
To: Education and Children Policy Board

On: 21 January 2016

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Education Scotland Inspection of Ferguslie Pre-five Centre,
Paisley

1. Summary

- 1.1. Ferguslie Pre-five Centre in Paisley was inspected by Education Scotland, in November 2015, as part of a national sample of pre-five education. The letter to parents and quality indicator evaluations, published by Education Scotland on 22 December 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 centre demonstrated a number of sector-leading practices. The letter to parents identified five key strengths of the nursery. These were:
- highly motivated, enthusiastic children who enjoy learning and make excellent progress;
 - an extensive range of challenging and rich learning experiences which meet children's individual needs;

- a highly skilled and nurturing staff team who provide exceptional support for children and families;
- highly effective partnerships with parents and other professionals; and
- the strong and compassionate leadership of the head of centre.

1.4. The report identified one area for further improvement. This was:

- continue to progress the priorities identified in the improvement plan.

1.5. Education Scotland was confident that the nursery 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 main point for action in the report, and share this plan with parents. In addition, the nursery will be supported in its improvement by children's services. Within two years of the publication of the letter to parents children's services will inform parents of the progress made by the nursery in addressing the main points for action.

2. Recommendations

2.1. Members of the education and children policy board are asked to note the key strengths and the area for improvement in the Education Scotland report on Ferguslie Pre-five Centre.

3. Background

3.1. The report includes one recommendation for improvement. This recommendation will be addressed through the centre's existing improvement plan and supported by children's services staff.

3.2. 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 point. This report will be made available to parents.

3.3. 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.

Children's Services

TMcE/AK/LG

11 January 2016

Author: Tony McEwan, Education Manager (planning and performance),
telephone no: 0141 618 7198

22 December 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

**Ferguslie Pre-five Centre
Renfrewshire Council**

Recently, as you may know, I visited and inspected your child's early learning and childcare setting. Throughout my visit I talked to parents and children and I worked closely with the head of centre and staff. I 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 me the early learning and childcare setting's successes and priorities for improvement. I looked at some particular aspects of the early learning and childcare setting's recent work including the development of the under three room, parental engagement in children's learning and the development of children's early literacy skills. As a result, I was 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 I found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Ferguslie Pre-Five Centre is an exceptional learning environment where children blossom and thrive. As babies, toddlers, children and parents arrive they are greeted warmly and with affection by all of the staff. Babies and toddlers benefit greatly from spending time with each other and the encouraging staff in a motivating, calm and well planned environment. They have a very strong bond with the staff who love and care for them. Younger children show great delight as they splash in puddles on their way to play alongside older children in the mud kitchen. Children aged three to five years are friendly, confident and respond with great enthusiasm to the opportunity to lead their own learning. They have lots of fun in their play and can talk about what they enjoy and what they are learning in a happy and relaxed way. Many children sustain and extend their play over prolonged periods of time, developing their ideas and asking for help from staff if they need it. Almost all children are self-motivated as they work on their own or with a few friends to plan, build and compare large complicated models of cars or traps. Staff take excellent account of children's interests when planning learning. They are highly responsive to ways they can support children's interests. In the outdoor area we saw that children were encouraged to work out for themselves the best way to transport water. All children have their own learning folders which demonstrate clearly their progress in learning. We saw that children help to decide what their next steps in learning should be. As a result, children are becoming aware of themselves as learners. We saw that you often talk with staff about these folders and that your ideas are used to plan learning for your child.

Across the setting, your children are making excellent progress in literacy and numeracy. Children of all ages show a keen interest in books, action rhymes and songs. They curl up with staff in the cosy corners and delight in sharing a favourite story. Older children explore familiar and more complex stories such as 'Handa's Surprise' and 'The Bog Baby'. They discuss and explore these stories in more detail with staff and their friends. A few children listen to stories that parents have recorded in Polish. Your children are becoming very confident communicators who talk and listen well to each other and to staff. Across the playroom and outdoors, children apply, use and develop further their interest in writing for different purposes. Most children are developing a very good understanding of measurement and shape as, for example, they hammer and saw using real tools. Children count during their play and when voting to make decisions about models they have made. They listen very carefully to 'Twiggle' the puppet who is used to help them understand feelings and build their self-esteem. Outdoor learning is having a direct impact on children's health and wellbeing. We observed children relish the freedom of this area as they develop their physical skills extremely well using the wide range of interesting activities. Children are becoming more aware of risk and managing their emotions as they decide if it is safe to go on the forest walk.

