# Hillhead EYC S&Q 2025/26

## About Our Centre

Hillhead Early Years Centre (EYC) is a local authority setting catering to children aged 0–5yrs situated in Kirkintilloch. At the heart of our practice, is a welcoming environment that strives to ensure all children to feel safe, secure and inspired to explore and learn. Our children have free flow access across five play rooms including outdoor spaces. We are passionate outdoor learning which encourages children's natural curiosity, building confidence and resilience. We actively engage with out local community through purposeful outings, including visits to aa nearby orchard and guided local walks. These experiences are carefully planned to support children's understanding of nature and seasonal change, while promoting physical development and road safety awareness.

We implement 1140 government funded hours within Hillhead Early Years Centre through extended day provision with a combination of morning, afternoon  or full day sessions.  Our current SIMD average is 3. The ethnic background of the pupils is 80% white Scottish and 20% other ethnic origin.

Our team is led by a Head Teacher and a Depute Head of Centre, supported by 3 Senior Early Years Workers, 33 Early Years Workers, a Nursery Teacher and 2 Support Workers. The team is further complemented by 3 dedicated clerical assistants, housekeeper, and cleaning staff.

As a local authority provider, we offer comprehensive specialist support tailored to individual learners, including access to Educational Psychologist, Teacher of the deaf, Speech and Language Therapy, and Occupational Therapy



## Hillhead EYC Vison, Values and Aims

**OUR VISION**

To provide a learning environment that promotes each individual child's wellbeing, happiness, holistic development and full learning potential. Through an ethos of love, respect and nurture.

**OUR VALUES**

*Our values are taken from the Getting it Right for Every child document*

**Safe -** The center takes great care to provide a safe place for all. The center has a number of policy and procedures that promote the safety of all.

**Healthy -** We aim to promote the health of all children through a variety of health promotion schemes. For example, tooth brushing, health snacks, good hygiene practices and access to outdoor play.

**Active -** We aim to provide an environment that is rich with provocations for learning and engages the children in active play and creativity.

**Nurtured** - Our team are committed to providing an environment that provides nurturing experiences and provide a loving and caring approach to all children.

**Achieving** - We track the learning and development of all children to ensure progression and to identify children who need help or challenge. We work with families to implement appropriate interventions to promote the child's learning potential.

**Responsible -** We will encourage all children to care for each other and the environment. Taking on helping roles within the playrooms and outdoor spaces.

**Respected** - Our staff respond to the children's views and ideas on Nursery life. The child's voice is displayed throughout the nursery. All children are encouraged to be kind to others and follow nursery rules.

**Included -** All children are encouraged to take an active role in nursery life. Staff provide activities that are accessible to all children or easily adapted to each individual's need.

**OUR AIMS**

To provide a safe and welcoming environment for all.

To enable all children to develop resilience, good self-esteem and a thirst for learning.

To encourage all children to be confident individuals, successful learners, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

To provide a high quality learning environment and balanced curriculum that reflects children's interests and promotes active learning through play experiences both indoors our outdoors.

To work with all agencies to ensure that when required all children receive timely and focused interventions.

To provide a staff team that are enthusiastic, well trained and committed to improving our service through continual evaluation and self reflection.

## Review of Centres Improvement Plan

Our Centre Improvement Plan was devised of 3 priorities for academic year 2025/2026.

Health and Wellbeing : Up, Up and Away- Champion Year

Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Observation and Planning

Wellbeing: Care plans, Nurture and SHANNARRI

## Priority 1 - Up, Up and Away (Champion Year)

As part of East Dunbartonshire Council's initiative to embed the Up, Up and Away Framework into our center and practice, we selected it as a priority for Hillhead EYC. Up, Up and Away is a framework that supports professionals and families with the use of toolkits, strategies and audits to support and develop language, communication and literacy development in children under the age of five. All staff were introduced to the Up, Up and Away CIRCLE Framework on the August in-service day. A professional learning record was created and staff gave initial feedback on their understanding of the document.  Practitioners and a senior early years worker were assigned as champions of this vehicle of change and attended all PLCs throughout the year.

