

## Oakburn Early Years Centre



## Standards and Quality Report 2022/23



## **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.

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.

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. We provide care to children living in areas with a Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) ranging from decile 3 to 10.

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, Clerical Assistant, Facilities Manager and 2 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 National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities**

Insert a brief description of progress and achievements in the following national 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 identified through assessment and observations as needing support in numeracy, focussed on number recognition and 1:1 correspondence. From the 12 children identified, 8 were focussing on number recognition 7-10. Our children who required some challenge in numeracy have been developing their learning in simple addition and subtracting, counting in 2's and pattern. There are currently 2 children in the setting that are working significantly above this, with good understanding of number patterns beyond early level. Throughout the year staff continually develop 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. Ferre Laevers observations, PAThS and Nurture groups and Numeracy and Literacy baseline assessments support 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 SLT, 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 was supported by a wide range of approaches. Children were welcomed to participate in PAThS groups led by the Early Years Teacher (EYT) and an Early Years Worker (EYW). This group supports children to build on their emotional skills and friendships. Through the use of Ferre Laevers observations 27 children were highlighted as requiring support throughout this year. These children have participated in small group activities to develop friendships, turn taking and to build their confidence. 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. Following these intervention approaches 30% of the children initially identified have progressed and no longer require support. 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. 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 has been implemented with small groups of children, participating in an 8-week course.

## Progress in Centre Improvement Plan (CIP) priorities

Centre priority 1: Sustainability	
<p><b><u>NIF Priority</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</li> </ul> <p>Choose an item.</p> <p><b><u>NIF Driver</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school improvement</li> </ul> <p>Choose an item.</p>	<p><b><u>HGIOELC QIs</u></b></p> <p>QI 2.2 Curriculum</p> <p>QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality &amp; inclusion</p> <p>QI 3.3 Developing creativity and skills for life and learning.</p>
<p><b>Progress and impact:</b></p> <p><b>Oakburn will:</b> create an environment that promotes life skills for sustainability, building core values and attitudes to eco practices both in and out with the Centre.</p> <p><b>Staff will:</b> deliver high quality learning opportunities for children that increase their knowledge and understanding of sustainability, cultivating empathy and compassion for our planet and motivating the children to lead change in our environment.</p> <p><b>Learners will:</b> have equity in opportunities to engage in learning experiences that develops their understanding of eco practices and be the driving force of change within the Centre environment.</p> <p><b>Families will:</b> have the opportunity to engage with events and receive information on the development of the environment and learning opportunities, through detailed blogs on the Centre website and their child's learning journal.</p> <p><b>Established area for planting and harvesting</b></p> <p>To develop capacity to lead improvement within our team, staff are encouraged to adopt leadership roles to drive forward the priorities outlined in our Improvement Plan. To lead and implement this part of our sustainability priority, a staff member displaying a keen interest in adopting this role, was identified through the PDR process. 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 polytunnel. They also considered where the optimum position would be for raised beds to ensure maximum growth. Following the installation of this equipment, children were encouraged to join staff in preparing the planters ready for planting. Staff consulted children on what they would like to grow and discussed how they could use their produce at snack and lunch times. To guarantee a healthy harvest of fruit, vegetables and herbs during all seasons, a calendar of the seeds and plants that were to be sown at particular times of the year was produced. This supported stability in the development of the area and continued learning opportunities for the children to develop their knowledge on seed to table practices. Our Outdoor Champion established a garden committee of children who displayed a keen interest in all areas of the garden. This encouraged connections with other topics under the umbrella of sustainability e.g., Eco group, community links and promoted cross curricular experiences and learning. Parents were invited to join us in the garden during Stay and Play sessions, with the children sharing what they had been working on and to participate in the learning experiences offered in that area. There have been many positive comments from the parents who joined us.</p> <p>“Great nursery, garden very good! Lots for the kids to do”.</p> <p>“What a wonderful outdoor space!”.</p> <p>“He was very involved in den building with Michael and then showed us around the allotment”.</p> <p>Our Outdoor Champion also attended the Parent Focus Group to keep our families informed on the development of our outdoor space and how they could support and become involved. Throughout the year the children have been continually clearing and preparing the ground for new seeds and plants,</p>	

developing their knowledge and skills. They have also harvested what they have grown, used potatoes to make soup, strawberries to make smoothies and pancakes and created recipes, incorporating learning outcomes in numeracy and literacy. Children could also take produce home and share what they had made in their learning journal WoW moments from home.

