sustainable thriving achieving
East Dunbartonshire Council
www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Lairdsland Early Years Centre
Standards and Quality Report
2025/26

Context of the Centre

Lairdsland Early years Centre is situated in Kirkintilloch town centre. The centre provides 1140 hours to all 3–5-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. This is implemented through extended day, extended year provision with a variety of attendance patterns. Lairdsland Early Years Centre is based a short walk from Lairdsland Primary School, close to the heart of Kirkintilloch and next to Southbank Marina. It is ideally situation next to the Forth and Clyde canal. Our centre includes a varied demographic of families across the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation with our catchment area consisting of a mix of private and social housing.

The Early Years Centre is led by the Head Teacher of Lairdsland Primary School. The Early Years Centre team consists of 2 part time Depute Head of Centre Nursery. There are two Senior Early Years Workers, an Early Years Teacher, twenty-three Early Years Workers, Support Worker, Clerical Assistant and Housekeeper, and a Building Manager and Cleaners who support the Health and Safety of the building.

The Early Years setting has a 2-3 playroom, 3-5 playrooms, a courtyard area, a mezzanine terrace, a family room, a nurture room and an outdoor play area. We provide a happy, safe and nurturing environment, using the Being Me Under 3 and the Early Level Curriculum for Excellence outcomes to provide rich learning opportunities for children indoors and outdoors. Children have opportunities to develop their independence, social, emotional and problem solving and communication skills.

Our Early Years Centre is a modern, purpose-built facility that enables children to experience a wide variety of learning activities. Our unique courtyard area provides outdoor learning opportunities within a covered, enclosed space, whilst children also enjoy learning experiences in one of our two playrooms. Children have free flow access between our playrooms, courtyard and spacious garden area where children can engage in a variety of learning experiences. We also have identified a site in the local area for our Forest school and are in the early stages of introducing this to the children.

Lairdsland Early Years Centre provides children and families with a warm welcome when transitioning from home to nursery. All staff use an attentive, nurturing approach to ensure children settle well into their new nursery environment and we communicate their progress with parents. Lairdsland Early Years Centre has established positive relationships with our primary colleagues and partner agencies. We work together to deliver positive outcomes for all children and families.

Our vision, values and aims establish what we hold close to meet the needs of our children and families.

OUR VISION

Relationships and partnerships are at the heart of Lairdsland Early Years Centre. Our children are supported to engage with quality learning opportunities to enable them to become effective contributors, successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

OUR VALUES

Safe: children feel secure, nurtured, listened to and enabled to develop to their full potential.
Healthy: supported in learning to make healthy and safe choices.
Achieving: supported and guided in learning and in the development of skills, confidence and self-esteem. **Nurtured**: growing, developing and being cared for in an environment which provides physical and emotional security.
Active: have opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport.

Respected: being involved and having their voices heard in decision making.
Responsible: have opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles in Lairdsland Early Years Centre.
Included: have help to overcome inequalities and being accepted in their Lairdsland Early Years Centre Family.

OUR AIMS

1. To provide an environment that promotes equity and fairness, kindness and respect where children and families have a sense of belonging.
2. For children and families to experience unity and connectedness in everything around them indoors and outdoors.
3. To use a rights-based approach to support children's social and emotional wellbeing.
4. To provide a holistic play environment where children are autonomous learners who are curious, creative, critical thinkers where children are supported by knowledgeable and nurturing practitioners.

Lairdsland Early Years Centre will ensure equality for all stakeholders following Scottish Government Policy and Guidance, referring to Care Inspectorate Guidance, Health and Social Care Standards and United Nations Rights of the Child to inform our daily practice to ensure we meet individual needs of the child.

Progress in Centre Improvement Plan (CIP) priorities

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Centre priority 1: Nurturing Care and Support- Up, Up and Away</td></tr>
<tr><td>NIF Priority

• Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre
• Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</td><td>QIs

• Leadership and management of staff and rescources
• Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Progress and Impact:

In August 2025 all staff attended Up, Up and Away, part of the CIRCLE document, training online, this gave all staff an overview of the document and its purpose.
In October 2025 the Up, Up and Away environmental audit was carried out in the centre and identified a gap in prewriting skills. From this an action plan was created to develop the malleable and fine motor skills. The area was moved to a different part of the playroom to make the area bigger and allow more opportunities for development.

