

19 November 2013

Dear Parent/Carer

**Wellpark Children's Centre
Inverclyde Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleague and I visited and inspected your child's pre-school centre. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and we worked closely with the head of centre and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the pre-school centre supports children to do their best. The head of centre shared with us the pre-school centre's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the pre-school centre's recent work, including literacy across learning and parental partnerships. As a result, we were able to find out how good the pre-school centre is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Children learn and achieve well at nursery. Children under three are becoming confident in making choices about what they want to do. They enjoy being active in the playroom developing their physical skills and coordination well. They are making friends and learning to share toys and take turns. Children aged three to five are lively and keen to learn. They concentrate well to complete a chosen activity and persevere well during adult-guided activities. Children like to use their imagination during free play to explore different roles as firemen and medical staff. They enjoy finding mini-beasts to observe when outdoors. Staff have identified this as an area to be developed further. In so doing, they should ensure it offers high quality experiences that encourage children to explore, investigate, problem-solve and develop their creativity. Children are becoming confident. They respond well to being helpers at snack and take their role very seriously. It is important to check for understanding when children undertake specific jobs and help them to make clear links between what they are doing and how they are learning. Children understand the importance of brushing their teeth and developing good personal hygiene. They feel confident to approach a member of staff if they have a concern or worry. Staff recognise there is scope to develop the approaches used to consult children about their learning. At times, a few children would benefit from following their own interests for longer, with supportive interventions from staff, to gain more depth in their learning.

Children are making appropriate progress in early language and mathematics. Most children listen well to adults and one another. They are becoming confident at expressing their needs. Children's vocabulary is increasing and staff encourage conversations during group and activity time. Children like listening to stories and looking at books to retell favourite stories. They are not yet experienced in using a wider range of sources to find out information including different texts and the internet. Children enjoy mark-making when playing. It is important that children have a range of meaningful purposes to build and develop these skills across all areas of the curriculum. Children are becoming confident in using appropriate language to describe size and shapes. They recognise numbers and most can count up to ten when playing with friends and in group activities. Children estimate different amounts and measure ingredients carefully when making play dough. They are able to match and sort objects according to size, colour and shape well. They will benefit from more real-life opportunities to extend and practise their skills. Children's achievements are shared through 'star moments', praise and encouragement. There is scope to develop children's folders to reflect more of the child's 'voice' and help them to take more ownership, see and understand their progress.

How well does the pre-school centre support children to develop and learn?

Staff working with children under three use a blend of national and local guidance to plan learning for children. They are attentive and responsive to children's emotional needs. Staff place a strong emphasis on meeting the care needs of all children. They are sensitive to family circumstances and parents say staff work hard to support children to help them become confident and independent. Staff working with children age three to five provide a broad range of experiences. They have focused on developing approaches to plan learning using Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and link these to next steps in learning. Staff provide an annual curriculum evening for parents to help share some of the activities and approaches to learning that children will experience. Parents like the take home bags and enjoy the shared focused time with their child to make learning about nursery rhymes fun. Staff provide children with a good level of challenge through the activities they plan. They offer a good range of opportunities for language, mathematics, health and wellbeing. Staff need to provide more varied opportunities to develop technologies across all areas of the curriculum. A few parents would like more regular information about their child's progress. Staff use visitors to support aspects of children's learning through promoting health and wellbeing and science. There is scope to develop further community links to enhance children's experiences. Children who need additional support with their learning or development are identified early. There is scope to ensure that planning includes all relevant information and that parents and children are involved in setting and reviewing targets. Staff work well with other agencies and are highly motivated to seek out advice and guidance to help meet specific needs well. Transitions into nursery are well handled and parents like the 'all about me' booklets. Effective links and well considered arrangements with schools and parents support children in their transition into primary school.

How well does the pre-school centre improve the quality of its work?

All staff are committed to improving the nursery. They are willing to source new ideas and appreciate professional development opportunities. They are particularly motivated to seek advice, training and support to help them build knowledge and skills to best meet children's learning and development needs. Staff work with the local 'cluster' to develop science in the curriculum. The centre manager uses an appropriate range of approaches to gather information and knows the children and families very well. Relationships between children, staff and parents are positive. There needs to be a stronger focus on sharing information regarding action taken as a result of views gathered. The centre manager recognises that approaches to develop self-evaluation need to take a stronger focus in involving children, parents and staff more fully in identifying and reviewing nursery improvements. This needs to become a more regular feature which shows clearly, improvements to children's progress and achievements.

Our inspection of your pre-school centre found the following key strengths.

- Confident children who enjoy coming to nursery.
- Positive ethos and relationships between children, staff and parents.
- Teamwork of staff to adapt practice and seek support to meet a wide range of learning needs.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the pre-school centre. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to develop partnerships with parents and the community to enhance children's learning.
- Continue to develop the curriculum and improve the programme for technologies.
- Ensure approaches to self-evaluation improve children's learning and achievement.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the pre-school centre's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. As part of the arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the pre-school centre, the local authority will inform parents about the pre-school centre's progress.

Mary Ann Hagan
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/eyc/WellparkChildrensCentreGreenockInverclyde.asp>

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