

Oakburn Early Years Centre



Standards and Quality Report 2023/24



Context of the Centre

Oakburn Early Years Centre is a purpose-built, extended day and year nursery provision which is a new resource for the Milngavie community. The centre opened in Spring 2021 and can accommodate 86 children aged 3-5 years and 15 children aged 2-3 years. The centre is open 50 weeks of the year from 8am-6pm. We provide care to children living in areas with a Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) ranging from decile 3 to 10.

The centre has two indoor areas, one for 2–3-year-olds and another open plan area for 3–5-year-olds. There is a covered outdoor area with a mezzanine level and a garden that is open every day, in all weathers for children to explore. The centre has a lot of surrounding green space and the location is central to all the local schools. We are developing our links with associated Primary Schools in East Dunbartonshire, specifically within the Milngavie area.

We have a Family Room to have family learning, parenting events and meetings. This also gives a quiet space that staff can access with small groups of children. In addition to this space we have a Nurture Room that children can visit for a quieter space, staff can support softer starts for identified children and where nurture groups can take place.

At Oakburn Early Years Centre we ensure that the children's wellbeing is at the heart of all we do. Staff have embedded The Rights of the Child and nurturing principles in their practice. They are supportive and caring to all of the children in their care and value the importance of developing positive relationships with parents and families and the contributions they make to the daily life of the Centre.

The staffing model consists of a Head of Centre, Depute Head of Centre, 2 Senior Early Years workers, an Early Years Teacher, 25 Early Years Workers, 2 Early Years Support Workers, a Housekeeper, 2 Clerical Assistants, Facilities Manager and a Facilities Assistant.

Our Vision is underpinned by the belief that:

- Positive relationships are at the heart of everything we do.
- Our team are committed and skilled in order to deliver high quality education and childcare.
- Supporting children's wellbeing is essential for them to learn.
- Child centred play is the core of our work and the best way to support children to achieve their potential.
- Outdoor play has lasting benefits for children and allows them to engage with nature in an ever-changing environment.
- Children's voices and views will be listened to, their rights respected and acted upon.
- Parents play the key role as their child's first educators, and we recognise the significance of their role in children's early education and involving them and their family in the life of the centre.
- A sense of community and engaging with the wider locality is important within our centre.
- In order for us to get it Right for Every Child and family, we must promote equity and equality.

We Value:

- Fun
- Relationships
- Open communication

- Respect
- Wellbeing
- Inclusion for All
- Children’s Rights

Our Aims and Objectives are to provide:

- An ethos of community that promotes respect, care and kindness for all.
- A skilled staff team that will nurture and support our children and families and continue to build positive relationships with the wider community.
- An environment that is safe, inclusive and secure with rich and stimulating opportunities indoors and outdoors.
- A curriculum that will provide fun, play based learning that is developmentally appropriate and enables all children to develop independence, confidence and achieve their potential.

Progress in Centre Improvement Plan (CIP) priorities

Centre priority 1: Tracking	
Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs	
1.3 play and learning 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>NIF Priority</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing the attainment gap • Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NIF Driver</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance information • assessment of children's progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school improvement 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>HGIOELC QI</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QI 2.2 Curriculum</p> <p>QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QI 2.4 Personalised Support</p> <p>QI 3.2 Ensuring children’s progress</p>
Progress and impact:	
Development of and implementation of new tracking system	
<p>Linking benchmarks outlined in CfE to the Learning Journals currently used within the Centre, was a sizeable task. To develop a more coherent and robust tracking system, the Early Years Teacher (EYT) worked in collaboration with an EYT colleague and Quality Improvement Officer to develop a system where benchmarks in Literacy and Numeracy could be transferred to the learning journals to make tracking of the children’s progress more accurate. During in-service training in August 2023, the EYT delivered a short presentation to the whole staff team on the newly developed tracking system. Members of staff, fully confident in using the existing learning journals, were identified to pilot this new system between September and March. Throughout the six months, the EYT was available to offer support and guidance when required and sought feedback on the effectiveness of the pilot. Consequently, all staff participating in the pilot agreed that planning next steps with the children was more user friendly and easier to record with the new system. One member of staff shared her thoughts on piloting the system.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“I feel that this new curriculum is very much more straightforward to use as it is broken down into individual learning outcomes. This allows you to properly track and recognise any gaps within a</p>	