“This one is like the letter J”.

“The mushrooms bigger than my wellies!”

“I can see a curry plant and chives”.

Our lead role in seed to table worked with the Eco Committee to source and reuse old wellington boots, filling them with soil and seeds, to learn about ‘propagating’. To record the development of the area and children’s learning, the lead staff member created a floorbook containing a wide range of experiences and activities the children and parents participated in. This learning was also recorded on learning journals to track progress of the individual child. The continued interest of the children in this area has increased opportunities to drive forward further change and support children’s love of the outdoors and health and wellbeing.

## **Eco Development**

The initial task for our Lead Eco member of staff was to establish an Eco Committee of children who would support the changes to our eco practices within the Centre. 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 purpose of this committee is ‘to ensure we keep Oakburn green and clean, protect our environment and save our planet earth’. The children and staff worked together to create an Eco song, which the children would practice with their keyworkers, resulting in a small number being able to sing the song with no support from adults. Children also created flyers that were displayed in all areas of the Centre. They were very eager to show these to their parents/carers and to remind their peers to turn off the water after washing their hands. The children’s flyers highlighted the importance of cars not idling, switching off lights and using your bicycle more. Recycle bins were purchased to encourage all to recycle their paper, particularly in our fine motor and arts and crafts areas where a great deal of paper materials is used. Discarded fruit and vegetables is also taken to the compost bin in the garden. Children were responsible for emptying the paper recycle bins in the Centre and taking it to the larger holders in the outdoor bin shed. When the children remarked that the fruit did not ‘look nice’ or it was past its best, they would discard it in the compost bins in the garden. Due to many learning experiences planned for throughout the year, the lead staff member listed all of the activities to be carried out and issued to all staff members. A whole staff approach has been instrumental in fulfilling our ambition in gaining our first Eco flag next year. To support our application a folder has been developed that records all of the learning experiences the children have been involved in, capturing their voice and their ECO responsibilities in the Centre. A floorbook has also been created to allow the children to revisit their learning, provide depth to the topic, build on existing knowledge and share their experiences of the topic with their peers. Through staff observations, it has been reported that most children’s awareness of eco practices has increased.

“Recycling is good for the environment”.

“Rubbish hurts our animals and the oceans”.

“We should do a litter pick”.

To support our Eco application links were created with the local primary school. Primary 7 pupils from Craigdhu PS visited the Centre in the Spring and joined our children planting bulbs and strawberries. During the summer period, when the school is closed, a small group of children from the Centre will visit their poly tunnels to water the plants and take care of them in the school children’s absence. This further develops their understanding of the need to keep yourself safe and road safety when walking in the community. From our Eco activities in the local community, we have established links with the local group Milngavie in Bloom and Milngavie Manor Care Home. Children have developed special friendships with the residents of the care home and share mutual enjoyment in their visits. Children are increasing their awareness of the importance of caring for the elderly and the pleasure the residents gain from their time spent together.

Milngavie in Bloom asked if the children of Oakburn would like to take ownership of the bedding display in the town centre this year, to which we excitedly accepted. Staff and children worked together to design a display that represented the Centre. Children made wooden nursery rhyme characters, decorating them



with lots of different recycled materials. After the children had prepared the area for planting with members of the Milngavie in Bloom group, they were supported by staff to erect their wooden creations.

### **Child Comments**

"We had to pull plants out and put new ones in".

"We had to pat the soil down".

"I liked putting the flowers in".

"We had to put soil down to put flowers in".

### **Parent comments**

" This is so lovely to see the children working hard in the community. We went past it today. When the flowers start growing it's going to look amazing!!".

"LOVE this such a fab thing to do for the community and how proud will you be when it blooms!!!"

### **Milngavie in Bloom comments**

"We were overwhelmed by the enthusiasm shown by the nursery children and the staff!".

