



sustainable thriving achieving

East Dunbartonshire Council

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Craighead Early Years Centre Standards and Quality Report June 2025



Context of the Centre

Craighead Early Years Centre is situated in the grounds of Craighead Primary School. Craighead Primary is a non-denominational school in the village of Milton of Campsie. The school was built in 1968 with a nursery class opening in 1997. The Early Years Centre offers provision for 48 3 to 5 year olds and 5 2 year olds. Since 2021, the centre has been providing 1140 hours to all 3-5 year olds and eligible 2 year olds. The Early Years Centre offers full day hours from 9-3 based on a term time year, which runs in partnership with the school. Our catchment area consists of a mixture of local authority, privately rented and owner occupied housing.

The staff team consists of one Head teacher within the Primary School, one Depute Head within the Primary School, one Senior Early Years Worker, 8 Early Years Workers and one full time Early Years Teacher.

At Craighead EYC we support our children to be the best they can be. We have developed strong connections with our learners and their families and have identified the different needs and barriers to learning for our children. Our team work hard to create a loving, happy inclusive environment for all. We provide targeted support and challenge that meets individual needs. We work closely with our families to meet the children's emotional and social needs. We understand the importance of community and work with key stakeholders to broaden our children's opportunities in the wider community.

We ensure children have smooth transitions from home to Early Years and from Early Years to school. We work with a variety of primary schools in the local area to ensure a smooth transition from our setting into P1.

Through a robust framework of evaluation and improvement planning, we strive to further enhance children's successes and achievements and consistently plan to improve the learning opportunities on offer and to help create independent and confident learners. We promote respectful, supportive relationships between children, staff and parents and provide regular opportunities for children and parents to take an active role in the life of the Early Years Centre.

Our Vision

Our vision is to be the best we can be in a loving, happy and inclusive environment.

We Value:

- Fun
- Safety
- Happiness
- Being Responsive
- Parental Involvement
- Care and Nurture
- Following Children's Interests

Our Aims and Objectives

To have happy, confident children who are motivated to explore, play and try new things.

To be reflective and responsive to our children's, parent's and staff's interests, needs and opinions.

To have an environment that provides fun, stimulating and challenging learning experiences.

To develop a child-centred curriculum which follows their developmental needs and interests, and is extended by staff.

Progress in Centre Improvement Plan (CIP) priorities

Centre priority 1: Health & Wellbeing – UNCRC	
NIF Priority: • Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people; • Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education; NIF Driver: • Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people; • Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education; HGIOELC QIs: QI 1.3 Leadership of Change QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality & inclusion QI 2.5 Family Learning	
Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs: • 1.4 Family engagement • 1.2 Children are safe and protected • 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	
Progress & Impact: This session we have continued with our Rights journey and have worked on enhancing awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) among our families, particularly focusing on new children and their families who have joined our community. Initially, we had intended to develop a standalone children's rights policy; however, following constructive discussions with all staff, we collectively decided that integrating the principles of children's rights into our existing policies would be a more effective approach. To gauge the current level of understanding regarding the UNCRC among our families, we issued a pre-questionnaire. We received feedback from 17 of our 30 families, which is a good response rate. The results revealed that an impressive 94% of respondents understood that the UNCRC serves as a framework of child rights that all countries are obligated to uphold. Furthermore, families were invited to rate their knowledge of the UNCRC and its implications for children's rights, and we used these results to analyse our next steps. I don't know much about it 5 I know a little 4 I have some understanding 4 I have a good understanding 3 I am very knowledgeable 1 6% 18% 24% 24% 29% Recognising the importance of home links and family participation, we have undertaken various initiatives to raise awareness of children's rights within our EYC community. One particularly engaging strategy involved the introduction of Rosie, our Rights Respecting bear. Her arrival generated an exciting buzz among both the children and their families. Rosie was initially introduced within the nursery environment, allowing everyone to familiarise themselves with her character. The children were encouraged to create stories about their homes and families to share with Rosie, deepening their connection to her while also exploring their own lives. Since March, we have been delighted to see children take Rosie home, accompanied by a book titled "Let's Explore Our Rights." This initiative has empowered families to develop their understanding of children's rights in a tangible and interactive manner. We have encouraged families to document their experiences and reflections on Learning Journals, which has fostered an exciting avenue of communication between	

home and nursery. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with families expressing appreciation for the opportunity to engage with children's rights on a personal level.

Ongoing observations and dialogue has shown that all staff and almost all children are using rights respecting language on a daily basis.