child's learning. It supports staff to be able to focus on children's next steps, ensuring they are meaningful and specific to each child. With the previous system I felt the outcomes were very vague and often found next steps to be repetitive. However, the new system allows you to see what you need to focus and work on this in depth. I believe that once staff are trained that they will agree that it is much more accessible, and beneficial to them and the children's learning".

As a result of the monitoring of the pilot and feedback from those using the new tracking system, it was identified staff would benefit from observing a more in-depth view of how this would appear on the children's learning journals and to trial the different aspects available. Therefore, time was allocated during May 24 in-service day to explore the system further. Small groups joined each member of staff piloting the system and were provided with two video clips of children engaging in learning experiences. Staff were then prompted to upload an observation using the new trackers to show where the child was in their learning. In doing so, staff commented that:

- "The new tracker is more broke down; it is easier to work out what stage children are at".
- "The new tracker is a lot more specific and links to what staff are working on. The tracking is simplified as you get a clearer *picture of your child's progress".
- "More user friendly".

Staff also made suggestions on how to improve the new system.

- "Being able to show the skills before the benchmarks would give a clearer indicator on where to track the child overall".
- "Having each skill colour coordinated to the benchmark would be easier to follow".

Through the use of other forms of observation and assessment to support effective tracking, it was recorded that there was a high number of children who required support with Health and Wellbeing. To support these children in developing friendships and managing emotions, staff utilised the quiet, calming space of the Nurture Room. Through small group working with identified children, staff were able to facilitate and scaffold the forming of friendships. The Nurture Room was also accessed by children who required a softer start to their session as they were very emotional on arrival at the Centre and separating from their parent/carer. From the 9 children who have benefited from this approach almost all are now able to separate from their parent/carer and choose where or who they would like to engage with.

Due to feedback from the pilot and changes that have had to be made to meet the needs of all staff, the full implementation of this priority will not begin until August 2024. To ensure this system of recording and tracking individual children's progress is accurate and an effective method, monitoring and audits will continue to take place until all staff are fully confident in using this system.

Parent comments on our progress of this priority:

- "I feel very much that I can approach my child's key worker for updates and all staff know them well enough to offer insights into what they do day to day".
- "Really confident and happy with the key worker involvement and personal attention".
- "Would like more formal feedback as child is entering into preschool year".

Next Steps:

- Implementation of new tracking system in August 2024.
- Continue to monitor and audit Learning Journals.
- Evaluate effectiveness and accuracy of children's progress linked to benchmarks.
- Impact on children's learning and progress.

Centre priority 2: Sustainability

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs

- 1.3 play and learning
- 3.2 leadership of play and learning

NIF Priority

- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

Choose an item.

NIF Driver

- school improvement

Choose an item.

HGIOELC QI

QI 2.2 Curriculum

- QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion
- QI 3.3 Developing creativity and skills for life and learning.

Progress and impact:

Planting and harvesting

To continue to develop capacity to lead improvement within our team, staff are continuously encouraged to adopt leadership roles within the Centre to drive forward the priorities outlined in our Improvement Plan. To lead this part of our sustainability priority, the staff member developing this area last year was keen to continue in this role. In the first instance, they worked collaboratively with the Outdoor Champion to identify an area within the outdoor environment that would be suitable for erecting a greenhouse as our poly tunnel was not withstanding the ever changing weather. They also considered how we could further develop our allotment area to ensure maximum growth.



Allotment plot extended and concrete base ready for slabs to be laid.



