

DRAFT

A quality framework for early learning and childcare, school-aged childcare and childminding services

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Contents

PART ONE	2
Background information.....	2
The process of developing the draft inspection framework.....	4
Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
PART TWO.....	7
Self-evaluation.....	7
How is the quality framework structured?.....	8
How to use this framework	9
Overview of the framework	14

PART ONE

Background information

Professor Ken Muir's report 'Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education' was provided to Scottish Ministers in March 2022. The report included recommendations that the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland should develop a shared framework for the inspection of early learning and childcare (ELC). Following this proposal, Scottish Government issued a consultation seeking views on the future of inspection of Early Learning and childcare (ELC) including childminders and school-aged childcare settings in 2022. In 2022, Education Scotland His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and the Care Inspectorate worked together to develop the framework. The purpose of this framework is to promote the highest quality experiences for all ages of children in any childcare setting and as such, it can be used to support children as they progress through the early level. The shared inspection framework will be used for the inspection of all ELC services, including childminders and school-aged childcare services. Through an emphasis on self-evaluation, the framework will support practitioners and providers to deliver consistently high-quality care and education. The aim of the new framework is to provide clarity, including in respect of roles and responsibilities, consistency, a common language, streamline bureaucracy, be supportive and reduce burdens and stress on staff.

Central to Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland's work is ensuring that children are safe and protected from harm; that they are well cared for and able to flourish and that they are offered high-quality learning and developmental opportunities and experiences to provide positive outcomes. This framework is rights-based and promotes a holistic approach to the evaluation of care, play and education. The quality framework will also be used by the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland during their inspections to provide independent assurance about the quality of care, education and support to children.

The range of sectors using the self-evaluation framework.

We recognise the diversity in the provision of early learning and childcare, school-age childcare and childminding services. Individually and collectively, the ELC, childminding and school-age childcare services make an important contribution to children's outcomes and life chances.

Early learning and childcare: The term 'early learning and childcare' or ELC is defined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 as "a service consisting of education and care, of a kind which is suitable in the ordinary case for children who are under school age, regard being held to the importance of interactions and other experiences which support learning and development in a caring and nurturing setting". This takes account of the full range of early childhood education for children under school age in Scotland today. The term early learning and childcare is intended to emphasise that the care and education of very young children are inseparable. Babies, toddlers and young children learn all the time from their experiences. The term 'early learning and childcare' or ELC in this framework is defined as the funded entitlement of 1140 hours for all 3 and four year olds and eligible 2 year olds.

Childminding services: Childminders are professional childcare workers who work from their own homes to provide a childcare service for other people's children in a domestic setting. Childminders provide unique, homely and family-based care, play and learning experiences for children. They may also enter partnership with their local authority to deliver funded ELC places for children aged 3 and 4 years and eligible 2 year olds.

School-age childcare services: Provide high quality care, play and learning for school-aged children in a range of provisions before and after school as well as during holiday periods. The framework aligns with the School-Age Childcare: National Children's Charter, which was developed with children and sets out what children want from their childcare in Scotland. This charter highlights the type of activities children want to enjoy and this includes a wide range of experiences that provide opportunities for development and learning.

The process of developing the draft inspection framework.

Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland appreciate and welcome the quality and range of feedback and support received in the development of the draft shared framework. In order to understand more fully what was needed, a range of in-person and online events were hosted with the sector. It is important that Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland continue to listen to your views throughout the implementation phase and continue to engage with the sector, monitoring and reviewing how the framework is being used for self-evaluation and inspection.

Finally, our thanks go to all who contributed to the development of the self-evaluation framework and the stakeholder reference group, including membership from:

- Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) Early Years Network representation
- Children's Parliament
- Connect
- Early Years Scotland
- Care and Learning Alliance (CALA)
- National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)
- National Parent's Forum for Scotland
- Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA)
- Scottish Out of School Care Association (SOSCN)
- The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland
- The Promise Team

Principles underpinning the self-evaluation framework

The framework is underpinned by children's rights and the underlying principle that every child grows up loved, safe, respected, and able to achieve the highest possible outcomes. Children's rights must be central to every aspect of their care, play, learning and education provision across all service types.

We are committed to keeping [‘The Promise](#) and the [Pinky promise](#) made to care experienced infants, children, young people, adults, and their families that children grow up loved, safe and respected.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Care Inspectorate has statutory obligations under section 53 of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 to carry out inspections of all ELC and school-age childcare settings that are registered with them. Under section 47 and schedule 12 of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, ELC and school-age childcare services are also regulated by the Care Inspectorate as ‘care services’ (either as a ‘day care of children’ service, which includes some school-age childcare services, or as a childminding service) The Care Inspectorate is the national regulator for all care services in Scotland and regulates care services for people of all ages in Scotland. Their work includes registering services, inspecting and evaluating quality, investigating complaints, carrying out enforcement action where necessary, and a general duty to support improvement. Regulation and inspection of services contributes to vulnerable people’s safety, ensures that the quality of these services improves and helps people to know the standards they have a right to expect. The Care Inspectorate reports publicly on the quality of these services across Scotland and supports the development of better ways of delivering these services. Almost everyone in Scotland, at one time or another, will use a service that is regulated by the Care Inspectorate. Around 15,000 care services offering many different kinds of care to people with a wide range of needs are regulated by the Care Inspectorate. This includes all daycare of children services, including school-aged childcare and childminders. The Care Inspectorate will inspect all children’s services whether or not the setting delivers the funded entitlement for ELC with the aim of ensuring all children, whatever their age or setting type have the highest quality care, play and learning experiences.

Education Scotland is the national body for supporting quality and improvement of education in Scotland. HMIE support improvement and provide public accountability and assurance on the quality of education to children, their parents/carers, and Scottish Ministers. Scottish Ministers’ powers relating to inspection of educational establishments and services are set out in legislation. Section 66 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 15 (“the 1980 Act”) empowers Scottish Ministers to “...cause inspection to be made of every school...” and “any other educational establishment”. This includes public schools 16; grant aided- schools; early learning and childcare settings; and independent schools. The definition of “educational establishment” in section 135(1) of the 1980 Act applies here.

Inspections of education are carried out by His Majesty's Inspectors. HM Inspectors put children at the heart of everything they do and will uphold children's rights for education. Excellence, equity and steps to close the poverty-related attainment gap remain vital drivers of their work.

The work of HM Inspectors is underpinned by the drive to ensure that every child experiences high quality education to ensure a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increasing sustainable economic growth. As well as providing assurance, HM Inspectors share evidence about education to support services to improve and inform the development of educational policy and practice.

Both inspectorates will retain their current roles and responsibilities. The Care Inspectorate will continue to inspect all ELC settings including childminders and school-aged childcare settings whether or not they provide funded ELC. Education Scotland will inspect settings providing funded ELC.

Inspection

Both the Care Inspectorate and HMIE will use the framework for the inspection of ELC. This includes inspections they undertake independently of each other and when they work together as part of a shared inspection of ELC. Having a shared framework will enable both organisations to work more closely together, using their professional expertise to evaluate the quality of the care and education. The Care Inspectorate will apply this framework within their inspection and regulatory role to ensure all elements of funded or unfunded ELC, childminding and school aged childcare receive the highest standards of care and learning. HMIE inspections and those of the new inspectorate will continue to evaluate the quality of children's educational experiences and major changes in the education system. The framework has distinct quality indicators for the inspection of education.

The aim of distinguishing quality indicators for the inspection of funded ELC is to make clear to the sector which elements are relevant to which types of setting and is not to be viewed as a divide. Both organisations will continue to promote a culture of self-evaluation and quality improvement.

Further details on inspection methodology will be shared prior to the implementation of the framework in September 2024.

PART TWO

Self-evaluation

Introduction

This framework is designed to support services in their self-evaluation. Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland will work with ELC services and sector-wide bodies to build the capacity for self-evaluation based on this framework. There are some specific indicators that are essential when delivering the funded entitlement. These are clearly marked in the framework. However, you may also find these helpful to develop your service, particularly if you choose to work in partnership to deliver funded ELC in the future.

Self-evaluation is used to support staff to explore their progress, development and practice to identify what has improved and what still needs to improve. It is a way of using evidence to reflect on achievements and successes and develop action plans for the areas that need to improve. The process of self-evaluation, as part of a wider quality assurance approach, requires a cycle of self-evaluation based around the following three questions.

- How are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now?

It is important for self-evaluation to be manageable. Consider the areas you wish to evaluate and why, using the evidence you have gathered to support your analysis.

How is the quality framework structured?

The framework has four key questions, supported by quality indicators with illustrations of what we might expect to see in a setting where the quality of provision is at a 'very good' level of quality, or at a 'weak' level. Quality indicators that are solely for the evaluation of funded ELC provision are marked clearly in the document.

The four key questions are:

- How good is our care, play and learning
- How good is our setting
- How good is our staff team?
- How good is our leadership?

The final key question is:

What is our overall capacity for improvement?

How to use this framework

As you look through the framework, you will see a number of quality indicators that focus on specific areas for improvement. They will help you identify strengths in the ways you are currently working, and to identify areas where you could do more to improve outcomes for children and their families. The quality indicators are designed to help you understand the difference you are making, what you need to do next, and to plan and make positive changes.

The quality indicators support settings to evaluate performance at every level and use the information gathered to decide on what needs to be done to improve. It is never an end in itself, but a means to inform action, which will lead to increasingly positive impact on the service you provide. It also requires you to consider your evaluations from all the other key areas and identify your capacity for improvement. The judgement is also a forward-looking assessment; it takes account of other factors that might influence your capacity to improve the quality of the setting in the future. Such factors might include staff changes, plans to restructure, or significant changes in funding. We think this is an important question to ask as part of self-evaluation.



Within this document, you will see some illustrations to help support understanding of the links between the framework and key documents: Every setting is required to meet the Health and Social Care Standards, and we have included key relevant standards within each section. The Health and Social Care Standards My support, my life [Health-social-care-standards-support-life](#)



If you deliver funded ELC or may wish to in the future, we have included illustrations to highlight the key criteria from the National Standard in each section.

[funding-follows-child-national-standard-early-learning-childcare-providers-operating-guidance/](#)



Under development

This is a working draft document on which we will gather feedback regarding the content of the overall framework and illustrations. As such there are a number of elements that will be added into the final document layout.

UNCRC

We are currently working on the UNCRC illustrations to make them more accessible.

Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019:

We are designing an illustration to highlight this legislation in the relevant sections and this will be added when developed. For this draft, we have included a simple icon to highlight the link.



Improvement toolkit

A range of questions designed to support self-evaluation and encourage professional reflection along with key improvement resources and good practice links will be included within the final document.

Sector specific content

Following the consultation, we will develop some sector specific content to support to support implementation and provide clarity where identified as required.

Overview of the framework

How good is our care play and learning?	How good is our setting?	How good is our staff team?	How good is our leadership?
1.1 Family as partners	2.1 Quality of the setting for care play and learning	3.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values.	4.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well
1.2 Children are safe and protected	2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3.2 Staff recruitment and staff deployment (*does not apply to childminders who do not work with assistants.)	4.2 Leadership and management of staff and resources
1.3 Nurturing care and support			4.3 Leadership in early education
1.4 Ensuring excellence and equity in early education for all children			
1.5 Play and learning			
1.6 Curriculum			
1.7 Children's progress in early education			
1.8 Effective Transitions			
1.9 Teaching and assessment in early education			
What is our overall capacity for improvement?			

How good is our care, play and learning?

1.1 Family as partners

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas/themes:

- Family engagement
- Family learning
- Wellbeing
- Inclusion and equality

Descriptor

This indicator recognises the importance of respectful, effective partnership with families and others in the community to achieve positive outcomes for all children. It highlights the importance of individualised approaches to enable all families to engage in their child's experiences and learning.

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation, human rights and the embodiment of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

It emphasises a shared understanding of the value of each child as an individual with views, opinions and choices to make in their care, play and learning. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and anti-discriminatory practice supports all children to be the best they can be. It positively recognises family differences and responds without judgement. It supports and promotes the ambition of [the Promise](#) to support care experienced children and their families.

Family engagement

Very Good

Families benefit from respectful and trusting relationships and are encouraged to engage in their children's play and learning regularly and meaningfully. Partnerships with families increase family engagement that impacts positively on the quality of children's learning experiences. Staff recognise the strengths that families bring to the setting and sensitively respond to individual family circumstances. They use individualised approaches to capture this knowledge for the benefit of all children. They are strong advocates for all of their families. Families have regular opportunities to discuss their children's learning or developmental needs in an environment where they feel valued and respected. Staff ensure families are fully involved across all aspects of their child's progress and work of the setting.

Weak

Staff demonstrate limited understanding of the strengths that families bring to the setting and may be insensitive to individual family circumstances. There is a lack of quality feedback to engage families across all aspects of their child's progress and work of the setting. Little value is put on building effective trusting relationships with families. This lack of effective engagement impacts negatively on the quality of children's play and learning experiences.