"The icing on the cake was the woodwork in the form of the lettering and the nursery rhymes".

For the final phase of the project children planted many colourful flowers, utilising the skills previously learned in the Centre and building on their current knowledge of caring for living things. Feedback from members of the group was very complimentary and they look forward to working with us on other projects in the future.



## **Forest School**

Forest School is led by our Outdoor Champion and is supported by enthusiastic staff members. The children have the opportunity to visit a nature-filled space to explore, create and learn about the world around them. Children are encouraged to embrace their natural curiosity and lead their own learning, with adults who create opportunities for them to discover their own interests and passions in a beautiful natural setting. Children have the freedom to explore and learn about nature, taking supported risks along the way. Throughout the year, three groups of children have participated in an 8 week block of sessions in a wooded area within the authority. Children developed their skills in listening, risk taking, creativity, independence, resilience, self-esteem and increased wellbeing. They were always excited to share what they had learned on their return.

### **Child Comments**

"The rope from the tarp is the hazard! The risk is falling or tripping over it".

"I found a hazard! A stick could poke your eye".

"You move the blade away from your body".

"Orange rope round the trees for the tool area"

### **Parent comments**

"I love that she has these experiences. Building a fire in the back garden is not something we would do and she is learning so much on how to be safe and responsible".

Also this year, the staff and children were delighted to welcome representatives from Scottish Futures Trust (SFT). Working with the Scottish Government to improve infrastructure investment, SFT were eager to explore the unique building and the benefits this design has for children. The covered Courtyard and Mezzanine allow children to experience the benefits of physical activity and being out in the fresh air, whilst being protected from the elements. A short video was created to celebrate the opportunities that the Centre provide for the children and highlights how the unique design supports this.

### Next Steps

- Continuous development of garden focussing on sustainability by sourcing additional raised beds, a greenhouse for constant growth throughout the colder months and a clothing recycling bin.
- Continue with Eco practices currently in place, gathering evidence to achieve our first Eco flag.
- Forest school to continue with additional staff trained in the outdoors.

## Centre priority 2: LCFE Accreditation

### NIF Priority

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

### NIF Driver

- school improvement
- Curriculum and assessment
- teacher professionalism

### HGIOELC QIs

- QI 1.2 Leadership of Learning
- QI 1.3 Leadership of Change
- QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion
- QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment

### Progress and impact:

**Oakburn will:** create an environment that will support and develop the language and communication skills of all our children.

**Staff will:** participate in leadership roles and training to develop their capacity in supporting and developing all children's speech, language and communication skills and provide evidence that supports this.

**Learners will:** be welcomed into an inclusive, nurturing environment, where they will be supported to make their own choices, become independent and progress in their learning and development.

**Families will:** receive information on the development of the environment and any resources that are supporting their children's speech, communication and language.

### Implementation of Language Communication Friendly Environment practices

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. 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 was to deliver a learning session around the key indicators for the whole staff team. A coherent approach in supporting the development of a learning environment that prioritises the development of communication and language is of paramount importance. During this session, smaller groups of practitioners completed a self-evaluation toolkit that focussed on current practice and identifying aspects that required improvement, with the purpose of developing an appropriate environment for learning for all children. Information from the toolkit informed an action plan which highlighted the key areas still requiring improvement to meet accreditation. These tasks were allocated to individual staff members, that would support the improvements to the environment. To ensure that all resources available to the children were labelled, to encourage and aid communication, photographs were taken and stored in a file accessible to all staff, in order that labels could be replaced or updated as and when needed.

Implementing LCFE strategies and delivering a whole Centre approach is a sizeable task. Therefore, to further develop capacity within this priority, the communication lead and working group have received

mentoring and assistance from the authorities' Quality Improvement Officers and a cohort of Early Years Practitioners who are also developing strategies in their own Centres. To support successful implementation, communication leads were encouraged to utilise the Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle to keep everyone on track and measure the success of change.