Before any new planting could begin in the raised planters, children were encouraged to join staff in preparing the soil and the discarding of any decaying plants or leaf litter. The lead staff member gathered children and used the calendar developed last year to check which seeds needed to be sown. We took this opportunity to ask the children and families some questions about our allotment and its future. Most of our children freely participate in daily opportunities within the allotment area, therefore are very knowledgeable of why growing your own food is important.

- 🍌 “To eat to be healthy and for the animals”
- 🍌 “To make you healthy and strong”
- 🍌 “Saves energy and money”
- 🍌 “You don't need to drive to the shops, saves money”

Parents have been invited to participate in Stay and Play sessions in the garden and commented on the learning opportunities the allotment provides for the children.

- 🍌 “Where food comes from, healthy eating”
- 🍌 “The importance of sustainability, understanding where food comes from”
- 🍌 “Fantastic learning for science, nutrition and practical skills”
- 🍌 “Learning lots about everything from nature, food sources and how the weather impacts things”

Unfortunately, due to the beautiful flowers in our allotment attracting more than just the bees, it was agreed that to give all of our flowers, fruits and vegetables a chance to grow and flourish, that a fence would be erected around the area. A gate providing access would give children the time to enjoy the space at its full potential with an adult present.

As a result of this development in the garden most children have increased their knowledge and understanding of seed to table practices and eager to expand on these experiences.



Our Outdoor Champion established a new garden committee of children who were keen on developing the garden and adding additional experiences for their friends to enjoy. One of these spaces was our tree area at the top of the garden. Using tools and their risk assessment skills, the children skilfully used hammers and screwdrivers and voiced their opinions about what should be added and how they could make it safe for everyone. A balance bridge in the trees, an obstacle course, a den, tree swings, and so much more was added to this part of the garden through the imagination and creativity of the children. This has resulted in increased awareness of risk, improved gross motor skills and extended play opportunities.



Child comments

Helping to make the balance beams

- 🍌 “I’m making this safe”
- 🍌 “I like climbing with my friends”

Den making

- 🍌 “I’m making sure it doesn’t fall on you”
- 🍌 “We need seats, a roof and I need help to tie it up”

As almost all of the materials used were from recycled wooden pallets this created connections with other topics under the umbrella of sustainability e.g., Eco group, community links and promoted cross curricular experiences and learning.

Throughout the year the children have been continually clearing and preparing the ground for new seeds and plants, developing their knowledge and skills. They have also harvested what they have grown, using the potatoes and carrots to make soup and strawberries to make jam with staff incorporating learning outcomes in numeracy and literacy. Children could also take produce home with recipes and share what they had made in their learning journal WoW moments from home. Subsequently, this has shown a slight increase in parent contributions on individual children's journals. However, staff have observed a greater increase in conversations at group times relating to growing, harvesting and sustainability practices.



To track the development of the area and children's learning, the lead staff member records the wide range of experiences and activities the children and parents participate in, in a floor book. This learning is also recorded on learning journals to monitor progress of the individual child. The vast interest the children have in this area has increased opportunities to continually drive forward change and nurture the children's love of the outdoors and improve their health and wellbeing.

Eco Committee

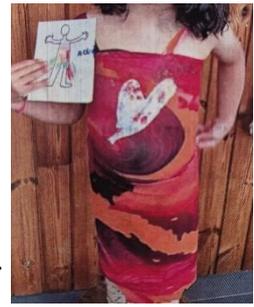
The member of staff leading our Eco priority last year, wished to remain in this role to continue implementing Eco practices in the Centre. The first task was to re-establish the Eco Committee of children who would take the lead in sharing positive practices with their peers. 7 children aged 3-5 years old, and 2 children aged 2 years old were selected after sharing their interest to join as a group member.



The aim of this committee is:

'to ensure we keep Oakburn green and clean, protect our environment and save our planet earth'.

The children and staff having been working together this year to explore many different ways in which we can recycle. Children have made their own paint, paper, cushions and dress making.



"I am so proud of my dress".