Family learning

Very Good

Family learning enables families to enjoy learning together and to achieve their goals. Staff consult with families in order to meet their needs in relation to literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing as well as wider family learning outcomes. Families are fully engaged and participate where possible in designing and delivering programmes. As a result, families participate in a meaningful way in evaluating their experiences and they have a sense of achievement when successes are recorded and celebrated.

Weak

The setting has not established effective family learning. Opportunities for families to enjoy learning together and to achieve their goals are missed. Staff consultation with families fails to identify how to meet their needs in relation to literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing as well as wider family learning outcomes. Families are not involved in evaluating their family learning experiences in a meaningful way.

Wellbeing**Very Good**

Staff recognise that relationships lie at the heart of children's development and lay the foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing. They work well together to embed a rights-based approach into every aspect of their practice. Children's rights are fundamental to the ethos of the setting and this is reflected in relationships evident between children and the staff who care for them. Children's participation, through a range of developmentally appropriate activities, is central to the setting's ethos and ensures children are gaining confidence in advocating for themselves. This ensures children are healthy, happy and safe and that they are confidently making choices about their lives, including about their play and learning experiences.

The promotion of wellbeing for all children and their families underpins every aspect of the work of the setting and is based on mutual respect, honesty and trust. There is strong evidence that the approach to Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) has made real improvements in outcomes for children and their families. Staff model behaviour that promotes wellbeing and encourages it in others. Staff actively promote GIRFEC and take account of SHANARRI (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included) wellbeing indicators. to benefit all children. Everyone shares the responsibility for creating a positive and respectful ethos with a shared understanding of wellbeing. In this way, staff ensure all children have the best possible experiences and outcomes, including those children who may face greater challenges.

Staff and families work very well together to promote a safe environment where children are understood and responded to sensitively, recognising all behaviour is a form of communication. In a developmentally appropriate way, children show consideration for others and have respectful relationships with each other and staff. Each child is considered as an individual with their own needs, rights and preferences for friendships.

Weak

The ethos or practice within the setting creates barriers to positive relationships with children and their families. As a result, opportunities to work together to support children's development, wellbeing and learning are missed. Staff lack the knowledge of right-based practice and the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child. Children's experiences are inadequate. In some cases, children's rights may be compromised. Children may experience relationships with staff that are based on control and a lack of warmth, affection and love. Children's overall experience limits their ability to advocate for their needs, wishes and choices.

Staff may lack awareness and understanding about how children communicate. As a result, children do not experience sensitivity and, in some cases, this may affect the children's sense of self-worth and wellbeing. Children's relationships may be negative as a result of the management by staff. There is a lack of understanding of children as individuals, which can lead to friction between peers. Children's confidence and self-image may be compromised as a result. They may experience outdated negative approaches as staff attempt to manage their behaviour. Opportunities to seek guidance from other professionals are not taken and approaches used do not effectively consider the child and their family.

Inclusion and equality**Very Good**

The ethos in the setting provides an environment where all children and their families are welcomed, valued and experience no discrimination. This includes high levels of staff awareness to ensure there is no indirect discrimination. There is a strong sense of community within the setting and this is reflected in the positive engagement of families within the setting.

Procedures are in place to ensure the service's policies and staff's practice promote and embed children's rights in all aspects of the delivery of the service. Staff are well informed about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and The Promise and are able to translate this into actions that promote children's overall wellbeing and quality of experience. Along with understanding of the Health and Social Care Standards, this approach ensures high-quality rights-based care, play and learning experiences for all children.

Effective plans are in place to improve outcomes for all children with a focus on those facing the most challenges. A positive emphasis on challenging discrimination and stereotypes is evident in provision of resources and experiences for children. Children see themselves, their community and their families reflected positively in the resources available to them. A strong focus on driving improvement, promoting flexibility and encouraging innovation to achieve high-quality rights-based care, play and learning experiences is evident throughout the work with children and families.

Weak

The ethos in the setting is not compatible with anti-discriminatory practice. As a result, some families may not feel welcome. This lack of staff knowledge and awareness can lead to indirect discrimination. Where discrimination does occur, whether intentional or not, this is deflected or downplayed and opportunities to learn from this are lost. Not every family feels part of the community within the setting and there is little or no attempt made to make them feel included.

Equality and diversity are not well promoted or supported and approaches to tackling discrimination are not well embedded. Therefore, families may not feel secure. There is limited consideration of positive discrimination within the service.

Negative or outdated stereotypes may be promoted through the resources provided. Children may not be able to recognise themselves or their communities in a positive light due to the limits of the resources available. Plans for improvement do not take account of children's rights and this limits the opportunities to ensure all children and families have equality of access to high-quality rights-based care, play and learning experiences.

Procedures within the setting do not take account of children's rights and as such, opportunities to embed children's rights across all aspects of the delivery of the service may be missed. Staff may have some awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and The Promise, however they lack the understanding or autonomy to translate this knowledge into actions to engage children and their families in learning about their rights.

There is a lack of planning and support to improve outcomes for all children, which directly impacts those facing the most challenges. Challenging discrimination and stereotypes has not been considered in the provision of resources and experiences for children. Children may experience negative messages about themselves, their community and their families in the resources available to them.

1.2 Children are safe and protected

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- Children are safe, secure and protected from harm
- Staff responsibility

Descriptor

This indicator focuses on the importance of effective relationships and communication to ensure children are safe, secure and protected from harm. This includes well-planned opportunities to help children become resilient and develop a sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe. It is about ensuring staff have the capacity to promote safe environments across the children's day including safe access to digital and online learning. This indicator also focuses on promoting staff confidence to competently recognise, respond and action wellbeing, child protection and safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding all children requires strong partnerships to be established between the setting and its local community. This includes the importance of how staff take account of local and national policies to promote the safety and protection of children.

Children are safe, secure and protected from harm

Very Good

All staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities relating to keeping children safe and protected. Staff are proactive in keeping their safeguarding knowledge up to date. They have a very good understanding of the Getting it Right for Every Child practice model and use this across all areas of practice. This helps promote positive outcomes for children's overall health and wellbeing. Strong links and effective partnerships with other organisations are in place to ensure children's safety and wellbeing, including promoting children's ability to keep themselves safe.

A competent and well-trained designated person has overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding. They help to reduce the risk of harm to children through effective role modelling and monitoring of practice.

Children are encouraged to have a voice in the setting and staff listen and respond appropriately to any concerns, ensuring an ethos of care and support. Arrangements for raising concerns are well publicised and are known by everyone in the setting, including children. The needs and concerns of children and their families are dealt with sensitively and effectively. Collectively, this approach ensures that appropriate action is taken without delay to protect children from harm.

Weak

Staff lack confidence and understanding in their roles and responsibilities relating to keeping children safe and protected. This means that there is the potential for children to be at risk. Staff do not know children and families well enough to build meaningful relationships. There may be a lack of sensitivity when areas of concern are addressed. There may be limited training or procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of staff practice. Managers have failed to address and identify improvements required in staff development and learning.

The Getting it Right for Every Child model is not well established in the setting therefore staff do not have all the information they need to help keep children safe and protected from harm. Managers are not currently providing appropriate direction or role modelling to support staff understanding and learning to keep children safe. This means there is an increased risk to children.

Procedures to support child protection are not appropriate or may be out of date. Where appropriate procedures are available, these have not been effectively shared or understood by staff. Links with other organisations, which could assist in the protection of children, are not fully effective. Where concerns have been identified, these have not been communicated effectively with the appropriate organisations.

The views and voices of children and families are not encouraged or heard in the setting. As a result, children and their families may not approach staff with concerns. Where they do, staff may not respond appropriately to ensure families feel respected and children feel valued and loved. Arrangements for raising concerns are not well publicised or do not reflect the current arrangements. Collectively, this lack of coordination places children and their families at risk of harm.

Staff responsibility

Very Good

Staff work well together to promote a safe and caring environment for children. They accurately identify and address areas of practice or learning in relation to safeguarding and child protection practice and procedures. They skilfully engage with families, other organisations and the wider community to build their knowledge and minimise risks to children. Staff are advocates for children's safety and wellbeing; they promote fairness, challenge discrimination and ensure children receive the support they need at the right time to build resilience. They understand the benefits of children's access to the internet and have sufficient knowledge to support children to stay safe when engaging in online activities while in the service.

Detailed safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are in place and are understood by staff to help keep children safe and protect them from harm. These policies and procedures reflect emerging issues within society. Accurate record keeping and meaningful chronologies ensure that the relevant staff have the information they need to help them keep children safe and protected. All staff, regardless of role, understand their responsibility to keep children safe. They have access to whistleblowing policies and understand them, and they recognise their professional accountability in ensuring children's safety and wellbeing.

Weak

Leaders have not sufficiently developed and implemented effective child protection policies and procedures and staff have a limited understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, there is a potential increased risk to children. There may be a lack of understanding or effective team working within the setting that creates opportunities for abuse to occur or go unreported. Staff lack awareness of how to raise concerns, either internally or externally. Poorly maintained children's records and chronologies increase the risk to children. Sensitive information is not stored securely and presents a risk to children's and families' confidentiality. The relevant people do not have access to the information they need to assess children's needs and keep them safe and protected. Overall, leaders have not taken all the necessary steps to uphold the rights of all children to be safe and protected from harm.

Staff may be unfamiliar with the online activity children engage in and fail to recognise the risks presented. They may lack confidence and understanding of digital and online resources. As a result, there is a potential that children may not be able to engage with the benefits of online activity or they may be at risk while doing so.

1.3 Nurturing care and support

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- Nurture and support
- Personal planning
- All children get the support they need to reach their full potential

Descriptor

This indicator focuses on how well children are nurtured, cared for and supported. Children's care and learning routines are individual to their needs and are delivered with kindness and compassion. Personal planning reflects the holistic needs of each child, which improves their wellbeing and support positive outcomes. It highlights the importance of involving children and their families in making decisions about their care and development. Staff are skilled at building resilience and identifying and supporting children with any additional support needs.

It considers how planning and assessment ensures appropriate, proportionate and timely support, including specialist input where required.

Nurture and support

Very Good

The roles of staff are clearly defined and understood and as a result, children experience warm, caring and nurturing approaches to support their overall wellbeing. Children thrive through relationships that are consistent, nurturing and responsive. Children are sensitively cared for and skilfully helped to vocalise their needs. Staff provide them with a very good balance of experiences to promote and develop their confidence and independence.

Practice by staff reflects families' personal preferences and promotes children's independence, privacy and dignity. Where children require support with personal care, interactions throughout are warm, caring and nurture children's security, confidence and positive relationships. When meals and snacks are provided, children are fully involved in the planning and preparation of these, as appropriate. Children and staff enjoy eating together in an unhurried and relaxed atmosphere, ensuring a caring and positive social experience. Staff recognise daily routines as a rich opportunity to promote close attachment. Staff are focused on all children and can respond immediately should an emergency happen, for example choking. Food choices are nutritious and reflect current guidance. They are appropriate for children's individual cultural and dietary needs. Fresh water is available throughout the day and children are encouraged to remain hydrated.

Where children require medication, this is delivered in a safe and sensitive manner. Staff support children's understanding of their need to take medication ensuring increased confidence and independence in the management of their condition.

Children experience warm, caring relationships with staff when receiving support with feeding. Where children are weaning or are receiving their nutrition from milk feeds, this is well planned. Wherever possible, children who are weaning are included in the overall meal or snack experience with others in the setting. (Not applicable to school-age childcare).

*Children's safety and emotional security and wellbeing are supported through sensitive arrangements for sleep routines. Staff understand the importance of sleep for children's overall development. Routines are reflective of individual children's needs and family wishes and promote good habits around sleep. (Not applicable to school-age childcare)

Weak

The roles of staff may not be clearly defined and understood. As a result, children may experience inconsistent approaches that lack warmth, caring and nurturing approaches. This has the potential to affect their overall wellbeing. Staff lack the knowledge to support children to express their needs. Experiences provided by staff may limit children's choice and impact negatively on their developing confidence and independence. Children may not always experience warm, caring interactions across their day. The tone and manner of some interactions with staff does not support the overall wellbeing and nurture of children. Children's personal care needs are delivered in a manner that does not fully reflect personal preferences. Opportunities are missed to foster independence, privacy and dignity. Where children require support with personal care, this approach may be task orientated and lacking in warm, caring interactions.

Where meals and snacks are provided, there is little involvement of children in the planning and preparation. Children and staff do not sit together, and staff may be busy on other tasks. This can lead to a hurried and stressful experience for children. Staff may be distracted and not alert to what is happening with the children. Food choices may be unhealthy and are not reflective of current guidance. There is limited understanding of children's individual cultural and dietary needs. Staff do not understand the importance of hydration and children may be thirsty throughout the day, as fresh water is not easily accessible to them.