This session the PATHs programme was implemented and led by the early years teacher to support children's understanding of emotions. Observations made by early years staff and SLT highlighted the following:

- The children effectively collaborating in small groups to familiarise themselves with the routines and expectations within our centre, demonstrating their ability to work cooperatively and adapt to new environments.
- Through engaging activities, the children have successfully recognised and celebrated each other's strengths and qualities, fostering a sense of community and mutual respect among their peers.
- The practice of exchanging compliments has proven to be beneficial, as it not only boosts self-esteem but also promotes positive interactions and builds confidence within the group.
- Discussions surrounding feelings have been particularly valuable; the children have demonstrated a growing awareness of emotional intelligence by recognising their own feelings and those of others. Their ability to identify facial expressions that correspond with various emotions illustrates an important developmental milestone.
- The children have participated in a variety of group situations to develop their friendship-making skills, which is crucial for their social integration and personal growth. Their engagement in these interactions highlights their willingness to form positive connections with one another.

Next Steps:

- The EYC will apply for bronze accreditation early August 2025. Following this initial accreditation, we plan to aim for silver accreditation during the session of 2025-26, setting the groundwork for an ongoing commitment to uphold and promote children's rights in all our activities.
- PATHs programme will continue to be implemented throughout the centre.

Centre priority 2: Curriculum - Rationale

NIF Priority:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

NIF Driver:

- Curriculum and assessment
- Teacher and Practitioner professionalism

HGIOELC QIs:

- QI 1.1 Self evaluation for self improvement
- QI 2.2 Curriculum
- QI 3.2 Ensuring children's progress

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs:

- 1.4 Family engagement
- 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led
- 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Progress and impact:

The aim for this priority was to develop a CEYC Curriculum Rationale that genuinely reflects the experiences of our learners in our centre.

To facilitate input from all stakeholders, we distributed questionnaires to both our children and their families via a Microsoft Glow form. The feedback pointed specifically to the strength of our staff team, the effectiveness of transitions, and the emphasis on a child-centred approach, important elements that contribute to our centre's uniqueness. The most popular words and phrases from the feedback is highlighted below:



During the October in-service day, our staff engaged in collaborative practice by examining the Curriculum Rationales of other Early Years Centres (EYC). This informed a provisional layout and content for our own Curriculum Rationale. By employing starter questions derived from How Good Is Our School? (HGIOS) to identify our strengths, the team thoughtfully considered what must be included in our document. A draft, prepared by our Early Years Teacher was shared with the staff for constructive feedback.

Following this, we presented the draft to our families, seeking their insight on whether the experiences of our children is consistent with our rationale. The overwhelmingly positive response, indicating that nearly all families found a strong alignment with the rationale and provided no suggestions for improvement, reflects the effectiveness of the process we implemented. A short video was created highlighting our Curriculum Rationale and shared with all families via a sway newsletter.

Next Steps:

Regular updates to keep our families informed and engaged in the continuous evolution of our curriculum.

Centre priority 3: Literacy – Language and communication

NIF Priority:

- Improvement in achievement, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;

NIF Driver:

- Curriculum and assessment
- School and ELC improvement
- Teacher and Practitioner professionalism

HGIOELC QIs:

- QI 2.2 Curriculum
- QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment
- QI 3.2 Ensuring children's progress
- QI 2.7 Partnerships

Care Inspectorate Quality Framework QIs:

- 1.3 play and learning
- 3.2 leadership of play and learning
- 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values
- 3.3 Leadership and management of staff and resources
- 1.4 Family engagement

Progress and impact:

Our EYT & SEYW attended the Alice Sharp Language and Communication launch training event in August 2024. Our CIP priority 3 identified our plan of action. We identified staff skills, children's interests and our areas for development from surveys, professional dialogue and observations. Key actions were identified:

- Observe learners to understand where they are starting from.
- Audit resources we have in each area to find out what is missing.
- Allocate budget wisely to purchase key resources.
- Use the Literacy Rich Environment Tool to enhance our classrooms.
- Make observations using 'The Up, Up and Away' stages tool.
- Conduct a staff pre-questionnaire to check initial understanding.
- Support staff in facilitating Language Development effectively.
- Keep a staff development journal to track our progress.

During our in-service day in October, we introduced 'Adventures with Alice' to our staff and shared access to an online resource account. We later explained this to families during our curricular evenings and through learning journals. We began with Volume 1 - Language Development, which included colourful bags designed to enrich each group's experience. Families got involved by helping to collect items for these bags. The Chatterbox activity involved the children picking characters from a list, and some even labelled them with numbers, which sparked their creativity.