We have maintained our relationship with Milngavie in Bloom and helped to keep the community nice and clean by going litter picking and designing and hanging posters in our car park. Children also made seed bombs in the garden, then visited Lennox Park to distribute them all over. Visits were made often to the recycling bins to dispose of paper, plastics and cardboard and to the charity shops where we donated our clothes and toys. Any clothes that could not be donated were taken to the recycle bin outside Milngavie Community Fire Station for the Firefighters Charity. Posters were created by the children and hung outside the Centre to encourage parents to switch off their engines and not leave them idling.



Child Comments

- 🍌 "Picking up litter saves our world".
- 🍌 "It's not good for animals, it might get stuck in them".
- 🍌 "We learned picking up litter is good for the environment"
- 🍌 "We learned that it is important to keep your engine off if you're not driving to save the planet".

Recently the children and staff have been discussing solar power and how our Centre has several solar panels on the roof to help provide the energy that is used in the building. As a direct consequence of these conversations, children have voiced their interest to explore this further and link in with the STEM group.

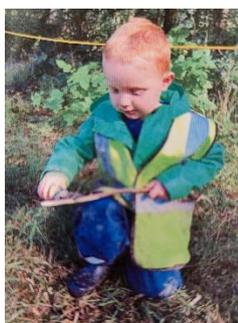
The commitment from the staff and children has been instrumental in embedding ECO practices here at Oakburn. Our folder and floor book has continued to gather evidence of all the learning experiences the children have been involved in, capturing their voice and the awareness they have of this topic. As a result of this commitment and the variety of opportunities the children have engaged in, they are eager to learn more about how they can help the world they live in.

Forest School is led by our Outdoor Champion and is supported by staff members that have shown a keen interest in developing their own knowledge and skills in this area. The children have had

opportunities to visit a carefully selected nature-filled space to explore, create and learn about the world around them. Children attending the sessions are encouraged to embrace their natural curiosity and lead their own learning, with enthusiastic adults who create endless opportunities for them to discover their own interests and passions in a beautiful, safe, natural setting. Children have the freedom to explore and learn about nature, taking supported risks along the way. This year we have been able to accommodate three groups of children to take part in the 8 week block of sessions. Children engaged in a wide range of experiences that supported their development in listening skills, risk taking, creativity, independence, resilience, self-esteem and increased wellbeing. Due to children being exposed to these experiences the majority increased their skills in safety practices, risk awareness and team work. When thinking about the children transitioning to school and how these could be further supported, staff ensured that each group consisted of children who would be attending the same school. This created opportunities to develop friendships in the very early stages of the school transitioning programme. On returning to the Centre the children are always eager to share what they have been learning.

Child Comments

- 🍌 “A hazard is a bit of glass”
- 🍌 “The risk is if it cuts your skin”
- 🍌 “You move the blade away from your body” (whittling)
- 🍌 “Stay behind the wood when walking at the fire”



Parent comments on our progress of this priority:

- 🍌 “I like that they ask for old toys/items etc. which can be reused rather than binned”.
- 🍌 “I like the Oakburn shop that gives out unused fruit and veg”.
- 🍌 “Lending library, clothes swap, garden sustainability are fab. Possible option for toy donations from families?”.

Next Steps:

- Continuous development of garden focussing on sustainability by using recycled materials for all building and children’s creations, distributing produce from allotment and extending recycling practices by obtaining plastic recycling bins.
- Forest adventure groups to continue with possibility of access to different sites.
- Explore Sustainability Goals

Centre priority 3: LCFE Accreditation

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs

- 1.1 nurturing care and support
- 3.2 leadership of play and learning

NIF Priority

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Choose an item.

