

Larkfield Early Learning Centre

Standards and Quality 20/21

Context of the Establishment:

The Centre currently comprises of 1 small and 2 large bright and spacious playrooms in the main building and 2 playrooms in the modular building. We accommodate a service for children aged 0 – 5 providing opportunities for our children to learn, develop and grow in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. Play, creativity and child led learning is at the centre of all we do at Larkfield. There are 2 large outdoor spaces and two smaller fenced areas for the younger children to enhance their creativity, health and wellbeing and learning. We make use of our surrounding woodland area, where our natural curiosity allows us to make direct connections with nature.

At the moment the centre has the capacity to provide early education and childcare for 48 children aged 3-5, 30 children aged 2-3 and 6 children 0-2. This capacity will increase to a further 16 3-5 year olds with the new build that is currently underway.

Currently, our staff team consists of an Acting Head of Centre, Depute, Senior Early Years Education and Childcare Officer, Acting Senior Early Years Education and Childcare Officer 20 full time Early Years Education and Childcare Officers. 11 part time Early Years Education and Childcare Officers, 1 part time Access to a EY Teacher, 1 Early Years Graduate, 5 Early years Support Assistants and 1 Family Support Worker, 1 clerical and 1 caretaker/cleaner. And 1 modern apprentice. The full staff team consists of 41 staff members.

We have very good links with our main feeder primary schools, St Andrews Primary, Aileymill Primary with cluster groups to ensure smooth transitions to school and moderation between establishments. We also work in partnership with various colleges, universities and secondary schools to support work experience and apprenticeships to develop and support young people's life skills. We have very good relationships with other ELC establishments, partner agencies and the local and wider community.

Our Vision for Larkfield Children's Centre is:

At Larkfield Early Learning Centre we foster a fun, happy and safe environment for our children and staff. We prioritise positive relationships through a nurturing pedagogy, ensuring that children are respected and feel loved. We embrace outdoor play, where every child is included and encouraged to lead their own learning.

We aim to carry out our vision by:

- Providing a safe, caring and motivating learning environment.

- Providing fun and relevant learning experiences that allow children to engage in their learning.
- Promoting positive nurturing relationships creating attachments with children, families and other agencies.
- Communicate effectively working in partnership with parents/carers and families during their journey at nursery, ensuring they are active participants in their child's learning.
- Working effectively as a team to ensure high quality care and learning is delivered whilst being committed, knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- Provide free flow access to high quality outdoor play experiences where children are encouraged to risk assess and make their own judgements through their play.
- Providing the best possible support and outcomes for all our families within our service and in the community.
- Create a motivating environment where our children can flourish and grow, reaching their unique potential.
- Ensuring parent/carers are involved and engaged in all aspects of their child's learning.

Our Values

- Promote all round respect to ensure children, parent/carers and staff value one another.
- Promote an ethos of trust and confidentiality within the centre.
- Ensure all families and staff feel included and accepted and are involved in the heart of Larkfield ELC.
- Continual professional development underpins our knowledge of child development and keeps our practice relevant.
- We recognise that all children are unique and provide individualised learning through enriched play experiences.
- Promoting staff's positive wellbeing and happiness through relationships filled with kindness and compassion.

Review of progress for session AUGUST - JUNE 2021

Establishment priority 1:	
<p><u>NIF Priority</u> Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children</p> <p><u>NIF Driver</u> Assessment of children's progress Assessment of children's progress Choose an item.</p>	<p><u>HGIOELC? QIs</u> 2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment 2.7 Partnerships 3.2 Securing Children's Progress</p> <p>Other Drivers RRS <i>Article 3 (Best interests of the child):</i></p>
<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving and sustaining children's wellbeing • Focus on staff wellbeing and offer equitable support as and when appropriate <p>Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gradual settling in procedures were organised in a safe way for children to become familiar with their playroom, keyworker and peers. During the settling in period we bridged the gap between home and nursery by discovering the children's likes and dislikes. Staff effectively communicated with parents outdoors, passing on all relevant information. • Key workers engaged in phone calls to all parents in order to complete new children's care plans and check-in with existing children and parents on any other wellbeing queries that they may have had during lockdown. All children's care plans are reviewed and are regularly updated as and when significant changes happen in their lives. All staff are clear on this process and implement it as and when required. • This enables Staff to share progress being made at home and within the centre and agree play based targets for their child's developmental aims. • All children can access a quiet area providing children with a small cosy, relaxing space where they can self-regulate. Children's views are further listened to with extra care to support their emotions. Staff are continually adapting the environment providing resources that support all children's wellbeing. • Staff wellbeing check-in format has been devised by SMT to support staff in a strategic and sensitive way using a pathway of support. Informal daily check ins have continued to take place and are equitable to all staff. Interventions such as a time out heart and concern and solutions sheets have been introduced to support staffs wellbeing. <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from the majority of parents regarding their child's care and learning has shown that Group call and telephone contact has been the preferred method of contact. • All children are settled within the nursery and it is evident that they have established a meaningful relationship, with staff members and their families, of happiness and contentment. • All children's pathways are updated with current information and are acted on immediately which ensures their needs are met at the earliest instance and the information is accessible to all staff who are interacting with and caring for the child. • There is an area identified for staff to self-regulate throughout each day. 	