*Where children are weaning or are receiving their nutrition from milk feeds, staff have limited understanding of the need to promote warm, caring relationships at this time. (Not applicable to school-age childcare.) Children may receive their meals or snacks in a task-driven manner rather than reflecting their individual needs. Weaning children may not be included in the overall meal or snack experience with others in the setting, limiting their opportunity for social engagement.

*Children's safety, emotional security and wellbeing are compromised by poor sleep arrangements. Staff have limited understanding of the importance of sleep for children's overall development. Routines do not fully reflect individual children's needs and family wishes and as such may impact on good habits around sleep. (Not applicable to school-age childcare.)

There is inconsistency or a lack of understanding about the management and administration of medication. Children's confidence to manage their medication may be affected. There may also be the potential of risk for children where they refuse to take their medication.

Personal planning

Very Good

Children's overall wellbeing is supported through effective personal planning. The design and content of the personal plan promotes children's rights and respects and values the individuality of each child and their family. Children are involved in having a say in the design of the plan wherever possible. Including elements where children can use photographs or images to express their needs and wants. Wellbeing indicators are used very effectively to provide complete assessments of children's strengths and support needs. This includes children who are more able. These are identified early through careful observation and effective analysis of assessment information. Children and families are central to this process, ensuring information sharing by staff promotes consistency and continuity of care. This enables the relevant staff to respond quickly, sensitively and compassionately to changes in a child's life.

Where children have identified support needs there are clear protocols in place to ensure that children are sensitively supported on a daily basis ensuring that they are recognised as a capable individual and not defined or limited by a support need. Where children may require emergency medication there are clear protocols in place with clear information to enable staff to act without delay. These are developed with the appropriate professionals to ensure consistency in the standard of care provided. The suitability of plans and their impact is reviewed on a regular basis and as a minimum at least every six months, in line with legislation.

Weak

Children's holistic wellbeing needs are not always met as staff have limited understanding of the importance of embedding wellbeing indicators within their personal planning approach. Personal plans do not comply with national guidance and legislation, or support consistency and continuity of care routines and development. Staff knowledge of the use of observations may be limited and result in poor-quality information upon which to build analysis.

Where children have identified support needs there may be a lack of appropriate information in place. As a result, staff approaches to children may limit their access to play and learning experiences. They may be over protective or may not recognise relevant risks and therefore not plan effectively to mitigate these. Where children may require emergency medication, protocols do not include all of the relevant information leading to a potential risk to children where medication could be withheld or incorrectly administered. Personal plans are not always well maintained or regularly reviewed, and children and families have little input in this process, which could result in poorer outcomes overall.

All children get the support they need to reach their full potential

Very Good

Staff have high expectations for all children and provide them with the correct support and encouragement to enable them to fully engage in exploration and play experiences. Staff know their children and families very well and they use this knowledge to ensure children are well supported and are developing to their full potential. Arrangements to ensure appropriate support is in place, including specialist input where required. This ensures children receive any additional help they may require in a timely manner. Staff are knowledgeable about the potential impact on children of adverse childhood experiences and can implement supports to build children and family resilience where needed.

Staff work proactively with children, families and other professionals to support children's ongoing development and learning. There are strong, collaborative partnerships and consistent contact with all those supporting children. Staff recognise the importance of supporting children's engagement with current interests and stage of development as well as supporting children's continuing development and learning. Appropriate next steps and strategies based on children's individual needs and prior learning are planned by relevant staff in consultation with families and other professionals as required. Together these approaches ensure all children are developing well and are enjoying positive play and learning experiences that are right for them and support them to achieve their full potential.

Weak

Staff may not have high expectations for all of their children. They may limit children's access to high quality play and learning experiences as a result. Opportunities to provide support and encouragement to enable all children to fully engage in exploration and play experiences are missed. Where next steps are planned these may not link appropriately to prior learning or children's interests. They may be overly challenging or lack a sufficient element of challenge for children to experience confidence and a sense of achievement. The views, knowledge and expertise of children and families are not fully recognised and valued. Links with other professionals are not yet resulting in positive outcomes for children. Staff lack an awareness of the potential impact of adverse childhood experiences and miss opportunities to implement supports to build children and family resilience where needed. Therefore, not all children get the support they need to reach their full potential

1.4 Ensuring excellence and equity in early education for all children (Applicable to settings delivering funded ELC)

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas/themes:

- Universal support
- Identification of learning needs and targeted support
- Removal of barriers to learning

Descriptor

This indicator highlights the importance of providing high-quality, inclusive, appropriate and rights-based support. It recognises that all children progress in their learning differently, depending on their circumstances. It promotes strong, collaborative partnership working between those supporting children. It highlights the importance of involving children and families meaningfully in decisions about how their needs should be best met. It recognises that at these early stages of learning and development children have different starting points. It highlights that children may require additional support, to access and benefit fully from their entitlement to high-quality early education. This includes identifying learning needs and providing targeted support. It highlights the key role senior leaders play to ensure all staff have relevant professional learning to meet the diverse needs of children. It recognises the importance of collaborating with partners to make responsive adjustments to practice.

Universal support

Very Good

Staff provide all children with highly effective support and encouragement. All children participate fully and engage in exploration and play, supported by high-quality interactions, experiences and creative use of spaces. Their individual needs are at the centre of planning and review processes. Staff work very well with families to take full account of the diversity of children's needs. They understand the impact this can have on children's experiences, interests and in the individual ways they learn. Each child benefits from nurturing interactions and participates in their own way in learning conversations with a supportive adult who knows them well.

The provision of high-quality experiences at the right level help children make sustained progress in their learning from their individual starting points. Children have individualised learning and development targets. These are reviewed and evaluated regularly with families, and appropriate next steps are identified. There are strong collaborative partnerships with all those supporting children.

Weak

Not all children receive the support and encouragement they need to enable them to fully engage in exploration and play experiences. Opportunities to be creative in the use of spaces or in quality interactions to ensure inclusion are limited. Children's needs are not appropriately identified or do not effectively inform the planning and review processes.

Staff may have low expectations for some or all children and this contributes to inequality in experience for some children. Staff do not fully understand their families and as such, they do not work well with them to match learning experiences and resources to the needs and abilities of individual children. Some children have limited access to exploration and engagement with natural materials including daily encounters with the outdoors. Generally, children's individual needs are not met and this impacts on overall outcomes for children's wellbeing and learning. Tasks, resources and experiences are not at the right level to help children make sustained progress in their learning from their starting points.

Relevant individualised learning and development targets are incomplete or not in place for all children. Where these are created, they do not sufficiently build on prior learning and where next steps are identified these are not sufficiently based on progress made and as a result may lack an appropriate level of challenge. Partnerships with all of those supporting children are not working well to ensure effective collaboration. Important developments or information may be missed as a result.

Identification of learning needs and targeted support

Very Good

Children's learning needs are identified early through careful observation and effective analysis of robust assessment information from a range of sources. Very effective use is made of the national wellbeing indicators to provide holistic assessments of children's strengths and support needs. Staff ensure appropriate, proportionate and timely support, including specialist input where required. Staff fully adhere to legislative requirements and provide high-quality targeted support to all children who require additional support with their learning. This includes the learning needs of highly able children. Children, families and partners are fully involved in decisions about learning and support. Targeted interventions are highly effective and lead to positive outcomes for children.

Weak

The use of observation and analysis of assessment information from a range of sources is not in place or not used appropriately to identify children's needs. There may be a limited understanding of the national wellbeing indicators or these may not be used to provide assessments of children's strengths and support needs. Staff lack understanding of the legislative requirements and their responsibility to provide high-quality targeted support to all children with additional support needs or who require additional support with their learning. This includes the learning needs of highly able children. Children, families and partners are not fully involved in decisions about learning and support. As a result, children who require additional support with their learning experience are failing to receive appropriate, proportionate and timely support.

Removal of barriers to learning

Very Good

Staff know all children and families very well and the socio-economic, cultural and linguistic context in which they live. Staff use this information effectively to respond sensitively with well-timed supports, taking account of family circumstances. Senior leaders and staff proactively plan a range of supports and engagement activities to reduce and minimise where possible, potential barriers to learning and development. Staff are highly skilled at identifying and assessing children who face barriers to their learning. All children who have additional support or are at risk of facing barriers to learning are closely monitored and receive high-quality targeted support. Staff collaborate closely with key partners to remove barriers to learning and provide an inclusive and nurturing learning environment.

Weak

Staff fail to understand their children and families and the local socio-economic context in which they live. This means they are unable to plan effectively to engage with families and to support children. Opportunities to remove or reduce potential barriers to learning and development are missed as a result. Staff may lack the knowledge and skills to identify and assess children who face barriers to their learning. In particular children who have additional support needs or who are at risk of facing barriers to learning are not in receipt of quality targeted support. Staff have limited opportunities to work closely with key partners to remove barriers to learning. This impacts negatively on their ability to provide an inclusive, nurturing learning environment for all children.

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1.5 Play and learning

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- Children's engagement
- Quality of interactions
- Child-centred planning and assessment

Descriptor

This indicator focuses on children's right to play, have fun, experience joy and have high-quality learning experiences indoors and outdoors. It recognises the value of play as a concept in itself, as well as an opportunity for developing skills for life and learning. It highlights the importance of placing the needs and interests of children at the centre. Children benefit from staff who skilfully support their current interests and curiosities. High-quality experiences promote children's learning and development. Staff use observations effectively to promote and inform all aspects of children's development, learning and wellbeing. It emphasises the importance of a very good understanding of child development, theory and practice. Children feel valued, safe and secure and are progressing well as a result of positive and responsive relationships that support them to make informed choices about leading their play and learning.

Children's engagement

Very Good

Children experience positive relationships where they feel valued, safe and secure. As a result of high-quality, real-life experiences, they are successful, responsible and confident in their play. Children are highly motivated and fully engaged by the range of rich, challenging, planned and spontaneous experiences both indoors and outdoors. Well considered innovations and creative approaches successfully engage children's imagination and enrich their play and learning. Play experiences develop children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy.

Children make informed choices about leading their play and learning within a stimulating, challenging and creative setting. Spaces, experiences and interactions, including through strong connections to their own and wider communities, extend and sustain children's interest. Children have time, space and support to make decisions and develop their creativity, resilience and independence very well.

Weak

Relationships between staff, children and their families are not positively established and as such, children may not feel valued, safe and secure. The quality of play and learning experiences is poor, limiting children's opportunities to be successful, responsible and confident in their play. Opportunities for children to make choices in their play is limited. There is little in the way of stimulating, challenging and creative experiences available to engage their imaginations and interest. As a result, children lack interest and motivation and may experience boredom and frustration. Children have little access to their own or wider communities. This limits access to a wide range of resources and experiences to stimulate children's interests and enhance play and learning opportunities. There are few opportunities to be engaged in play experiences to develop children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy. Approaches to developing children's independence are not well understood and as such, children have limited opportunities to make decisions and develop their creativity and resilience.

Quality of interactions

Very Good

Positive and responsive relationships support the emotional resilience of children and families through holistic and nurturing approaches to secure children's wellbeing. High-quality observations happen naturally during everyday activities and are used well to promote children's creativity and curiosity.

Effective use of questioning extends children's thinking, widens their skills and consolidates their learning. Through careful observations and effective assessment of information, progress and achievements are recognised and enhanced. Any additional supports are identified, planned for and implemented. This highly responsive approach ensures children are developing a broad range of relevant skills. Warm, responsive relationships are evident between the staff and children. Staff interact in a sensitive, responsive and stimulating way to promote children's curiosity, independence and confidence. Staff listen effectively to children and ensure their views are respected and acted upon.

Weak

Relationships between the staff and families to support resilience are not well established and have limited impact on their wellbeing. The approach to observations within the setting is not implemented effectively.

Opportunities to observe children in their everyday play are missed, leading to gaps in understanding about children's interests. Questioning is not used as a tool to extend children's thinking, widen their skills or consolidate their learning.

The need for additional supports for some children may be missed, impacting negatively of children's experiences and overall development. Staff do not demonstrate understanding of child development and learning approaches and as such are unable to use this to enhance children's experiences. Staff interactions with children may lack sensitivity and children may not be listened to or responded to with respect.

Child-centred planning and assessment**Very Good**

Staff plan in ways that are child-centred and responsive to children's interests, life experiences and stage of development. Staff are skilled at facilitating and empowering children to plan their experiences. Staff have a very good understanding of child development and skilfully put this into practice. As a result, children are happy, confident and have a key role in leading their own play and learning. Staff use observations very well to plan high-quality spaces, experiences and interactions. Staff fully involve families to share and reflect on children's experiences. This highly responsive approach ensures children are developing a broad range of skills.

