
Report To:	Education & Lifelong Learning Committee	Date:	12 May 2009
Report By:	Corporate Director & Social Care	Report No:	EDUC/60/09/IF
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Subject:	HMIe report on Kelly Street Children's Centre		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee of an HMIe and Care Commission joint report on Kelly Street Children's Centre.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Kelly Street Children's Centre has received a very good report from HMIe and the Care Commission. The report was produced on 29 April 2009. Members should note that the indicators of quality, recently amended by the HMIe, reflect very well on the nursery with two indicators of quality evaluated as 'excellent' and three as 'very good'. It is particularly pleasing, in the wider context of Inverclyde, that the Children's Centre is producing excellent evaluation in respect of meeting learning needs.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee approve the report on Kelly Street Children's Centre.

Ian Fraser
Corporate Director Education & Social Care

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Kelly Street Children's Centre was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and the Care Commission in February 2009. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages, identified key strengths and main points for action using the following six-point scale:

6	-	Excellent – excellent
5	-	Very Good – major strengths
4	-	Good – important strengths with some areas for improvement
3	-	Satisfactory – strengths just outweigh weaknesses
2	-	Weak – important weaknesses
1	-	Unsatisfactory – major weaknesses

4.2 HMIE and the Care Commission assessed and reported on the views of parents, pupils and staff, the quality of learning in teaching, how well the school was raising achievement for all pupils, achievement in national examinations, the centre's processes for self-evaluation and innovation, the school's capacity for improvement.

4.3 The report was published on the 29 April 2009 and will be circulated at the meeting. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener and Vice-Convener for Education & Lifelong Learning.

4.4 Kelly Street Children's Centre is inspected under the evaluation framework "The Child at the Centre 2".

4.5 In assessing the indicators of quality, HMIE and the Care Commission found two aspects of the work of the school to be 'excellent' and three to be 'very good'. The evaluations of the indicators for quality can be found on page 7 of the report.

4.6 Members should note that HMIE and the Care Commission comment on examples of good practice. The report indicated two examples of good practice:

- Transitions from nursery to P1
- Approaches to developing children's skills in technology

4.7 A school improvement plan will be put in place to address the point for action, to continue to maintain and extend the high quality of provision with the centre.

4.8 The report on Kelly Street Children's Centre should be set in the context of Inverclyde. This is an excellent in the context of other reports on early years establishments and is an excellent report in terms of the school inspection regime.

Inspection of pre-school provision



A report by
HM Inspectorate of Education
and the Care Commission

Kelly Street Children's
Centre
Greenock
Inverclyde
29 April 2009



HMIe
improving Scottish education

This report tells you about the quality of education at the centre. We describe how children benefit from learning there. We explain how well they are doing and how good the centre is at helping them to learn. Then we look at the ways in which the centre does this. We describe how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including parents¹ and services which support children. We also comment on how well staff and children work together and how they go about improving the centre.

Our report describes the 'ethos' of the centre. By 'ethos' we mean the relationships in the centre, how well children are cared for and treated and how much is expected of them in all aspects of centre life. Finally, we comment on the centre's aims. In particular, we focus on how well the aims help staff to deliver high-quality learning, and the impact of leadership on the centre's success in achieving these aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Where applicable, the website contains analyses of questionnaire returns and descriptions of good practice in the centre.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends.

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1. The centre

Kelly Street Children's Centre was inspected in February 2009 by HMIE on behalf of both HMIE and the Care Commission as part of the integrated inspection programme. The centre caters for pre-school children aged three to five years. It is registered for 80 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 131 at the time of the inspection.

2. Particular strengths of the centre

- Highly-motivated, confident learners throughout the centre.
- High-quality curriculum.
- The approaches of staff to meeting children's learning needs.
- Opportunities for parents to share in children's learning within the centre.
- The work of the management team in developing leadership skills within the staff team.

3. Examples of good practice

- Transitions from nursery to P1.
- Approaches to developing children's skills in technology.

4. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children are very happy within both playrooms. They are highly motivated learners who play very well alongside each other. Children make purposeful choices and persevere well in their play. They have developed close friendships with each other and enjoy learning together. Children are making very good progress in their learning. Children speak confidently, can listen to others and share their ideas

readily. Staff support children effectively in using different techniques to extend their skills in listening and talking. Children make very good use of books throughout the playrooms. They enjoy sharing favourite stories and use the pictures to tell the story. With support from staff, children know how to use information books to help them 'write' their own stories about animals. They like to practise early writing skills throughout their play, especially when making cards and letters. Children are confident when counting within ten. They are learning about the relationship between numbers and can sort objects in different ways. Children can compare different lengths, and know when something is heavy or light through investigating with weighing scales. Children recognise mathematical shapes and explore them through making models. They enjoy using cameras and digital microscopes to take photographs and make discoveries in the sand. They use the computer and interactive whiteboard confidently. Children have fun using their imagination in the home corner. They take on different roles and use props very well to illustrate their play. Children make well-planned, independent choices in the creative area. They select their own materials and their paintings show detail. Children regularly practise physical skills indoors and out. They can cycle, throw and catch, as well as follow instructions round a challenging obstacle course.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff provide excellent learning opportunities across all areas of the curriculum. Activities in both playrooms are highly stimulating and take very good account of children's interests. Staff consult children consistently about their learning and support them skilfully in taking forward their own ideas. Resources are carefully selected to ensure children are challenged and are able to progress their skills. Children who attend on an extended placement receive a varied programme throughout the day. Staff ensure that opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum are very well planned. In particular, they have developed successful literacy programmes. Staff are very familiar with the national initiative, *Curriculum for Excellence*. They have successfully taken forward aspects of technology in order

to challenge children further. As a result, children designed their own story set and used filming equipment to record their own story. Staff have recently introduced a new programme to support and monitor children's physical skills. Children regularly have fun practising outdoors as well as in the school gym hall.

Staff know children very well as learners and are highly skilled at meeting their individual needs and monitoring their progress. They observe them at play effectively and use the information to plan the most appropriate next steps in learning. They have introduced well-considered strategies to both challenge and support children. Staff are very good at recognising when children need extra help in their learning. They have written individualised plans, and work collaboratively alongside parents and outside agencies to take them forward.

5. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?

Parents are very pleased with the open and trusting relationships they have with the staff. They are particularly positive about, and praised the work of, the staff and their outstanding commitment to the children in their care. There is an active parents' group which is supported by the head of centre and a member of the community learning and development team. They meet regularly and are all knowledgeable about initiatives being taken forward in the centre. Parents are encouraged to monitor and evaluate the quality of the centre. They take part in a range of activities to support their children's learning both in the centre and at home. The centre works closely with others to support children's development. There are effective links with psychological services, health and social work. Very positive relationships are in place with local primary schools and, as a result, arrangements for children moving from nursery to school are very effective.

6. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?

The head of centre and depute head work effectively with staff to improve the quality of the centre. They have a focused approach to self-evaluation and support staff in continuous reflection about their practice. The two part-time teachers have responsibility for supporting the work of colleagues and in providing guidance on next steps in children's learning. Staff are very good at sharing ideas and innovative ways of working. Children are involved in planning and discussing activities, and their views are taken into account. This was illustrated well during a successful enterprise 'wedding' event. The improvement plan is shared with parents and sets out important priorities to ensure that there is clear impact on children's learning and development.

7. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?

Staff have high expectations of all children in the centre. They have created an inclusive ethos in which all children are supported and challenged to achieve. Staff very quickly recognise and address any factors which might hinder children's learning. They support children very well in celebrating their own achievements through the use of stickers and very attractive displays of work. Children like to keep their favourite pictures and paintings in their own special folder. Staff very sensitively support children in understanding that we are all different and celebrate events in different ways. They ensure that resources widely reflect different cultures and languages. Staff are knowledgeable regarding their role in protecting children from harm and are confident in the procedures they have in place. They consult national nutritional guidance when providing snacks, and ensure children brush their teeth each day.

8. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?

The head of centre and the depute head are highly effective leaders of learning. Together, they have created an ambitious and challenging vision for the work of the centre. This is shared by staff, parents and stakeholders within the community. The management team are very experienced in working alongside staff, supporting them and developing their skills. As a result, staff are highly motivated and enthusiastic in their work. Each member of staff is encouraged to take a lead role in an area of responsibility. The management team are involved in key projects within the local area and are knowledgeable in national initiatives within early years. They use their own expertise skilfully to guide staff in taking forward the improvement agenda within the centre. All staff are highly focused on continuous improvement whilst maintaining the aspects of outstanding practice they have already achieved.

9. What happens next?

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the centre, we will make no further visits following this inspection. The education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its pre-school centres.

We have agreed the following area for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- Continue to maintain and extend the high quality of provision within the centre.

Quality indicators help centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a centre. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish centres are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Kelly Street Children's Centre.

Improvements in performance	very good
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	excellent

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

The curriculum	excellent
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

Managing Inspector: Shona E S Taylor
29 April 2009