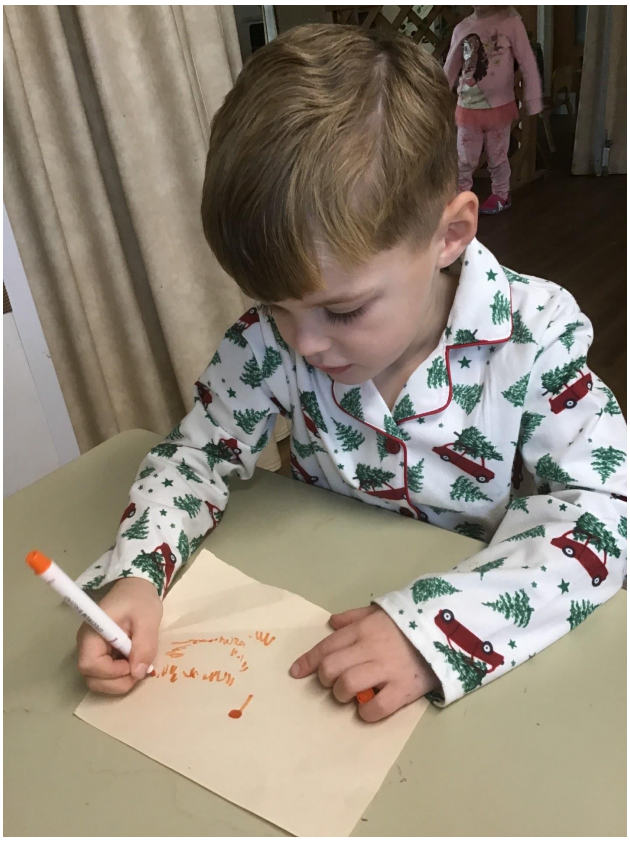
An action plan was created following a whole staff team approach using the Literacy Rich Environment Tool. Progress was regularly reviewed and a resource audit was completed, following which an resources were purchased and made available to all children and staff within the EYC. The identifying stages tool was shared with all staff in August 2025 and mentors continued to support throughout the year. On the May 2026 in-service day an update on our progress was shared with all staff who completed a questionnaire to measure impact. This demonstrated that 100% of staff, from the 19 responses, knew more about the Up, Up and Away resource than at the same time last year. Engaging with the resource's Literacy Rich Environment Tool, evidenced that all children have benefited from improved access to an inclusive environment.

Practitioners will continue to carry out observations within both indoor and outdoor areas of the EYC to ensure we continue to build on improvements gained. An evidence folder has been created containing high-quality examples of mark making pre and post interventions with staff regularly viewing the resources on the Glow TEAM's tile. Practitioners use the reflective tool for enriching communication, self-evaluation purposes and to improve their communication skills with all children.

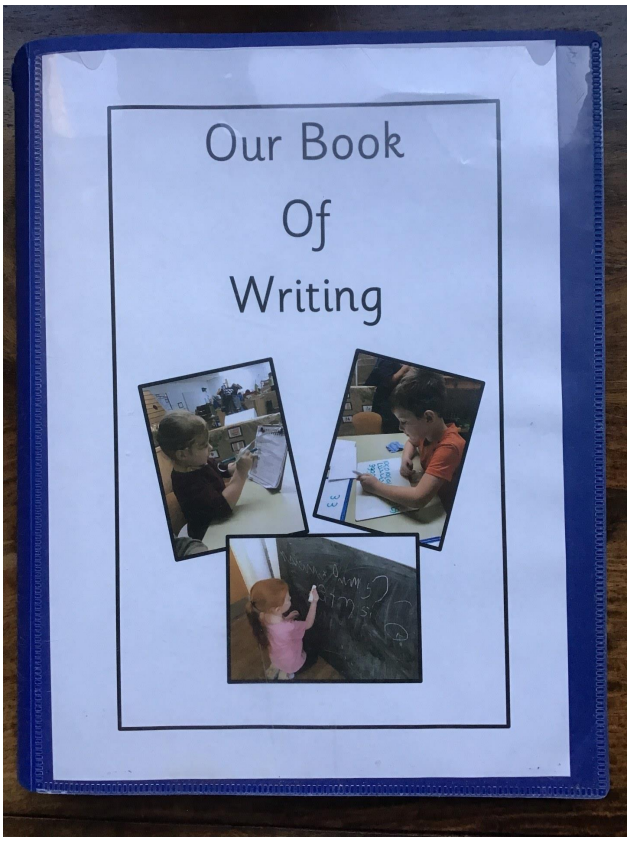
The Risk and Resilience Tool was incorporated into our current wellbeing assessments to further enhance them and action plans continue to provide positive outcomes for all children. A 6-week PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) was implemented to audit, strengthen, and sustain high quality inclusive provision throughout the setting. Holistic tracking data and on-going in-the-moment observations demonstrated measurable progress in outcomes for all children using holistic trackers and Ferre Laevers observations.