Recording our journey in a binder, under the key indicators, provides the evidence required for the Centre to become an accredited Language and Communication Friendly Environment. Throughout the year the communication lead has carried out audits of the environment, indoors and outdoors, to ensure strategies are being implemented and embedded in our practice. The senior management team have also carried out mentoring observations of interactions shared between the adult and the child, sharing positive practice feedback with the practitioner and suggested areas for development. In the Centre we are fully aware of the needs of our children who use sign or other communication systems to communicate and value all forms of communication in our establishment. To ensure all children are progressing in their learning, positive partnerships with other agencies was essential. The link speech and language therapist (SLT) to the Centre, joined us to deliver training on Makaton and provide a refresher on the most common signs used within the early years environment. New Makaton signs are introduced on a fortnightly basis and shared with the children. All signs that the staff and children have been learning throughout this academic year have been added to a folder and can be revisited at any time. Some children in the Centre will use the signs when singing songs or when encouraged to by staff. Children identified as having communication difficulties are currently having their needs met by using visuals. To fully embed the use of Makaton by all children and staff, work will continue to be implemented into the daily routines of the Centre. The communication lead has commented that the impact on learners has been very positive and awareness of LCFE practices has increased in our staff team.

“Children are becoming more independent when looking for resources or helping adults to tidy up due the extensive labelling in their environment. Continuing to work on displaying an interactive daily routine that engages children, will support smoother transitions and aid communication during their session. Staff have engaged positively with training, implementation of strategies and participated in self-evaluation tasks to improve the environment”.

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. It is therefore crucial that any difficulties are identified early. Through the use of assessment and observations 31 children attending the Centre were initially identified as needing support with pencil control. Staff reintroduced the use of scissors as a continuous provision in their areas to further develop children's fine motor skills. Early Years Teacher discussed her findings with all staff and kindly requested that provocations offered, placed a focus on developing the dexterity in hands and fingers. Following intervention and individualised/group support from our Early Years Teacher (EYT), there has been a significant increase in the children's abilities. Of the 31 children identified only 38% remain as requiring support. The EYT believes this is:

“Largely driven by the number of writing resources throughout the environment that are easily accessible by the children and staff increased awareness of the importance of driving a “love” for writing in these early stages”.

It was also noted that the number of boys engaged in writing has increased. Children who require challenge have been focussing on rhyme and initial sounds story writing and adding detail to their drawings.

### **Next Steps:**

- Communication lead and working group to participate in year 2 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 the key indicators.
- To maintain an audit, monitoring and mentoring process to support implementation within the Centre.
- Recording of our journey to provide evidence for accreditation to continue.
- Use of assessments and observations to ensure early intervention to continue.



## Centre priority 3: Parental Involvement

### NIF Priority

- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children

### NIF Driver

parental engagement

Choose an item.

### HGIOELC QIs

QI 2.5 Family Learning  
QI 2.7 Partnerships  
QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

### Progress and impact:

**Oakburn will:** continue to build on the existing communication pathways, strong relationships and engagement with all of our families in the life of the centre.

**Staff will:** foster positive relationships with all families and engage in and promote parent events throughout the year.

**Families will:** have varied opportunities to regularly engage with and feel involved in the life of the centre and feel included in the developments that are made.

### Maintaining early parental involvement

Initial contact with parents is established soon after an application has been made through the EDC website, in the form of an email. This opens up a pathway of communication and parents are encouraged to contact the Centre if they have any further questions regarding their child's application. Approximately 3 months prior the requested start date, attendance is confirmed, and settling visits arranged suitable for the family. Parents have the opportunity to speak with their child's keyworker and ask any questions they may have. Staff also signpost them to the Centre website where they can peruse the Handbook and visit our newsletters or weekly blogs.

Following an initial settling period of 4-6 weeks, a child's parent will receive a telephone call by the keyworker to discuss how their child has settled into their new environment. All staff have been issued with guidance on what should be covered in this call. Through general conversations with staff, parents have commented that this has been supportive in the initial weeks as it has given them opportunities to discuss any concerns they may have. This also supports the staff to build on their relationship with the parent.

