

**REPORTS BY CARE INSPECTORATE OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PROVISION**

Report by Chief Officer, Education and Children's Services

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Report is to provide the outcomes of the Comhairle's Early Learning and Childcare settings engagement with the Care Inspectorate and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Care Inspectorate joint inspection visits from June 2023 to June 2024.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Settings within Comhairle nan Eilean Siar are subject to inspections from the Care Inspectorate as a single agency and, in addition, joint inspections from His Majesty's Inspectorate and Care Inspectorate.
- 2.2 As part of their work, the Care Inspectorate regularly inspect the quality of care in ELC to ensure it meets the quality standards. Where it is found that improvement is needed, they support services to make positive changes. Inspection criteria and quality indicators are incorporated within the quality standards.
- 2.3 The Care Inspectorate review the Quality of Care and Support; the Quality of the Environment; Quality of Staffing; and Quality of Leadership and Management. The number of indicators reviewed can vary from a minimum of two to a maximum of four during their visits.
- 2.4 Self-evaluation for self-improvement is a key feature of improving the Early Learning and Childcare experience for children and their families. Self-evaluation is at the heart of everything that settings do and focuses on the quality of provision, in relation to the national key guidance and quality frameworks promoted nationally.
- 2.5 In the period from June 2023 to June 2024, five Local Authority ELC settings have been inspected by the Care Inspectorate. Two Local Authority Nurseries were jointly inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and the Care Inspectorate. One Partner Nursery and one partner Childminder have also been inspected by the Care Inspectorate during this time.
- 2.6 The full reports are available on the Care Inspectorate website <https://www.careinspectorate.com>.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 **It is recommended that the Comhairle note the Report and continue to support Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings to implement continuous improvement in keeping with the Quality Frameworks.**

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Appendix: None  
Background Papers: None

## IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

<b>Resource Implications</b>	<b>Implications/None</b>
Financial	None
Legal	None
Staffing	None
Assets and Property	Some inspection reports have identified requirements or recommendations for improvements to settings within the estate that are being undertaken.
<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Implications/None</b>
Risk	None
Equalities	Applicable UNCRC Articles: 28 – A Right to Education 29 – Goals of Education
Corporate Strategy	<b>Support Children, Families and Young People:</b> - Raise ambition and attainment, in particular to address inequalities.
Environmental Impact	None
Consultation	None

## BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Care Inspectorate is a scrutiny body which supports improvement. They examine the quality of care in Early Learning and Childcare Settings to ensure they meet the expected high standards. From their visits if they identify areas for improvement, they will support the service to make positive changes.
- 5.2 As well as external scrutiny, self-evaluation for self-improvement is a key feature of improving the Early Learning and Childcare experience for children and their families. Self-evaluation is at the heart of everything that settings do and focuses on the quality of provision, in relation to the national key guidance and quality frameworks promoted nationally:
- Realising the Ambition – Education Scotland
  - How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare – Education Scotland
  - Quality Framework – Care Inspectorate
  - Health and Social Care Standards – Scottish Government
  - The National Standard – Scottish Government
  - The principles of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC)
  - United Nations Convention of Rights for the Child (UNCRC).

5.3 During a Care Inspectorate Inspection four key areas are inspected:

- **Key question 1:** How good is our care, play and learning?
- **Key question 2:** How good is our setting?
- **Key question 3:** How good is our leadership?
- **Key question 4:** How good is our staff team?

5.4 His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education inspected against the following quality indicators:

- Learning, teaching, and assessment.
- Securing Children’s progress.
- Leadership of change.
- Ensuring well-being equality and inclusion

5.5 Each key area is assessed on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent. After every inspection, an inspection report showing their findings.

5.6 Where a setting requires support the Care Inspectorate will make recommendations for improvement and issue requirements for change. The ELC Setting will be required to create an action plan and a return visit may be made to check that the recommendations have been met. The Care Inspectorate and the authority will work to support the setting, offering advice, guidance and sharing good practice to ensure positive and improved outcomes.

#### DETAIL

6.1 The settings inspected in the 2023-24 academic year were graded as follows:

#### Care Inspectorate

Settings /Childminders	How good is our care, play and learning?	How good is our setting?	How good is our leadership?	How good is our staff team?
Sgoil Àraich Balivanich	Good	Adequate	Adequate	Good
Sgoil Araich Dhalabroig	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Saoghal Beag Sgoil Araich Uibhist a Tuath	Very Good	Good	Very Good	Very Good
Sgoil Araich Lionel	Good	Good	Good	Good
Sgoil Araich nan Loch	Good	Adequate	Good	Good
Cothrom Og Nursery (Partner)	Good	Adequate	Good	Good
Little Treasures Child Minding (Partner)	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Good

#### His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education

Settings	Learning, teaching and assessment	Securing children’s progress	Leadership of change	Ensuring wellbeing and inclusion
Sgoil Araich Lionel	Good	Good	Not inspected	Not inspected
Sgoil Araich Balivanich	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

## **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The Early Years Service is committed to providing high quality early learning and childcare within all our settings. Inspections are an important part of our Quality Assurance process to assist us in identify areas for improvement through self-evaluation for self-improvement. Self-evaluation is a continuous, reflective process throughout our settings where settings are encouraged to examine the quality and effectiveness of its work.
- 7.2 Following the recent inspections, improvement plans have been implemented in collaboration with the Care Inspectorate, the management team, and staff to address the identified requirements and recommendations. The level of support given to the setting will be determined by both the service's inspection grades and the report.