Weak

Staff approaches to planning are not well considered or understood. Experiences that are offered lack a child-centred focus and are not responsive to children's interests, life experiences and stage of development. There is little evidence of children's active involvement in leading their own play and learning. The use of observations within the setting is limited and therefore is not used appropriately to enhance children's access to high-quality spaces, experiences and interactions. There are missed opportunities to engage children and their families to reflect on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator 1.6: Curriculum (Applicable to settings delivering funded ELC)

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- Pedagogy
- Curriculum design
- Continuity and progression

Descriptor

This indicator highlights the importance of placing the needs of children at the centre of curriculum design and development. It recognises the importance of the curriculum being informed by shared values and beliefs about how young children learn which is understood by everyone. It highlights the curriculum is most effective when it is meaningful to children and families and takes account of the local context. It focuses on a clear and shared understanding of pedagogy which promotes high-quality learning and teaching and results in positive educational outcomes for all children. It highlights planning for progression in children's learning and ensures continuity across the early level.

Pedagogy**Very Good**

Staff are confident and knowledgeable and deliver high-quality play pedagogy. This ensures continuity in children's curriculum experiences, which offers all children challenge and enjoyment that is stimulating and engaging.

There is a shared understanding in the setting of child-centred pedagogy, and staff readily engage in debate and dialogue about ensuring high-quality play. In their practice, they demonstrate their deep understanding of the critical role of play in promoting children's development and learning.

Children are provided with rich, relevant experiences across the curriculum that enhance their play and enable them to practise skills. Children explore the world around them and develop knowledge and understanding in their own way and in their own time.

Well-timed and skilled interactions effectively promote children's creativity, extend their thinking, and consolidate their learning in play. Through this highly responsive approach, children are developing a broad range of skills within motivating and relevant contexts. Staff skilfully support children to take forward their own ideas and interests. Children are supported to experience a sense of achievement and to understand the reasons for their success.

Weak

Staff are not confident and knowledgeable in offering child-centred pedagogy. As a result, there is little continuity in children's curriculum experiences. Learning is not appropriate for children's individual stage of development. There is not a shared understanding in the setting of child-centred pedagogy, with few staff engaging in debate and professional dialogue to ensure continuous high-quality play. Staff have limited understanding of the critical role of play in promoting children's development and learning. Children's experiences are limited and do not provide opportunities to develop and apply skills for learning and life. Staff interactions do not effectively, promote children's creativity, extend their thinking or consolidate their learning through play. As a result of this approach, children are not developing a broad range of skills across all areas of the curriculum within motivating and relevant contexts.

Curriculum design

Very Good

The early childhood curriculum is holistic and built upon trusting relationships. Staff value children and their potential for learning from birth. They understand the uniqueness of each child, their family and the community in which they live. This includes those children facing additional challenges, for example, care experienced children and those living with socio-economic challenges. The curriculum framework values and upholds the rights of the child including the right to play. It is informed by national guidance and current research on early education and care. The framework for the curriculum strives to achieve challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance. It reflects local circumstances and adapts to meet the changing needs of children and their families. The children's curriculum is enriched by the highly effective contributions of carefully chosen partnerships.

Together, staff successfully plan and deliver relevant, real-life opportunities for children to apply their developing skills and consolidate their learning. Children are given opportunities and encouragement to access all areas of the curriculum to gain an awareness of the world in which they live and grow.

Weak

The purpose of the curriculum framework may not be well communicated within the setting and as such it is not well understood by staff and families. There may be aspects of the framework or the implementation in practice that do not support high expectations and outcomes for children. Local needs and circumstances have not featured or are not accurately reflected in the design of the framework and a values-based approach is not evident in either the design or delivery. The design lacks quality and is not reflected of children's individual needs and stages of development.

Where the curriculum framework is overall of a good quality, staff may fail to implement this effectively due to a lack of knowledge, direction or a combination of both. As a result, children are missing opportunities for high-quality play and learning. Leading to poorer-quality outcomes for both children and their families.

There may be no attempt to deliver the curriculum to all or some children and there is evidence that staff understanding of teaching and play in learning is poor. This limits children's ability to progress in all aspects of their learning and development.

There is an absence or lack of awareness of children's wellbeing and rights, including the right to play. Aspirations for children are low and children are not recognised as capable and competent learners. As a result, children may not feel confident in their own abilities.

Progression in children's learning is not considered or planned for. This lack of continuity impacts opportunities for children's learning. Children's needs, dispositions, interests and stage of development are not considered or accurately represented as part of the planning process. Staff may not know or understand children's unique abilities. Children are not involved and supported in making decisions about their own learning. Staff lack knowledge to understand and take responsibility for providing high-quality learning opportunities for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, and activity. The additional essential aspects for early learning - communication, mathematics, curiosity, inquiry and creativity - are not actively promoted, limiting outcomes for children's learning and development.

Continuity and progression

Very Good

Staff ensure the curriculum is well-matched to children's age and stage of development. They very effectively build on the prior and continuous learning of all children, within and beyond the setting, including the next stage of their learning. Staff monitor and evaluate progress across the curriculum to improve children's learning. Transition programmes very effectively build on prior learning and support curriculum continuity and progression to meet the needs of all children. Very good attention is paid to continuous progression in children's learning and wellbeing during their learning journey across our setting and into primary one. Staff carefully and concisely record aspects of children's progress in their development and learning. Staff use planned opportunities to develop a shared understanding of progress and play-based pedagogy across the early level. Information is shared meaningfully with families and key partners. As a result, children benefit from meaningful continuity in their learning experiences as they move on to school.

Weak

The purpose of the curriculum framework may not be well communicated within the setting and as such it is not well understood by staff and families. There may be aspects of the framework or the implementation in practice that do not support high expectations and outcomes for children.

Local needs and circumstances have not featured or are not accurately reflected in the design of the framework and a values-based approach is not evident in either the design or delivery. The design lacks quality and is not reflected of children's individual needs and stages of development.

Where the curriculum framework is overall of a good quality, staff may fail to implement this effectively due to a lack of knowledge, direction or a combination of both. As a result, children are missing opportunities for high-quality play and learning, leading to poorer quality outcomes for both children and their families.

There may be no attempt to deliver the curriculum to all or some children and there is evidence to support that staff understanding of teaching and play in learning is poor. This limits children's ability to progress in all aspects of their learning and development. There is an absence or lack of awareness of children's wellbeing and rights, including the right to play. Aspirations for children are low and children are not recognised as capable and competent learners. As a result, children may not feel confident in their own abilities.

Progression in children's learning is not considered or planned for. This lack of continuity impacts opportunities for children's learning. Children's needs, dispositions, interests and stage of development are not considered or accurately represented as part of the planning process. Staff may not know or understand children's unique abilities. Children are not involved and supported in making decisions about their own learning. Staff lack knowledge to understand and take responsibility for providing high-quality learning opportunities for literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, and activity. The additional essential aspects for early learning - communication, mathematics, curiosity, inquiry and creativity - are not actively promoted, limiting outcomes for children's learning and development.

1.7 Children's progress in early education (Applicable to settings delivering funded ELC)

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- Children's progress in communication, early language and literacy, numeracy and mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- Children's progress over time across all areas of learning
- Children achieve and experience success
- Staff ensure equity for all children

Descriptor

This indicator relates to children's development, learning and progress. It requires clear understanding of early learning, child development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way children learn across all areas of the curriculum and the importance of experiences that are developmentally appropriate. It emphasises that high-quality early learning contributes to closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning, ensuring these foundations are secure to achieve future attainment success.

Children's progress in communication, early language and literacy, numeracy and mathematics, and health and wellbeing

Very Good

All children make very good progress from their prior stages of learning. A strong focus on health and wellbeing enhances children's learning. Children develop and apply their early language and literacy, numerical and mathematical skills very well across a variety of imaginary and real-life experiences. Children are enabled to be increasingly independent and learn at a pace that is relevant for their stage of development. Children demonstrate high levels of interest about their place in the world and the world around them. Children are confident to try new experiences both indoors and outdoors and engage with new learning enthusiastically.

Weak

There is little evidence that children are developing their emotional, social, physical and cognitive skills as a result of the work of the setting. Children may demonstrate a lack of interest about the learning experiences available to them. Children's learning and development is compromised as a result. There is a lack of connection between health and wellbeing and children's ability to learn and routines or approaches used by staff may disrupt learning opportunities. Children may communicate their lack of challenge in behaviours evidenced across the day. Opportunities to promote children's independence and learning at their own pace and relevant for their stage of development are too few. Children have limited opportunities to develop and apply their early language, numerical and mathematical skills across a variety of imaginary and real-life experiences.

Children's progress over time across all areas of learning**Very Good**

Since joining the setting, all children make very good progress across almost all aspects of their learning and development. This includes those who require additional support with their learning, are care experienced or are living with socio-economic challenges. Children are becoming increasingly confident, resilient and independent learners. From the earliest stages, children are well supported to make choices and share their learning and progress in their own way. Staff know each child very well as an individual learner and build upon prior learning. We make sound professional judgements about significant learning and children's progress based upon reliable information and data. Staff collaborate with colleagues including those working across the early level to develop a shared understanding of children's progress to ensure continuity in learning.

Weak

From the earliest stages, children lack support from staff to make choices and share their learning and progress. Staff have limited knowledge of each child as an individual learner. As a result, since joining the setting children make very little progress across aspects of their learning and development. Limited progress is evident for all children including those who require additional support with their learning.

Children's confidence, resilience and independence in their learning is therefore negatively impacted. Where data and information is available, staff lack the knowledge and understanding to make sound professional judgements about children's learning and progress. Staff have limited opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues within and across the early level, missing opportunities to develop a shared understanding of children's progress to ensure continuity in learning.

Children achieve and experience success

Very Good

Children's individual successes are recognised and celebrated. Families feel empowered to share children's achievements from outwith the setting. Staff use this information meaningfully to influence future learning and progress. Children are successful, confident and responsible learners who contribute effectively to the life of the setting, the wider community and increasingly, as global citizens. Children are achieving a range of skills and attributes through a wide range of high-quality experiences.

Weak

There is little recognition and celebration of children's individual successes. Families are not encouraged to share children's achievements from outwith the setting and are not well informed about their child's progress. This means that future learning and progress is not influenced by all of the children's achievements. The contribution the staff are making to children's success is unclear and at times, may stifle children's creativity and learning. Children are not encouraged to share their views and opinions and may demonstrate frustration as a result.

Staff ensure equity for all children

Very Good

Children thrive through supportive, inclusive spaces, experiences and interactions. Staff identify and minimise potential barriers to learning for children in collaboration with families and relevant partners. Staff take very good account of children's differing learning needs and the cultural, socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds of our families. Very effective use is made of information and data to support decisions about future interventions on children's progress, for example the levels of multiple deprivation in the areas in which our children and families live.

Senior leaders and staff monitor very closely the impact of strategies to identify gaps in learning and ensure equity for all. Staff evaluate the impact of strategies to inform what needs to happen to ensure children continue to make progress in their development and learning.

Weak

Children's access spaces, experiences and interactions may be limited as a result of a lack of awareness of inclusive practice. Staff do not clearly identify and minimise potential barriers to effective learning for children in collaboration with parents and relevant partners. Staff do not take account of children's differing learning needs and the cultural, socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds of all children and their families. Limited use is made of information and data on children's progress. As a result, ill-informed decisions may be made about future interventions. Senior leaders and staff carry out limited monitoring and evaluation of the impact of strategies which identify gaps in learning. Opportunities for improvements in children progress in their development and learning are compromised.

DRAFT

1.8 Effective transitions

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- children's security and wellbeing
- effective communication

Descriptor

This indicator focuses on the need for children to be well supported at times of transition. Recognising that moving into and out of any childcare setting or moving through different rooms or stages of learning requires careful planning. This includes developing procedures that consider children's individual and developmental needs within the transition planning process. It promotes the need for meaningful consultation and effective communication with children, families and all professionals involved, to ensure effective partnership working when any changes in the arrangements for their care, play and learning are due to take place.

Children's security and wellbeing

Very Good

The approach to transitions places the child and their family at the heart of any decision-making process. This includes when they first start, and as they move to another stage of, learning or to a new setting. Staff understand and actively promote the importance of building relationships and developing secure attachments within and beyond their setting. Wherever possible, children are supported to transition when it is appropriate, and they are ready to do so.

Staff understand the impact of life events and provide effective support to help with these times, making adjustments as necessary to ensure equity for each child when attending the setting and when moving to another setting. Very effective arrangements are in place to involve families and relevant agencies in carefully planning personalised approaches for those requiring additional time and support.

Children experience effective support when they have a split placement with another setting. Staff make effective links and communicate with other settings to ensure continuity in learning and care.

When considering transition within the setting, there is a wider focus on children's development and learning and decisions are not solely based on children's age. Once transitions are agreed, there is a planned approach that is individual to each child and their family to enable them to feel secure with the changes. This is not limited to visits, but also includes other innovative ways to make connections and begin to build trusting relationships before permanent moves take place.

Staff are sensitive to, and can recognise, where any change may impact on other children. They use flexible approaches and innovative ideas to enable children to maintain friendships where appropriate. Together, these approaches support children and families to experience positive transitions and feel confident and secure as they move to another stage of learning or to a new setting.