NIF Driver

- school improvement
- Curriculum and assessment
- teacher professionalism

HGIOELC QI

- QI 1.2 Leadership of Learning
- QI 1.3 Leadership of Change
- QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion

Progress and impact:

Language Communication Friendly Environment Key Indicators 2 & 3

An environment rich in language and communication, that supports children in making their own choices, to become independent and lead their own learning, is fundamental for children in developing essential life skills. A coherent approach in continuing to support the development of a learning environment that prioritises the development of communication and language is a high priority in our establishment. To continue to take forward our vision of becoming a Language and Communication Friendly Environment (LCFE), a communication lead and working group was identified through the PDR process to oversee the planning and progress. The initial task for the group this year, was to deliver a learning session around our focus of key indicator 2 'adult talk that encourages and promotes participation from all learners' and key indicator 3 'adult interaction styles that are responsive to individual children's needs', to the whole staff team. This took place in August in-service day and allowed for in-depth conversation and personal reflection. The session was delivered by our communication lead and her focus was to inform practitioners on the importance of how we communicate and interact with our youngest learners and to reflect on their practice. Through self-evaluation tasks, practitioners were able to identify their strengths under the 2 key indicators and consider next steps that would support and encourage their own learning and skill development. As a consequence of this training, staff requiring additional support in these key areas were identified. Therefore, the Senior Management Team (SMT) were able to provide further training, improving their knowledge and understanding, positively impacting their interactions with the children.

Monitoring and support is a key component in establishing and maintaining an environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language and communication for all of our children. To continually evaluate progress within the setting, the lead member developed an annual timetable to ensure effective monitoring and auditing practices were in place. Audits of the environment were carried out by staff members when moving to a new area of the Centre and was also included in Learning Walks by the Senior Management Team. This ensured continuous evaluation and development of all areas of the environment. Monitoring staff practices in their interactions and engagement with the children was supported by utilising 'TALK' strategies, which were shared with staff during the learning session in August. The communication lead and Senior Management Team carried out mentoring observations on the quality of interactions shared between the adult and the child. Following these observations, positive practice feedback was given to individual staff members and suggestions to develop their approaches and practice.

To further develop capacity within this priority, the communication lead and working group continue to receive mentoring and assistance from the authorities' Quality Improvement Officers and attend meetings with a cohort of Early Years Practitioners who are also developing strategies in their own Centres. Our communication lead has utilised the Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle to keep everyone on track and measure

the success of change within the establishment. Through observations of the playrooms, the communication lead identified that there was no visual timetable indicating the routine of the day. Photographs were taken of the children participating in the routine and placed in area children could easily access. As a result of this visual timetable some children became more independent and developed their language.

Recording our journey in a portfolio, under the key indicators, provides the evidence required for the Centre to become an accredited Language and Communication Friendly Environment. Contributions are requested from all staff members to highlight the positive changes in their areas and own professional practice. This portfolio of evidence allows the communication lead and Senior Management Team to evaluate the progress of the action plan and identify any tasks that require further support or attention. These steps have had a positive impact on LCFE approaches within the Centre. All staff members are aware of their responsibility to contribute to the portfolio, continually evaluate their immediate environment ensuring resources are labelled and to implement the 'TALK' strategies when interacting with children. This in turn benefited most children as they were confident in leading their own learning, as they knew where to locate resources, visuals aided communication and inclusiveness and transitions occurred seamlessly.

In the Centre, staff know our children very well and are aware of those who use signs or other communication systems to interact with others. To ensure all children are progressing in their learning, positive partnerships with other agencies is essential. Staff work with allocated Speech and Language Therapists on a regular basis to guarantee a consistent approach in strategies put in place, to develop the child's language and communication. Makaton signs are introduced on a fortnightly basis and displayed throughout the Centre. Staff also share these with the children during group times and incorporate them when possible during their day. All signs that the staff and children have been learning throughout this academic year have been added to an existing Makaton folder which can be revisited at any time. Children identified as having communication difficulties are currently having their needs met by using visuals or Now and Next boards. As only some of the children are able to use basic signs for communication and rhymes, work will continue to fully embed Makaton into the daily routines of the Centre.