All children who who have an action plan have regular reviews of their targets, all children received a smart target which was updated each term and shared with parents, SLT audited this and gave feedback to staff throughout the session. Parent comments were sought through Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings to ensure positive outcomes for all children. ***" I cannot thank***

***you enough for what you have done for my child, he would not had as much success as he has had if it was not for your hard work."***








## Priority 2- Learning and Teaching- Observation and Planning

Over the recent years, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has conducted regular observations and learning walks, which have consistently highlighted both strengths and areas for development across the setting. These observations have enabled practitioners to identify and evidence schematic play through learning journals, and this has been shared regularly with parents to deepen their understanding and support continuity of learning at home.

Learning walks have been followed by structured SLT-led feedback discussion, supported by newly developed paperwork to enhance professional dialogue. Where additional support was identified, individual action plans were implemented, resulting in measurable improvements in core provision, provocations and practitioner confidence.

Monthly learning journal monitoring, led by the Nursery Teacher and SLT, has strengthened staff understanding of the planning and recording process. As a result, all children now have relevant and achievable next steps, which are consistently supported by practitioners, leading to clear progress across all areas of the curriculum.

To further enhance provision, area packs were created by the Equity and Excellence Lead to support targeted planning across all zones. Additionally, one practitioner undertook play

pedagogy training throughout the year, which included multiple center visits and subsequently informed significant environmental improvements within the 2-3yr room.

As part of the ongoing Up, Up and Away action plan, a comprehensive range of gross and fine motor learning experiences was systematically planned across the center to support children in acquiring the foundational skills necessary for mark making and early writing. Staff professional knowledge was further developed regarding the intrinsic link between fine and gross motor abilities, with particular emphasis on the importance of upper body strength and coordination as a prerequisite for writing competence.

In the outdoor environment, children were provided with varied opportunities to build shoulder and arm strength through access to a carefully selected range of resources. Similarly, indoor provision included balancing activities and tasks involving lifting, pushing, and pulling, thereby promoting whole-body physical development. Targeted 'Play Doh Disco' sessions were introduced for children aged 2–5 yrs, while fine motor resources were expanded and embedded within daily practice, with a clear focus on individual interests to engage reluctant participants effectively.

A collaborative workshop, delivered by the Senior Early Years Worker and Nursery Teacher, was offered to parents to enhance their understanding of fine and gross motor development and to provide practical strategies for supporting these skills, alongside mark making, within the home environment. Throughout the year, grab bags were compiled, containing recipes and accompanying ingredients to enable families to prepare healthy meals or snacks together. To complement this initiative, a staff member recorded instructional cooking videos, which were shared via the centre's Facebook page; this was subsequently followed by photographic evidence in children's learning journals, showcasing family engagement with the resources.

In October 2025, the centre hosted a well-attended Pumpkin Patch event, affording families the opportunity to participate in Halloween-themed activities and to take home a pumpkin of their choice. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with comments including:

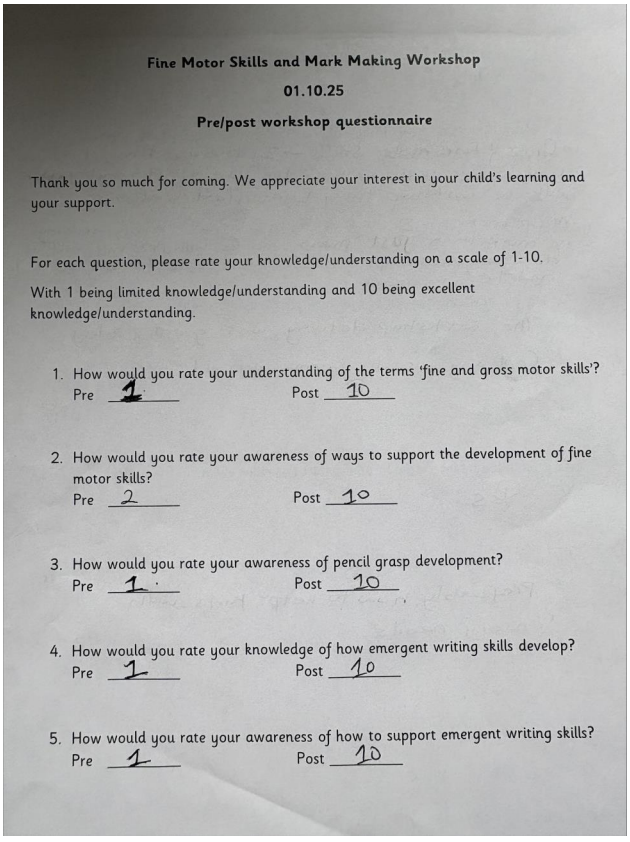
***"So cute and fun! It was lovely to see the nursery staff with my child and to have the opportunity to chat to them. A thoroughly lovely family event."***

***"A great wee event! My child was delighted. It was also good to have the chance to explore the garden space. Many thanks for all your hard work!"***

In November 2025, the annual curriculum evening was held, structured as a market-place style event. This format enabled staff to showcase the learning environment and engage in meaningful dialogue with parents regarding how the centre supports each child's developmental journey. Feedback from attending families was highly encouraging, with one parent noting:

***"We really love everything you are doing. Such a warm, educational, and play-based environment—the teacher clearly knows my child well and is friendly. We love it here!"***

Throughout the session, the centre has continued to offer a wide array of family engagement opportunities, including parent lunch visits, sensory stay-and-play sessions, Families Connect, and numerous additional events. A Senior Early Years Worker facilitated an Alice Sharp professional development session for all staff, tailored to their existing skill sets. In response, each practitioner developed an enhanced area of provision or a targeted resource to enrich children's learning experiences. These enhancements were designed to foster listening and talking skills, whilst also supporting vocabulary acquisition. Notably, the home corner was further developed to offer a broader range of literacy-focused experiences.



**Fine Motor Skills and Mark Making Workshop**

**01.10.25**

**Pre/post workshop questionnaire**

Thank you so much for coming. We appreciate your interest in your child's learning and your support.

For each question, please rate your knowledge/understanding on a scale of 1-10.

With 1 being limited knowledge/understanding and 10 being excellent knowledge/understanding.

1. How would you rate your understanding of the terms 'fine and gross motor skills'?
   Pre 1 Post 10
2. How would you rate your awareness of ways to support the development of fine motor skills?
   Pre 2 Post 10
3. How would you rate your awareness of pencil grasp development?
   Pre 1 Post 10
4. How would you rate your knowledge of how emergent writing skills develop?
   Pre 1 Post 10
5. How would you rate your awareness of how to support emergent writing skills?
   Pre 1 Post 10


Our
All About Me
Book


Hillhead EYC
Family Pumpkin Patch
Tuesday 21st October
3pm-5pm
Pick your own pumpkin
Autumn crafts
Games
Tattoos
Photo opportunities
Hot chocolate and much more
Lots of fun for all



Friday, 03 October 2025

Achievements from home

By Shona Cassidy

Details History

What was I doing?

Connor practicing his fine motor skills, with his goodie bag treats from nursery

Update

Achievements from home - Parent Contribution Published

Edit



Friday, 19 September 2025

Achievements from home

By Michelle Horne

Details History

What was I doing?

We got a grab bag and made nicolas tomato n basil pasta! I loved making it helping chop the onions and garlic. I loved it and ate the whole bowl , mummy had a bowl too .. yummy cant wait for the next wish it was sooner lol

Update

Like Comment

Nicola Gallagher We will be calling use Gordon Ramsay glad your enjoying using the bags help yourself to another one next week if you want to. I'm working on the next recipe

on Friday, 19 September 2025

Reply

1. Did you find today's workshop useful?

Yes.

2. Which aspects of the workshop did you find particularly useful/not useful?

(i) Gross & Fine motor skills → I always thought, fine & Gross motor skills involves the use of pen and paper, With the workshop today, I understand better.

(ii) Mark making – I find it useful that mark making is more than just making marks with pen or pencil, there are ~~many~~ more options available with helping the kids and learning more.