During the February in-service day, we introduced out Volume 2 – Becoming a Reader. Our focus was on Story Builders, Letters and Sounds, carefully chosen to align with what the children were already interested in. Many children were keen to write their own stories, so staff added visuals of characters like Godzilla, King Kong, and various Disney princesses to inspire their storytelling. For the Letters and Sounds segment, we centred on the theme "My name is..." where children practised identifying letters in their names—saying them aloud and matching letters they found around the playroom. This has resulted in lots of emergent writing for many of the children who are starting to write the letters of their names.

In the final term, we introduced Volume 3 - Pedagogy of Communication, which has significantly enhanced our teaching strategies within the home corner. This space has been purposefully designed to foster an environment rich in literacy, encouraging children to engage with environmental print, reading, and storytelling. By incorporating a "Chance to Chat" approach, we are actively promoting verbal communication, allowing staff to scaffold children's conversations and facilitate imaginative play effectively. Our ongoing work in auditing and improving the home corner has resulted in a well-established area that supports language development while ensuring that it remains uncluttered and focused. We have been intentional in our resource selection, utilising appropriate labelling and avoiding over-resourcing, which helps to maintain an environment where language can flow naturally.

Writing skills are encouraged through practical activities such as creating shopping lists and recipes, encouraging children to relate literacy to their everyday experiences. We have provided a variety of materials, including recipe books, authentic grocery containers, and fiction, to stimulate reading and sharing among peers, including reading to their baby dolls. Additionally, our storytelling and make-believe area, equipped with puppets and dressing-up resources, further enriches the learning experience. This area serves as a platform for children to express their personal narratives, such as recounting weekends or holidays, strengthening their communication skills.

Staff have carried out learner observations and audited resources to identify other areas for improvement. The use of the Literacy Rich Environment Tool has allowed staff to track progress effectively. Feedback from staff post-questionnaires shows that all staff are confident with developing literacy skills throughout the centre.

Next Steps:

Ongoing development of literacy development using the Up, Up and Away project.

Progress in National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities

- **Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education;**

All staff complete Child Protection and Safeguarding training annually and receive updates throughout the session where appropriate. We ensure that we are Getting It Right for Every Child by: having care plans that cross reference individual children's needs with wellbeing indicators; Ferre Laevers; Need to Know information for all staff; biannual care and learning plan consultations with families and other stakeholders. Children's Rights are integrated throughout the centre.

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

A holistic tracker which includes wellbeing indicators, SIMD index, additional support information and engagement and participation levels is used effectively to measure progress and identify next steps for all children. Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires and Ferre Laevers assessments are implemented twice yearly and data used to inform transitions and any interventions required. Regular Support for All and PSG meetings ensure the right support at the right time for our children and their families.

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

Through observation and tracking all children's next steps have been identified and support/challenge is given to those that require it. EYT and EYW's work collaboratively to track children's learning across all curricular areas. Our Family Champion engages with all families through Learning Journals, offering advice and support as required – this has been a valuable support to a few of our families. Through Support for All and collaborative working with other stakeholders, we have identified and implemented appropriate support and strategies for our ASN children.

- **Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people;**

Our unique setting allows us to offer individualised experiences in response to our children's needs and interests, securing children's progress. Individual attainment is tracked and monitored through our robust tracking system, ensuring steady progression and identifying opportunities for additional support. Leadership roles have allowed staff to develop their skills and knowledge, which has benefitted all of our children.

- **Improvement in achievement, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy;**

All of our children have developed their curiosity, imagination and problem solving skills through good quality play experiences. Our robust tracking system shows all children have made good progress individually. Our observations have identified high levels of engagement and sustained shared thinking in children's play. Children are well supported to learn and develop through their play and learning. Planning approaches to play and learning are child centred. The learning environment provides opportunities that promote curiosity, experimentation, imagination, and challenge.

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

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

Summary of Centre Improvement priorities for Session 2024/2025

1. Health & Wellbeing – UNCRC
2. Curriculum Design
3. Up, Up and Away project

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

Craighead Early Years Centre has a stable, committed and nurturing staff team who are eager to lead further improvements to benefit staff and learners. Staff willingly take on leadership roles and are motivated to continue to embed these in practice. Family engagement continues to be high and parents are supportive and involved in the day-to-day running of the centre. Feedback gathered from glow surveys at the end of the session show that all families are highly satisfied with the service. All who responded highlighted relationships as a key strength. We will continue to consult with all stakeholders to ensure their voices are heard and are responded to.

'very approachable staff, I feel I am dropping my child off to family'

'nurture is not just a word with you'

'The fact that you are always ready to welcome the children and give a cherry goodbye'

'The greatest strength is the staff' – May 2025

This year's transitions and enhanced transitions were carefully managed to support children and their families to help them to be ready for starting nursery and school. We have well established relationships with big buddies and school staff and this is a real strength of both the centre and school.