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East Dunbartonshire Council

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Bearsden Early Years Centre Standards and Quality Report 2023/24



Context of the Centre

Bearsden Early Years Centre is a purpose built, extended day and year Early Years provision which opened to children in August 2021. We are registered to provide early learning and childcare for up to 95 children aged 2-5 years. This is split into 16 2–3-year-olds and 79 3–5-year-olds for any one session. We currently have 133 children on our register (109 in 3-5 room and 21 in 2-3 room).

98% of children stay in deciles 8-10, with no children in SIMD 1-2. 2% live in decile 7.

The centre is open 50 weeks of the year from 8am-6pm. We provide quality early learning and childcare for children from the Bearsden and Milngavie locality. We began delivering the 1140 model when we opened in August 2021. In line with the local authority, children are offered five sessions over the week, covered by 1140 funding. Families then have the option to pay for 'wrap' care.

The centre has been designed to make best use of both indoor and outdoor play, with an internal courtyard that can be used in all weathers. In addition, a covered mezzanine level can be used flexibly with lots of open space and natural light. Children are encouraged to free flow between the indoor and outdoor areas including the garden.

The Early Years Centre is overseen by the Head teacher, Catriona Smith, Bearsden Primary School. Claire White is Depute Head of Centre, leading the day to day running of the centre, supported by two senior early years worker, 1 Nursery Teacher and 27 Early Years Workers (some who work part-time), and 2 Early Years Support Worker, this equates to 24.80 FTE. We have one full time Clerical assistant, 1 part-time Clerical Assistant, a Housekeeper, Buildings Manager and 3 Janitorial Assistants.

We have updated our vision, values and aims for the centre this session and this is detailed in our evaluations below (priority 3).

Our vision is:

To create a caring, happy community where all feel nurtured and supported.

Aims:

To provide an inclusive environment where children are empowered to actively learn through play, both indoors and outdoors, to become confident and independent learners. (Article 2, 29, 31)

To inspire children to be creative, imaginative and curious of their world and have their voice listened to. (Article 13, 12)

To encourage building resilience by helping children to face challenges and setbacks to build the foundation for lifelong learning (Article 28)

The values for Bearsden Early Years Centre are:

- Kindness
- Happiness
- Safety

Engagement with parents / carers was and will remain to be one of our priorities. We have explored different ways of involving our families through Stay and Play sessions and using different technology as a medium for engaging with our families.

Progress in Centre Improvement Plan (CIP) priorities

Centre priority 1: Ensuring high quality learning experiences underpinned by the rights of the child

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs

- 1.1 nurturing care and support
- 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities
- 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led
- 4.3 staff development

NIF Priority

- Improvement in achievement, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;

NIF Driver

- Curriculum and assessment
- Performance information

HGIOELC QIs

- QI 2.2 Curriculum
- QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment
- QI 3.2 Ensuring children's progress

Progress and impact:

We have been working on improving the environment for children to ensure children can make progression across the curriculum. We carried out regular environmental audits which allowed staff to identify strengths and areas for development. Staff were supported in completing this by the Nursery Teacher and Early Years Support Teacher. As a result, our environment is more engaging, better resourced and allows children to be curious in each area as evidenced in SLT observations. Staff have been developing their provocations for play and have shared ideas at inservice days, been to visit other centres, undertaken outdoor learning training and this has led to children being more engaged within all the different areas. Loose parts have been used to enhance play opportunities across different areas- malleable, art, garden and small world.

We increased the opportunities for free flow play for children. The garden is open from 8am and children can select where they would like to play allowing children to become independent. Children are involved in the risk assessments and setting up of areas, again encouraging independence and responsibility.

All staff were trained on Ferre Laevers this session and we are at the early stages of implementing this across the centre. We have used this to observe targeted children and to monitor and plan appropriate supports. We will extend this further next session.

The Early Years Teacher worked closely with the Principal Teacher to assess, support and challenge the children within the centre. Children were identified for challenge and support with specific areas to work on. The pre-school children were tracked carefully and all children made progress from October 2023 until March 2024. The information from these assessments then helped to formulate the next steps for the backdrop plan for group time for Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

Staff have been developing their planning formats to record their responsive planning. Staff are now consistently using these plans and are being supported in developing the next steps for children through regular weekly meetings with the teacher and principal teacher. Quality assurance processes provide an opportunity to moderate and feedback to staff to ensure that these are of a high quality and impacting on learning for the children. Almost all staff have reported that they found this helpful in their planning.