In March 2026 the Equity and Excellence lead who is currently based in the centre was deployed to the malleable area to support staff members in enhancing provocations and learning intentions for children, linked to fine motor and prewriting skills. The area was further developed to provide children with opportunities for self-service and a variety of malleable experiences. Children had access to a variety of open-ended resources and tools to enhance their imaginative development alongside their fine motor skills.</td></tr>
</table>



The Equity and Excellence Lead and a senior member of staff continued to attend the Up, Up and Away online training and used their developing skills and knowledge to implement strategies from the document into the 2-3 room.

In March 2026, a review of existing area audits used was completed and information collated. The information was combined to make new audits consisting of key components from each of the following documents: Being Me under 3, Up, up and away and Language and Communication Friendly Establishment (LCFE). Through observing and evaluating the layout of the room a review staff deployment and new curricular areas was embedded. All staff are confident with the changes and are building confidence in completing the paperwork for their area. The areas are now settled, well-resourced and all children are more engaged.

Staff in the 2-3 room are beginning to use the toolkit with children to identify strengths and next steps, using the strategies required to support them. A review of this initiative will take place at the end of July to assess the impact on children and establish integrating further into practice within the centre.

In May 2026 new transition paperwork was created for transitions between the 2-3 room and the 3-5 room. This has allowed for smoother transitions between rooms with important information being shared both about the child's wellbeing and learning needs. It also offered an opportunity for shared targets to be created during the transition period.

Through support and guidance from senior staff, the 2-3 room staff have upskilled their knowledge of curricular areas and have been supported to use the new paperwork, engaging in professional reading. We have observed a positive impact on 2-year-old children as they are being provided with more engaging activities and their developmental needs are being tracked appropriately with targeted intervention when required for all children.

The Enhanced Learning Resource (ELR) Team have been closely working with staff to discuss and review support strategies for children. This has improved outcomes recorded in child plans.

Next Steps: Up, Up and Away will continue on in our 26/27 improvement plan with a focus on using the strategies within the document for more targeted intervention. Specific members of staff will be given the remit of working on these strategies with individual or small groups of children. Reviewing the progress in the 2-3 room will inform how we roll the programme out with the wider staff team.

Centre priority 2: Learning, Teaching and Assessment -Raising attainment in literacy and numeracy through play pedagogy

NIF Priority	QIs
• Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children • Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.	• Leadership and management of staff and rescources • Children's Progress

Progress and Impact:

In August 2025 we were joined for part of the week by a class teacher from Lairdsland Primary school to support raising attainment in literacy and numeracy and transition to Primary 1.
All pre-school children had the opportunity to visit Lairdsland Primary on a weekly basis to support transitions through early level. This offered the opportunity to experience literacy and numeracy in a primary school setting. This has had a positive impact on all children, who demonstrated increased confidence in the primary setting and resilience when visiting their own catchment school.



We developed the malleable area to support children's fine motor skills, hand eye coordination and muscle control. This in turn developed emergent writing. We introduced dough disco; programme to help children strengthen the muscles in their fingers and develop fine motor control. The programme is set to music therefore helps to develop phonological awareness by following the beat of the song. Childrens language is also extended during this activity. Most children showed improvement in their fine motor skills and this increased their confidence in mark making.



Providing opportunities for emergent writing was a further focus in literacy development with most children having opportunities to use big movements in physical play. Children took part in games such as parachute, throwing and catching to develop gross motor skills.



The story stars programme continued in session 25/26 with a more focused approach and a set timetable. And linked in with our Bookbug sessions. All pre-school children had the opportunity to take part in these sessions, developing new vocabulary, rhythm and story structure and progress was evidenced through observation of sessions.

Bookbug sessions were introduced to parents to enhance engagement opportunities, alongside regular sessions for children. Parents attended one session per term and feedback was positive. All parents enjoyed being able to take part in these sessions. Some parents were already familiar with the programme having taken part in session in the local library.

Parents with English as and additional language visited the nursery to read to children in their home language. This provided some children with a new and enriching language experience was positive for all who took part.

Families Connect sessions provided throughout the year with literacy embedded through the structured activities and home links. Targeted families were invited to these sessions and evidence shows a positive impact on language development for all children and families who attended.

LCFE continued across the centre with labelling of resources and environmental print being maintained as areas were changed and developed. TALK strategies, a set of approaches used to develop children's speech, language and communication skills, were encouraged to be used by all staff in their areas.

The Talking Mats training was introduced to the centre where a few children have engaged and have responded well. This will be further embedded next session for some children, particularly to support transitions.

