

Summarised Inspection Findings

**Elmwood Nursery (early learning and
childcare standalone setting)**

East Renfrewshire Council

SEED No: 8600317

15 February 2017

1.3 LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE

good

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community*
 - *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
 - *Implementing improvement and change*
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- The setting has an established vision, clear values and specific aims statements that reflect their approach to working with children and families. In particular the values of love and respect are evident in staff practice. The setting has very recently undergone a programme of significant change and expansion. The aims of the setting could now be refreshed in partnership with children and families to ensure these are understood and shared by all.
 - The manager and owner work closely together as an effective and supportive management team. They lead with a clear focus on, and commitment to, quality early learning and childcare. This means all staff are encouraged to reflect on and continuously improve their practice.
 - Staff use national guidance, visits to other settings and are making more reference to research and theory in early learning and childcare to support improvement. They are beginning to reflect on recent changes to the learning environment and frequently make changes to suit individual children's needs. Now that this programme is complete staff should continue to monitor and evidence the impact on children's learning and development over time. Staff should continue to build their skills and confidence in making carefully planned use of the new self-evaluation framework to support and drive improvement.
 - The management team are clearly committed to developing the leadership skills of all staff within the setting. Leadership is developing at all levels with staff taking increasing responsibilities for aspects of the setting including leading improvement plan priorities such as Eco-Schools. Practitioners are increasingly confident to lead specific areas of responsibility. Staff should continue to develop their confidence and skills in how to evidence the impact of their improvements on children's learning and development.
 - The management team actively encourage and inspire staff to pursue additional qualifications. This fosters a culture of continuous improvement and is developing a reflective staff team. All staff are committed to develop the quality of their practice. Staff are valued for their individual skills and experience and work well as a team. Continuing to facilitate opportunities for focused visits to highly-performing settings would be useful in implementing strategic priorities such as the planned changes in planning for children's learning.
 - Overall now that children, families and staff have settled into their new playrooms,

the team need to develop further a strategic overview of their improvement priorities with a focus on impact on children's learning and development. As planned, the management team should explore and introduce a considered approach to the full implementation of the new national self-evaluation framework 'How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare'?

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
 - *Quality of interactions*
 - *Effective use of assessment*
 - *Planning, tracking and monitoring*
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- There is a respectful ethos and culture ensuring all children are treated and valued as individuals. Relationships are positive throughout the setting. This results in children feeling safe and secure and supports them to be increasingly successful and independent within the setting. Almost all staff are responsive to the interests of children and most staff make good use of effective questioning to encourage children to develop their own ideas and solutions in their play. Children are increasingly confident in their new environments.
 - Staff make effective use of information from home to support babies, toddlers and young children to settle in to the setting or a new room. Staff work effectively in partnership with parents to support attachments. They agree and follow clear plans that support children in a way that best suits their individual needs.
 - There are good opportunities for children to be involved in decision making within the setting. Most children demonstrate a good level of engagement in their play for most of their day. This is particularly evident for older children in their time spent in free play in the indoor or outdoor environments. Staff are currently reviewing the flow of the day to ensure an appropriate balance of adult and child initiated learning.
 - Staff recognise that children could be even more involved in planning and leading their own learning. Children are supported to choose 'themes' and talk about what they already know. Staff are developing their skills and confidence in supporting children to lead their own learning through the more informed use of floor books and choice cards. Increased use of real life experiences and opportunities for children to apply and develop their skills in unfamiliar situations would ensure all children are appropriately challenged in their learning.
 - Children confidently make good use of digital technology to support their learning across all playrooms. A few children demonstrated very well-developed skills in using the computer and mouse when playing simple games. The staff should continue to explore the progression of children's skills in this area.
 - Staff are at the early stages of tracking children's learning using their new e-profile. Parents have responded very positively and are increasingly using it to share achievements and learning from home and comment on staff

observations. As planned, staff should now increase children's ownership and meaningful use of their e-profiles.

- Planning, tracking and monitoring of children's learning and progress is an area that continues to develop. Staff currently plan for 'themes', learning that responds to children's interests and for individual children using 2 stars and a wish. As planned staff should work together to review the planning cycle and continue to agree, use and monitor clear, personalised next steps in learning for all children.