Staff have taken on champion roles this session- Literacy, Numeracy, Outdoor, Nurture, Family, Language and Communication Friendly Environment (LCFE) and have led developments within the

centre, such as home link packs for literacy and numeracy, and increased family events which has been noted by parents:

"You have created a lovely community feel to the centre and made us feel like part of the Bearsden EYC family."

Champions have attended meetings with other champions to share ideas and practice. They have also been supported by the Early Years Support Teacher in carrying out their role. In addition, we have staff who are taking on community champion roles such as Fundraising, Parents Group, Family engagement and events.

We have improved our mealtimes to allow children to have rolling lunch and snack routines to encourage children to select their own foods and choose when to come for lunch to limit the interruptions to their play and for a relaxed and social experience.

Sleep routines in the 2-3 room have been improved to provide a relaxed, peaceful environment for children to have a sleep in a suitable space and still allow for the free flow to play in the centre. Children throughout the centre have also been provided with cosy areas to allow for quiet spaces and sleep areas if required. Staff monitor this carefully to ensure all children have the appropriate space and to support those children who still require a daytime sleep. Care plans are used to ensure that these routines match these needs from home. As the children transition from the 2-3 room to the 3-5 room, children are supported to do this by joining with 3-5 lunches with the support of their key worker, the free flow aspect of the centre allows children to mix freely with all children and staff. Additionally 2-3 key worker links with the 3-5 key worker and undertakes a transition parent meeting and prepares a transition document which has the voices of the children, parents and key worker to support a successful transition.

Next Steps:

- Ferre Laevers will be extended to use with all children to support their wellbeing and participation by using the scoping tool.
- Develop the tracking of all outcomes and experiences to have a consistent tool used by all staff for both Curriculum for Excellence and Realising the Ambition/ Being Me Under 3.

Centre priority 2: Family Partnerships

NIF Priority

- Improvement in achievement, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Placing human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education

NIF Driver

- Parent/carer engagement and family learning
- School and ELC improvement

HGIOELC QIs

- QI 2.5 Family Learning
- QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs

- 1.4 Family engagement
- 1.5 effective transitions
- 2.1 Quality of the setting for play and learning

Progress and impact:

This session we have improved our communications with families to encourage their involvement in the life of the centre. Drop off and pick up were changed to allow parents full access into the centre. This has allowed parents to observe the children within the centre, build relationships with the staff as they can discuss the care of their child in an informal way and pass on information from parents to staff, and staff to parents. Communication systems has been improved to ensure important messages are shared with parents at these times such as lunches, personal care and any accidents/ incidents. Staff have also

begun to use 'Ask me about...' stickers to encourage dialogue between parents and children about their learning.

This session we introduced a settle meeting that takes place within 4-6 weeks of starting at the EYC. This allows parents and staff to discuss children's interests within the nursery, relationships that are formed, awareness of routines and any concerns that have been identified. This has worked well in settling the children and in reassuring parents about how happy their child is at nursery.

Stay and Play sessions were offered to parents this session. These took the form of Woodwork, Bookbug, Easter café and the Christmas concert. Almost all parents have attended at least one of the sessions, and we have also welcomed grandparents and siblings into sessions. Parents have also volunteered to lead learning such as Astronomy, World of Work Week, Chinese New Year and How to Recycle, Reduce and Reuse allowing parents to share their skills with children.

The feedback from parents have highlighted how well the sessions have been received

- *"It's really nice to feel part of C's nursery experience by getting involved in different things like Bookbug and the woodwork stay and play"*
- *"It was lots of fun being in nursery today and taking part in a range of activities. All children were included and there was a lovely range of activities"*
- *"Very friendly staff, lots of activities to bring in the parents and involve them. I couldn't get over how much you do for the kids and how many different activities they do / learn so much!! Very impressed! Such a huge place but still manage to maintain a lovely relationship with everyone!!"*

We have also developed Friday news that goes to all parents weekly. This includes information on staffing, events, important information and asks for lunch choices for the coming week. Curriculum newsletter has been issued termly to share the main areas of learning for the term and key dates in advance for parents.

