

Report To: Education and Communities
Committee

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Report By: Corporate Director Education,
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Development

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Subject: Care Inspections of Early Learning and Childcare Establishments

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the quality of Inverclyde Council's Early Learning and Childcare establishments as evidenced by Care Inspectorate inspections.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Care Inspectorate inspect services to ensure appropriate standards of care are provided.
- 2.2 Grades on a scale of 1 to 6 are awarded at inspection in the areas of quality of care and support, environment, staffing and management and leadership.
- 2.3 The report provides details of grades awarded to services, highlights areas of best practice and areas of development.
- 2.4 Inverclyde Council's early learning and childcare establishments are providing a high quality of care.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the content of this report.

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4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Care Inspectorate regulates and inspects care services in Scotland to make sure that they meet the correct standards.

4.2 At inspection, services are awarded grades for the quality of care and support, environment, staffing and management and leadership.

Each area is assessed on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent.

Grade	Assessment
1	Unsatisfactory
2	Weak
3	Adequate
4	Good
5	Very good
6	Excellent

4.3 The frequency of inspections varies dependent on the type of service and the grades awarded at previous inspection. Services with children aged 3 to 5 years with good or above grades are inspected every 3 years. Services with children aged 0 – 3 years with good grades are inspected every 2 years. Services with unsatisfactory, weak or adequate grades are inspected annually.

4.4 Inspections are unannounced with a maximum of 2 inspectors present. Inspections are usually completed in 1 day but more complex services may be inspected over 2 days.

5.0 LOCAL INSPECTION OUTCOMES

5.1 Current grades awarded to Inverclyde Council's early learning and childcare establishments are:

Establishment	Quality of			
	Care and Support	Environment	Staffing	Management and Leadership
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0
Weak	0	0	0	0
Adequate	0	0	0	0
Good	8	7	6	7
Very Good	10	12	12	11
Excellent	1	0	1	1

5.2 A comparison with inspection outcomes for the previous inspection year identifies that:

- 10 establishments have improved grades;
- 8 establishments have unchanged grades all with very good grades);
- 1 establishment is newly registered.

6.0 AREAS OF STRENGTH

6.1	Heads of Establishment recognise the importance of providing high quality care for Inverclyde's children and families. This consistent focus on improving practice results in improved grades being awarded.
6.2	Almost all inspection outcomes in Inverclyde are well above the national performance. The number of very good grades awarded is particularly strong. Inverclyde Council establishments have no grades recorded at unsatisfactory, weak or adequate.
6.3	There is a clear recognition of the impact of the investment in the Early Years estate. The continued investment in this is recognised by the Care Inspectorate and reflected in inspection reports.
6.4	Inverclyde Council's commitment to workforce development is recognised in many inspection reports which comment on the professional, trained and motivated workforce. Many staff across the Authority have been supported to undertake qualifications which is positively impacting on practice.
6.5	The wide range of parental engagement is commended across all establishments. This includes parents being engaged in their children's learning and in a wide range of family support activities.
7.0	SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE
7.1	Developing practice in line with Care Inspectorate legislation remains a high priority. It is a standing item on the Early Years Head of Establishment meeting and is a constant feature of professional dialogue within establishments.
7.2	<p>Annual analysis of Care Inspectorate data is undertaken by the Quality Improvement team. Areas for focused attention are identified and action plans developed. In the last inspection year the areas for focused attention were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the quality of care and support. • To move very good grades to excellent. • To improve grades in targeted nursery classes. <p>This rigorous approach has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of care and support, a small increase in excellent grades and a significant shift in grades in the targeted nursery classes.</p>
8.0	NEXT STEPS
8.1	Education Services will continue to support and challenge all services to improve their performance. Data will continue to be analysed to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.
9.0	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
9.1	There are no financial implications.
10.0	LEGAL IMPLICATIONS
10.1	There are no legal implications

11.0	HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS	
11.1	There are no human resources implications.	
12.0	EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS	
12.1	There are no known equalities implications.	
13.0	REPOPULATION IMPLICATIONS	
13.1	There are no known repopulation implications.	
14.0	CONCLUSIONS	
14.1	Early learning and childcare provision across Inverclyde continue to offer high quality services. Education Services will continue to support establishments to maintain and / or improve the quality of provision.	
15.0	BACKGROUND PAPERS	
15.1	Care Inspectorate reports.	