Next Steps: Continue with the implementation focus of health and wellbeing supporting children, parents and staff through a continuing challenging time of the pandemic restrictions, 1140 hours increase and a move to the new building.

Establishment priority 2:	
<p><u>NIF Priority</u> Improvements in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy</p> <p><u>NIF Driver</u> Assessment of children's progress School leadership</p>	<p><u>HGIOELC? QIs</u> 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment 2.4 Personalised Support 2.7 Partnerships</p> <p>Other Drivers</p> <p>RRS Article 3 (Best interests of the child):</p>
<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and children are actively involved in a leadership group to enhance collaborative working across the whole centre. • All staff have begun to take an active role in the leadership groups each led by individual staff members. Work is ongoing to creatively meet to ensure progress is being made in each area despite current restrictions limiting our contact with bubbles which has enhanced the opportunities for all children and staff to work towards a shared vision and goals. Most experiences relating to these groups are reflected in children's individual profiles, throughout our environment and on social media. <p>Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff actively seek experiences to share from twitter and other social media sources that allows for development of various areas such as literacy, numeracy, STEM, Eco schools, forest schools and rights respecting schools. Staffs confidence has increased, taking ownership of their roles has developed this confidence and has had a positive impact on staff relationships across the centre. Megan is part of the STEM cluster group which has met once however due to COVID there has been no further cluster group work. This expected to continue as soon as safely possible. • ECO - Most staff and children are more aware of our environmental impact and make daily choices relating to ECO schools. Recognition via a press release has motivated the eco team to further develop their initiatives over the next 2 years in their updated action plan. The environment is a real and true reflection of the children's work and knowledge around eco schools e.g they are growing their own fruit, vegetables and flowers and using these through play, developing their skills for life and critical thinking skills when deciding on tasks to improve our world. Some children are skilled in knowing that one item is able to be reused multiple times for different reasons fostering a healthy mindset for life. All children's engagement levels are high when using reusable materials such as cardboard boxes or pump dispenser bottles for paint as opposed to shop bought resources. 	

- **WORD AWARE** – Our Early Years Teachers has been working alongside our EYECOS where they have been focusing on children’s vocabulary across the centre. They are developing language skills through intentional interventions enhanced through play, which is contributing to their early literacy foundational skills and closing the attainment gap of the vocabulary deficit. Parents are being upskilled in vocabulary and language development through everyday experiences shared via Twitter, groupcall and newsletters. Most staffs knowledge and understanding of vocabulary and how language develops has increased across the centre and some are confident in leading the implementation within their rooms. Thus resulting in the environment being language and literacy rich which is developmentally appropriate. All staff verbally the value of the word aware initiative for the children’s vocabulary development and see the children’s engagement and recall improve in aspects relating to the words they have learned, both current and previous.
- **STEM** – Most children are developing their problem solving, critical thinking and creativity skills through the experiences provided. This develops early skills for life-long learning and collaborative working. Through our STEM Projects, all children were able to develop their fine muscle control. This enhanced fine motor skills and great finger dexterity. Most children were able to confidently undergo tasks such as pre writing/mark making play experiences, buttoning and zipping clothing. It has been evident to observe vocabulary growth across the Centre, STEM has introduced children to an entire new set of words that they may have not necessarily encountered before.
- **Forest schools** – As most of our staff team have had a shift in mindsets, some staffs understanding of rich multi-sensory outdoor play and learning has impacted positively on their resilience, health and wellbeing. Some staff research creative and interesting ways to engage children outdoors and as a result of this, children’s enthusiasm and love of outdoors has grown. Most staff have been creative in using our immediate grounds to give children experiences of greenspaces and natural environment. As a result all children are confident in exploring and developing their outdoor environment supported by staff who actively support and encourage the children.
- **RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS** – All children are well settled within each room and are able to engage in learning through play. Most children who are able to, can vocalise their thoughts and feelings and will use terms such as ‘my feelings are hurt’ or ‘good job’ towards their peers and staff and know that their voices are respected and valued which gives them confidence and a strengthened sense of self-worth. The relationships all staff have built with the parents/carers of all children across the centre, especially with children who are vulnerable, have additional support needs or are unable to talk for themselves, has created a deep trust. This provides the carer with confidence that we are meeting their child’s wellbeing in a way that they would do so themselves.
- Due to COVID some team building activities could not take place however, as a result of Covid restrictions, we have intentionally created staff working teams made up of main building and hut staff which is helping them to get to know each other. Some of the nursery celebrations and staff tasks for sports day have created fun COVID safe experiences where some staff across the centre have been involved in adult team games and a lot of laughter. We have a treat Friday where we all

order from a local bakery for lunch which provides us all with a shared interest and helps to develop interaction and relationships.

