve the service.

Staff reflected well during the inspection and are aware that a strong focus on developing effective teamwork will be the key to taking forward the improvements needed to ensure children learn and achieve better. The local authority have worked well to support the setting by establishing a leadership team. It is too early to say if these changes will have enough impact. They rightly recognise the importance of achieving stability in staffing and a more effective structure in place to provide clear direction and strong leadership.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations. As a result of this inspection there are three requirements and seven recommendations.

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

- Friendly and motivated children who are keen to learn.
- Commitment and drive of the senior management team to work with staff to improve learning experiences for children.

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:

- Improve teamwork and develop a shared vision for improvement.
- Improve the curriculum to ensure all children receive their entitlement to a broad general education.
- Improve opportunities for children to develop their early mathematical skills.
- Establish effective and robust approaches to self-evaluation.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the early learning and childcare setting needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. Our Area Lead Officer and Lead Officer Early Education along with the local authority will discuss the most appropriate support in order to build capacity for improvement, and will maintain contact to monitor progress. We will ask for a progress report from the authority six months after publication to determine progress and decide if an earlier inspection is needed. Otherwise, we will return to carry out a further inspection within 18 months of publication of this letter. We will then issue another letter to parents on the extent to which the early education and childcare setting has improved.

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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 **Foxlea Pre 5 Centre**

Improvements in performance	weak
Childrens' experiences	satisfactory
Meeting learning needs	satisfactory

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

The curriculum	weak
Improvement through self-evaluation	weak

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for **Foxlea Pre 5 Centre**

Quality of care and support	adequate
Quality of environment	weak
Quality of staffing	weak
Quality of management and leadership	weak