

# Early learning and childcare (ELC) setting shared inspection report

## Calderwood Lodge Family Centre

East Renfrewshire Council

20 January 2026

In October 2025, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Calderwood Lodge Family Centre. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

### Key inspection findings

- Children were happy, safe and secure, as a result of well-planned transitions across the day.
- Staff demonstrate and role model the values of play, respect, honesty, nurture and kindness. This has a positive impact on children's engagement with each other and is recognised through praise, encouragement and achievement awards.
- Respectful and nurturing relationships between staff, children and families were a strength. This strong emotional connection supported children's sense of belonging.
- The well-considered learning environment is exciting and engaging. As a result, children engage well in their learning and make very good progress.
- The provider should further develop child protection policies and procedures in line with current local and national guidance.

HM Inspectors and the Care Inspectorate gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the setting's work using four quality indicators from [the Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors](#).

| Quality Indicator                              | Evaluation |
|------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment | very good  |
| Learning, teaching and assessment              | very good  |
| Nurturing, care and support                    | good       |

|                     |           |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Children's progress | very good |
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## Summary of inspection findings

### Key contextual Information

Calderwood Lodge Family Centre is non-denominational and is located within East Renfrewshire Council. It is situated within a joint faith campus, which is shared between Calderwood Lodge Primary School and St Clare's Primary School. The setting is registered to provide funded early learning and childcare to 100 children aged from three years to those not yet attending school. The current roll is 98 with children attending over a variety of patterns. The setting is open from 8am until 6pm five days a week and consists of one large playroom and adjacent outdoor space. Staffing consists of a headteacher, principal teacher, depute head of centre, one senior child development officer (CDO), 16 CDOs, one teacher and five playworkers.

### Leadership: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

The team consistently demonstrated warm, respectful, and nurturing interactions with children, creating a positive and emotionally secure environment. High-quality engagement promoted children's communication, confidence, and learning through responsive and intentional practice. This contributed to children feeling supported and valued throughout the day.

Staff applied a strong understanding of child development, tailoring approaches to meet individual needs. They used communication aids such as Board maker cards and social stories to effectively communicate with all children. Play pedagogy was well implemented, with activities and experiences appropriately matched to children's age and stage, supporting all round development. This meant that staff successfully made good use of professional development to enhance outcomes for children's play and learning experiences.

Reflective practice was embedded across the team, with staff open to feedback and committed to continuous improvement. The setting's core values of play, respect, honesty, nurture, and kindness were clearly evident in daily practice. These values underpinned interactions and relationships, fostering a culture of trust, belonging, and mutual respect. This promoted a positive, nurturing, and collaborative working environment where both children and staff thrived.

All staff held current professional registration with the Scottish Social Service Council or General Teaching Council, as appropriate, and demonstrated a clear understanding of the relevant codes of practice that guide professional conduct and accountability. Professional learning was well-planned, tailored to both individual and service needs, and underpinned by evidence-based approaches. Training included key areas such as trauma-informed practice, neurodiversity, and The Promise. As a result, professional development effectively enhanced practice and supported positive outcomes for children.

Staffing arrangements were robust, with ratios consistently met and deployment supporting continuity of care and relationship building. Keyworker roles were clearly defined and contributed positively to children's wellbeing. Transitions were

well-supported by consistent adult presence. This ensured children experienced continuity and security throughout the day.

The team benefited from a balanced mix of skills and experience, contributing to a calm, well-supervised environment. Absence cover was effectively planned, and staff breaks and non-contact time were managed to maintain safety and supervision. Staff were flexible and responsive across indoor and outdoor areas, with deployment regularly reviewed to meet evolving needs. This approach supported a high-quality learning environment and strong outcomes for children.

Staff were observed to be kind and supportive of one another, fostering a positive team culture. Staff wellbeing was a clear focus within the improvement plan, with measures in place to support emotional resilience, workload balance, and professional fulfilment. These efforts contributed to a motivated and confident workforce, enhancing the overall quality of care and education.

### **Children play and learn: Learning, teaching and assessment**

Staff have developed respectful and nurturing relationships with all children and their families. These positive relationships between staff and children and between children, enable all children to feel safe and valued in the setting. As a result, almost all children are kind, caring and respectful towards each other and staff. Children co-operate very well together and have developed a sense of belonging to the Calderwood Lodge Family Centre community.