Progress - Through collaborative working staff will form relationships, share goals and develop initiatives.

Progress - Develop a vision for our new team and centre

All staff has been consulted regarding a new vision for our children, centre and new team. Our existing vision statement has being modified through staff feedback and consultation with parents in designing and choosing a statement that best describes the centre going forward. We have secured a final statement which we feel reflects our Larkfield ELC family, shown at the beginning of the document.

Impact – There has been a significant increase to our staff team and with the new building imminent, it felt fitting to review our vision to best reflect who we are within our pedagogy which can transition seamlessly with us. 56% of staff and parents responded to our questionnaire of our shared vision (stated above) reflecting what they thought was most meaningful to them and their child/ren. This gives us a clear shared focus for moving forward with our new building, staff team and families.

Next Steps: A few staff moves across playrooms for the new term allows staff teams to mix and further working relationships to build. Research further COVID safe team building ideas to take forward in the new session. Design our new foyer that is welcoming and highlights our new vision.

Establishment priority 3:

<p><u>NIF Priority</u> Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</p> <p><u>NIF Driver</u> School Improvement Assessment of children's progress Choose an item.</p>	<p><u>HGIOELC? QIs</u> 1.3 Leadership of change 2.2 Curriculum 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</p> <p>Other Drivers</p> <p>RRS</p> <p><i>Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child):</i> <i>Article 31 (Leisure, play and culture):</i></p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Strategies:

- EY graduate to establish and lead nurture group
- Improve links with Educational Psychologists

Progress: EY graduate to establish and lead nurture group

- Nurture is central to the development of wellbeing, all of our staff recognise this and therefore our nurture group is well established and has shown a vast improvement in all children and families experience here at Larkfield, especially during the pandemic. Our wellbeing Wednesday has provided parents with a contact to our family support worker who greets everyone at the gate welcoming them to nursery during such times where they are not permitted inside the

building. This is an opportunity where parents/carers can ask questions, raise concerns or have a friendly chat without feeling pressured to leave due to a queue forming. It also allows us to gauge our parents and at times pinpoint who may need some support.

- All staff have engaged in training regarding bereavement in relation to change and loss which was current for our children during the pandemic in addition to adverse childhood experiences. Some staff have also engaged in supporting emotions training provided by the authority. We have expressed our interest in this running again to engage extra staff members as some of the team who engaged with it found it very useful. We have been offered training from the nurture CMO who is working closely with Anne, our EY graduate who is taking the lead of this group.
- Key workers had outdoor check-ins and fortnightly phone calls with parents where they discussed the children's wellbeing and offering some Literacy and Numeracy support, reflecting the curriculum experiences offered as a setting that are developmentally appropriate to individual children. There was also offers of access to external support from other agencies.
- All children's achievements are regularly shared with and from parents/carers via virtual platforms, through their learning profiles and through daily interactions. Where children are unable to verbalise their day there are communication books and photographs provided to share some significant learning that has taken place especially for our children who have additional support needs and those who are non-verbal. EY teacher and Graduate have created a home learning policy to ensure consistency of approach from staffing. A plan for the next principle roll out is in place for the new term. A new lead will be appointed for this group due to a secondment opportunity for Anne.

Impact:

- Staffs knowledge of the nurture principles as a whole school approach has increased. Several staff have being introduced to this document and by choosing to focus on 1 principle has allowed us to have a deeper understanding and implement and embed this within practice making it a more manageable undertaking.
- We launched wellbeing Wednesdays across the centre which has been greatly received by all children, families and staff. Staff are motivated and driven to record or implement wellbeing experiences such as preparing toast for children as they arrive to ensure they have a full tummy before embarking on a day of learning. They are engaging in healthy mindfulness experiences throughout the day allowing them some downtime or discuss ways in which keeps them healthy or makes them feel better.
- Due to COVID measures preventing parents from entering the building the parents and children are being welcomed at the gate. We acknowledge not permitting parents in to the building is impacting as a barrier to supporting our families and having Claire at the gate has been one solution to this.
- Yoga, Karate and dance experiences have been implemented by using the skill set of the staff team and health and wellbeing being is promoted throughout play experiences.
- Our environment is a safe space for our children where they can regulate their own emotions and this is reflected within cosy spaces, calming resources and resources that are a prompt for discussion around emotions. Most children are confident in verbalising how they feel which supports their emotional literacy development. This helps them to emotionally regulate throughout the day with all adults facilitating this where needed.

