

**Kilpatrick Early Years
Service
Clydebank
West Dunbartonshire
Council
26 August 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

Kilpatrick Early Years Service (KEYS) 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 up to five years with significant additional support needs, arising from complex health and disability factors. It is registered for 12 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 11 at the time of the inspection, the majority of whom had a shared placement with another centre.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Well-settled children who are keen to learn.
- Positive relationships among staff and children.
- Caring and supportive environment for learning, and effective teamwork.
- Positive links with parents.
- Effective shared placements with other nurseries.

3. Examples of good practice

- The KEYS Club.
- Support for transitions.

4. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children are actively involved in their learning and are growing in confidence. They engage well with staff. They enjoy a wide range of learning activities which help them relate to what is around them, including different textures, tastes and smells. Children are encouraged and supported to choose aspects of their play. Some children are aware of others in the playroom but need more support to play together and share experiences and activities, where appropriate.

Children are achieving very well. They make good progress in communicating with staff through eye pointing and responses. Most children listen well to stories and enjoy looking at picture books. The youngest children enjoy exploring paint, dough and 'gloop', using touch. Children concentrate well on tasks, such as using switches to change the size of images on computer screens. They enjoy exploring shapes, colours and patterns in art. Children express themselves imaginatively through their art work.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff provide varied learning opportunities for children. Children have a suitable curriculum that takes very good account of their stage of development and the *Birth to Three* guidance. Staff have very positive relationships with children and support them well during play. When staff plan activities, they observe and listen to children to help them follow their interests. Staff keep helpful, individual records of children's learning. All children have significant additional support needs and staff take very good account of the differing needs of individuals. Staff know children very well as learners and provide activities at the right level to support and challenge their learning. They take full account of children's daily routines and medical needs. Staff quickly recognise and respond when a child may need extra support to help them progress. The service has strong partnership arrangements with other professionals and therapists and with parents to agree individualised educational programmes. The impact of these arrangements has been very effective in ensuring that all children make good progress and become more confident and successful learners.

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

Parents are made very welcome in the service and have friendly and supportive relationships with staff. Children's learning is shared with parents in a number of effective ways. A variety of high-quality displays record and celebrate children's achievements across their learning. The weekly KEYS Club encourages parents to be involved in their children's learning activities. Parents find staff friendly and approachable and welcome the chance to share their experiences with other parents and carers. Communication among staff, parents and children is very good. Information sheets let parents know about activities and provide ideas for home learning, such as making a 'treasure basket'. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the development of the service through effective consultation. Staff value parental input and are responsive to it. Staff are very sensitive to the needs of individuals and give due care to supporting children. As a result, children settle well and remain confident. Staff prepare very effectively for children's transition to other nurseries and centres. The service has very good links with other nursery schools and family centres to ensure shared places for children are managed effectively.

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

Staff have developed a range of imaginative ways of communicating with children. They value the children's responses and act upon them. Staff are very committed to the service and its success and take up opportunities to develop themselves professionally. They are reflective in their working practices and share their good practice as a team. The staff team are very committed to the ongoing development of the service. Approaches to evaluating the quality of the service and monitoring progress are effective. The service does not yet have its own improvement plan which identifies specific priorities for development.

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

Staff have created a happy and safe learning environment where everyone is welcomed. The service has very high expectations of children's care, welfare and development. Staff have very high expectations of children's learning. All children are very well cared for with good attention paid to their medical needs. Staff are aware of their responsibilities for child protection. Children have fun playing and learning, with staff supporting them very well. Children, parents and staff are treated fairly and with respect. All children are able to keep trying and complete tasks. Staff use praise effectively and recognise and celebrate individual successes.

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

The headteacher and depute headteacher lead the service very effectively. Staff work very well together as a team and have a clear vision for what they want the service to be. Managers are strongly committed to achieving this vision and work very effectively with the staff team to make the necessary improvements. Staff know the service very well and continue to think about ways to improve it. All staff are very enthusiastic, hardworking and proud of the service. Staff know children and families very well and work effectively to support them.

9. What happens next?

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the centre, we will make no further visits following this inspection. The education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its pre-school centres.

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

- Identify and plan for specific priorities for improvement for Kilpatrick Early Years Service.

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 Kilpatrick Early Years Service.

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

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

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

HM Inspector: David Watt
26 August 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. You can also contact the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, telephone 0845 603 0890.

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

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