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

Across the setting for children of all ages, staff meet the learning needs of children in an outstanding way by working in close partnership with parents and other professionals. Guided by the expertise of the head of centre and depute, staff are passionately committed to achieving the very best outcomes for your children. The effective keyworker system helps staff to be fully aware of each child's individual developmental stage, learning needs and family circumstances. Staff show a thoughtful, deep understanding of your children and their strengths and interests as they plan. This means that children feel very confident and secure to try new things and have their skills and abilities celebrated. You told us you highly value the wide range of groups to work alongside your child and understand how they learn. We saw that these include sessions where families learn together. Children lead workshops on learning for parents and groups to help you support your child at home. Children who need extra help are supported to be as independent as they possibly can be, taking part in all of the activities with no limits on what they can achieve. Staff work in close, highly effective partnerships with a high number of agencies and professionals to support children who require additional support with their learning. Often, they arrange services to be provided within the setting to best suit your needs. A very wide range of effective programmes includes groups to support communication skills and the use of nurture approaches. Many of you told us just how much you appreciate their assistance and emotional support, particularly in difficult times. With your involvement they review children's progress continuously to ensure they challenge all children appropriately.

Staff working with babies and toddlers make highly effective use of national guidance to plan for all children's learning. The broad and relevant curriculum for children aged over three years reflects exceptionally well national guidance and the context of the setting. Senior management and staff work together to carefully monitor all areas of the curriculum to ensure children have a balance in their learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills across their learning. For example, children worked together and with local businesses, colleges and schools to design and construct a dog house in their garden area using their literacy, numeracy, problem-solving skills, while developing an early understanding of different jobs and how to work with others. Children understand what they are learning in the setting and are keen to revisit and extend learning they are interested in. The recycled greenhouse built with the help of Mirren Park School pupils and local college will be used to gain a third green flag for their work on caring for the environment. Opportunities to involve the local community in children's learning are maximised. Parents extend and support children's learning when you share your skills to make food like pierogi or chapattis with them and share festivals such as Diwali and events like 'splashing day'. This is helping all children learn more about their own and their friends culture. Staff continue to monitor the impact of their interesting and effective learning projects with local primary schools. We asked the staff to continue their plans to work with you and the children to revisit the aims of the centre to update these to better reflect the wide range of learning and work of the setting.

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

There is a commitment to improve and involve everyone in the work of Ferguslie Pre-Five Centre that runs through every important decision that is made. As a result, everyone has a clear focus on improving outcomes for children. Leadership is outstanding across the whole team. This is driven by the skilful and highly experienced head of centre, supported by her highly effective depute, who both have extensive knowledge of high quality early learning and childcare practice. Strong and confident leadership means the team will try new ways of working to ensure they get the very best outcomes for children and families in Ferguslie Pre-Five Centre. There are many examples of important decisions that are having a direct positive impact on children's learning including the changes to the rooms for children aged birth to three years, learning projects such as the Lighthouse Keepers Lunch with local schools and highly effective joint working with local services such as Families First. Monitoring of children's progress, including the focused wellbeing discussions, helps staff to provide quick, effective, targeted support to children in their learning when they need it most. As a result, children are thriving and making tremendous progress in their learning. The highly skilled and passionate team understand that nurture and high quality learning go hand in hand and strive for the highest quality for you and your children at all times. They have a deep, shared understanding of what high quality play looks like. They regularly try new ideas and adapt strategies to ensure your children make the very best progress in their learning, often leading such initiatives. The leadership and skills of the whole staff team is having a very positive impact on the quality of your child's learning experience. We are confident the setting is very well placed to continue to develop and provide very high quality early learning and childcare.

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

- Highly motivated, enthusiastic children who enjoy learning and make excellent progress.
- An extensive range of challenging and rich learning experiences which meet children's individual needs
- A highly skilled and nurturing staff team who provide exceptional support for children and families.
- Highly effective partnerships with parents and other professionals.
- The strong and compassionate leadership of the head of centre.

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

- Continue to progress the priorities identified in the improvement plan.

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 visits in connection with this inspection. As part of the arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the early learning and childcare, the local authority will inform parents about the setting's progress.

Margaret Paterson
HM Inspector

Appendix 2

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

Here are the evaluations for **Ferguslie Pre-five Centre**.

Improvements in performance	excellent
Children's experiences	excellent
Meeting learning needs	excellent

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the early learning and childcare setting.

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	excellent