Weak

The approach to transitions does not give due consideration to the needs of the children and their families. This includes a lack of settling-in process when children first register with the setting. The process of decision-making may be inflexible or not consistently applied. Staff may lack understanding or opportunity to promote relationships and develop secure attachments within and beyond their setting. Insufficient or no account is taken of the impact of life events when attending the setting and when moving to another setting. As such, families and children miss out of support at these times. No or ineffective arrangements are in place to involve families and relevant agencies in planning personalised approaches for those requiring additional time and support. Key information is not considered when planning for changes to children's care, play and learning experience. It is likely that decisions are based on children's age rather than including a broader range of considerations. Once transitions are agreed, these take place at short notice, with limited opportunities for children to adjust and feel secure.

The setting may be isolated and have few or no links with other settings. This impacts on children's quality of experience and outcomes when experiencing split placement with another setting.

A tokenistic approach to supporting transition is applied and opportunities to support children to start forming trusting relationships may be missed or limited.

There is limited understanding of the impact on remaining children and as such, some children may not receive support as they experience change, and in some cases, loss. Children experience insecurity and distress because of the management of transition within the setting.

Effective communication

Very Good

All staff recognise the importance of effective communication and implement this when children are experiencing any transition. Comprehensive, well-planned, effective transition arrangements are in place that ensure children and their families experience positive and successful transitions. This includes fostering positive working relationships internally and across other settings that children move to, such as local primary schools or another childcare setting. Arrangements are effective for all children, in particular for those requiring additional support.

This includes where appropriate, linking with the named person. For children needing additional support, this is clearly documented in the child's plan. Key information to support children's continuity and progression in their care and learning is shared appropriately, securely and in good time. Staff use this information effectively to plan for both continuity and change in children's care, play and learning needs. As a result, children are happy, stimulated and receive appropriate challenge throughout their transition. Regular evaluation of the impact of transition arrangements, involving the setting partners, other settings and agencies identifies where improvements may be needed and ensures continued successful outcomes for children and their families.

Weak

Arrangements in the setting do not support continuity and progression of children's care, play and learning. This includes ineffective communication and a lack of positive working relationships internally and across other settings. As a result, when children move to other settings, this is poorly planned and implementation of the transition process may also contribute to creating or maintaining barriers. In particular, children who require additional support may be particularly impacted by poor practice in respect of transition arrangements. Key information, including that within the child's plan, to support children is not shared appropriately, securely and in good time. Where information is shared, it may not be sufficiently up to date or detailed to accurately provide a current picture of the child and their family.

There may be significant gaps in information or staff may not use information well. As a result, children will experience a lack of continuity and progression in their care, play and learning needs throughout transition. Transition arrangements are not routinely or effectively evaluated and as such, opportunities to improve children and families experience of transition are missed.

DRAFT

Quality indicator 1.9 Teaching and assessment (Applicable to settings delivering funded ELC)

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- Approaches to teaching
- Effective use of assessment
- Planning for learning
- Tracking and monitoring of learning

Descriptor

This indicator focuses on approaches to learning, teaching and assessment that secures high-quality early education for young children. It highlights the importance of staff having a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy to provide excellence and equity for all. There is strong focus on the effective use of observation and assessment to inform and plan future learning and identify progress in learning. Together this ensures children's successes and achievements are maximised. It focuses on how staff involve children meaningfully in planning for their own learning. It highlights the importance of children's earliest experiences of education and the clear focus on reducing the poverty related attainment gap.

Approaches to teaching**Very Good**

The ethos and culture of the setting demonstrate a strong commitment to children's rights and providing excellence and equity for all. Across the setting, relationships are positive. All children feel valued, safe and secure. As a result, they are successful, confident and responsible. Children are encouraged to contribute effectively to the setting and its community in purposeful and innovative ways. They enjoy and are actively involved in learning through spontaneous play opportunities, well-planned, purposeful play and through relevant real-life experiences.

Children are highly motivated and fully engaged by the range of rich, challenging experiences and opportunities that are on offer both indoors and outdoors.

Learning experiences extend and sustain children's interest, help them make decisions and develop their creativity, resilience and independence very well. Children make informed choices about their learning and they have a key role in leading their own learning within a supportive nurturing environment.

Staff have a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy and they skilfully put this into practice. They have warm, responsive relationships with children, creating a positive climate for achievement. Staff use skilled questioning and scaffold children's learning well. They interact in a sensitive, responsive and stimulating way to promote curiosity, independence and confidence. Staff listen effectively to children and they know their views are respected and acted upon. Children have time and space to follow their interests and deepen their individual learning. Learning is enriched and supported by children's use of digital technologies.

Weak

The ethos and culture of the setting compromise children's rights and impact negatively on equity for all children. Across the setting, some relationships may not be positive. Children may not feel valued, safe and secure as a result and this impacts on their success and confidence. Staff fail to encourage children to contribute effectively to the setting and its community. Children's play opportunities are not well-planned, and children may not be motivated as the learning experiences do not extend and sustain children's interest. Children's opportunities to make informed choices about their learning are few. Staff lack understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy and they are unable to put this into practice. The understanding of the key role children should have in leading their own learning within a supportive nurturing environment is limited and children's experience of learning and teaching overall is negative.

Effective use of assessment

Very Good

Staff use assessment as an integral part of the child-centred pedagogy in practice. Staff capture and record children's progress and achievements at key points, taking account of their actions, emotions and words. They confidently identify factors that create barriers to learning and are proactive in ensuring equitable experiences for all. Staff know children very well as learners. Listening skilfully to children, they make very good use of high-quality observations and interactions to make accurate judgements about children's learning.

Observations are used very effectively to inform appropriate and well-timed interventions and future learning. These interventions have a clear focus on reducing the poverty-related attainment gap and ensuring equity in educational outcomes. Assessment information provides robust and reliable evidence that leads to significant improvement to learning and developmental outcomes for all children. Staff record assessment information in meaningful and informative ways, making very good use of this to support children to reflect on their learning, including the use of learning profiles. Assessment information demonstrates children's achievements and progress in learning over time. The overall approach to assessment supports highly effective transitions into, across and from the setting. Families receive regular and up-to-date information, including learning profiles, on their children's progress and achievements. Both children and their families make valuable contributions to these profiles. Children talk about their learning and achievements and are developing an understanding of themselves as learners and what they might learn next. Through talking together with colleagues within and beyond the setting, staff have a shared and accurate understanding of children's progress and achievements.

Weak

Staff do not know individual children well as learners. The quality of observations where these are in use, is not good enough to inform interventions for children's future learning. Approaches to capturing and recording children's progress and achievements are poor quality and may lack consistency in the frequency of recording, providing a sparse picture of children's progress over time. As a result, staff are unable to provide reliable evidence to support improvement to learning and developmental outcomes for children. Approaches to assessment are disproportionate and as a result, unmanageable for staff and this impacts negatively on children's experiences.

Services may be isolated from other professionals and may not engage in professional dialogue outwith their own service, leading to gaps in information about children and opportunities for staff knowledge and development. Staff expectations for some or all children are low, resulting in activities that fail to challenge and engage children. Families do not receive regular, accurate and quality up-to-date information on their children's progress and achievements. Where profiles are being used, these may be generic, of poor quality and not accurately reflect children's achievements and interests. Children and their families are not encouraged to contribute to these profiles.

Planning for learning

Very Good

Staff implement a child-centred approach to planning learning that helps children build on what they already know and can do. Curriculum, well-developed pedagogy and an extensive knowledge of child development is used as a basis for future planning. Planning for learning demonstrates a clear focus on ensuring excellence and equity for all. Staff use a highly effective blend of responsive and intentional approaches to planning high-quality learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors. Children are supported to learn about and digital technologies. The high-quality experiences provide learning opportunities in all areas of the curriculum. Children are involved effectively in planning for their own learning in meaningful and developmentally appropriate ways. Staff regularly use high-quality, relevant information and data to review the progress children are making to inform their planning of spaces, experiences, and interactions. This ensures that child-centred pedagogy is put into practice.

Weak

There is a lack of knowledge of child-centred approaches to planning learning. As a result, planning approaches are limited and not designed to meet the needs of all children across all areas of learning. Planned experiences are not developmentally appropriate and/or tailored to meet all children's individual learning needs. Children are not involved in planning learning. There is a lack of connection between the planned curriculum and the activities provided to children. Where information and data is available, this may not be current or may not be used appropriately to review the progress children are making.

Tracking and monitoring of learning

Very Good

Staff track, monitor and evaluate children's progress across all areas of the curriculum. They effectively use approaches that are manageable and well understood to secure improved outcomes for all children. Staff confidently use information and data from a range of sources to identify children who may benefit from additional support and interventions. Staff take full account and address all factors that may prevent children making very good progress in their learning. These include differing socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds that may result in educational inequity. Where required, additional support and interventions are provided to help all children make the best progress across the early level. Extensive use is made of information and data to evaluate the effectiveness of additional support to reduce any differences in progress and in some cases, accelerate progress.

Weak

Monitoring and evaluation of progress across the curriculum is not considered or not reflective of what is available to children. In particular, children facing additional challenges are not considered or planned for appropriately, contributing to the disadvantage they experience in their learning experience. Approaches to data collection may be limited or over burdensome. Where information is gathered to plan children's play and learning experiences, this is of poor quality and not from a suitable range of sources to be used to design effective interventions to improve outcomes for all children and their families. Staff lack capacity to plan to ensure all children experience continuity and progression through to the next stage of their learning. As a result, children's progress across the early level is compromised.

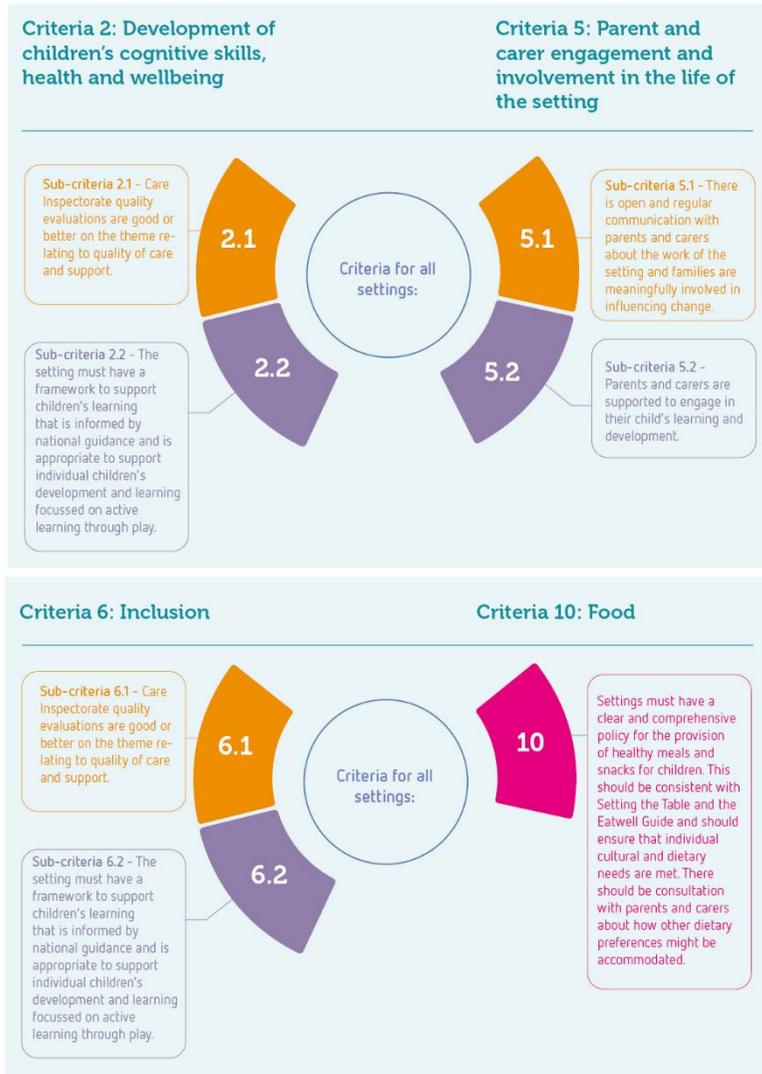
Links to Health and Social Care Standards: How good is our care, play and learning?

- 1.4 If I require intimate personal care, this is carried out in a dignified way, with my privacy and personal preferences respected.
- 1.6 I get the most out of life because the people and organisation who support and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential.
- 1.15 My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.
- 1.19 My care and support meets my needs and is right for me.
- 1.27 I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me.
- 1.29 I am supported to be emotionally resilient, have a strong sense of my own identity and wellbeing, and address any experiences of trauma or neglect.
- 2.27 As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable to my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.

Links to Health and Social Care Standards: How good is our care, play and learning?

- 2.2. I am empowered and enabled to be as independent and as in control of my life as I want and can be.
- 2.3 I am supported to understand and uphold my rights.
- 2.15 I am enabled to resolve conflict, agree rules and build positive relationships with other people as much as I can.
- 4.2. The organisations that support and care for me help tackle health and social inequalities.
- 3.10 As a child or young person I feel valued, loved and secure.
- 4.18 I benefit from different organisations working together and sharing information about me promptly where appropriate, and I understand how my privacy and confidentiality are respected.