Following the relaxation of Covid restrictions within the Centre, a questionnaire was issued to parents requesting their views on how they would like to be engaged with the Centre e.g., Stay and Play, assisting in community walks or trips, attending parent focus group. From the 98 Glow forms issued, we received 25 responses. 36% stated they would be interested in regularly attending our parent focus group, 56% would like to participate in assisting with local community walks, 20% had a hobby or skill they would like to share with the children and 29% answered that they would like stay and play sessions to be available monthly. When asked what activities or experiences they would like to participate in with their child we had many different answers.

"Something outdoors as he loves outdoor activity".

"Messy play, reading stories, arts and crafts".

"Painting, den building, transient art, obstacle course".

"Something similar to their usual routine and activities".

"To see what activities they do and take part of each day".

To ensure staff and children did not feel overwhelmed with families coming back into the Centre, we planned our first stay and play sessions to be offered every day for a week. Throughout this week 34 parents attended in total. In February three days were offered over one week, with 21 attending, and in

April two days were offered, with 14 attending. The feedback received from the parents and families was overwhelming.

"I enjoyed my visit to see her at play, it's a beautiful nurturing environment. She loves coming here".

"Loved the stay and play morning. It was so nice to see them playing and interacting with each other. So many activities for them to choose from, they are so lucky".

"It was so nice to finally come in and have a look around and see what he gets up to with his friends. You all do an amazing job! Thank you!".

At present we have one parent who volunteers once every six weeks, supporting the children in the playroom, assisting staff preparing for events and joining the children on walks and trips.

"Thank you so much for having me in Oakburn today. It was a joy making Christmas decorations with the children".

Families have been involved in various events throughout the academic year, with their views, opinions and feedback warmly accepted and valued. They have joined us for our Curricular Evening, Christmas Concert, Easter Toddle, Coffee mornings and World of Work Week.

"What a lovely concert, the children were wonderful, and the staff must have worked really hard!".

"She had a great time doing the toddle. It was great to see them all and take part".

"Brilliant to get a chat with not only other parents but the lovely staff"

"Today I spoke to the children about working in a laboratory and how we find out what bacteria can make you sick. Thanks so much for having me".

During the World of Work Week, we had also had a visit from Julie, who works with the Teddy Hospital, Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity. Julie told them about what happens when you go to hospital and how the teddy can help you. The children were very engaged and received a certificate for their hard work.



The parent focus group had its initial meeting in September and was attended by 4 parents. Attendance varied at each meeting and following an evaluation of how often these meetings should take place, it was agreed that these should be changed to termly to make the meetings more focussed and meaningful. Following feedback from parents of the MacMillan Coffee Morning in September that "it was very valuable to get to know other parents" we organised further dates where parents could pop in for a coffee and a chat with each other. Parents contributed to the planning of fundraising events, ideas to raise our profile within the community and supported all events throughout the year. To record all this wonderful feedback, we ask all parents who visit the Centre to leave a comment in our parental feedback book.

### **Effective pathways of communication established**

There are many different ways in which the Centre attempt to reach all parents and keep them informed of what is happening or information we need to share e.g., via emails, newsletters, social media, Centre website/blogs, posters/flyers and e-journals. To guarantee effective pathways of communication are in place, a questionnaire was issued via Glow to all families of children attending. From the 108 distributed we received 17 responses, only 16%. When receiving information, parents responded that emails and e-

journals are the most effective way to ensure that information reaches them. When receiving items such as newsletters, lunch menus or calendar of events, 94% noted that they prefer this in electronic format. To gather information on how often the Centre web page is accessed we asked parents if they ever received information via this method. 47% responded never and 35% rarely. No parents viewed the Centre newsletter via this method. Parents were asked how we could improve the website to increase visitors to the page.

“Have events listed way in advance to allow parents to be prepared for certain upcoming events”.

“Maybe some pictures of the different areas within the setting?”.

“Can't answer, never visit. Assume it is more for prospective parents than current”.

A calendar of events for the year was uploaded to the Centre website and any changes that were made during the year were communicated to parents via email.