The communication lead continues to work with the staff team to offer support and has commented that:

“the majority of our staff team follow the TALK strategies when supporting children's communication. Mentoring and observing interactions is an important aspect of LCFE and to ensure we encourage practitioner reflection, dates for staff mentoring is placed on the annual calendar. Using visuals and the labelling of the resources supports children in daily routines and provides an inclusive environment for those with language and communication difficulties”.

The ability to be able to communicate is a fundamental life skill for all children. Language develops naturally over the first five years of a child's life and developing strong oral language is essential for developing literacy skills in word decoding, reading comprehension and writing skills. In the previous two years staff have worked endlessly to provide a rich and stimulating environment in which children are immersed in oral language, the world of print and encourage a love of stories, rhymes and writing. Due to this dedication, it has been observed there is an increase in children accessing the book area, with some having the ability to retell stories, some children engaging in the early stages of writing, who previously displayed minimum interest some developing their language to communicate and interact with their peers.

To raise parents' awareness on the importance of reading to children and how this develops their understanding and use of language and writing, the communication lead researched what would be required to implement the 'Big Bedtime Read'. Due to issues in procurement at the time of purchasing resources, the initiative was not fully prepared until the month of March. Following a discussion with staff, it was agreed to postpone the launch until August 24. This would provide staff a longer period to record levels of participation, gain feedback from children and families and to evaluate the impact on learners.

Parent comments on our progress of this priority:

- “Loved when he came home and was able to sing and sign a nursery rhyme and song independently”.
- “Really diverse and inclusive, safely allowing awareness of different abilities/personal needs for communication and mobility, feeding etc.”
- “The signage is great around the nursery.

Next Steps:

- Communication lead and working group to participate in year 3 of EDC 3-year LCFE course.
- Continue partnership working with other agencies, QIO’s and EYW cohort for support and training.
- Staff will engage in more in-depth training of key indicators 4 & 5.
- To maintain and record audits, monitoring and mentoring process to support implementation within the Centre.
- Recording of our journey to provide evidence for accreditation to continue.
- Launch ‘Big Bedtime Read’.
- Use of assessments and observations to ensure early intervention to continue.

Centre priority 4: Children’s Rights UNCRC

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs

- 1.1 Nurturing care and support
- 1.2 Children are safe and protected
- 1.3 Play & Learning

NIF Priority

Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre

Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing

NIF Driver

- school improvement

HGIOELC QI

QI 2.5 Family Learning

QI 2.7 Partnerships

QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion

Progress and impact:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) highlights that children (up to the age of 18) are neither the property of their parents nor are they helpless objects of charity. They are human beings and are the subject of their own rights. The Convention not only recognises their basic human rights but gives them additional rights to protect them from harm. The UNCRC sets out the rights that must be realised for them to develop to their full potential. As childcare practitioners it is our duty to uphold and promote children’s rights. During the PDR process a member of staff shared her passion for children’s rights and that she would like to further promote this in the Centre. Her ambition was to have these rights wholly embedded in everyday practice and to raise children’s and parents’ awareness and understanding of the articles. Her initial task was to deliver a presentation on the in-service day informing staff of the Rights Respecting School Award at all stages, staff to ask questions and agree on an action plan moving forward with clear goals set. At this time the 26 members of staff present signed up and became ‘Unfearties’,

pledging to protect, uphold and promote children's rights. Feedback from staff was very positive and one member commented that

"it gave us more information on the rights and how easy it can be to incorporate these into everyday experiences at a child's level".



Ezmie, Elaine and lead practitioner Rebecca.

Following discussions with a representative and an online information session, the lead staff member did not feel that the content of the RRS Award was suitable for children under five years old. She contacted the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland (CYPCS) to enquire on the availability of literature or resources for early years. A book had just been published and the department was currently researching this topic themselves. After subsequent conversations two members of the CYPCS team requested a visit to the Centre to observe how the staff team was promoting children's rights. We were delighted to welcome Ezmie and Elaine from CYPCS in August to meet all of our wonderful children and for them to be shown all the exciting experiences and activities on offer. The children took the lead role in giving Ezmie and Elaine the full tour of the Centre and invited them to join them in their singing, dancing, play, going down the slide and even having their lunch. On leaving the ladies surprised all the children with their very own goody bag and a copy of the new book 'Let's Explore our Rights' which they were excited to read straight away.