Almost all children confidently and independently explore the broad range of exciting experiences provided indoors, outdoors and in the local community. As a result, children are motivated to follow their own lines of enquiry. The thoughtfully planned spaces spark children's curiosity and creativity. A few children become absorbed in their play, often for extended times. Almost all staff manage transitions across the day well. They use visuals and social stories appropriately to enable almost all children to progress through these transitions with ease. Real-life experiences such as sewing and forest school enrich children's learning and provide opportunities to develop skills for life and learning. All children attend the setting regularly and there are clear systems in place to monitor attendance. Staff consider well all children's patterns of attendance in planning experiences out with the centre. This regulates the pace of the day and week for all children, providing welcomed periods of activity and rest.

Most staff engage in meaningful interactions with all children. They provide support and challenge for individual children's learning. Almost all staff observe and listen well to children. The staff team's recent focus on the development of children's early communication and language skills has supported them to enhance successfully their interactions. As a result, children increasingly contribute their thoughts and ideas. Staff extend children's digital skills through daily access to interactive programmes, songs and games. A few children use digital devices to create pictures and publish digital stories to share with others.

Almost all practitioners make very good use of learning walls. They have developed their planning system to ensure a balance of child-led, adult-directed and adult initiated experiences. The learning walls and floor books capture effectively

children's comments about their experiences. This enables most children to reflect on their learning and prompts them to revisit and extend their experiences. All children's learning experiences are regularly documented in online learning journals through photographs, videos and observations of their learning. All parents view their child's learning on an online platform and a few add comments on learning from home.

Almost all staff use their observations of children's learning to plan relevant experiences that build on children's learning and development needs. Daily adult-led 'together times' provide an opportunity for all children to meet in small groups. These support all children to build on focused skills such as listening, learning rhymes, counting and turn taking. Most staff identify children's significant learning in their observations and the majority capture children's developing skills. As planned, staff should develop a consistent approach to identifying and recording appropriate next steps in learning for all children.

All staff use a range of tools to assess and track children's progress. Through professional dialogue with the principal teacher, staff ensure that this information is used well to ensure children's individual needs are met. Children who require additional support have relevant plans in place and parents and carers contribute to these. All children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing is tracked on the local authority tool. The data is used well to produce summative reports of children's progress which are valued by parents. All parents and carers meet with staff twice a year to discuss their children's progress in learning.

### **Areas for improvement**

As planned, the staff team should continue to work together to identify and moderate children's suggested next steps in learning. As a result, this would add increased rigour to assessment information and ensure all children make continued progress in learning.

### **Children are supported to achieve: Nurturing care and support**

Children's emotional wellbeing was well supported by responsive and intuitive staff who demonstrated warmth, sensitivity, and a genuine understanding of individual needs. Relationships between staff and children were nurturing and respectful, contributing to a secure and inclusive environment where children felt safe, valued, and confident. This strong emotional connection supported children's resilience and sense of belonging.

Care routines were flexible and adapted to suit individual needs and preferences. Staff sensitively supported children with personal care and sleep routines, responding to cues and comfort needs in a calm and unhurried manner. Mealtimes were relaxed, sociable experiences where staff sat alongside children, promoting independence, positive interactions, and healthy eating habits. The service demonstrated careful consideration of dietary and cultural requirements. For example, kosher menus and provisions were effectively accommodated. These approaches ensured children's physical and emotional needs were consistently met.

Transitions were planned thoughtfully to ensure children felt safe and secure, with staff providing reassurance and continuity. For example, when welcoming a new

child, staff took time to help them settle by introducing key adults and familiar spaces in a calm, supportive way. This sensitive approach promoted trust and confidence during times of change.

All children had a personal plan in place which reflected their individual needs, preferences, and interests. Information was gathered through home visits and regular discussions with parents. Additional support needs plans were in place where required and were reviewed regularly to ensure they remained effective and flexible. Medication and health needs were well understood, with clear records maintained to support safe practice.

While personal plans were generally used effectively to guide care, some targets were not always relevant or reflective of what was observed in practice. The overview sheet provided a useful summary to signpost staff to other key information sources; however, it would be beneficial to further develop this to ensure it is fully individualised and reflective of each child's current needs. Developing these areas will strengthen consistency and ensure plans more accurately capture children's progress and experiences.

Staff were confident in their understanding of child protection and safeguarding and reported concerns promptly to the child protection coordinator, ensuring children's safety was prioritised. However, the current policy did not clearly identify the correct procedures, including the requirement to notify the Care Inspectorate when concerns are raised with another agency. In addition, chronologies should record and be maintained to provide an accurate overview of safeguarding concerns over time. Reviewing and updating the policy will provide staff with clear guidance, support consistent practice, and strengthen the service's safeguarding arrangements (see area for improvement 1).

