Summarised inspection findings

Flowerbank Early Childhood Centre

East Ayrshire Council

19 August 2025

Key contextual information

Flowerbank Early Childhood Centre is a purpose-built setting located in East Ayrshire. It serves the community of Kilmarnock and surrounding areas. The building consists of three playrooms and a large hall area. All playrooms have access to a spacious outdoor area. The centre provides places for 77 children aged from birth to starting school. There are currently 86 children on the register. The centre is open 48 weeks of the year. Staffing consists of a head of centre, a depute manager, two senior early childhood practitioners, 22 early childhood practitioners and three support assistants.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	**very good**
This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are: ■ learning and engagement ■ quality of interactions ■ effective use of assessment ■ planning, tracking and monitoring	

- Across the centre, senior leaders and practitioners have created an ethos that demonstrates a strong commitment to children's rights. The relationships they have with children and their families are very respectful and nurturing. As a result, children are very confident, happy and excited to be at nursery. They play very well with their peers, often showing respect and care for others. Almost all children are very motivated and curious in their learning. Most engage for extended periods of time in their chosen activities, for example woodwork. Children move freely between carefully developed spaces, indoors and out, making decisions and increasingly leading their own learning. Practitioners have effectively used national guidance to inform the development of environments and continue to reflect on how spaces are used for learning. They should progress plans to review spaces, creating zones of learning to support a further increase in depth and challenge in learning.

- Practitioners are highly attuned to the needs of individuals across the continuum of development and learning, from babies to older children. This results in them providing highly effective and sensitive individualised support to ensure children learn, in an unhurried way, at their individual stage of development. In all playrooms, practitioners interact with children in a calm, responsive and very nurturing manner. Almost all practitioners consistently use skilful questioning and commentary to sensitively support, extend and consolidate children's learning. They show interest and delight in children's learning and achievements. Children are developing an appropriate awareness of themselves as learners. They discuss and plan what they may learn next with practitioners. Families are often involved in these discussions. Most children use the interactive board and tablet computers confidently to play games and search for interesting information. Practitioners should continue to develop children's skills in using digital technology in creative and purposeful ways.

- Practitioners effectively observe children as they learn, and record and share children's progress and achievements weekly in online learning journals. They make personalised observations of learning and use a range of assessment strategies to support accurate judgements about children's progress. This valuable information helps inform a range of helpful

© Crown Copyright

tools that practitioners use to track children's learning. This allows them to identify where interventions may support children make increased progress. Practitioners make very effective use of this information to provide bespoke support to individual children.

- Practitioners plan for learning through a highly effective blend of being extremely responsive to children's interests and offering more focused, adult-initiated learning. They use their shared understanding of child development, and of children as individuals, to provide invitations to play that provoke creativity and curiosity. Practitioners carefully and sensitively ensure that they plan for all children, including those who may have barriers to their learning or benefit from challenge. This ensures all children receive the support they need to help them learn and make strong progress.

© Crown Copyright

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The setting submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

© Crown Copyright

3.2 Securing children's progress	very good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

Children aged under three years

- Almost all children are making very good progress, appropriate to their stage of development, across all aspects of their learning. They are developing their physical skills and learning to manage their bodies very well as they climb and slide on the chute. Children enjoy exploring and investigating as they interact with interesting and exciting sensory resources. They are becoming more independent as they make choices about their play.

Children aged three years and over

- Almost all children are making very good progress in communication and early language. They take part in extended conversations with practitioners and each other and engage confidently with visitors. Children can talk about their learning and recall accurately what they have learned. Children show a keen interest in mark making and attempt to write their names and copy other words. Children show a deep interest in books and use them to find out information. Practitioners could now continue to build on children's interest and provide a wider range of real-life experiences to develop further interest in mark making.

- Almost all children are making very good progress in mathematics. Children use mathematical language accurately to describe measurement, for example, as they create 'long snakes' in the outdoor area. They have opportunities to learn about the concept of empty and full as they experiment with liquids. Children show a sound understanding of early numeracy and count with confidence beyond ten. A few children can add and find missing numbers. Children understand the properties of shape and can recognise and name an appropriate range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Children are ready to develop their understanding of other aspects of mathematics including time and money.

- Almost all children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing. Children are confident and can make choices about how they spend their time in nursery. They talk about their feelings and express what makes them happy and sad. Children are developing empathy and show care, kindness and consideration to each other. They work well together and can negotiate and work as a team. Children are very independent and understand how to make healthy choices and keep their bodies fit. They enjoy wellbeing Wednesday and participate with enthusiasm in "Fit5", the enjoyable exercise programme devised by practitioners.

© Crown Copyright

- Within the centre, almost all children are making very good progress across almost all aspects of their learning and development. Practitioners take on relevant champion roles enthusiastically. This work is impacting very positively on children's progress, as they take part in high-quality, relevant experiences including learning about planting. They are developing important skills for life and becoming confident, resilient and independent learners.

- Children are very proud of their achievements outwith the centre and enjoy sharing them with practitioners and each other. Practitioners use feedback and praise very well as they value children's efforts. Children contribute effectively to the life of the centre and are learning to take responsibility for the environment through participating in the Eco group.

- Throughout the centre, there is a very supportive, inclusive ethos and practitioners foster mutual respect and trust with children and parents. They work very effectively with other agencies to reduce any barriers to children's learning. Each child is respected as an individual and practitioners take pride in meeting their needs. Practitioners use all available information and data to ensure ongoing improvement. This careful approach helps to ensure all children make the progress they are capable of.

© Crown Copyright

Practice worth sharing more widely

- The wellbeing champions in the centre worked with children to create a “Fit5” programme. This programme consists of five simple exercises, with catchy animal names and finishes with a short breathing relaxation. The children really enjoy taking part in Fit5 sessions and can demonstrate the moves. Practitioners use the programme to settle and re-focus children at points during the day. Local NHS partners were very interested in this work and supported the centre to make a poster about “Fit5”. The local authority has asked the centre to share this development with other early years settings.

© Crown Copyright

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

© Crown Copyright