Progress - Improve links with Educational Psychologists

- Laurence was a contact for Anne and has provided training that Anne has shared with the team. Laurence has supported Anne with the self-evaluation of the ASNWA document which we have incorporated into our self-evaluation process in conjunction with HGIOELC.
- Due to Lisa being off on maternity leave we have not had further contact with educational psychology regarding practical support. In the new session we need to make links with our new contact.

Impact –

- Anne knowledge and understanding of the nurture principles and how they apply practically to our children has improved enabling her to share this with all staff. All staff are more aware that children’s learning is understood developmentally and experience provided reflect this. Anne is confident in advising the staff team on matters surrounding nurture in practice and the staff have confidence in approaching Anne for support with this.

Next Steps: Roll out implementation of nurture principles 5. Re-connect with educational psychology and new HWB CMO. Appoint a new lead for nurture group. Continue with current embedded practice.

Establishment priority 4:

<p><u>NIF Priority</u> Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</p> <p><u>NIF Driver</u> Parental engagement School Improvement</p>	<p><u>HGIOELC? QIs</u> 2.2 Curriculum 2.7 Partnerships 3.3 Developing creativity and skills for life</p> <p>Other Drivers</p> <p>RRS</p> <p><i>Article 28: (Right to education):</i> <i>Article 31 (Leisure, play and culture):</i></p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Strategies:

- Newly appointed Family support worker to become acquainted with families who attend the Centre
- Virtual cooking classes available to parents
- Re-establish community projects

Progress:

Our family support worker Claire, has been taking part in the morning check-ins to introduce herself to parents as a friendly face. Regular telephone calls have been made to vulnerable families steering them to the appropriate agencies and offering support where needed. Equitable support to individual families is provided with regards to food vouchers and donations, clothing donations and holiday packages in collaboration with Poverty Inverclyde.

Claire has approached family support workers working within the local authority to create a working group where she can access support, knowledge and guidance to assist families in her care. She has also established strong working relationships with other agencies such as health visitors, social workers, Bernardo’s and local charities and community services. Some work has

recently initiated with our local youth connections where we have been offered some creative initiatives such as music with I-pads.

Claire has undertaken PEEP Training which supports parents and children to learn together in fun meaningful ways. It has been adapted to be delivered online due to COVID 19 restrictions. Claire has had virtual communication with other FSW's in the authority to share ideas of how to take this initiative forward for August 2021.

There is ongoing support available to our identified families through clothing donations, listening to parents, offering advice and empathy towards their situations. Strong connections have been re-established with Belville Community Gardens. Although their service has changed due to the pandemic we have still utilised their service to support families in need.

Claire has been in contact with our feeder Primary Schools and ask they contact their parents to ask if they no longer need school uniform to donate to the nursery. This will assist our school uniform bank for any of our families who are moving on.

Impact:

- Staff identified a small number of our families who were encountering financial and health issues. We were able to specifically provide families with practical support signposting them to agencies to convey information and arrangements for food parcels being delivered to their homes.
- Verbal feedback from the online cooking classes was positive and we plan for similar virtual classes in the future.
- Sharing ideas and getting advice from other family support workers is allowing Claire to offer a variety of support to our families who need it, improve their home circumstances and therefore improving the child's wellbeing and experiences.
- The family support worker has had a positive impact facilitating food donations and availability and delivery of virtual cooking classes to some our families to access.
- During current restrictions she has been checking in with families and creating food bags in conjunction with Belville Community Gardens. This has had a positive impact ensuring families who need support receive provision of foods for meals or other necessities.

Next Steps: Family support worker to lead enrolments and take part in some core group meetings where appropriate. Initiate and form a parents group for Larkfield to ensure the parent's voice is represented. Family support worker to implement PEEP training with families across the centre to promote the importance of parental engagement.

National priority: How we are ensuring Excellence and Equity?

Brief commentary on context and identified barriers to learning which affect progress and attainment

We have a high SIMD 1&2 demographic of children and a number of children who have been identified as having an additional support need, some who are vulnerable and refugee children and children who have English as an additional language. From session 2020/2021 we have continued to target children from the high SIMD groups to individualise learning with an aim to close the attainment gap. We continue to provide mulit-agency support using our GIRFEC approach for our children and families who have English as an additional language.

A cohesive new planning system has been created for the 3-5 rooms and work is being done to implement the process and upskill staff in the robust use of this. The 3-5 tracking has been adapted in reference to I.C Pathways by way of developmental check ins this ensures that children receive equitable learning experiences.

Self-evaluation using HIGIOELC and incorporating elements from the ANSWA document selecting from various nurture principles is used to evaluate and improve practice ensuring that nurture is the foundation of further developments.

Children have had the opportunity to engage in high quality open ended play experiences in which they can lead their own learning for deeper engagement.