2.2 CURRICULUM: theme 3: Learning and Development Pathways

- There is an appropriate curriculum framework in place that is well matched to the development needs of babies, toddlers and young children. For the youngest children, staff currently plan with reference to the *Pre Birth to Three* curriculum. They also consider the wellbeing indicators as they consider how best to meet children's learning needs. As planned, they should revisit how they record their planning for young children now that they have settled into their new environment. Planning for learning is underpinned by strong and consistently nurturing relationships. Staff use their detailed knowledge of children's individual needs, stage of development, personality and interests to develop their curriculum.
- Prior learning from outwith the setting is built on in most cases with information being shared through regular contact with parents. This could be developed to ensure greater consistency and challenge for all children. Prior learning and progress within the setting is shared well as children move across stages and rooms. Staff are working hard to ensure consistency and a progressive approach to learning.
- Developments to the curriculum have resulted in all staff taking responsibility for the delivery and development of literacy and numeracy skills. Continuing professional learning to explore continuity and progression in learning between the 2-3 years and 3-5 years stages will be useful.
- There is potential to develop further skills for learning life and work. Maximising the very good relationships and partnerships with parents and increasing use of local community will provide real-life contexts for children to apply and further develop their skills.

2.7 PARTNERSHIPS: theme 3 Impact on children and families – Parental Engagement

- Caring, respectful and positive relationships with parents are evident; this means that staff and parents communicate effectively to support children's learning. Parents feel very welcome and valued within the setting. They know their views will be taken seriously and influence staff practice.
- There are good opportunities for shared learning at home linking to what the children are learning at nursery. Home learning sheets, shared activities and e-profiles support this engagement between parents, children and staff well.
- Information is regularly shared with parents about children's learning and progress in formal and informal ways. Regular meetings, newsletters, attractive displays and the new e-profiles support effective sharing of information about children's learning and interests. Parents speak positively about the opportunity to access and contribute to their child's profile at home. They feel confident in approaching staff for support or further information about their child.

2.1: SAFEGUARDING

- The centre submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.1 ENSURING WELLBEING, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
- *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
- *Inclusion and equality*

- Positive relationships underpin all aspects of work with babies, toddler and young children. Staff have a good understanding of the importance of nurture, bonding and wellbeing of young children. Staff provide very positive role models to children. There is a warm, welcoming ethos in the setting and children are well-behaved, kind and caring in their interactions to one another appropriate to their stage of development.
- The principles of *Getting it Right for Every Child* are embedded throughout staff practice. Staff and children are at early stages of using the language of the wellbeing indicators. Staff recognise that there is scope to further develop their understanding and use of the indicators in a meaningful way with children and families.
- Positive behaviour is encouraged and reinforced through use of nursery rules that children have developed. Staff working with older children use praise and language effectively to reinforce their expectations of behaviour and show children that their views are important. Staff recognise that there is potential for a deeper exploration of children's rights by reintroducing some of their committees and expanding the ways that children are involved in leading their learning. Planned developments such as reintroducing the work on sustainability offer much potential to support this.
- Care plans are clear, up-to-date and record important information about children and families. These are reviewed every three months for children or more frequently if circumstances change. Staff recognise and make use of the information that supports them to, for example, meet children's personal care needs in the way best suited to that child.
- Staff are beginning to establish links with a good range of partners to support the needs of children who have specific barriers in their learning. Staff make good use of regular observations to identify children who require additional support or specific support. They are proactive in working with professionals such as speech and language therapists or support workers to agree a plan with clear targets. The management team should continue with their plans to formalise aspects of the recording of this joint work with partners and parents.
- The management team have a well-developed knowledge and understanding of

legislative requirements. They use this to support the implementation of statutory duties. The management team ensure staff are kept up-to-date with, for example, health and safety legislation, child protection training and guidance on healthy eating. Now that their additional building is operational, staff should review the arrangements for the storage of medication.

- Inclusion and equality is promoted throughout the work of the setting. Staff value and celebrate the diverse backgrounds, faiths and interests of all children and families. There is a positive and respectful ethos where everyone is valued. Staff should continue to explore how they can engage children and staff in continuing to learn more about equality and diversity in a way that is age and stage appropriate.

3.2 SECURING CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- *Progress in communication, early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing*
- *Children's progress over time*
- *Overall quality of children's achievement*
- *Ensuring equity for all children*

- A clear focus on health and wellbeing across the setting is resulting in babies, toddlers and young children developing a good range of skills and understanding. Older children risk-assess their play and understand how to keep safe while playing outdoors and the importance of exercise and healthy eating in keeping strong and helping their body to grow. They show a developing understanding of their own and other children's feelings. In all playrooms children are learning to be independent appropriate to their developmental stage.
- In early language and communication almost all children across the setting are making good progress. The youngest children enjoy positive interactions and relationships with staff who care for them. Staff communicate well with babies, making good use of eye contact as they respond to babbling as young children convey their feelings and needs. They spend time looking at stage appropriate books, singing and chatting with adults. All children aged 3-5 years demonstrated a good level of talking and listening both during group time and free play, children are confident communicators and almost all enjoy opportunities for extended conversations with staff and their peers. Most children aged 2-5 years were exploring mark-making, can write their name in their own way and recognise their name in print.
- In numeracy and mathematics, children are making good progress. Through routines and play experiences they are learning about counting, shape and measurement. Babies and toddlers are exploring early number, volume and shape through exploratory play. Older children are learning how numbers represent quantities through planned activities.
- Through daily routines children use their literacy and numeracy skills in meaningful contexts. Staff recognise the potential to develop further this as they support children to be increasingly independent at snack and lunch times.
- Staff make good use of the developing outdoor learning environment across all age groups. Children are supported to lead their own learning with access to some open-ended resources. Staff should continue with their plans to further develop the natural environment and opportunities for problem-solving.