A home link bag was created to involve parents in this priority and raise their awareness and how we are supporting their child to understand their rights. A soft toy elephant and her baby chosen to go in the bag, needed a name before they could go home with the children. There were many wonderful, imaginative suggestions and after a series of votes, the winning name was 'Belle' and 'Ariel' for baby. Along with our Rights Explorer elephant was a copy of 'Let's Explore our Rights' book and a notebook for the children to record their adventures. Children were very excited to take Belle home and as a result of her visits to their homes, all children involved were observed discussing their rights with staff and peers and what they did when Belle came to visit.



Parents Comments

"E was very excited to bring Belle home for the weekend".

"F and E had a great weekend having Belle over for a sleepover".

"A has enjoyed looking after Belle and learning about children's rights".

"E and Belle had a lovely time together, and E enjoyed telling Belle about her rights as a child".

"We had a discussion how access to education is one of the fundamental rights for children while taking Belle to Kelvingrove Museum".

Children also created a 'Rights Jenga' game with support from adults. They began by sawing pieces of recycled wood in the woodwork area, making sure they were the same size and then sanded the edges so that they were safe to play with. They then painted each block a different colour of the rainbow to represent the different articles. An adult then wrote the key values onto each side of the blocks. As the children play the game and remove a block, they will take the opportunity to discuss the value they have taken from the tower.



Articles from the UNCRC were placed in several locations throughout the Centre, prompting conversations between staff, children and families around the articles and what this means for them. These conversations provided staff with evidence to what information the children were retaining and evaluate how they could improve.

Unfortunately, during the academic year, our lead practitioner moved on to another establishment and further progress of the tasks intended to be implemented were put on hold. To ensure this does not occur in future years leadership groups will be established.

Parent comments on our progress of this priority:

- 🔥 "Sometimes they are too aware of their rights and resulting behaviour can be difficult at home".

Next Steps:

- Establish Children's Rights group to continue with implementation and UNCRC practices.
- Creation and purchase of additional resources.
- Establish a Rights Committee of staff and children and organise events throughout the academic year.

Progress in National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities

- **Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;**

Achievement in the areas of numeracy and maths and reading, writing, listening and talking across the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence shows that most children are meeting the expected levels of attainment. Children requiring support and challenge were identified through daily observations, assessments and focus child observations. In numeracy children requiring support focused on number recognition, 1:1 correspondence within 5 and also 2 step patterns. Children received targeted home links to support their learning at home. 16 children were identified in August/September as requiring support. Of those 16, 2 were still being supported at

the end of the school term. A number of children were identified as requiring challenge in areas of maths and numeracy. These children were given opportunities to learn about number patterns beyond 20, simple addition and subtraction and creating 3 to 4 step patterns. A number of ICT programmes supported all of these children with numeracy and maths.

A number of children were identified as requiring support with pencil and scissor control, therefore scissors were introduced to areas to support this skill development. Playdough was available as part of daily provision and a renewed focus on fine motor skill development by allocating a staff member in this area. Throughout the year staff have continually developed their areas to ensure that Literacy and Numeracy opportunities are consistently available, and this is evident through the recording of the Centre's planning and triangulation with floor books and individual children's Learning Journals. Training through CLPL and the cascading of information from the Literacy and Numeracy Champion has supported staff to develop their areas and to increase their knowledge and skills of the Early Level Curriculum.

- **Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;**

The Senior Leadership Team work in collaboration with the Early Years Teacher to develop and implement a robust tracking system to identify how children were progressing in all areas of the Early Level Curriculum. Staff continually participate in self-evaluation to ensure all children have access to high quality learning experiences that supports development in all areas of the curriculum.