Staff members attended the Early Level Play Pedagogy Practitioner Learning Communities (PLCs) and following this carried out an audit, alongside the primary school to evaluate delivery of a play-based approach to learning. Some staff then visited centres to see different approaches to play pedagogy in practice. A working party was created to identify development needs with a focus on schematic play, interactions and spaces.

Time sampling observations in some areas of the playroom to identify how children were engaging with the play spaces were used to further develop the play spaces based on findings. This had a positive impact on almost all children as the areas were enriched in response to the observations and they offered a more cohesive flow between areas.

East Dunbartonshire's progression frameworks for literacy and numeracy were introduced to all staff. They are continuing to develop their knowledge and confidence in using these to inform their planning for children and next steps in learning. This will be continued into next session. The progression framework statements have been added into the skills trackers for learning adventures.

To further enhance phonological awareness a 'sound of the month' and a 'story/ rhyme of the month' was introduced into the backdrop plan along with a Makaton song and 'sign of the month'. All staff used this at group time and almost all staff reported an increase in engagement. from children.

Next Steps: A robust system of tracking and monitoring will be implemented in session 26/27. This will include using the skills tracker to record children's progress and identify gaps in learning. Senior leadership and the early years teacher will meet with key workers termly to collate information from the tracker and support identification of appropriate next steps. The senior leadership team will moderate planning and observations to ensure quality, depth and progression. Moderation by the senior leadership team will ensure equity and a shared expectation across the centre.

Progress in National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities

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

  Individual trackers for literacy and numeracy development has shown that **almost all** children have made progress in literacy and numeracy throughout the year. All children have an agreed next step to further develop in these areas.
  Provocations and activities provide challenge and support for children at all levels development, ensuring that all children have the opportunity to make progress in literacy and numeracy.

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

  The introduction of skills trackers in the learning adventure folders has allowed us to identify gaps in childrens learning and plan appropriate learning experiences to support and challenge children. A few children who have been identified as disadvantaged have benefited from extra time at nursery which in turn has supported their wellbeing as well as their learning and development.
  Visual prompts, timetables and now and next boards are used to support children who are non-verbal or the early stages of verbal communication. Staff are skilled in recognising childrens non-verbal cues and responding by scaffolding or prompting.
  Our family engagement programme, in particular Families Connect, has allowed parents to develop further skills and knowledge of how to support their children at home.

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

  We continue to use our support for all group and team around the child meetings to identify childrens wellbeing needs and take appropriate steps to meet these needs. We work alongside other agencies to provide a holistic approach to supporting the wellbeing of both the child and the family.

  The use of passports gives staff a snapshot of childrens holistic needs and these are something that we intend to develop further alongside an updated care plan format.
  The implementation of up, up and away has allowed us to look more in depth at children's developmental needs and create individual action plans to support them.

  Transitions between nursery and Primary 1 has been a focus this year and almost all children have shown confidence and resilience during their school visits.

Impact of Interventions for Equity

Through the support for all process, childrens needs were identified timely and appropriate supports were put in place to ensure equity in their development and learning. Appropriate referrals were made when necessary for specialist support and intervention.

The introduction of the up, up and away document has contributed to identifying needs of individual children and supported their development with appropriate targeted intervention. This has allowed most children to make progress in their development.

Self-evaluation of The Quality Framework

HMIE Single Inspection Quality Indicators.

Quality indicator	Centre self-evaluation	Inspection/ Authority evaluation
Curriculum	Good	not applicable
Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	Good
Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	Good	Good

Summary of Centre Improvement priorities for Session 2026/27

- 1.Wellbeing and Inclusion
- 2.Curriculum (pedagogy)

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

Clear expectations for observing, planning and recording have now been set with guidance developed for all staff on how to complete this. The senior leadership team will continue to support staff to use the new guidance and paperwork. Senior leadership team will be visible on the playroom floor, conducting learning walks and observations. A robust system for monitoring and evaluating planning and tracking will be implemented with regular team meetings and scheduled learning walks added to the annual monitoring calendar.

Senior leadership team will create a 3 year plan for self evaluating against the new Quality improvement framework and will support staff to reflect on and evaluate their own practice. These meaningful reflections will inform our next steps for continuous improvement.

Standards and Quality Reports should be emailed to the link Quality Improvement Officer by 19th June 2026. Centres will receive report feedback by 4th September 2026.