- The play environment continues to evolve and develop as children settle in following the expansion. Staff have given good attention to creating well defined areas and labelling to begin to support children's independence. The management team should continue to support staff to use best practice guidance to evaluate their developing use of the spaces for children aged under three years. Staff should continue with their plans to ensure clear links between the learning environment and home for the youngest children and ensure that it provides comfortable, engaging spaces carefully planned with reference to pedagogy and best practice.
- Floor books show learning about a variety of subjects that have been of interest to children such as space, travel and animals. Staff recognise that there are opportunities to extend their use of floor books to capture children's reflections about their learning and evidence how they have developed their skills and knowledge. Children aged 3-5 years make good use of choice cards to plan their day, children review them at the end of the session with their parent. Staff recognise that there is potential to further develop their discussions with children to reflect more consistently on their learning and progress.
- Recently introduced achievement trees are showing early signs of increasing opportunities for children, parents and staff to celebrate and build on individual children's achievements more consistently.
- Staff take good account of a range of different cultures and interests within the setting when planning for learning.
- As planned, there should now be a renewed focus on tracking and monitoring children's progress over time. With support from the management team, staff have recently evaluated their use of the new e-profiles and identified some improvements in using this new system.

SETTING CHOICE OF QI: 2.6 TRANSITIONS

- Quality of support for children and their families.
 - Collaborative planning and delivery.
 - Continuity and progression in learning.
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- All staff give careful attention to supporting children and families to make a positive transition into the setting. Flexible, responsive arrangements ensure that strong, trusting relationships are built at a pace that suits the individual child. This means that there is effective support for children and parents in developing new attachments and managing change. Staff take good account of the individual interests, personality and care needs of children. Good attention is given to the needs of parents and carers during transition as well as the needs of the child. This ensures that they too, are well supported.
 - Transitions between playrooms are carefully planned when children's development and learning needs mean they are ready to progress to another stage of their learning. Staff make good use of observations, consultation with parents and relationships with other team members to decide when children should move between rooms. Staff build on learning from children's prior experience at home or in their previous setting to ensure children continue to make good progress.
 - Staff recognise that there is scope to improve transitions between activities and at key times throughout the day. This will continue to develop as children and staff settle into and evaluate their new learning environment.
 - Staff work hard to provide a programme of activities to provide sound pastoral support to children and families to make successful transitions to a wide range of schools. Teachers are invited to visit the setting and staff share information about children's learning and progress. Staff are keen to work in closer partnership with local schools, to ensure a shared focus on continuity and progression in learning across the early level of Curriculum for Excellence. They should continue to explore ways to support this in their partnership work with the local authority.
 - A newly introduced transition room is supporting a small group of children who are ready to access Curriculum for Excellence. As planned, the management team should review the impact of this new arrangement using best practice guidance, current research and rigorous self-evaluation. This will support them to continue to develop and expand their provision for all children.
 - Arrangements to support children who attend the setting on a split placement are beginning to develop. Staff have an appropriate focus on continuity in learning and care for individual children. As planned, staff should formalise how they record communication between placements to ensure continuity in learning for children.

PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SETTING

- Independent children who are confident communicators and eager to learn.
- The leadership of the management team in effectively managing change and driving improvement within the setting.
- The committed and nurturing staff team who work well with parents to support children to make good progress across all aspects of their learning.
- Improvements to the outdoor and indoor learning environments that show early signs of improving outcomes for learners.

AGREED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR THE SETTING

- Continue to support children to make the very best possible progress by increasing opportunities for them to lead their own learning.
- As planned, refine approaches to planning for children's learning and tracking the progress they make.
- Develop staff skills and confidence in demonstrating how improvements are impacting on children's learning and development over time.
- As planned, fully implement strategic use of the new national self-evaluation framework to drive improvements and monitor practice.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INSPECTION?

We are confident that the setting has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. East Renfrewshire Council will inform parents/carers about the setting's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its settings.