A pilot was undertaken during the academic year to introduce progression pathways onto the children's Learning Journals. Whilst only a limited number of staff undertook this, it proved to be highly beneficial and positive feedback was received. All staff reported that they developed a greater understanding of progression and skill development. The breakdown of skills into Emergent, Phase 1 and Phase 2 across all areas of the curriculum has provided clearer information of where children are in their learning. This allowed staff to identify gaps, and next steps were more specific and meaningful. The breakdown of skills also provided staff with better knowledge of the wide range of skills that children work on in different areas of the curriculum.

Ferre Laevers observations, PAtHS and Nurture groups and Numeracy and Literacy baseline assessments also supported the staff team to provide the right support at the right time. Termly snapshots also support staff in identifying children in their key group who may require support or challenge. Evidence gathered by staff is reviewed regularly and any data analysed by the SMT, to identify any existing or emerging gaps in attainment and achievement. These children would then receive targeted support from the EYT to improve outcomes and achievements.

- **Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing;**

The mental health of all children is supported by a wide range of approaches. Children were welcomed to participate in PAtHS groups led by the Early

Years Teacher (EYT) and Early Years Workers (EYW). This group supports children to build on their emotional skills and friendships. Through the use of Ferre Laevers observations, the 13 children identified as requiring support have participated in small group activities to develop friendships, turn taking and to build their confidence. Out of the 13 children all but 1 have developed a close friendship with another child. Home link packs have also been used to support their emotional development in the form of the colour monster story and associated props. This resource has also been used within the setting to support children at group times and as a targeted approach. The Family Champion was available to support the family unit and home link bears to support children who were finding the transitions to and in the Centre challenging. The Nurture Room was also utilised for these children to offer a softer start approach and allow them to join their peers at their own pace. Bi-monthly Support for All meetings took place, including input from the link Educational Psychologist, ensuring that any progress or concerns were discussed in a timely fashion and any strategies or supports put in place. Free flow access to the outdoor area from early in the morning to the evening, in any weather, is available to all children and Forest School 8-week courses occur throughout the year.

Self-evaluations of How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare

Quality indicator	Centre self-evaluation	Inspection/ Authority evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Good	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Very good	Very good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Very good	Very good
3.2 Securing Children's Progress	Very good	Very good

Summary of Centre Improvement priorities for Session 2024/25

1. Parental Involvement – increase involvement in the life of the Centre.
2. Sustainability – gain first Eco flag, reduce reuse recycle, development of allotment.
3. LCFE – work towards and gain accreditation.
4. Quality Assurance – audits, monitoring, mentoring and effective communication.

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

All staff at Oakburn Early Years Centre are committed to providing the highest level of care and learning to all of our children. We pride ourselves in being a welcoming, nurturing Centre and in the positive relationships we have with all stakeholders.

Our highly motivated, enthusiastic and experienced staff team are confident that we can continue to make improvements using the self-evaluation process and improve outcomes for all children.

A clear VVA, ethos and play and learning approaches that are well led supports the ongoing improvements and achievements that attain best outcomes for children and families.

A sound knowledge of the staff team, their qualifications, skills, attributes and long-term goals allows for management to ensure that systems in place support staff to flourish, communicate and influence change and improvement. Leadership at all levels and CLPL provides opportunities for staff to develop knowledge, understanding and progress in their career and aspirations.

Clear procedures, policies and routines supports the smooth running of the service ensuring the care and safety of staff and service users.

An environment that is safe, enabling and well-resourced with clear curriculum approaches and monitoring procedures, provides opportunities for children to play, learn and achieve within the environment.

Consultation, communication and an earnest approach to family engagement provides opportunities for service users to be supported, included, heard and involved in the life of the centre.

A rights-based approach that underpins our practice ensures the wellbeing, respect and implementation for our VVA for all.

We have a strong understanding of our centre, our care and learning approaches and a commitment to continuous improvement.