



A summary of the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland Inspections of Early learning and Childcare, November 2018-June 2019

A range of funded providers were inspected including partner nurseries, Midlothian Sure Start centres, a playgroup, a Children's Centre and local authority settings. The settings that were inspected in this period were:

Bonnyrigg Primary School Nursery, Danderhall Primary School Nursery, Gorebridge Primary School Nursery, Mayfield Nursery School, Paradykes Primary School Nursery, Roslin Primary School Nursery, Strathesk Primary School Nursery, Danderhall Playgroup, Hawthorn Children and Families Centre, Newbattle Community Nursery, Happy Days Eskbank, Happy Days Hardengreen, Pinnochios Penicuik and Sure Start Family Learning Centres at Paradykes, Woodburn and Penicuik.

Report by Maria Lloyd, Acting Head of Education

1 Purpose of Report

The report provides a summary of the outcomes of the above inspections in Early Learning and Childcare settings for three and four year olds as carried out by the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland in the Nov 2018-June 2019 and follows on from the report to Cabinet in January 2019.

2 Background

2.1 A total of 16 inspections took place in the time period from 23rd November 2018 to 29th June 2019. Four of these inspections were carried out by Education Scotland. The reports were published in that time period and have been distributed to all Elected Members and Church Representatives on the Cabinet for their information. Reports are published on the Care Inspectorate website <http://www.careinspectorate.com/> and Education Scotland site.

2.2 During the inspections, the Care Inspectorate gather evaluations of 4 core Quality Indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish Early Learning and Childcare settings are doing, these are:

- Quality of Care and Support
- Quality of Environment
- Quality of Staffing
- Quality of Leadership and Management

If inspected by Education Scotland evaluations are focused on quality indicators (QI). For a short inspection, i.e. Bonnyrigg Primary School, the QIs are 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment, and 3.2 Securing Children's progress. The QIs for a full inspection are 1.3 Leadership of change, 2.3, 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion and 3.2.

During a CI inspection, a setting may be inspected on two or more indicators. A six-point scale is used to describe the quality of the setting with either inspection:

6	Excellent	Outstanding or sector leading
5	Very good	Major strengths
4	Good	Important strengths, with some areas for improvement
3	Adequate	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
2	Weak	Important weaknesses – priority action required
1	Unsatisfactory	Major weaknesses – urgent remedial action required

Summary of inspection grades: (See Appendix 1 for the inspection grades for individual settings)

November 2018 - June 2019

	Total no. of settings inspected on this indicator	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Care and Support	13	3	3	6	1
Environment	10	1	4	5	0
Staffing	5	3	2	0	0
Leadership and Management	9	5	2	2	0

2.3 The following common key strengths were indicated by the inspection teams:

- Practitioners knew children very well and are nurturing, responsive and respectful to their individual needs and interests.
- Practitioners are involved in constant self-evaluation of the service. This results in improvements to the service and outcomes for children and their families.
- Practitioners promote outdoor play and are aware of the benefits for children's health and wellbeing. Balancing between challenge and safety enabling children to make decisions to learn the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- Practitioners are skilled in extending children's learning. They support them to have ownership of their environment which has a positive impact on the outcomes and experiences.
- Practitioners encourage children to be independent.

2.3.1 The following areas were highlighted for improvement:

- Practitioners being consistent in their approach to meeting individual children's needs and ensure the focus is on the development of learning for all children.
- Providers and practitioners must adhere to the policies and procedures required of them.

2.4 The Care Inspectorate has a duty to support improvement in settings with adequate gradings, and this informs how and when they make requirements and recommendations to a setting following an inspection.

- A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Service Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration.
- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.
- Midlothian settings and partner providers received a number requirements and recommendations which will be met within the agreed timescales.

Please see Appendix 2 demonstrating what action has been undertaken since last inspection for each area with an Adequate grading.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no financial and human resource implications associated with this report.

3.2 Risk

The Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland visit a sample of Early Learning and Childcare settings each year to find out how they are performing. A report is published which informs parents about the key strengths of the setting, its capacity for further improvement and sets out the main points for action.

Following the publication of that report further visits may be made to the setting by Midlothian Council's Early Years Team to assist improvement and monitor progress.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of progress by Midlothian Council's Early Years Team is the control measure in place to reduce the risk of failure of the setting to demonstrate its capacity to improve.

With changes to Early Learning and Childcare with expansion to 1140 hours by 2020 and publication of a National Standard, we need to ensure settings we are in partnership with are graded good or above. To ensure this happens we have created a clear Improvement protocol which gives coherent guidance and team support to allow settings to move towards good.

For all settings a time framed improvement action plan is established in line with the LA expectations and our partnership contracts.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The provision of high quality, early learning and childcare supports the delivery of two of the GIRFEMC outcomes for 2017/18 to 2019/20:

- Children and young people are supported to be healthy, happy and reach their potential.
- Inequalities in learning outcomes have reduced.

The settings will continue to improve their work in line with their improvement plans and Midlothian Council's Early Years Team will continue to challenge and support the settings in relation to developing and implementing a range of quality improvement strategies.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The Education (Scotland) Act aims to take preventative action in order to close the attainment versus deprivation gap by implementing key policies and programmes which are designed to target support to children and young people from disadvantaged communities. Midlothian is highly committed to closing the attainment gap which compliments the strategies employed by Midlothian which are highlighted in the National Improvement Framework report which was presented to Council on 3 November 2015.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Copies of the reports have been made available to Elected Members, parents and carers of children currently in the settings and other interested parties.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

The Improvement Plans will be screened for equalities implications.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The Improvement Plans allow for sustainable development and improvement.

3.9 IT Issues

There are no IT implications.

4. Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to:

- (i) Note the content of the summary of the inspection reports.
- (ii) Congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with these reports.
- (iii) Pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration.

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Appendix 1

Inspection information for individual settings

Setting	LA / FP	Date of inspection	Care and Support	Environment	Staffing	Leadership and Management	Link to Care Inspectorate report	Summary of actions since inspection
Newbattle Community Nursery	FP	29/11/2018	Adequate	Good	Not inspected	Not inspected	Link	<p>Good news in terms of there being no requirements but adequate grading due to care plan recommendation</p> <p>Supported setting to address recommendation to include further details in children's care plans</p> <p>Completed wellbeing audit for all funded providers to ensure that they were following MLC guidance on care plans</p> <p>Nursery manager attended SQIP training and action plan put in place</p> <p>Ongoing regular support visits from Principal Teacher</p>
Happy Days Nursery Eskbank	FP	05/01/2019	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Link	<p>4 requirements in January 19 which had all been met by the time the report was published in March 19</p> <p>Previously 2 weak and 2 adequate gradings; improved grade.</p> <p>Setting not involved in Expansion pilot due to gradings from CI</p> <p>SGM, EY Manager and PT met with nursery owners and advised that they were subject to service improvement protocol</p> <p>Action plan created and regularly reviewed with Principal Teacher</p> <p>Significant change in engagement from provider – PT had previously struggled for engagement but has subsequently delivered whole team training, completed unannounced visits and</p>

Setting	LA / FP	Date of inspection	Care and Support	Environment	Staffing	Leadership and Management	Link to Care Inspectorate report	Summary of actions since inspection
								Provided ongoing regular support visits Nursery manager attended SQIP training and Expansion information session.
Gorebridge Primary school Nursery	LA	14/01/2019	Adequate	Good	Adequate	Adequate	Link	One requirement addressed shortly after inspection Action plan created, requirement addressed and ongoing work to ensure recommendations are met and actions sustained. Ongoing regular support visits from Principal Teacher Support visits from SGM with HT and DHT to review SQIP and action plan progress. Support and action planning from Equity and Excellence lead based in the nursery (funded by SG)
Pinocchios Nursery Penicuik	FP	30/01/2019	Good	Adequate	Good	Adequate	Link	No requirements Last inspection 4 adequates – therefore improvement from before Adequate gradings where setting had not made enough progress with previous recommendations EYs Manager met with Area Manager to express concerns and discuss improvement protocol Action plan created ECERs tool used to support setting to provide baseline to improve environment Early Years Support team supporting staff with strategies to manage children's behaviour Early Years Officer timetabled to support setting one day per week since June

Setting	LA / FP	Date of inspection	Care and Support	Environment	Staffing	Leadership and Management	Link to Care Inspectorate report	Summary of actions since inspection
Strathesk Primary School Nursery	LA	27/03/2019	Adequate	Good	Not inspected	Adequate	Link	<p>One requirement which was met after the inspection visit and follow up training given by locality PT</p> <p>Action plan created with PT and progress monitored on a regular basis.</p> <p>Setting challenged by SLT changes</p> <p>Ongoing regular support visits from Principal Teacher</p> <p>Revisit by CI in June 19 and improvement noted.</p> <p>SGM supporting with leadership and wider action plan for session ahead.</p>
Danderhall Playgroup	FP	29/04/2019	Very Good	Very Good	Adequate	Adequate	Link	<p>No requirements - good</p> <p>Adequate for staffing and leadership due to recruitment process which had not been followed correctly due to communication issues with committee. This was addressed and training and systems supported</p> <p>Principal Teacher met with nursery manager to discuss safer recruitment procedures</p> <p>Ongoing regular support visits from PT</p>

Appendix 2

Early Learning and Childcare – Improvement Support

As detailed in the Elected Member's report, 6 of our funded providers have received evaluations that were less than "good" since November 2018. Although higher than the previous Elected Member's report, we have maintained the percentage of providers that are inspected as good or above in all care inspectorate evaluation themes (84% of funded providers in June 2019 and 85% of funded providers in November 2018). We have received anecdotal feedback from other local authorities that they have experienced an increase in providers being evaluated as less than good in recent inspections. By comparison, we have reviewed neighbouring Local Authorities' providers for the same time period as the elected members report and found that 7 out of the 22 ELC services inspected received quality evaluations of less than good (this includes 3 providers with weak evaluations).

In accordance with the National Standard, which sets the expectation that all early learning and childcare providers receive a minimum of good in care inspectorate evaluations, the funding agreement for partner providers is being revised. All funded providers who are evaluated as less than good, will be subjected to an improvement period to ensure that all funded providers are supported to deliver high quality early learning and childcare.

During the 2018/19 school session, all funded providers (local authority and partner providers) received regular touch base meetings from the learning community principal teachers. Settings that have received less than good in CI evaluations, received enhanced support from the early years learning community teams. This has included bespoke training to staff teams, increased visits from Principal Teachers, directing practitioners to relevant CPD opportunities, co-constructing action plans and intensive support to address the requirements of the inspection report. A summary of actions taken for the 6 funded providers who received adequate evaluations has been added to the table below.

For the next school session, we have developed a new support offer to all funded providers. This will provide more support to those settings that are at risk of not meeting the national standard requirements (including good or better in all Care Inspectorate themes) and those settings supporting children from our highest priority CPP areas. To evidence improvements in the ELC environments, the learning community team will use the internationally recognised ITERS and ECERS rating scales alongside How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare self evaluation material. Principal teachers will be supported by an Early Years Officer who will be able to provide increased on the ground support to funded providers.

We also understand that the Scottish Government are funding the Care Inspectorate to provide additional support to funded providers that are rated as less than good although we are yet to see what this will look like.