3. Do you have any suggestions for how we could improve the workshop?

The workshop delivery was great today, Cant say as it seems perfect.

4. Would you be interested in taking part in similar events in the future?

Yes.

5. Are there any topics you would like future workshops to focus on?

Preferably, how to help kids with Sensory needs.

Thank you again for coming!

Thank you for having us.

Kehinde Falola.





## Priority 3- Wellbeing- Care plans, Nurture and SHANNARRI

In August 2025, a revised Child Care Plan was introduced. Parents were invited to meetings to complete the new documentation, which was also adopted as the initial paperwork for all new children. The plan was presented to all staff during the August in-service day, and the SLT has since conducted regular audits to ensure consistency and quality of completion.

A designated nurture space, known as 'The Snug' was established within the 3-5yrs playroom. Throughout the year, the nurture champions actively participated in all Nurture Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and used their training to inform ongoing environmental developments across the playrooms. A rota was introduced for children identified as benefiting from nurture sessions, with access reviewed regularly by the nurture champions, the Equity and Excellence Lead and key workers. From April 2026, targeted nurture sessions commenced for children requiring additional support.

All playrooms now feature accessible quiet space to support children's self-regulation. The Hub was further enhanced to serve as a breakout area, offering children opportunities to engage in masterclasses and Skills for Life activities.

A Calm Cafe was established within Hillhead EYC to provide snack and lunch provision in a nurturing, unharried environment. Children are offered choice in their meals and dine with a dedicated adult, accompanied by soft background music. Self-service options promote independence, and the flexible approach has positively impacted the nursery environment by allowing children to signa readiness for food, minimising disruption to learning.

A consistent routine has been embedded across all playrooms to help children manage expectations and regulate their emotions. SHANARRI Wellbeing Buddies were introduced, and certificates have been created to recognise and celebrate children's achievements. A designated Wellbeing Champion now creates and shares resources across the team to support children with additional emotional needs.

An enhanced transition programme was developed in partnership with Hillhead Primary School to ensure children move confidently to Primary 1. In August 2025, an early years worker was placed within the Primary 1 classroom, for the first few weeks, to support continuity. Children participate in regular visits to the school throughout the year, including attending the Christmas Nativity performance, Learning Showcase Event, PE sessions within the gym hall and visits with the local librarian to the school library. School pupils also visited the nursery to support our children, leading them in learning activities. A shared vision was established between the school and the EYC to strengthen partnership working. In November 2025, a curricular event was held in the EYC, during which the Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher spoke with parents about the transition process.

The Nursery Teacher liaised with all other local schools to which children were due to transfer. Children requiring enhanced transition support were identified through Support for All Meetings, and TAC Meetings were convened with individual schools to ensure a robust transition for children with additional support needs. The Getting It Right For Every Child

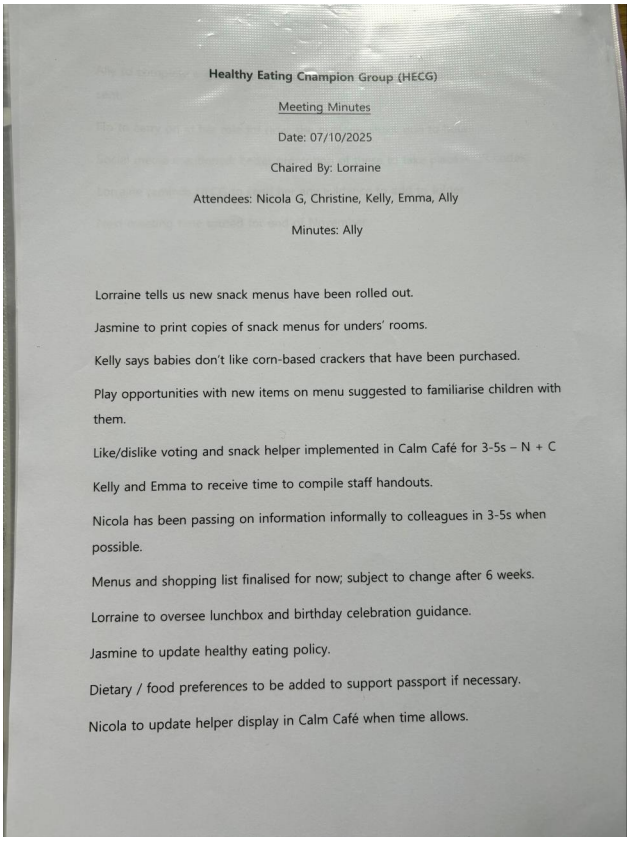
(GIRFEC) Liaison Group processes were followed to promote positive, inclusive transitions for all children.

