

1. The Inspection

Linnvale Early Education and Childcare Centre was inspected in September 2007 as part of the integrated inspection programme by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. In November 2007, the nursery prepared an action plan in agreement with West Dunbartonshire Council. The action plan indicated how they would address the main points for action in the HMIE report, within a two year period.

West Dunbartonshire Quality Improvement Service assessed the extent to which the nursery was continuing to improve the quality of its work, and evaluated progress made in responding to the main points for action in the original report.

2. Continuous Improvement

The head of centre and staff had worked very effectively as a team to take forward the recommendations contained in the report. The head of centre was a valued member of an authority working group, which had produced guidelines for self-evaluation, enthusiastically received by all colleagues in early years. She had also implemented and piloted the self-evaluation strategies successfully, to ensure that children received the very best learning experiences. The system for monitoring the work of staff was rigorous and clearly linked to outcomes for children. Staff, children and parents were fully involved in the process. The arrangements for transition had improved. The centre had worked with the adjoining school to improve the children's experience of transition. The centre is continuing to effectively develop continuity and progression in learning for children transferring to primary school.

The centre is very well placed to sustain and build on the improvements they have achieved.

3. Progress towards the main points for action

The initial inspection report published in January 2008 identified two main recommendations for improvement. This section evaluates progress made with each of the recommendations and the resulting improvements for children and stakeholders.

3.1 *The head of centre should develop formal systems for monitoring children's experiences and progress.*

The nursery had made very good progress towards meeting this action point.

The head of centre had worked closely with the local authority to pilot draft guidelines for self-evaluation. All staff were genuinely committed to improving the work of the centre. The approaches to improvement through self-evaluation were very good. The head of centre had used a range of very effective methods to involve children, staff and parents in evaluating the work of the centre. They were very systematic in their approach to evidence gathering. Learning and teaching was regularly monitored and constructive feedback had ensured consistently high standards were provided. The views of parents, children and staff were gathered and acted on as part of this process. The head of centre worked closely with staff to monitor children's progress and learning experiences. The nursery team worked

hard to ensure that improvements impacted on outcomes for children. The staff team reflected regularly on how they were delivering the experiences for learners; sharing good practice with each other and with colleagues from other establishments.

The improvement in this area was driven by the vision of the head of centre, who had piloted West Dunbartonshire's Self-Evaluation Guidelines in the nursery. The centre staff have the capacity to build on these improvements.

3.2 The head of centre and staff should ensure effective transitions for children moving on to primary school.

The nursery had made very good progress towards meeting this action point.

The head of centre had met regularly with the adjoining school's deputy head to plan and discuss the arrangements for transition resulting in the development of a new and fresh approach for nursery pupils moving to primary school. Using the authority transition calendar they devised and implemented their own calendar of activities. This working document was tailored to meet the needs of the children and families in their care. The activities provided a transition experience for all children, regardless of which school they would eventually attend. P.1 Buddies were very successfully matched to nursery children and some nursery children had two Buddies. The Buddies engaged in a range of activities with the nursery children. Joint activities were aimed at developing continuity and progression in learning through a wide range of examples: outings, playtimes, displays of children's work, visits to the school by the nursery children, P.1 teacher visiting the nursery children and working with them in the nursery, parent workshops, nativity plays and shows. All of these activities had a very positive impact on outcomes for children's learning. Working with the P.1 teacher and P.1 children, they produced a booklet which celebrated children's achievements – 'My Buddy Book'. This fresh approach also impacted positively on the range of activities with other schools. They are on target to continue making improvements in this area of their work.

4. Capacity for Improvement

The nursery had made very good progress in all areas of learning and teaching. The manager and team had worked together to develop a shared vision for the nursery. The manager was highly committed to the continuous improvement of the nursery. She provided high-quality leadership and was a very good role model. The staff team was highly committed to improving children's learning experiences.

5. Conclusion

With support from West Dunbartonshire Council Quality Improvement Service, Linnvale Early Education and Childcare Centre had worked enthusiastically to meet the recommendations of the HMIE report. Staff had improved the quality of children's learning experiences. All staff had been fully involved in the implementation of the action plan and had worked hard to support the head of centre to undertake the recommendations within the agreed timescale. The centre was very well placed to continue the improvements achieved to date.