How good is our care, play and learning?



How good is our setting?

2.1 Quality of the setting for care, play and learning

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- quality of the setting
- children's influence

Descriptor

This indicator highlights the importance of having a safe, secure and inspiring setting, whether delivered indoors, outdoors or a blend of both. It makes clear the importance of children having an active role in influencing the design of the setting and in shaping their experiences and activities throughout the day. It supports children to safely access play and learning opportunities that will impact positively on their development, health, wellbeing and happiness. Staff recognise the right of all children to enjoy outdoor play and understand the importance of outdoor play for children's health and wellbeing. The setting reflects a risk-benefit approach to children's play, learning and development. Care of our natural resources is a key feature of children's experience of outdoor play and learning.

Quality of the setting

Very Good

The setting, whether delivered indoors or outdoors, is welcoming, fully meets children's needs, and is equipped to a very high standard. It gives a strong message to children that they matter. They have ample space for their needs. Staff are confident in making best use of available resources to create, sustain and enhance a motivating environment for effective learning. As a result, the setting has been designed to empower children to actively experience play and learning challenges centred on their needs and interests. Opportunities are well matched to the stages of development of children and promote fun, learning and independence.

The accommodation or outdoor premises provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment that is of a very high standard. Robust infection prevention and control and food safety practices provide high levels of safety for children.

These are supported by effective quality-assurance practices, ensuring children benefit from high-quality safe, care, play and learning experiences, whether in their setting or further afield. All staff are vigilant and take prompt action to ensure the safety and security of children, visitors and each other. This includes when using community resources. Staff ensure children are accounted for at all times and that the environment is secure and safe. This includes when outdoors and in the wider community. In doing so, children's activities are not compromised and they are supported to enjoy challenging and fun play experiences.

There are well appointed areas for children to engage in energetic activities, and staff understand the importance of physical activity to support children's health and wellbeing and learning. There are safe, cosy spaces indoors and outdoors where children can rest or sleep as needed. Arrangements for sleep are planned around the family routine and the child's developing needs. The arrangements for children to receive personal care are well planned, support high levels of infection, prevention and control, and respect children's privacy and dignity. There is appropriate space where staff can speak in confidence to parents and carers when needed. Children benefit from social spaces that are designed around them. The layout, including in outdoor services, enables children's privacy to be respected.

Weak

The setting design has limited opportunity to empower children to actively experience play and learning challenges that are centred on their needs and interests. Staff demonstrate limited understanding of the benefits of the outdoors to children's play, learning and development. Current best practice or research is not used effectively to inform their knowledge in this area. Children's views do not sufficiently influence their access to outdoors. Staff do not always recognise when children need more energetic experiences. Not enough thought has gone into meeting the range of needs of all children and of reducing potential barriers to their play and learning.

The design of the setting does not take account of children's need to sleep or rest as appropriate. As a result, children's routines are disrupted and they may be overtired as a result. There is potential for risk where arrangements do not reflect safe sleep guidance. The arrangements for children to receive personal care are not well considered and do not respect children's privacy and dignity.

The use of the setting compromises infection prevention and control measures and as a result, children are at potential risk of harm. Staff demonstrate limited understanding of the benefits of the outdoors to children's play, learning and development. Current best practice or research is not used effectively to inform their knowledge in this area. Access to outdoor areas may be limited by a lack of vision, limiting children's opportunities to benefit from enriching outdoor experiences. Children's views do not sufficiently influence their access to outdoors. Staff do not always recognise when children need more energetic outdoor or indoor experiences.

Staff do not always work well together to promote a safe environment for children. They may have limited understanding of children's development and may not recognise when everyday items can pose risk. As a result, children may be at risk from avoidable harm. Staff may unnecessarily limit children's experiences in order to keep them safe and as such children's quality of experience is compromised.

Arrangements for security within the setting, outdoors and in the wider community may not be well considered and there is the potential for children to exit the setting or be unaccounted for across the day exposing them to risk of harm.

Children's influence

Very Good

The setting, including displays of children's work, stimulates children's natural curiosity, and they have fun as they celebrate their achievements, develop their skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving. A wide range of interesting resources are used effectively and managed in a sustainable way, developing children's understanding of the importance of reducing waste and the impact of our use of natural resources.

Staff understand and promote diversity, equality and inclusion in the provision of high-quality resources. Children, their families and communities are positively reflected in the resources available to them, promoting a sense of inclusion and wellbeing. Children are also developing their knowledge and positive respect and understanding of difference.

The design of the setting provides very good opportunities for children to be independent and make choices. Children are engrossed and motivated in their play and are progressing very well in all aspects of their learning and development. Staff understand the positive impact that rich, multi-sensory outdoor play and learning has on children's resilience, health and wellbeing.

Children have uninterrupted time to become absorbed in their play and have fun. Staff actively engage with children to enable them to direct their play and activities in the way they choose. Children know that they are listened to and that their views matter. They have a key role in shaping the environment and their experiences. Space has been thoughtfully arranged to allow children control over what they do and how they play.

Well resourced play areas and experiences support and extend children's learning in all areas. The extensive range of interesting materials, access to nature, tools and open-ended resources, engages children's curiosity and challenges their thinking.

Staff embrace a risk-benefit approach and support children to safely engage in play to push their own boundaries and build self-confidence and develop skills for life. Where appropriate, children are actively involved in assessing relevant risks they may encounter during their learning and play. This positive approach to the benefits of adventurous, challenging play underpins effective outdoor and physical play and learning experiences. Staff have worked effectively with parents to ensure that they understand the benefits of children enjoying more challenging play and learning experiences. This encourages families' and children's growing confidence and understanding of their abilities.

Weak

The setting may look or feel neglected, may be clinical or a functional environment, rather than warm and welcoming for children. There is a limited attention to detail such as homely touches, decoration, and the quality of furniture. There may be unpleasant smells or intrusive noise levels. The setting, furniture and fittings are generally inadequate, with limited opportunities to display interesting materials and children's work. There is little available in the environment to engage and stimulate children's interest. Children's needs and views are not consistently sought or taken into consideration when designing the setting and experiences. The design of the setting limits children's opportunities to be independent and make choices.

Children are unable to direct their own play and activities in the way they choose. Practice in the setting related to caring for resources including the natural environment does not take account of sustainability. Very few if any opportunities are provided for children to learn about sustainability and caring for their natural environment, encouraging poor habits in respect of reducing waste and the impact of our use of natural resources.

The provision of play resources and equipment is limited and in some cases, outdated and inappropriate. Children may lack motivation and interest and may demonstrate negative behaviour due to the lack of stimulating resources and activity. Those available lack breadth and balance and do not sufficiently meet children's stages of development or offer challenge and exploration.

In some cases, children and their families may experience discrimination as a result of outdated inappropriate resources being used. This has the potential to negatively influence children's self-esteem and children's knowledge and understanding of difference.

The design of the setting provides few opportunities for children to be independent and make choices. Children are not engaged and motivated enough in their play, compromising their progress in their learning and development.

Children's access to the outdoors may be limited or of poor quality, reducing the benefits to them of enjoying outdoor play and learning. Children's enjoyment of their activities and progress in learning may be negatively impacted by decisions made about the layout of the space or by the routines of the day. Children's voices are not heard or encouraged, sending the message that their views do not matter.

Staff may demonstrate an approach to risk that is either risk averse or not well considered. This is evident in the layout of the setting indoors and outdoors. This may result in the potential for harm. Staff may not engage effectively with parents and carers to deepen their understanding of the benefits of riskier outdoor play and learning experiences. Children's confidence may be affected where staff place unnecessary restrictions on their play and learning experiences.

2.2 Children experience high-quality facilities

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- safety, security, and maintenance
- information management

Descriptor

This indicator acknowledges the importance of a well-maintained environment for children, highlighting the need for regular maintenance of the building and or outdoor environment including all play resources and equipment used in the provision of the service. It supports an appropriate level of risk assessment to minimise those risks and to keep children safe from harm, including the need for rigorous infection prevention and control. All aspects of security are recognised as important, including the storage of confidential records and information.

Safety, security, and maintenance

Very Good

Arrangements for monitoring, maintenance and repair of the setting, equipment and vehicles function well and are consistently implemented. Damaged items are promptly replaced. Staff work well together to identify and remove risks to children within the setting both indoors and outdoors, across the whole day. They ensure children are accounted for at all times and that the environment is secure and safe. This includes when outdoors and in the wider community. In doing so, children's activities are not compromised and they are supported to enjoy challenging, fun play experiences.

Robust infection prevention and control and food safety practices provide high levels of safety for children. These are supported by effective quality assurance practices.

All staff understand the arrangements for cleaning within the service. Risk assessments have been undertaken that address the current guidance in respect of infection prevention and control. Staff have received appropriate training on infection prevention and control and are confident in ensuring a high-quality safe environment for themselves and the children in their care.

There are clear policies and procedures in place to ensure consistent approaches across the setting. Children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

Weak

The arrangements for monitoring, maintenance and repair of the setting, equipment and vehicles are not sufficient to ensure repairs are carried out without delay. Essential equipment does not fully function or breaks down regularly. This has a negative impact on children's care, play and learning experiences.

Staff do not always work well together to promote a safe environment for children. They may have limited understanding of children's development and may not recognise when everyday items can pose risk. As a result, children may be at risk from avoidable harm.

Safety equipment may not be used appropriately and this includes overuse as well as lack of use. Staff may unnecessarily limit children's experiences in order to keep them safe and as such children's quality of experience is compromised.

Arrangements for security within the setting, outdoors and in the wider community may not be well considered. Staff may lack awareness of their role to ensure all children are accounted for at all times. There is the potential for children to exit the setting unobserved through unlocked gates, damaged fences or open doors. Children may also be unaccounted for within the setting boundaries across the day exposing them to risk of harm or distress.

Staff are unclear about their role in promoting a safe environment for themselves and children in respect of infection prevention and control. There may not have been recent training or the training received has not had an impact on the approach to infection prevention and control within the setting. Policies and procedures may be unclear, or out of date leading to poor standards of infection prevention and control in the setting. Children may be exposed to a potential risk as a result.

Information management

Very Good

The setting provides security and safety without impinging on children's rights and reflects the service's aims and objectives. Any use of CCTV is lawful, fair and proportionate and protects their dignity. It is only used for purposes that support the delivery of safe, effective and compassionate care for children.

Protection of children's personal information is paramount and complies with relevant best practice. Leaders and staff are well informed about their responsibilities. Appropriate systems are in place to manage electronic information in line with general data protection requirements and advice on cyber threats.

Weak

The use of CCTV is not well understood in the setting. Leaders and staff are not well informed about their responsibilities and infringements of rights of children, families and staff may occur as a result. Families may not have been consulted about any CCTV or informed of their rights. The arrangements for CCTV do not meet the requirements of current legislation.

Arrangements for the storage of and processing of children's personal information is poorly managed and does not comply with relevant legislation and best practice.

Links to Health and Social Care Standards: How good is our setting?

- 

1.32 As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment.
- 

2.7 My rights are protected by ensuring that any surveillance or monitoring device that I or the organisation use is necessary and proportionate, and I am involved in deciding how it is used.
- 

5.18 My environment is relaxed, welcoming, peaceful and free from avoidable and intrusive noise and smells.
- 

5.19 My environment is secure and safe.
- 

5.22 I have enough physical space to meet my needs and wishes.

Links to Health and Social Care Standards: How good is our setting?

- 

5.2 I can easily access a toilet from the rooms I use and can use this when I need to.
- 

5.4 If I require intimate personal care, there is a suitable area for this, including a sink if needed.
- 

5.6 If I experience care and support in a group, I experience a homely environment and can use a comfortable area with soft furnishings to relax.
- 

5.11 I can independently access the parts of the premises I use and the environment has been designed to promote this.
- 

5.23 I am able to access a range of good quality equipment and furnishings to meet my needs, wishes and choices.
- 

5.24 I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.

How good is our setting?



DRAFT

How good is our staff team?

3.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values



This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- compassionate and responsive care
- professional competence and registration

Descriptor

This indicator focuses on the ability of staff to build strong relationships with children and families, and with each other. It highlights the importance of skilled interactions to promote children's confidence and to have a positive influence on their lives as they develop and learn. Staff professional development is promoted through highly effective use of reflective practice, feedback and support. Professional learning is well planned, informed by local, national and international evidence and research, and it is reviewed and matched to identified needs of individual staff members. All staff practice is underpinned by the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Health and Social Care Standards, and relevant codes of practice. A positive, compassionate and responsive culture where children thrive and flourish is evident across the setting.

Compassionate and responsive care

Very Good

Staff warmth, kindness and compassion enable children to feel valued, loved and secure. Staff recognise the importance of nurturing, warm and responsive attachments and interactions. Staff provide individualised support by effectively engaging with children and take account of their views and experiences. Effective team working fosters a warm atmosphere where staff are polite and respectful. This enables staff to have time to support, speak and listen to children.

Weak

Interactions from staff lack compassion and generally there is a lack of interest, warmth and care evident in the behaviours displayed by staff. Staff do not fully support children's needs and interests. They do not always make themselves physically or emotionally accessible to children. They do not consistently sit with children or at their level. Staff rarely initiate conversations with children and may conduct conversations with colleagues inappropriately in the vicinity of children. They sometimes respond negatively or ignore children's verbal and nonverbal communication. The quality of working relationships between staff is poor, impacting negatively on the atmosphere children experience.

Professional competence and registration

Very Good

Staff have a clear understanding of how children develop and learn. They make very good use of professional development opportunities that link directly to enhanced outcomes for children, their individual learning needs and the setting's improvement plan. Research, best practice, national and local policy, UNCRC and the Health and Social Care Standards are used in this process. There is a wide range of opportunities for staff to hold professional discussions and use these to inform practice. Staff reflect and implement their learning to improve practice and children receive high-quality interactions and experiences.

Staff are aspirational and have an enabling attitude that supports children to achieve their potential. Staff use skilled questioning and interact in a sensitive, responsive and stimulating way to promote curiosity, independence and confidence. They recognise the importance of fun in children's play to enable learning to be taken forward. They are highly reflective practitioners engaging in professional discussion to build individual and team knowledge and effectiveness. Celebrating success and learning from mistakes is an integral part of the ethos in the setting, leading to a culture of openness where staff feel proud to work in the setting and safe to discuss practice when errors do occur. They actively promote a learning culture in the setting ensuring children and families experience high-quality innovative care play and learning.

Staff undertake qualifications relevant to their role and engage in continuous professional learning. They maintain effective records of the impact of their learning and development and have a clear learning action plan. Where required, they maintain a registration with a professional body and follow the codes of practice.

Weak

Staff fail to, or are not enabled to, engage in professional learning activities to improve their practice. The quality of outcomes and experiences for children and families is negatively impacted as a result. There are limited opportunities for ongoing development for staff. Where learning needs are identified, these are not fully taken forward. This results in gaps in professional knowledge and skills, which impacts negatively on the quality of children's experiences. Where some staff do have appropriate knowledge, this is not shared effectively across the team. There is an absence of professional discussion to support each other's development and learning. As a result, the balance of knowledge and skills within the team is compromised. There may be avoidable incidents or accidents that have the potential to put children at risk, due to a limited understanding of childcare practice. Training and development opportunities have not improved outcomes for children.

Where staff achieve success, this may be overlooked and there may be an over emphasis on perceived failures. Staff may lack confidence to talk about mistakes, which has the potential to lead to harm to children. Overall, the lack of reflective practice, and ineffective development and learning, significantly compromises the quality of experiences and outcomes for children.

Staff do not fully understand their responsibility to maintain professional registration. Where registration with professional bodies is required, this is incomplete or may have lapsed.

They do not fully understand their responsibilities for continuous professional learning as detailed in the relevant codes of practice. They may not take sufficient account of the codes of practice in their work. The principles of the UNCRC and the Health and Social Care Standards do not underpin the practice of some staff.

DRAFT

3.2 Staff recruitment and staff deployment (Does not apply to childminders who do not work with assistants)



This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- staffing levels and deployment
- recruitment procedures
- induction

Descriptor

This indicator focuses on the importance of staffing decisions to the quality of children's overall experiences and outcomes. It recognises the need for responsive staff deployment to meet children's needs across the whole day. It supports values-based, safe recruitment procedures that ensure trained, competent and skilled staff are employed to promote positive outcomes for children. Children and families have opportunities to be involved in the process in a meaningful way. Positive, caring and inclusive relationships underpin a highly supportive and welcoming ethos. It focuses on accountability, responsibility and shared values as important features of building and sustaining a highly professional team. This includes a comprehensive induction programme to support and guide newly recruited staff in their roles and responsibilities. It focuses on how policy, guidance, legislation, the UNCRC and the Health and Social Care Standards are used to ensure that each child is protected, safe and receives the right support and care from staff.

Staffing levels and deployment

Very Good

The importance of ensuring that the service is appropriately staffed during the day is recognised by leaders as essential to the wellbeing of children and staff in the service. Effective use is made of the differing experience, knowledge and skills of the staff group to ensure children's experience across the whole day is positive and that they are safe. Arrangements are in place to promote continuity of care across the day and ensure positive transitions and communication with families.

Leaders recognise the need for high levels of quality interaction and support between staff and children to promote wellbeing and safety.

To ensure this is consistent across the day, staff breaks are planned to minimise impact on the children while enabling staff to rest and be refreshed.

This rounded approach to staff deployment also ensures staff have the appropriate level of support from experienced colleagues to support their developing skills and knowledge, leading to high levels of staff satisfaction and wellbeing in their role and high-quality outcomes and experiences for children.

Arrangements for absence, both planned and unplanned, support minimum disruption to children's routines. Children are prepared in advance for their key worker's absence, wherever possible. Families and children are kept informed and introduced to any temporary staff in the team who may be caring for their children. Appropriate policies are in place to maximise the attendance of staff, and all staff understand the impact of unplanned absence their colleagues and on the provision of the service. This collaborative culture ensures a positive ethos of attendance within the service.

Weak

The approach to staffing within the service is not outcome-focused. At points across the day, there are gaps in specific skills needed to keep children safe and promote high-quality outcomes for children. At these times, opportunities for children are more limited. Continuity of care across the day is variable and this impacts on the transitions and communication levels with families. Staff may not receive enough breaks or may be on breaks at a time when higher levels of supervision are required, such as mealtimes. Activities become task oriented rather than an opportunity for high-quality engagement and interaction.

Arrangements for planned absence are poorly managed, resulting in disruptions to children's routines. Children and families are not always advised when staff will be absent and are not prepared for, or introduced to, temporary staff.

Systems to support management of staffing when unplanned absences occur are poorly managed. Temporary or agency staff appointed do not always reflect the needs of the wider staff group or children attending.

Maximising attendance is not well understood by the staff team and unplanned absence levels are high and impacting on the quality of outcomes for children. Overall, there is a lack of understanding of the impact of absence of colleagues and on the provision of the service.

The quality of experience for children is poorer as a result and staff may experience negative impacts on their wellbeing as a result of ineffective staffing provision.

Recruitment procedures



Very Good

The importance of recruiting and retaining a stable and skilled workforce is recognised as being essential to the delivery of high-quality care, play and learning for children.

Staff are recruited in a way that has been informed by all aspects of safer recruitment practices. Leaders understand their responsibility to ensure any temporary staff are safely recruited and understand their responsibilities within the staff group. The candidate's skills, experience and qualifications are evaluated in relation to the role they will be employed in.

There is a strong emphasis on value-based recruitment, ensuring successful candidates values reflect those of the service. Children and families have opportunities to be involved in the process in a meaningful way.

Weak

The recruitment procedures may compromise the welfare or safety of children. Key elements of the process may be ignored. For example, exploring gaps in employment history, disciplinary records or staff start working before all the required checks have been undertaken or received.

Staff lack some of the skills and experience required for their role. Their values and motivation are not fully consistent with the ethos of the setting. Induction is tailored to the learning and development needs of the individual staff member.

Induction

Very Good



The induction programme is thorough and personalised to meet the different roles in the setting. It ensures staff are confident in meeting the needs of individual children. Staff are supported to develop an understanding of the ethos and culture of the setting. There is sufficient time to ensure that staff can understand all the information and what is expected of them. This includes an emphasis on recognising the UNCRC and implementing the Health and Social Care Standards as underpinning values for all care and support.

There is a clear process for mentoring and supporting staff who are new, using the skills and knowledge of experienced staff. There is time allocated to effectively take this forward. Mentors are clear about their roles and responsibilities, with written information they can refer to. Together these approaches support high-quality outcomes for all children in the setting.

Weak

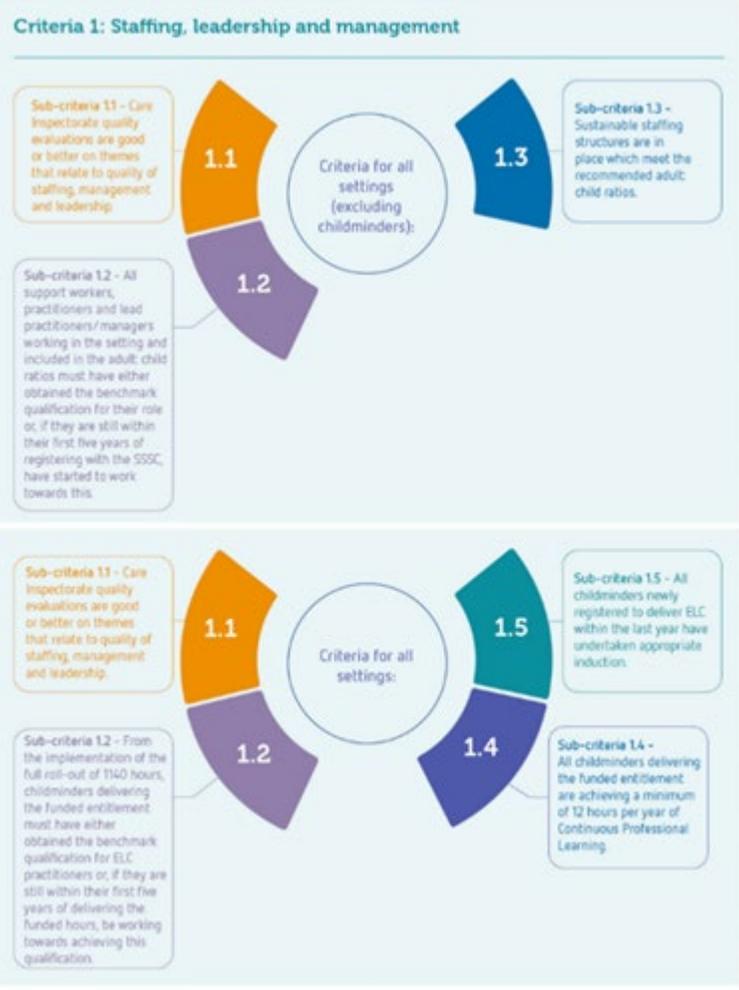
The induction of new staff is not planned effectively, leading to new staff being unfamiliar in their role and responsibilities. Induction may be limited to a one-off event, focusing on policies and procedures with little consideration of the care, play and learning needs of children and staff ongoing learning and development.

Staff are unclear of what is expected of them and may lack knowledge of how the UNCRC and the Health and Social Care Standards underpin the provision.

Mentoring arrangements, where these exist, are not well considered and do not support staff to better understand their role. Staff undertaking mentoring roles have insufficient time allocated to do this well. Children may experience poor outcomes as a result of the failure to implement effective supportive induction for staff.

Links to Health and Social Care Standards: How good is our staffing?

- 3.1 I experience people speaking and listening to me in a way that is courteous and respectful, with my care and support being the main focus of people's attention.
- 3.7 I experience a warm atmosphere because people have good working relationships.
- 3.8 I can build a trusting relationship with the person supporting and caring for me in a way that we both feel comfortable with.
- 3.10 As a child or young person I feel valued, loved and secure.
- 3.14 I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.
- 3.17 I am confident that people respond promptly, including when I ask for help.
- 3.18 I am supported and cared for sensitively by people who anticipate issues and are aware of and plan for any known vulnerability or frailty.



4.1 Quality assurance and improvement

This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- vision, values and aims
- collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- planning and implementing change

Descriptor

This indicator highlights the need for leaders to ensure an ambitious, shared vision that focuses on improvements and positive outcomes for all. There is a strong ethos of continuous improvement that enhances the delivery of high-quality practice. It focuses on accountability, responsibility and shared values as important features of building and sustaining a highly professional team. Positive, caring and inclusive relationships underpin a highly supportive and welcoming ethos. This indicator underlines that thorough self-evaluation is the responsibility of all involved in the life of the setting. It highlights the importance of partnership approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. It emphasises the need for strong leadership and a shared understanding of strengths and areas for development. The impact of self-evaluation can be measured in the evidence of improved outcomes for children, families and staff.

Vision, values and aims

Very Good

Leaders and staff promote, sustain and are highly committed to a shared vision for the setting that reflects the highest possible standards for children, families, partners and the wider community. Leaders create conditions where all people feel confident to initiate well-informed change and share responsibility for the process. This helps all staff know what is important for the setting to meet the needs of children and families. Effective communication ensures a clear view of the setting's vision and aims so that the wider staff team, children and families are included in achieving them. Leadership of the setting is clearly founded on principles of high-quality childcare and learning, engagement with children and their families and a quality culture.

Weak

The vision, values and aims for the setting are unclear or are not effectively communicated to children, families, partners and the wider community. There is a limited focus on the importance of improvement. Not everyone involved in the service is aware of the aims or their role in promoting these. Staff are not supported to reflect on their practice in a meaningful way. Changes made to practice and the setting have little impact on children and families. Leaders or staff show some resistance to change and this impacts negatively on the ability to deliver improved outcomes. Few opportunities are available to support staff development and learning in respect of self-evaluation. Opportunities may not be appropriate for the particular staff group. As a result, opportunities for teams to reflect and bring about positive change for children, families and each other are missed.

Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation**Very Good**

Well considered purposeful self-evaluation enables the setting to deliver high-quality care and learning tailored to children and families' particular needs and choices. The importance of using the views of children, families, and partners to inform improvement is central to the self-evaluation process. Leaders evidence where these views inform change, secure improvement and ensure positive outcomes for all children and families. Staff reflect well together and use these reflections to bring about positive change to outcomes for children and families.

Leaders ensure outcomes of self-evaluation and proposed changes are clearly communicated and understood by all. Quality assurance and moderation activities have agreed standards and expectations that are understood by all staff. Identified priorities reflect this focus. Very good use is made of evidence to draw conclusions about the quality of the provision and identify effective approaches to improvement. Relevant local, national and international advice and research are used effectively to support the thoughtful changes within the setting.

Weak

The culture of self-evaluation for improvement is at an early stage of development or has not resulted in sustained improvements. Children and families are not meaningfully involved in the process of self-evaluation. As a result, they do not feel well informed about changes to the setting or why they are happening. The improvement plan is not used consistently to inform improvement in the quality of the service for children and families.

The culture in the service may not enable staff or families to confidently highlight complaints or improvements. Leaders fail to respond promptly to feedback and therefore positive change is too slow to make improvements. Opportunities to engage a range of partners has not been developed or has not been used to inform improvement planning. The setting's experience therefore may be isolated and may be out of touch with national perspectives. There are significant gaps in the areas covered by the quality assurance systems in place. Inconsistencies in practice are not fully identified and do not highlight areas for improvement.

Planning and implementing change**Very Good**

There are clear processes in place to support the implementation of new initiatives, which include regular opportunities for reflection and evaluation of progress. There is an appropriate pace of change when improvements are implemented. Good practice is shared within and beyond the setting and demonstrates the improvement this has made to the setting and outcomes for children. Leaders ensure that high-quality learning through play is at the heart of improvement planning. This enables staff to make thoughtful changes and innovations. Continuous improvement, success and achievement for all children are central to the planned implementation of strategies for improvement.

Weak

There is insufficient capacity and skill to support a programme of continuous improvement. Leaders fail to motivate staff and staff are not sufficiently challenged to raise standards. Staff reflect together, however these reflections do not influence positive change to outcomes for children and families. When changes are implemented, they are often done in isolation and are not underpinned by current thinking and best practice. Staff are not consistently able to drive and sustain improvement.

Staff are not effectively supported to feel confident and initiate change. Leaders' approaches to challenge and demanding targets can place additional stress on the staff leading to a stressful working environment. This impacts negatively on the experiences for children, families and staff within the setting.

DRAFT

4.2 Leadership and management of staff and resources



This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- empowering and motivating leadership
- leadership of care, play and learning
- staff wellbeing

Descriptor

This indicator highlights the importance of effective leadership of all staff within the setting. The importance of staff wellbeing is recognised as being essential to high-quality outcomes for children. It focuses on the importance of having the right number of staff with sufficient time and appropriate skills to meet the needs of children and families. It focuses on the importance of sound management of the setting's finances and the extent to which the use of resources leads to improved outcomes for children. The management of resources should result in building a sustainable and equitable future for all.

Empowering and motivating leadership

Very Good

Leaders act as role models for the development of positive and nurturing relationships and this ensures the wellbeing of others. They recognise the contributions of staff which help them to feel supported, challenged and engaged. This means that all are empowered and motivated to make decisions and lead on initiatives which promote positive outcomes for children and families. This contributes to high levels of satisfaction and professional growth and builds on strengths. The capacity of the setting to deliver positive outcomes for children and families is enhanced.

Weak

There is a significant lack of leadership in the setting. Staff are demotivated and disengaged, leading to poor outcomes for children and families. Children and their families are not meaningfully involved in decisions that affect them. Consequently, an ethos of inclusion and respect is not evident. There is little evidence that staff are supported or encouraged to use their initiative to improve the quality of care and support.

Leadership of care, play and learning**Very Good**

Leaders understand and promote the highest standards across all aspects of the delivery of care, play and learning. Leaders support and empower staff to encourage children to have ownership of play through learning on their own terms and in their own ways. There is a strong professional development and learning culture which supports shared reflections that ensure children are at the centre of all planning for play and learning. Leaders work well together with children, families and partners to support children to enjoy their successes and share their achievements in play and learning.

Leaders enable staff to monitor, evaluate and review the use and impact of resources to maximise the quality of children's experiences. Any gaps in provision are clearly communicated and are used to inform future financial and resourcing decisions. Overall, very good strategic guidance and direction ensure outcomes for children are of the highest quality.

Weak

Leaders offer limited support and guidance to enable staff to be flexible and responsive in their approach to children's developmental needs. There is a lack of understanding of children's abilities when planning for their next steps. Leaders do not provide sufficient challenge to staff to ensure children actively lead their play and learning. Leaders do not promote opportunities to work with children, families or partners and as such opportunities to build on children's successes and share in their achievements are missed.

Poor financial management by leaders means that resources do not take full account of the importance of meeting all children's needs. This limits opportunities to build children's confidence and self-esteem through engaging in independently chosen activities and interests that matters to them and their friends. Overall, this leads to missed opportunities for children to reach their full potential.

Staff wellbeing

Very Good

The culture and ethos within the setting are positive and caring. The importance of staff wellbeing is recognised as essential to high-quality outcomes for children and their families. Policies and procedures are in place and well understood by all staff to ensure the pastoral support and wellbeing of staff. Everyone working, engaging with and attending the setting feels included and valued. Leaders demonstrate the values of wellbeing in all of their interactions with their staff, families, children and visitors. This ensures high standards of respect, support and consideration for all in the setting. Staff are empowered and feel supported to raise concerns where these arise and the lines of accountability are clear and understood by all. All staff share information effectively, listen to others and respond positively to ideas and issues raised with them.

Staff benefit from a highly effective professional review process, which includes both formal and informal opportunities for development and learning. The process empowers them to reflect on their skills and knowledge, promotes their wellbeing and enables leaders to address any areas of improvement. Where improvements are required, this is addressed in a clear, constructive and supportive manner.

Everyday support and feedback are used routinely and constructively to build effective and professional relationships and is valued by staff. Together, this shared commitment and understanding ensures staff continually progress and learn in an environment of trust and wellbeing. As a result, all staff are clear on their individual and collective role for ensuring continued high-quality outcomes for children.

Weak

The culture and ethos within the setting lacks care and consideration. The importance of staff wellbeing is not recognised as essential to high-quality outcomes for children and their families.

Policies and procedures do not reflect the need to support staff wellbeing or are not implemented effectively in the setting. As a result, staff may experience a lack of confidence and motivation in their role, leading to poorer-quality outcomes for children. Not everyone working, engaging with and attending the setting feels included and valued. Leaders' interactions with their staff, families, children and visitors are not in line with compassionate care and support, and this impacts negatively on everyone. The approach to mistakes in the setting is one of blame so staff do not feel safe to highlight when things go wrong. The potential exists for children to experience poor care and learning or harm as a result. As a result, staff do not openly share information that would lead to improvement in performance. This negative atmosphere impacts the quality of experience for children and their families.

Opportunities for staff to benefit from a professional review process are absent or infrequent. Identification of areas of improvement and opportunities to reflect on their skills and knowledge are very limited as a result. Opportunities for staff to grow and learn together are missed. Everyday support and feedback are not used routinely and constructively to build effective and professional relationships. As a result, staff may not feel valued and may miss opportunities to learn from their daily practice in real time. Where staff experience success, this is not celebrated, shared or recognised as a team development opportunity. Overall, the culture in the setting may contribute negatively to staff wellbeing.

4.3 Leadership and teaching in early education and care



This includes the extent to which children's rights are respected and promoted through the following key areas:

- Pedagogical leadership
- Impact of professional learning
- Children leading learning

Descriptor

This indicator relates to leadership of improvements in learning and teaching. It focuses on achieving equity in educational outcomes, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. It highlights the importance of strategic guidance and direction to ensure early years pedagogy and practice are of the highest quality. It recognises the importance of professional learning opportunities for senior leaders and all staff. There is a clear focus on how staff reflect on, develop and improve their knowledge, understanding and pedagogy to support early education. It highlights the impact of effective leadership of learning at all levels which improves pedagogy, educational outcomes and equity for all. It recognises the right of all children to be listened to and the crucial importance of empowering children to be leaders of their own learning.

Pedagogical leadership

Very Good

Senior leaders are visible and provide strategic guidance and direction to support all staff to secure children's progress. There is a determined focus on reducing educational inequity for all. Staff deliver the curriculum through high-quality learning experiences across the setting and the early level. Senior leaders promote and support innovation, creativity and professional enquiry.

This enables all staff to be leaders of learning and improve educational outcomes and reduce inequity for children. Senior leaders and staff have a shared understanding of pedagogy and how this supports the delivery of their early level curriculum. Very good account is taken of research, local and national guidance about how children learn to inform the pedagogy and practice. Senior leaders and staff regularly engage in professional dialogue to reflect on practice as part of a commitment to improvement. Senior leaders monitor the quality of interactions, experiences, and spaces effectively to continually improve practice and educational outcomes for children.

Weak

Senior leaders may lack visibility in the setting, leading to a lack of strategic direction and guidance. Staff delivery of the curriculum is compromised as a result. Innovation, creativity and professional enquiry are not supported. There is a lack of encouragement and understanding from senior leaders of the need for all staff to be leaders of learning. The outcomes for children and families are poorer as a result. Senior leaders and staff do not have a shared understanding of pedagogy and the delivery of the early level curriculum. Monitoring arrangements are ineffective or absent and as such, opportunities to improve the quality of practice and outcomes for children are missed.

Impact of professional learning

Very Good

There is a strong ethos of professional learning, development and collaborative working. Senior leaders and staff engage in a broad range of professional learning and self-evaluation activities. The outcomes of these activities is used very effectively to build on and develop the practice in facilitating and improving learning and teaching. All staff are leaders of learning and undertake key roles to improve the quality of children's experiences. They motivate, support and inspire others to improve their practice. They demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of early learning pedagogy and current developments within ELC. Very good use is made of research, local and national guidance and learning with and from others. The resulting knowledge gained is used very well to influence and support pedagogy within the setting. Professional learning and development enhance the setting's improvement priorities with a positive impact on educational outcomes and wider improvements in the setting. Through effective leadership at all levels, staff consistently achieve high standards in their work and strive to be sector leading.

Weak

There is a lack of professional learning, self-evaluation activities, development and joint working within the setting. Improvement opportunities are missed as a result. Staff in the setting lack the encouragement or opportunity to be leaders of learning, and their role in improving the quality of children's experiences is not recognised. Staff may lack motivation in their work as a result.

Professional learning and development where these take place are not linked to the setting's improvement priorities. Therefore, there is limited impact on quality of experiences for children, their progress and wider improvements in the setting.

Children leading learning**Very Good**

Senior leaders and staff support and empower children to have ownership of their learning. They fully understand the impact of high-quality interactions, experiences and learning spaces in enabling children to lead their learning. Very good account is taken of children's ideas and interests to influence interactions and shape learning spaces and experiences. Children have the time and space to actively explore the world around them through imaginary and real-life contexts. Children are skilfully encouraged and supported to follow their interests and be confident and successful learners, reflecting on and reshaping their experiences through play. Staff work very well together with children, families and relevant partners to support children to enjoy their successes and recognise themselves as a learner. This successful collaborative working has a focus on improving educational outcomes and ensuring equity for all.

Weak

The approach to children leading their learning is not well understood or implemented within the setting. Senior leaders and staff consistently miss opportunities to support and empower children to have ownership of their play. Interactions, experiences and learning spaces are not high quality and children are not encouraged to lead their learning. Children's ideas and interests, where these are acknowledged, are not used to influence children's learning experiences. The learning experiences provided for children, lack an understanding of the importance of imaginary and real-life contexts. Children's learning may also be interrupted due to the approach to routines and priorities within the setting. Collaborative working with families and other partners is ineffective and children miss opportunities to share successes and achievements.

Links to Health and Social Care Standards: How good is our leadership?

- 3.14 I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.
- 3.15 My needs are met by the right number of people.
- 3.16 People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me.
- 4.4 I receive an apology if things go wrong with my care and support or my human rights are not respected, and the organisation takes responsibility for its actions.
- 4.7 I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in a spirit of genuine partnership.
- 4.8 I am supported to give regular feedback on how I experience my care and support and the organisation uses learning from this to improve.

Criteria 4: Self-evaluation and improvement



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