A curriculum evening was introduced this session to allow parents to come into the centre and explore the kinds of learning provocations and activities that could be offered to the children. This was well attended and the parents who attended gave very positive feedback on the event.

- *"We're grateful and excited about everything that BEYC is doing to nurture our children's growth. We value their time have to develop into confident, happy and curious little people. It's an important time for them to play, interact and have fun, but all the while enjoying the support of the EYC in building personal confidence, independence and freedom to develop their own sense of self. So much of what takes place in BEYC is what sets our children on their own paths in life. We know that our children will look back with pride on their early years and how BEYC have helped shape their futures"* Parental Comment

Home learning bags were developed for literacy and numeracy. A Health and Wellbeing Travelling Teddy Bear was developed for the 2-3 room to allow for sharing with home. A lending library was also introduced. All of these initiatives were well received and there is scope to further develop a separate numeracy pack as there were not as many resources within the bags for this area.

Staff have also been developing how they share the learning with parents. Learning journals training and guidance was developed for all staff. This has led to more learning observations and stories being published. In turn this has led to an increase in parental logins, comments and contributions. We have also increased the centre activity on Learning Journals, ensuring we share events, celebrations, and whole centre learning eg World of Work Week.

A parents group has been started and they have focussed on fundraising and consulting them on centre improvement. They have suggested areas they would like information on, what should be on the website or shared within newsletters. They have suggested further ways of increasing further parental involvement and fundraising and are taking on some responsibility for this. We also looked for volunteers for the Parent Council and had one parent attend. We look to develop this further next session.

Next Steps:

- Continue to build on parental sessions and the parent groups that have been started. Increase the numbers of parents engaging in the Parent Focus Group/ Parent Council.
- Increase the Champion Roles to ensure they include parental engagement and involvement.
- Continue to add to the website for information for parents.

Centre priority 3: Curriculum

NIF Priority

- Improvement in achievement, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing;

NIF Driver

- Curriculum and assessment
- Teacher and Practitioner professionalism
- School and ELC improvement

HGIOELC QIs

- QI 2.2 Curriculum
- QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment
- QI 3.2 Ensuring children's progress

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs

- 1.1 nurturing care and support
- 1.3 play and learning
- 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Progress and impact:

A quality assurance calendar with all dates for the year was introduced. This ensured that all practitioners had a clear idea from the start of the year of the expectations for planning, assessment and parental involvement. New planning formats were introduced for child led responsive planning, linking to either Curriculum for Excellence for the 3-5 children or to Realising the Ambition for 2-3 year olds. Responsive planning has allowed for children's voice to be at the heart of the experiences offered. Practitioners have been developing their ability to take the 'spark' from the children and how they can enhance this learning. Weekly support meetings with either the Principal Teacher or Early Years teacher were established to give high quality feedback to Early Years Workers. Group Time for all children was also changed to ensure that there was a Literacy or Numeracy focus alternate weeks (with the backdrop outcomes being identified by the teacher) along with a HWB focus and one other area. This is recorded in their learning journals with observations tied into the outcomes. This allowed for quality assurance of these areas to be triangulated with the planning evidence and to identify gaps in learning or next steps.

The Early Years Teacher and Principal Teacher worked with all the children to assess their stage of development and this led to support and challenge groups for the pre-schoolers. Targeted sessions were introduced linked to the children's next steps and all pre-school children made progress from their first assessments.

We revised our Vision, Values and Aims, and developed our Curriculum Rationale for the centre this session. We gathered views from the staff, parents and children on what makes Bearsden EYC unique and what we would like to be offered in our curriculum. Parents views were sought at Curriculum Evenings, Christmas/ Easter shows and by email, allowing parents thinking time on the questions before coming into the centre. We had most parents contributing to all of these.

- *"A centre that provides a compassionate and nurturing environment that forms the basis for holistic learning and gives a solid foundation for progression to primary school"*
- *"Staff are fantastic and enjoy their job which comes through to the children. Excellent all round!"*
- *"Kind, dedicated nurturing staff who are fully child centred"*

All staff contributed through staff meetings and focus groups for children were established to gather their views. Children were consulted on a number of topics, this was facilitated by using photographs and set up stations within specific areas to gain their views using pompoms and their comments. This then fed in to our new Vision, Values and Aims, along with a visual representation of our Curriculum Rationale.

