

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Lifelong Learning Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>19 January 2010</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Acting Director of Education</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EDUC/04/10/AH</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Albert Henderson</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712761</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>HMle Report on Ladybird Pre-Five Centre</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee of an HMle and Care Commission joint report on Ladybird Pre-Five Centre.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Ladybird Pre-Five Centre has received a very good report from HMle and the Care Commission. The report was produced on 25 November 2009. Members should note that the indicators of quality reflect well on the centre with four indicators of quality evaluated as 'very good' and one as 'good'.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education & Lifelong Learning Committee approve the report on Ladybird Pre-Five Centre.

**Albert Henderson**  
**Acting Director of Education**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Ladybird Pre-Five Centre is a voluntary organisation which is in partnership with Inverclyde Council for the provision of pre-school education. Ladybird Pre-Five Centre was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and the Care Commission in October 2009. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the centre at all stages, identified key strengths and main points for action using the following six-point scale:

- 6 - Excellent – outstanding, sector leading
- 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 centre was raising achievement for all pupils, achievement in national examinations, the centre's processes for self-evaluation and innovation, the centre's capacity for improvement.

4.3 The report was published on the 25 November 2009. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener and Vice-Convener for Education & Lifelong Learning.

4.4 Ladybird Pre-Five 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 four aspects of the work of the centre to be 'very good' and one to be '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 one example of good practice:

- Woodland Learning Initiative

4.7 The reports lists one area for improvement:

- Develop more rigorous approaches to monitoring playroom practice to bring about further improvements in children's experiences

4.8 The report on Ladybird Pre-Five Centre should be set in the context of Inverclyde. This is a very good report in the context of other reports on early years establishments and is a very good report in terms of the school inspection regime.

**Ladybird Pre-Five Centre  
Greenock  
Inverclyde  
25 November 2009**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects centres in order to let parents<sup>1</sup>, children and the local community know whether their centre provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with centre staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the head of centre and staff about the strengths of the centre, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into playrooms and join other activities which children are involved in. We also gather the views of parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the centre. We describe how well children are doing, how good the centre is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the centre. We also comment on how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the centre is led and how all staff help the centre achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals. Where applicable, you will also be able to find descriptions of good practice in the centre.

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<sup>1</sup> 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**

Ladybird Pre-Five Centre was inspected in October 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 six weeks to five years. It is registered for 56 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 94 at the time of the inspection.

## **2. Particular strengths of the centre**

- Happy, settled children who are becoming more independent through their learning experiences.
- Teamwork and staff commitment to improving the work of the centre.
- Relationships between staff, parents and children.
- The quality of work in supporting families and the provision of flexible placements to meet their needs.
- Leadership of the head of centre.

## **3. Example of good practice**

- Woodland Learning Initiative.

## **4. How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **Learning and achievement**

Babies and children up to the age of three years are happy and content. They are curious about their environment. Staff encourage them to explore and discover through good use of natural materials. Older children enjoy learning and confidently make choices and decisions about their play activities. They take turns and share well when playing. Children are developing increasing independence when dressing for outdoor play and serving themselves at snack time. They

give their views about what they want to learn. For example, their outings to Finlaystone Country Estate encouraged them to look more closely at small creatures in their locality. One child brought in a frog and this led to a number of new activities in the playroom, all built upon children's interests in the frog. Children use the digital camera independently and enjoy taking photographs of one another at play.

Children aged three to five are making very good progress in their learning. They listen well and talk confidently about their interests. They ask questions which help them learn. They enjoy listening to stories and repeating rhyming words. Almost all enjoy using books and try to retell familiar stories. Most recognise their name in print and many experiment with drawing and mark making. Children recognise numbers and count accurately. They confidently match and sort objects. They know the difference between full and empty and use the terms biggest and smallest appropriately. Children are learning to identify various shapes around the playroom.

### **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

Staff provide a good range of play experiences for children under three. They are knowledgeable about how young children learn. They have a clear focus on using a range of natural materials to help children use their senses to explore the playroom environment. For children aged three to five, staff plan a broad range of activities which take very good account of children's interests. Staff involve children well in planning their learning. They have made a very good start to using *Curriculum for Excellence*. This has improved children's experiences. Staff make very effective use of a variety of visits and visitors to enhance children's learning. They interact well with children to encourage them to succeed in their learning.

Staff know children well and are very responsive to their needs. Activities are carefully selected to enhance children's learning experiences. Staff observe children's learning through play. They maintain very informative profiles of children's achievements and share these with parents. Staff provide consistent care and emotional

support to children. The centre works very well with a range of agencies to support children and families.

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

There are very positive relationships between staff and parents. Parents feel welcome and find staff to be very friendly and approachable. Staff work very well with others to support children's learning. They complete daily information books for babies under two. They consult regularly with parents and act upon their views. Parents serve on the Board of Directors. Two informative parents' evenings take place annually. Regular newsletters are issued from each playroom to keep parents up to date with what their children are learning. The family support worker provides very valuable parenting help and has set up a successful family learning project. The centre has a well-established but flexible programme to help children settle when they start. There are effective transition arrangements in place for children transferring from the centre to primary school.

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

All staff are very committed to the centre, its children and their families. There is a strong sense of teamwork and shared responsibility across the centre. Staff willingly lead improvements and share effective practice with others, both within and beyond the centre. They regularly seek the views of parents to help identify further improvements. Staff reflect on their practice and discuss ways to continue to improve. They take account of children's views in planning learning activities. A staff group monitors and evaluates the work of the centre. Managers use a range of processes effectively to evaluate the work of the centre. They recognise they now need to be more thorough in monitoring playroom practice to bring about further improvement.



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

There is a very warm, welcoming and supportive ethos across the centre. Staff have high expectations of children. They use praise well to recognise achievement. All staff have received child protection training and know how to keep children safe and well. Staff promote positive behaviour and children treat one another with respect. Children are treated fairly and celebrate a number of festivals throughout the year to help them understand other cultures. They brush their teeth regularly and are encouraged to have good hand hygiene. They are learning about how to keep themselves safe in the outdoor environment through their very successful 'woodland initiative'.

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

The head of centre has a very clear sense of future direction based on continuous improvement. Leadership is very effective. Morale is high and teamwork is strong. Staff are very proud of the centre and are committed to its ongoing improvement. They take part in a wide range of training opportunities. The head of centre appreciates the support, advice, additional staffing and training provided by the education authority. The centre is well placed to continue to improve.

## **9. What happens next?**

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the centre, we will make no further visits in connection with 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 centre.

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

- Develop more rigorous approaches to monitoring playroom practice to bring about further improvements in children's experiences.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the centre there was one recommendation and one requirement. Both have since been addressed.

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 Ladybird Pre-five Centre.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Children's experiences</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>Very good</b>

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

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>Good</b>

**HM Inspector:** Isabel Robb  
25 November 2009

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means	outstanding, sector leading
very good	means	major strengths
good	means	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	means	major weaknesses

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You can also contact the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, telephone 0845 603 0890.

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