

Accreditation of Mayfield Nursery School's ICAN provision**Report by Dr Grace Vickers, Head of Education****1 Purpose of Report**

The report outlines the outcome of the I CAN Early Talk Accreditation which was carried out in Mayfield Nursery School on 25 October 2016. The I CAN Early Talk accreditation scheme is a quality assurance and quality improvement tool. The accreditation involves an inspection of a portfolio of evidence, and an onsite audit of practice using standards of service excellence, which have been developed by I CAN. A full copy of the accreditation report is attached in the appendix.

2 Background

- 2.1 Mayfield Nursery School's I CAN provision was inspected on 25 October 2016. The I CAN Early Talk accreditation scheme is a quality assurance and quality improvement tool. The accreditation involves an inspection of a portfolio of evidence, and an onsite audit of practice using standards of service excellence, which have been developed by I CAN.

The accreditation visit was carried out over one day, with the morning being used predominantly for staff interviews, parent interviews and direct observation. The accreditors provided brief verbal feedback in the afternoon to disclose the success of the specialist accreditation.

- 2.2 The specialist level accreditation is divided up into ten sections:

1. Outcome Measures
2. Supporting children in your setting/service
3. Specialist Education and Therapy
4. Assessment
5. Supporting Inclusion
6. Admission, Transition and Outreach
7. Working with Families
8. Professional Development
9. Staff mix and Induction
10. Management Structure and Support

To achieve Early Talk specialist level accreditation all 10 sections need to be scored as achieved. The I CAN Provision at Mayfield Nursery School has achieved a full accreditation award which will be valid for three years subject to successful annual interim reviews. The accreditation report also congratulates the service on this achievement and stated that this is 'a clear reflection of the high quality service at Mayfield Nursery School'.

2.3 The reports outlines 52 strengths across the ten indicators including:

- I CAN at Mayfield Nursery School is an inclusive provision wherein children access mainstream early level learning alongside their peers. Appropriate and proportionate support is provided to enable children to access play environment, curricular learning and social interaction.
- The nursery ethos recognises potential or existing barriers to learning for all children. Careful forward planning ensures that individuals can access the curriculum at their own, specific level and according to their particular stage and style of learning.
- There is a well established system of involving families in multi-agency working that everyone recognises and there is a high level of consultation and support, both formal and informal, which is offered to children and families during the transition process (both into and out of the provision).
- Parents play an important part in supporting and developing their child's progress within the provision and whilst daily contact is typically through the children's home school diary, parents are invited to come in regularly to the nursery for play dates and to observe sessions.
- The role of the current Head Teacher in over viewing the service and enabling effective ongoing monitoring of service delivery is seen as a major strength. Her role is well integrated into the I CAN core staff team and also has significant links with multi-agency professionals. The Accreditors were impressed by the Head Teachers commitment to providing teaching time for all children in the nursery.
- There is a supportive staff team in place with a wealth of experience and a high level of collaboration between staff exists, with regular skill sharing during the nursery sessions between the provision and mainstream staff.
- There is a high level of skill-sharing with the host nursery core team, built into systems of planning and continued professional development audit of need.
- There is an enhanced awareness of the outreach consultative model across the authority, following a number of awareness raising and consultation sessions with key staff and management. This has also involved presentations to senior staff groups e.g. NEG, and in the session 2016-17 will include presentations to the teaching staff in the new Early Years Learning Communities.
- Management systems ensure that therapeutic programmes, interventions and strategies are integrated into the inclusive nursery setting through careful planning, skill sharing and resourcing.

2.4 The report outlines 20 areas of comment/areas for development across the ten indicators including:

- From the Parent Forum, it was suggested that a range of case studies are written for parents whose children have been offered a place. These studies would show the various pathways for a number of different children and the outcomes that can be achieved.
- Continue to explore opportunities for provision children to experience enhanced links with future educational placement, post- PAG decisions, in term three.
- The Accreditors support the core team's development plans to create a comprehensive system for collecting and analysing children's outcome data including review of the questionnaires used and return rate.
- Further develop systems for communicating with outreach families in order to build upon success of more informal end of year meetings and 'drop in' opportunities with outreach teacher.

2.5 Conclusion

The accreditors acknowledged that the service provided a comprehensive portfolio of evidence which supported observations made on the accreditation visit and the formation of this report. The service, I CAN Provision at Mayfield Nursery School is of high quality, characterised by professional staff who together provide an excellent example of good practice in early years communication and education for young children. It is worthy of note that the accredited specialist services in Midlothian have consistently provided excellent services for children with speech, language and communication needs for some years. These strengths can be fine tuned further in line with the suggested areas for development described in the accreditation report. These areas for development are intended to give a steer to the focus for this next stage of development for the team at Mayfield in order to support the service in its continued and invaluable work with the children, families, schools and settings in the locality.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

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

3.2 Risk

Monitoring, review and evaluation of progress by the Head Teacher, School Group Manager and Early Years Officers is the control measure in place to reduce the risk of failure of the Nursery to demonstrate its capacity to improve.

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 setting will continue to improve its work in line with its improvement plan and the Education Service will continue to challenge and support the setting in relation to developing and implementing the areas for development.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The Education (Scotland) Bill 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 report have been made available to Elected Members, parents of children currently in the school and other interested parties.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

The Nursery Improvement Plan will be screened for equalities implications.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The Nursery Improvement Plan allows for sustainable development and improvement.

3.9 IT Issues

There are no IT implications.

4 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note the content of this report.
- (ii) Pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration;
- (iii) congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with the ICAN provision at Mayfield Nursery School on the key strengths identified; and
- (iv) to note those areas for further development highlighted within the report.

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