

11 April 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

**Children's Hour Nursery
Clydebank**

Recently, as you may know, I visited and inspected your child's pre-school centre. Throughout our 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 pre-school centre supported children to do their best. The head of centre shared with me the pre-school centre's successes and priorities for improvement. I looked at some particular aspects of the pre-school centre's recent work, including outdoor play and literacy across learning. As a result, I was able to find out how good the pre-school centre was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what I found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

I found that children are learning and achieving very well. In all playrooms children are happy and secure and have good relationships with the adults who care for them. Babies have fun during 'messy play type' activities, and enthusiastically carry out actions to familiar songs. Toddlers enjoy playing with dolls in the house corner. Babies and toddlers are developing a keen interest in books. A few toddlers pick out their favourite books to share with staff. They join in enthusiastically at different parts of a familiar story. Older toddlers and children aged three to five share and play well together in the same playroom. Older children are very helpful and kind as they play with younger children. Children aged three to five are enthusiastic and motivated by their learning experiences. For most of their time in nursery, they make choices about the resources they want to play with. A few children display a keen interest in playing with trains and building tracks together. New approaches in planning help to capture children's interests effectively. Children now have opportunities to talk about and plan their learning with staff. This has resulted in children becoming more interested and involved in their learning. Children are becoming more independent and are given more responsibility. They confidently take on roles such as helping to prepare snack and recycling different materials in their playroom. Through their eco and sustainable work, children are learning to care for the environment and are working to achieve green flag status from Eco-Schools Scotland. Children are very well behaved and this is promoted effectively by staff using the rainbow reward chart. Children proudly talk about their achievements as they share their learning folders with their friends and adults. Parents are encouraged to contribute information about children's achievements at home.

¹ This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as this will not connect.

Children aged three to five are making very good progress in developing their literacy skills. They listen well to adults and carry out simple instructions. A few children need more support to listen during large group activities. Children talk confidently to their friends and adults. They enjoy opportunities to talk about their own experiences such as holidays. Staff build on children's early interest in books. Children choose to look at books by themselves and a few children use the internet to choose and read different books. They are learning about the features of books such as illustrator, author and title. Older children display a very good understanding of rhyming words. They use their early writing skills in their play. They make lists and make good attempts at writing their name. Staff recognise that they now need to provide more challenging and relevant opportunities to develop children's writing skills. Children are making very good progress in developing their numeracy and early mathematics skills. Children are learning how to display information using different kinds of graphs. They use their counting skills as they record daily rainfall. Commendably, staff encourage children to record this information on a graph using the computer.

How well does the pre-school centre support children to develop and learn?

The nursery supports children very well to develop and learn. Staff are kind and caring and interact positively to support children in their play. They know children well and a key worker system supports this effectively. Staff make good use of *Pre-birth to Three* guidance to help plan learning experiences for children aged three and under. They ensure children's individual developmental and care needs influence their planning. Younger children are provided with a good range of natural materials to explore. This helps develop their curiosity well. Younger children would benefit from accessing art and craft type activities more readily. Staff working with children aged three to five have been developing their curriculum in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. They provide an increasingly responsive curriculum which is now taking forward children's interests and ideas. For example, this has supported small groups of children to come together to learn and deepen their knowledge of their particular interests in trains. Staff provide good opportunities for children to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy across their learning. Staff need to continue to develop children's investigative and problem-solving experiences to extend children's thinking skills further. Children enjoy play in their outdoor area each day. Although space in the garden is limited, staff organise the area well to develop children's learning across the curriculum. Children grow vegetables and plants in their nearby allotment. Staff understand their responsibilities in supporting children who need extra help in their learning. Transitions from home to the nursery and from room to room are well thought out and tailored to meet the needs of individual children. Parents appreciate how well their children are supported as they move into different rooms. Staff work hard to build good links with primary schools to help children make successful transitions to P1.

How well does the pre-school centre improve the quality of its work?

Staff work well together, reflect on experiences offered to children each day and make changes to improve the quality of learning. The views of children and parents are taken account of to help improve the work of the nursery. Parents appreciate that their ideas and suggestions are valued and taken forward by the nursery. Staff have introduced new approaches to track children's progress across the curriculum. This is helping staff to challenge and support children appropriately. It would now be helpful for staff to come together with other early years colleagues to share and develop a common understanding of assessment. A new manager has been in post for six months and she is already leading significant improvements in the nursery. She has recently implemented new approaches to monitor and evaluate the work of the nursery. She uses staff's interests and skills well to support new developments. The nursery benefits greatly from the very good support it receives from the local authority. Staff are very receptive to this guidance and support, and

this is helping the nursery to improve. Staff have recently visited local nurseries to share and discuss good practice in planning children's learning. Through the manager's and staff's commitment to improvement and with the ongoing very good support from the local authority, this nursery is well placed to continue on its journey to excellence.

Our inspection of your pre-school centre found the following key strengths.

- Well-behaved, motivated children who are keen to learn.
- Staff's development and use of children's assessment profiles to ensure progress in children's learning and development.
- Caring staff who interact well with children to meet their individual needs.
- Manager's leadership of improvement.

I discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the pre-school centre. This is what I agreed with them.

- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with Curriculum for Excellence.
- Continue to develop self-evaluation and monitoring procedures to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of children's learning.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INSPECTION?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the pre-school centre's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The head of centre and local authority will inform parents about the pre-school centre's progress as part of the arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the pre-school centre.

Jackie Maley
Managing Inspector
11 April 2012

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at
<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=10598&type=1>.

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