

**Jamestown Early
Education Centre
West Dunbartonshire
22 July 2009**

This report tells you about the quality of education at the centre. We describe how children benefit from learning there. We explain how well they are doing and how good the centre is at helping them to learn. Then we look at the ways in which the centre does this. We describe how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including parents¹ and services which support children. We also comment on how well staff and children work together and how they go about improving the centre.

Our report describes the ‘ethos’ of the centre. By ‘ethos’ we mean the relationships in the centre, how well children are cared for and treated and how much is expected of them in all aspects of centre life. Finally, we comment on the centre’s aims. In particular, we focus on how well the aims help staff to deliver high-quality learning, and the impact of leadership on the centre’s success in achieving these aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Where applicable, the website contains analyses of questionnaire returns and descriptions of good practice in the centre.

¹ Throughout this report, the term ‘parents’ should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends.

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1. The centre

Jamestown Early Education and Childcare Centre was inspected in May 2009 by HMIE on behalf of both HMIE and the Care Commission as part of the integrated inspection programme. The centre caters for pre-school children aged three to five years. It is registered for 60 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 124 at the time of the inspection.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Happy and confident children.
- Attention given to the care and welfare of children.
- Quality of staff interaction during adult-led activities.
- Opportunities for play and learning in the attractive outdoor area.
- Partnership work with other agencies and services.

3. Example of good practice

- Developing responsibility with young children.

4. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

In Jamestown Early Education and Childcare Centre children are happy, settled and growing in confidence. They enjoy a range of activities including exploring sensory materials in the discovery area and have daily opportunities for outdoor play. The routine of the day does not always enable children to engage fully in play experiences, with too much time being spent on adult-led activities.

Children are making progress in their development and learning. Almost all children are developing very good listening skills and can predict what happens next in stories. Almost all are experimenting with early drawing and are making attempts to write their name on the sign-in sheets. Most children are developing confidence in talking to one another and to adults. The majority are developing an awareness of letters and most children can recognise their name. They are making good progress in recognising and understanding the properties of shapes. The majority of children can count to ten and are beginning to recognise number symbols. They can match and sort by colour. Almost all children are becoming independent at snack and lunch and can put on their shoes and coats. Most can talk about planting and growing and explain changes in the lifecycle of butterflies. Most children enjoy using musical instruments. For example, they use a guitar to make music and sing songs through a microphone. Almost all children are developing good skills in physical movement. They enjoy running outdoors and play confidently on bikes. In partnership with parents, the nursery is encouraging children to develop responsibility by giving them money to purchase snack from local shops. The centre now needs to establish a consistent way for staff to record and celebrate children's achievements in key areas of their development and learning.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff provide a broad range of play activities across key aspects of children's development and learning. There is regular use of the outdoor play area for physical activities and science, including planting and growing. Staff provide a range of opportunities to promote children's learning in early language. Children have access to books in the book corner and in different areas of the nursery, including menus in the home corner. They can explore letters using the magnetic letters and boards and are learning about rhyming words in games. Children are exploring counting using natural materials and have opportunities to recognise numbers in puzzles and picture cards. They are also learning to use computers and digital cameras during play. The centre has developed its provision for outdoor play. A very

attractive outdoor play space has been created. Children enjoy working with the sports development coach in a range of energetic activities. The curriculum is enhanced with a range of visits, for example to Balloch Park where children had a chance to participate in orienteering.

The range of activities provided is well matched to children's needs. Staff interact very well with children during group tasks and storytelling and take account of children's interests through 'Big Book' activities. They have changed their approaches to planning to enable them to focus on children's learning. Staff record some aspects of children's achievements and learning but this is not yet sufficiently focused to enable them to take sufficient account of prior learning and identify next steps. There are good procedures in place to identify children who have additional support needs and the centre works with a range of agencies to ensure that appropriate support is provided including speech and language therapists. Staff identify children who require more challenge and provide activities for them such as small group story time.

5. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?

Staff work well with a range of other agencies, including early intervention staff, to provide support for children. They have very good relationships with partner agencies to support children's learning. Links with the network support team, educational psychologist, social workers, community police officers and health visitors help staff support the needs of children including the most vulnerable. The parent group is involved in fundraising activities and organising events and outings. The centre provides full-time provision for some children. Parents are happy with the centre but a minority would like more information about their child's progress. A well-planned programme is in place to support children as they get ready to move on to primary school.

6. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?

There is a newly formed children's ECO group which is working to improve the centre's environment, for example by tidying litter and turning off taps. Staff work very well as a team and are committed to the centre, its children and their families. They evaluate aspects of their work and are making improvements to the playrooms, for example by enhancing the music area. An improvement plan is in place and some priorities were identified in the last integrated inspection report. There has been progress in taking these forward but they have not yet fully impacted on children's experiences.

7. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?

The head of centre and staff are very committed to supporting the care and welfare of all children. They have high expectations of children's behaviour. Children behave well and are courteous to staff and to one another. Staff actively promote aspects of healthy eating at snack and lunch and encourage regular tooth brushing. They are aware of their responsibilities in protecting children and have attended appropriate training.

8. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?

The head of centre is committed and hardworking. She has worked hard to secure additional funding to enhance and improve the outdoor area. She provides opportunities for staff to take responsibility for taking forward different aspects of the work of the centre, for example the ECO group. She has a vision for the centre and, with support from the education authority, is well placed to take this forward.

9. What happens next?

We are confident that the centre will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, we will make no more visits following this inspection. The centre and the education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress in improving the quality of education.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- Develop approaches to planning, assessing and tracking children's progress to ensure a clear focus on children's learning and achievements.
- Review the balance between adult-directed and child-initiated play.

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

Here are the evaluations for Jamestown Early Education and Childcare Centre.

Improvements in performance	satisfactory
Children's experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

Managing Inspector: Aileen Valenti
22 July 2009

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If you wish to comment about any of our inspections, contact us at HMIEenquiries@hmie.gsi.gov.uk or alternatively you should write in the first instance to BMCT, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Our complaints procedure is available from our website www.hmie.gov.uk or alternatively you can write to our Complaints Manager, at the address above or by telephoning 01506 600259 or the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY.

If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The SPSO is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to SPSO, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330, fax 0800 377 7331 or e-mail: ask@spsso.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website at www.spsso.org.uk.

This report uses the following word scale to make clear judgements made by inspectors.

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses