

**Innellan & Toward Family  
Centre  
Argyll and Bute  
27 April 2011**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects centres in order to let parents<sup>1</sup>, children and the local community know whether their centre provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with centre staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the head of centre and staff about the strengths of the centre, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into playrooms and join other activities which children are involved in. We also gather the views of parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the centre. We describe how well children are doing, how good the centre is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the centre. We also comment on how well the centre works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the centre is led and how all staff help the centre achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the centre, please visit [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends

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### **1. The centre**

Innellan & Toward Family Centre was inspected in March 2011 by HMIE. The centre caters for pre-school children aged two to five years. It is registered for 24 children attending at any one session. The total roll was 19 at the time of the inspection.

## **2. Particular strengths of the centre**

- Friendly children who are enjoying learning.
- The caring staff team who have developed positive relationships with children and families.
- Commitment of staff and parents in supporting the continuing development of the playgroup.

## **3. How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **Learning and achievement**

Children are relaxed and happy in their learning environment. Children aged two and over are becoming increasingly independent and sociable. They take turns and share toys well. Children age three to five are very friendly and keen to learn. They cooperate well to support younger children. They like to play together and, at most times throughout the day, concentrate well on what they have chosen to do. Children are at the early stages of using their own ideas to make decisions about what they want to learn about. Staff should ensure that planned group activities are not too long and engage all children effectively.

Children enjoy daily energetic play in the community room and also in the garden. They enjoy taking on the responsibility of organising the snack for their friends. Staff are beginning to help children keep a record their achievements to support them build on their learning and achieve more widely.

Most children aged over three are developing good skills in listening and talking. They listen well to staff and follow simple instructions during play activities. They enjoy stories and use the main ideas in

their imaginative play. Almost all children recognise their printed name cards as they register themselves. In early mathematics the majority of children can sort and match objects by shape and colour. Most children count confidently within five and a few beyond. They are learning to collect and present data in the form of simple graphs. Children now need to use their literacy and numeracy skills across a wider range of learning situations.

## **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

Children aged from two years to five years learn together in the same playroom. Staff provide a variety of opportunities for children to learn through play. They use national guidance appropriately to ensure children under three years have fun and success in their learning. Staff are making positive progress in planning the curriculum through taking account the experiences and outcomes within Curriculum for Excellence. There are increasing opportunities for children aged three to five to experience individual success. However, staff now need to extend opportunities for children to develop their interests and skills in a wider range of experiences both indoors and outdoors. All children have good opportunities for imaginative and investigative play. Creative play can be extended to increase the levels of challenge. Staff make good use of the local environment to enrich the curriculum. They are keen to provide more opportunities for children to observe and explore in the outdoors.

Staff know children and their families very well. They are caring and supportive in their interactions and each child is treated with respect. Staff observe children's play in the playroom and outdoors. They have made a good start to recording children's progress through 'learning books' and written observations. They recognise they can now use this information more effectively to increase the levels of difficulty in activities and extend children's learning further. Staff are aware of their roles in identifying children who need additional help and seek support from appropriate agencies when required.

#### **4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?**

Staff actively support and promote good relationships in the community. The project worker and staff coordinate and help deliver a good range of programmes which support children and families well. Parents are very happy with the work of the centre and see it as central to their community. They offer high levels of support through their fund-raising events. Parents find the daily contact, newsletters and parents' meetings with staff helpful. Staff recognise that they now need to continue to involve parents further in their child's learning. They are continuing to build on the good transition arrangements with primary schools to help children make continuous progress in learning.

#### **5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their centre community?**

Staff meet regularly to reflect on their work and plan activities. The views of staff and parents are sought and valued and help to shape the nursery's priorities for improvement. Children are beginning to talk about their learning and this is helping them recognise their own successes. Staff now need to develop further how they track the progress of individual children to ensure they build on their successes. The manager needs to involve children, parents and staff further in continuing to improve learning and teaching. Evaluation processes now need to be more focused on ensuring continuous improvement in children's learning.

#### **6. Does the centre have high expectations of all children?**

Staff are sensitive to children's personal needs. They encourage children to be independent in caring for themselves when getting ready for outdoor play. Children are very polite to staff and one another. They are learning about healthy lifestyles through food choices, tooth brushing and daily physical exercise. As staff take increasing account

of children's interests, they realise that they need to continue to raise their expectations of what children can achieve in their learning. Children are learning to celebrate different cultures and festivals through play experiences. Staff understand their responsibilities to keep children safe and well. As part of this, they now need to keep a more appropriate record of all fire drills and alarm tests.

## **7. Does the centre have a clear sense of direction?**

Staff, parents and children are all very proud of the centre and are committed to improvement. Staff have a good understanding of what they want the centre to be like and what children need from the centre. They have been successful in providing valuable support to children and families in the centre and in the local community. Parents are very appreciative of their work. Staff work effectively as a team and contribute well to centre improvements. They now need to ensure they have a clearer direction on developing and evaluating new initiatives in the curriculum. The centre shows capacity to continue to improve.

## **8. What happens next**

We are confident that, with support from the education authority, the centre will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The centre and the education authority will inform parents about the centre's progress in improving the quality of education.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the centre and education authority.

- Continue to take account of *Pre Birth to Three Guidelines* and Curriculum for Excellence to improve learning experiences for children.
- Make better use of assessment information to plan learning to ensure all children are challenged.
- Ensure approaches to self-evaluation focuses on learning and teaching.

## **Requirement**

- The provider is required to keep a record of all fire drills and alarm tests. This is in order to comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument 2002/114 Regulation 19(3)(c).  
Timescale: within three days of the publication of this report.

Quality indicators help centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of a centre. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *The Child at the Centre*. Following the inspection of each centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish centres are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Innellan & Toward Family Centre.

|                                    |                     |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Improvements in performance</b> | <b>satisfactory</b> |
| <b>Children's experiences</b>      | <b>good</b>         |
| <b>Meeting learning needs</b>      | <b>good</b>         |

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the centre.

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| <b>The curriculum</b>                      | <b>good</b>         |
| <b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b> | <b>satisfactory</b> |

**Managing Inspector:** Sheona Moore  
27 April 2011

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

|                |       |   |
|----------------|-------|---|
| excellent      | means | outstanding, sector leading                         |
| very good      | means | major strengths                                     |
| good           | means | important strengths with some areas for improvement |
| satisfactory   | means | strengths just outweigh weaknesses                  |
| weak           | means | important weaknesses                                |
| unsatisfactory | means | major weaknesses                                    |

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