

**Ladyton Early Education &  
Childcare Centre  
Alexandria  
West Dunbartonshire  
Council  
9 February 2011**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects centres in order to let parents<sup>1</sup>, children and the local community know whether their centre provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with centre staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the head of centre and staff about the strengths of the centre, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into playrooms and join other activities which children are involved in. We also gather the views of parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the centre. We describe how well children are doing, how good the centre is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the centre. We also comment on how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the centre is led and how all staff help the centre achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals.

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<sup>1</sup> 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**

Ladyton Early Education & Childcare Centre was inspected in November and December 2010 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 40 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 78 at the time of the inspection.

## **2. Particular strengths of the centre**

- Motivated and enthusiastic children who are successful, confident learners.
- Staff's care for children's welfare and their support for children's learning and development.
- Children's exciting outdoor learning experiences.
- The enthusiastic and committed approach of the head of centre and staff to the continuous improvement of the nursery.

## **3. How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **Learning and achievement**

Children are relaxed and confident and enjoy coming to nursery. They interact well with adults and one another. Children decide confidently on resources and friends to play with and are motivated by the activities and resources on offer. Almost all persevere with tasks and a few solve problems during the course of their play. Children are encouraged to express their views about what they would like to learn, both inside and outdoors.

Children are gaining success and confidence through taking part in a wide variety of activities within their local community. The stimulating and attractive outdoor garden has enabled children to develop an awareness of sustainability, grow plants and vegetables and learn about the changing seasons. Children are developing a very good awareness of the importance of cleanliness, hygiene and safety through nursery rules and routines.

Almost all children are making very good progress in their learning. They listen well and take turns in conversation. Children independently access fact and fiction books in the attractive book area and enjoy retelling favourite stories. Almost all older children are developing an awareness of letter names and sounds and recognise their name in print. Children explore mark-making in different contexts across the nursery. Their 'WOW' wall displays the imaginative words they suggest in the course of their writing. Children are very confident when counting and using numbers in their play. Almost all sort and match objects according to size, shape and colour, using a variety of attractive resources, including natural resources. Children are developing confidence when using the language of early mathematics and when exploring mathematical concepts such as volume in the sand tray. They are learning directional language using a variety of remote controlled toys and computer programmes.

## **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

Staff provide a curriculum which is suitably broad and balanced and responds to individual children's needs and interests. There is a good balance of choice and adult-supported activities on offer. Staff have made good progress in using the experiences and outcomes from *Curriculum for Excellence* to take forward children's learning. Staff work hard to provide opportunities for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the curriculum. The outdoor area is very well set out and resourced to provide a wide range of experiences for children. Staff plan a variety of outings and invite visitors to the nursery to further enhance children's learning.

Staff are caring and know individual children well. They are sensitive to their needs and support their emotional and social development effectively. Through careful observations, staff respond to children's experiences and interests. Staff are aware of the importance of providing appropriate learning materials and opportunities to promote individual children's learning. Staff now need to develop a system for tracking individual children's progress in a more coherent way. The local authority teacher manages a programme of staged intervention

which supports children who require additional help with their learning. A learning assistant works closely with those requiring significant additional support. Staff work with parents and a variety of outside agencies to set appropriate targets for individual children. They take account of advice and resources provided by these agencies when planning children's learning.

#### **4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?**

Parents are made to feel very welcome in the nursery. They are invited to participate in playroom activities and a rota of parent helpers is beginning to build up. Communication with parents is effective. Newsletters and notice boards, including *Curriculum for Excellence* information, are attractively presented around the nursery. Staff engage well with parents in formal and informal events to support children's learning and maintain very good relationships. Parents interviewed spoke highly of the friendly and approachable staff. The nursery has developed links with local primary schools and, through consultation, improvements have been made to arrangements to help children when they move on to school.

#### **5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?**

Children, parents and staff are involved in improving the work of the nursery. Staff and children review learning experiences daily. During regular planning meetings, staff reflect on activities provided and implement changes to improve learning opportunities for children. Children are becoming more involved in improving their nursery and are asked for their views on aspects of their learning through floor books and daily diaries. Parents' views are gathered through an

annual questionnaire and evaluations of particular events and activities. The head of centre now needs to involve staff and parents more fully in the self-evaluation process to help identify appropriate improvement priorities.

## **6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?**

Staff ensure that parents and children are made to feel welcome through being supportive and caring towards them. Staff have high expectations for children's care and welfare and actively encourage and promote equality and fairness. Staff are alert to the care and wellbeing of all children and understand their role in protecting children from harm. Equality and diversity are promoted through resources, festival activities throughout the year and imaginative play. Staff encourage children to make healthy choices, for example by providing healthy snacks and lunches and regular tooth brushing.

## **7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?**

The nursery benefits from effective leadership. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable head of centre has established an appropriate revised vision for the nursery in consultation with parents. She is committed to working towards improvement and has made a good start to consulting with staff, parents and children. She is keen to build on this foundation to bring about improvements in children's learning and experiences. Staff are supportive of the head of centre and are willing to undertake additional responsibilities as necessary. The positive, enthusiastic staff team work well together to take forward the vision of the nursery. The nursery is well placed to improve further.

## 8. What happens next?

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the centre, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The centre and 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 education.

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

- Continue to implement *Curriculum for Excellence* as planned, ensuring the design principles are taken account of when planning for children's learning.
- Proceed with plans to improve self-evaluation, involving all stakeholders, to ensure the continuous improvement of the centre.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the centre there was one recommendation. It has since been addressed.



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 Ladyton Early Education & Childcare Centre.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Children's experiences</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>good</b>

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

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>good</b>

**Managing Inspector:**Juliet Colquhoun  
9 February 2011

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

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

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