The setting demonstrated a strong commitment to building meaningful relationships with children and their families. The warm and welcoming ethos was evident through initiatives such as Grandparents Day and Keyworker Coffee and Catch-Ups, which encouraged family participation and strengthened partnerships. The team's proactive approach to communication ensured families felt valued, informed, and supported. Parents described staff as "approachable, warm, and professional." These positive relationships contributed to a sense of community and partnership, enhancing outcomes for children.

Collaborative working with external professionals supported a holistic approach to meeting children's needs. Staff engaged constructively with visiting specialists and used advice to inform planning and individual strategies. This partnership approach ensured continuity and consistency of care across agencies.

### **Area for improvement**

To further strengthen the safeguarding of children, the provider and manager should review and further develop child protection policies and procedures in line with current local and national guidance. Monitoring systems should be in place to evaluate the consistent application of child protection procedures, ensuring practice remains of the highest quality and that learning is shared effectively across the team.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- Reviewing and further developing the setting's child protection policy to ensure it reflects current national guidance and clearly outlines staff responsibilities and procedures.
- Ensuring staff are confident and competent in applying child protection procedures.
- Establishing systems to monitor, evaluate, and share learning from the application of child protection practices.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that:

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying, and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.' (HSCS 3.20)

'If I might harm myself or others, I know that people have a duty to protect me and others, which may involve contacting relevant agencies.' (HSCS 3.25)

### **Children are supported to achieve: Children's progress**

All staff provide effectively a wide range of exciting high-quality early learning experiences across the nursery environment. As a result, almost all children are making very good progress in their learning appropriate to their age and stage of development. Most children confidently engage in conversation with adults and peers as they share experiences and talk about their learning. Children who may require additional support with their learning benefit from a range of effective visuals to make choices and share their views.

A strong emphasis on health and wellbeing for children and staff contributes to an environment where children and staff feel valued. This supports all children as they navigate and engage in a broad range of curricular experiences. For example, children effectively develop their early language and communication skills within the literacy rich environment. They enjoy listening to and writing their own stories, this includes engaging well in Bookbug sessions, both in English and in Hebrew. Children engage very well in experiences which support the development of numerical and mathematical skills. As a result, most children show a keen interest in number, with a few counting to 20 and beyond.

The well-considered and engaging environment allows children to develop a broad range of skills. For example, developing their gross motor skills well in the gym hall. Staff should continue to identify and build upon children's prior learning and support them to develop new skills. This should enable all children to continue to make very good progress in their learning, as a result of their nursery experience.

All staff know their children very well and use their professional judgement to capture children's engagement in learning and progress over time. Senior leaders meet regularly with staff to review the available data to inform future learning. Staff track children's learning using a range of approaches. They should continue to ensure they capture all of the learning in which children engage. This will support staff to identify gaps in learning and inform next steps. Staff work together effectively as a

team and collaborate with parents and each other to share information to support all children to make progress in learning. They effectively share information on children's learning and development at key points of transition. For example, end of year reports which are shared with P1 to support continuity and progression across the early level.

Staff recognise children's daily achievements through positive praise and encouragement. Children receive awards linked to the setting's values, which are 'play, nurture, respect, kindness and honesty'. Staff encourage families to share children's achievements from home through their online platform or in daily conversation. Children are developing well the four capacities as they become successful learners, effective contributors, confident individuals and responsible citizens. For example, they engage enthusiastically and effectively in intergenerational learning within a local care home. As planned, staff should continue to capture and share fully children's achievements from home and as a result of their positive nursery experience.

All staff work effectively as a team to identify early and respond to children who may require additional support with their learning. They are proactive in responding to children's individual needs and have implemented effective strategies to support continuous progress in learning. Strategies include small group targeted support, one to one support and a consistent approach to planning to reduce barriers to learning. Staff monitor the range of interventions to ensure they result in positive outcomes for all children.

Staff know all children and families very well and take account of their individual needs effectively. They are fully aware of the cultural, socio-economic and linguistic context in which children and families live. Children who attend the setting can participate in religious festivals and celebrations with Calderwood Lodge School. Staff commendably conduct home visits and use a range of data to respond sensitively to family circumstances. They work effectively with a range of partners to offer support and signpost families to a range of local support networks. Staff strive to get it right for all children and families, with the aim of improving outcomes for all.

### **Area for improvement**

As planned, staff should review approaches to tracking children's progress across the curriculum. As a result, they should be able to clearly identify any gaps in learning. This will ensure all children continue to make very good progress in their learning and development.

## **Safeguarding (HMI)**

- Inspectors discussed safeguarding and child protection information provided by the ELC setting with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the ELC setting and the education authority.

## Outcome of inspection

We are confident that the ELC setting has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

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HM Inspector

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