

West Dunbartonshire Council

Report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services

Children's Services Committee: 13 December 2006

Subject: Integrated Inspections of Early Education & Childcare Centres - Update

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** To inform Members of the integrated inspections carried out in Early Education & Childcare Centres since April 2006.

2. Background

At the Children's Services Committee on 27 October 2004, Members of the Committee agreed that integrated inspection reports of Early Education & Childcare Centres (EE&CC) should be notified to the Children's Services Committee on a regular basis. The reports are available at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/>

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** As indicted in previous reports the integrated inspections involve the Care Commission and HMIE and relate to all 23 Council-run EE&CCs and all 10 partnership nurseries within the private sector.
- 3.2** Since April 2006 the following establishments have been subject to joint inspections and received a final report:

<u>Partnership Centres</u>	<u>Date of Inspection</u>	<u>Date of Final Report</u>
Goldenhill Day Centre	April 2006	12 July 2006
Sunflower Nursery (1)	June 2006	23 August 2006
Sunflower Nursery (2)	June 2006	27 October 2006

These reports are included as appendices 1, 2 & 3.

- 3.3** The following key strengths were identified from Goldenhill (appendix 1) and Sunflower (2) (appendix 3) inspections:

- Children's interest and motivation in play experiences;
- Caring relationships and very good interaction between staff and children;
- Very good programmes in emotional, personal and social development;

- Good team work between nursery staff, and commitment and hard work of senior management;
- The bright, attractive nursery environment and very welcoming atmosphere created by staff;
- The very good interaction with babies and children aged 3 to 5;
- The very positive responses from parents related to the relationships with staff.

3.4 The inspection reports included recommendations for improvement in the following areas:

- Staff should provide indoor physical activity for children 1 to 3 years;
- Staff should further develop systems for assessing, planning and recording to focus clearly on what children are expected to learn and use observations to plan next steps in learning;
- The management team should continue to develop more systematic and rigorous procedures to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the work of the nursery.

3.5 The education authority, working with staff from the above centres has prepared Action Plans to address these recommendations. The authority will continue to monitor the progress of these plans.

3.6 Sunflower Nursery (1) (appendix 2) was previously inspected in June 2004, so this recent inspection was part of a programme of follow-through inspections carried out by HMI. The education authority, working with staff, have prepared an Action Plan indicating how the recommendations identified in the Integrated Inspection Report could be addressed. The purpose of the follow-through was to evaluate progress made against the 5 recommendations within the original report. The follow-through report evaluated the progress as being good and very good in all of these areas.

3.7 In addition to the Integrated Inspections, Members may be interested to note that since the last update report the inspections carried out by the Care Commission take the form of unannounced inspections. As part of these reports the Care Commission identifies the level of support which they consider the centre to require. To date a number of centres have undergone these unannounced inspections and all have been identified as requiring a low level of support which is a very positive outcome.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** The programme of Integrated Inspections of Early Education & Childcare Centres continues to confirm good quality education and childcare arrangements across centres in West Dunbartonshire. Continuous improvement remains a high priority however and the Early Years Team within the authority work directly with Heads of Centres and provide an excellent programme of staff development to ensure that standards are maintained and improved.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1** Members are asked to note the content of the report.

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Background Papers: There are no background papers

Wards Affected: Wards 2 & 9