Next Steps:

- Within the 2-3 year age group we will look at the 'Being Me Under 3' document to support planning and tracking
- Ensure a clear tracking document in place for all children to ensure progression and coverage of outcomes for children.
- Launch and promote the new Vision, Values and Aims, and Curriculum Rationale with all stakeholders.

Progress in National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities

- **Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education**

We have a UNCRC Champion who has been to visit other centres to begin to develop our journey. Planning formats have highlighted links to UNCRC. Every child in the centre has a care plan individual to them ensuring we meet their individual needs. This is reviewed every 6 months with their parent/ carer. Children's voice has been included in planning and improvements in the centre. We have used different ways to gather their voice and the planning is clearly focused on their interests and motivations.

- **Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing;**

We have worked this session to involve children in both their snacks and lunches. Children work with the Early Years Workers to choose the menu for snack on a 3 weekly rotation. Discussions on healthy choices are had during this time.

Children have been involved in developing the lunch routines where the document Setting the Table has been used to support implementation. Children now self-serve, register for lunches, and tidy away at the end. Practitioners sit at the lunch tables to support the mealtime routine, allergies and social communication.

To support children's wellbeing we are fortunate to have a centre that enables free flow play in both indoors and outdoors. Staff have worked to improve the quality of the environment outdoors and the children have access to growing and harvesting their own vegetables. This has also linked to indoor area for cooking and healthy eating.

Any support needs are identified quickly and the centre works with a range of partners including Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologist, Outreach staff from Enhanced Learning Resource and Health Visitors to support interventions. Support for All group meets regularly to plan next steps for children requiring support from the EYC. This is attended by DHoC, Early Years Teacher, Principal Teacher and Educational Psychologist.

We ensure that children have a smooth transition from home to nursery with bespoke settling arrangements. We introduced a settle meeting that happens within 6 weeks of starting and this has supported children and parents with the transition into the EYC. Staff have undertaken training on Ferre Laevers and understand the importance of how wellbeing impacts on children's involvement. Identified children have been observed and this has fed into their individual plans. This will be taken forward further next session.

Almost all children transfer into Bearsden Primary and there is a robust transition programme established to support the move into school. We also foster close links with our associated primary schools to ensure all children are confident in making the transition from early years to primary education. Children with additional support needs are provided with enhanced transition support. Care plans for each child include a SHANARRI indicators document which is updated regularly. A holistic tracker is in place for all children which includes information on medical needs, agencies involved, tracking of literacy and numeracy and SIMD information.

- **Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people**

While we do not have children from SIMD 1-6, we are aware of the barriers that individual children face. Targeted supports are in place for children that require this and personal circumstances of children and their families are taken into consideration when planning. We plan to increase the use of Ferre Levers observations to target support for identified children, not only in the 3-5 room but to introduce this as part of transition from the 2-3 room.

- **Improvement in achievement, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy**

As discussed above, we have had baseline assessments for all children this session. In further assessments almost all children made improvements in their literacy and numeracy targets. This allowed for targeted support and challenge to be put in place and the teacher worked closely with small groups to direct the teaching input. Group time is well established and links directly to Literacy, Numeracy or HWB. The backdrop plan ensures that we are ensuring a progression in outcomes.

Self-evaluations of How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare

Quality indicator	Centre self-evaluation	Inspection/ Authority evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Good	Choose an item.
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	Choose an item.
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Good	Choose an item.
3.2 Securing Children's Progress	Good	Choose an item.

Summary of Centre Improvement priorities for Session 2024/2025

- 1. Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- 2. Up, Up and Away
- 3. Rights Respecting Schools increasing children's participation

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

The EYC is well placed to continue to improve. Pace of change is managed realistically, and staff work together to be responsive to the needs of the children and families within our community. Families, staff and children all report that they feel safe and happy within the school. We are well supported by all of our families who engage enthusiastically with the centre.

All staff at Bearsden Early Years Centre are committed to delivering high standards, which is leading to improved outcomes for our children. They create a welcoming environment for the children where parents report their children are happy to come to and feel safe. Staff will continue to be encouraged to engage in continuous professional learning and development opportunities to ensure their skills align with theory and practice.