### **Raised profile within the community**

Through the PDR process a member of staff displayed an interest in adopting the role of the Centre's community links representative to raise the profile of the Centre, here in the community. Initial contact was made with the local care home, Milngavie Manor, and dates were arranged for small groups of children to visit and spend time with the elderly residents. The children's first visit took place in October, and they have attended the care home 8 times throughout the year. Residents have also attended our Christmas Concert and the children's graduation here in the Centre. Following an outing in the town centre litter picking, staff and children were approached by the community group Milngavie in Bloom with an exciting proposal. Every year children from the local schools are asked to take ownership of developing the flower bed in the town centre and this year they would like to give the children of Oakburn this opportunity. The staff and children worked extremely hard in developing a display that represented the Centre. The volunteers from the group were highly complementary of both the children and staff and their dedication to the task at hand. Children developed many life skills and have been asked to continue working with the group in the future. Woodwork transitions programmes have continued this year and have been greatly beneficial to the children moving onto Primary School in August 2023. Children's confidence has grown in the new environment during their visits and staff have commented that they appear to very relaxed and comfortable in their surroundings. Primary 1 teachers from all of our feeder schools were invited along to our graduation, which they graciously accepted, and was a further opportunity to talk with keyworkers, early years teacher and the children. Contact has been made with the minister from the local church, and we look forward to working with him in the next academic year. All staff within the Centre have created valuable links within the community and we endeavour to continue to nurture and develop these further in the coming years.

### **Parent group and supporting families**

In August information was distributed to parents to inform them of the Centre Parent Focus Group, with an invitation to join us in our first meeting. Attendance has varied during the year with between 3 to 5 parents at each meeting. As the year progressed, it was agreed by staff and parents that monthly meetings were surplus to the requirements of the Centre. Through feedback, a change was made to our calendar, with a coffee morning for parents to meet each other and staff alternating with the Parent Focus Group meeting. This increased attendance at both events and will continue termly next year. Parents and families have been a wonderfully overwhelming support to us this year attending our Curricular evening, Halloween Grizzly Ghoulish Garden Party, Christmas Winter Wonderland, Easter Toddle and Sports Day!

Our Family Champion has continued to support families by offering one-to-one meetings and attending Parent Focus Group meetings. In total, nine parents have sought help and support throughout the year with issues varying from bedtime routines, setting boundaries, toilet training and more. Parents and families were also invited along to three separate drop in sessions with a member of staff from the Supporting Families Team, with three parents attending. Our Family Champion has received very positive feedback and is eager to continue to support the children and families in the Centre.

“Understanding, caring and approachable”.

“Good listener, gave good feedback and strategies”.

“Made a difference and made me think differently about parenting”.

“Invaluable support”.

To ensure a member of staff was available during our session times, an additional member of staff was appointed to work collaboratively with our existing Family Champion. To provide additional assistance to children and their families, contact was made with Save the Children with the intention of introducing the Families Connect Programme. The Head of Centre has been trained and accredited in the full programme and would cascade information to both Family Champions who would help to deliver the programme. To guarantee knowledge and resources in this area was current, all 3 members of staff met with Save the Children representative, Sara, who provided current paperwork, literature and updated information. Unfortunately, this meeting was delayed until the end of the year due to staffing changes at STC. Following discussions with Sara and reflecting on the space we have to hold these sessions, we proposed holding a 4-week trial to ensure that the space available would be adequate for the minimum number of families required to deliver the programme. Information will be distributed to parents in the new term and trial sessions will begin in September.

#### Next Steps:

- Maintain the current high level of parental engagement in the daily life of the Centre.
- The Centre newsletter will be uploaded onto Sway in order that we can gather data on how effective this is as a means of communicating with our families.
- Establish Families Connect Programme and continue to schedule drop-in sessions for parents with the Family Champion.
- Implement the Big Bedtime Read with children and their families.
- Focus Group to continue and involved further in the organisation and delivery of fundraising and events.

### Centre priority 4: Quality Assurance

#### NIF Priority

- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
  - Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children

#### NIF Driver

school improvement  
teacher professionalism

#### HGIOELC QIs

- QI 1.1 Self evaluation for self improvement
- QI 1.2 Leadership of Learning
- QI 1.3 Leadership of Change
- QI 1.4 Leadership and management of practitioners

#### Progress and impact:

**Oakburn will:** ensure children receive the highest quality of care and that they are central to planned implementation of strategies for improvement.

**Staff will:** feel confident to initiate well-informed change and share the responsibility for the process of change.

**Learners will:** experience change that is well judged and appropriately paced to ensure it has a positive impact on their learning and development.

**Families will:** be welcomed into an inclusive culture and ethos where they will be well informed of any planned changes within the Centre and their views and opinions sought.

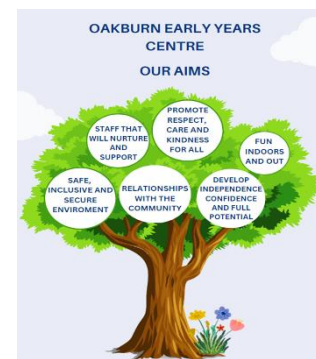
Quality assurance calendars were developed and implemented in August that has supported management to deliver a well-managed service and improvements. These calendars, a collegiate, monitoring, 3-year self-evaluation and annual planner, were all shared with the whole staff team. This increased confidence in individual staff members to initiate well informed change and share responsibility for the process. Staff felt informed of all meetings and events occurring within the Centre and any ad hoc meetings were shared in a timely fashion.

Audits on the quality of service were driven by an increased presence of management on the playroom floor which also provided a greater understanding of staff skills, areas for development, leadership opportunities and developing positive working relationships. To ensure staff are feeling fully supported within their role, many systems were put in place.

Termly wellbeing check ins were offered to all, professional development reviews arranged to discuss roles and responsibilities and opportunities to develop knowledge and practice. Leadership roles were also distributed to give staff ownership of a specific improvement. Team building activities were held at each in-set day and staff given opportunities to share their views and opinions through self-evaluation and questionnaires. As a result we have a staff team who are motivated, work as a team and are supportive of each other.

Effective communication is vital when sharing information in a large establishment, with staff and parents. Gaining feedback on the systems currently in place provided information to allow for improvements. From 32 questionnaires distributed to staff regarding current communication pathways, we had 44% response. Rating the effectiveness of the communication systems currently in place between 1-5, 78% responded 4 and 22% as a 3. Eight staff stated that the most effective form of communication was by using a what's app message, three selected emails, three for in person staff meeting and one member stated that utilising the staff notice board was highly effective for them. There were many suggestions on how we could improve, and these were shared with staff at a strategic meeting. It was agreed that what's app messaging would be used to prompt staff members to check specific forms of communication e.g., diary, staff notice board and to share important information that requires immediate attention by all.

Subsequent to the Centre being open for one year, a review of the Vision, Value and Aims was conducted by families and parents to make sure it continued to reflect the ethos, care and service provided. All staff participated in the review and feedback gathered. Staff agreed that only small tweaks were needed to the wording e.g., 'should' changed to 'will' and additions made to our values.



The review was distributed to families via email and no changes or suggestions were made.

"Completely agree with the above statement (our vision). If a child feels nurtured and supported in nursery they will thrive".

"Agree (we value) and like how fun is first on the list. If something is not fun, then it's hard to engage the child".

"Absolutely (our aims), respect and kindness are key".

Our Vision, Value and Aims was redrafted, issued to all staff and displayed at the entrance for families and visitors. These are at the heart of all we do here in the Centre and will be embedded by all.

#### Next Steps:

- Continue to implement quality assurance calendars yearly to ensure delivery of a well-managed service and self-evaluation for continuous improvement.
- Maintain high level of parental engagement and partnerships.



- Staff will continue to feel supported in all aspects of their role and their views and opinions listened to and acted upon.

## 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	Satisfactory
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Very good	Very good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Good	not applicable
3.2 Securing Children's Progress	Good	Very good

## Summary of Centre Improvement priorities for Session 2023/24

1. Tracking – robust tracking system in place that provides accurate learning and development information.
2. Sustainability – gain first Eco flag, reduce reuse recycle, development of allotment.
3. LCFE – work towards and gain accreditation.
4. Children's Rights – develop resource pack and literature suitable for our youngest children, embed practices throughout the Centre.

## 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.