The Primary 1 class teacher for 2026/27 sessions at Hillhead Primary School completed regular visits to the EYC throughout term 3, accompanied by the school's Nurture Teacher. Time was provided to begin building relationships with our pre-school children to further ensure a smooth transition to Primary 1.




STRAWBERRY
MARKET


BOOKS



Healthy Eating Champion Group (HECG)

Meeting Minutes

Date: 07/10/2025

Chaired By: Lorraine

Attendees: Nicola G, Christine, Kelly, Emma, Ally

Minutes: Ally

Lorraine tells us new snack menus have been rolled out.

Jasmine to print copies of snack menus for unders' rooms.

Kelly says babies don't like corn-based crackers that have been purchased.

Play opportunities with new items on menu suggested to familiarise children with them.

Like/dislike voting and snack helper implemented in Calm Café for 3-5s – N + C

Kelly and Emma to receive time to compile staff handouts.

Nicola has been passing on information informally to colleagues in 3-5s when possible.

Menus and shopping list finalised for now; subject to change after 6 weeks.

Lorraine to oversee lunchbox and birthday celebration guidance.

Jasmine to update healthy eating policy.

Dietary / food preferences to be added to support passport if necessary.

Nicola to update helper display in Calm Café when time allows.

## Progress in National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;

An action plan was created following a whole staff team approach using the Literacy Rich. Environment Tool. Progress was regularly reviewed and a resource audit was completed, following which an resources were purchased and made available to all children and staff within the EYC. The identifying stages tool was shared with all staff in August 2025 and mentors continued to support throughout the year. On the May 2026 in-service day an update on our progress was shared with all staff who completed a questionnaire to measure impact. This demonstrated that 100% of staff, from the 19 responses, knew more about the Up, Up and Away resource than at the same time last year. Engaging with the resource's Literacy Rich Environment Tool, evidenced that all children have benefited from improved access to an inclusive environment. Most children in the EYC have made progress in numeracy and literacy and this has been evidenced in targeted next steps. Children have been offered numeracy and literacy experienced that have been targeted individually to their own understanding.

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

Children within Hillhead EYC have the opportunity to access support for all process and the opportunity to work with the link educational psychologist if required to ensure positive outcomes for all children in Hillhead EYC. A few children have accessed Enhance Learning Resource from Harestanes PS which offered enhanced support for children who required this whilst upskilling staff. Regular farer leaver assessment took place in the EYC showing progress in all children's involvement and wellbeing. All staff participated in the literacy rich environment toolkit training and this showed 100% of staff now feel more confident implementing this with all children.

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

Hillhead EYC have developed a nurturing environment to ensure we are supporting all children health and wellbeing. A designated nurture space, known as 'The Snug' was established within the 3-5yrs playroom. A rota was introduced for children identified as benefiting from nurture sessions, with access reviewed regularly by the nurture champions, the Equity and Excellence Lead and key workers. From April 2026, targeted nurture sessions commenced for children requiring additional support. All playrooms now feature accessible quiet space to support children's self-regulation. The Hub was further enhanced to serve as a breakout area, offering children opportunities to engage in masterclasses and Skills for Life activities. A Calm Cafe was established within Hillhead EYC to provide snack and lunch provision in a nurturing, unharried environment. Children are offered choice in their meals and dine with a dedicated adult, accompanied by soft background music. Self-service options promote independence. A consistent routine has been embedded across all playrooms to help children manage expectations and regulate their emotions. SHANARRI Wellbeing Buddies were introduced, and certificates have been created to recognise and celebrate children's achievements. A designated Wellbeing Champion now creates and shares resources across the team to support children with additional emotional needs.

## Self-Evaluation of Quality Framework

| Quality indicator | Centre self-evaluation | Inspection/ Authority evaluation |
|---|---|---|
| **Curriculum** | Good | Good |
| **Learning, teaching and assessment** | Good | Good |
| **Wellbeing, inclusion and equality** | Good | Good |

## Summary of Centre Improvement Priorities for session 2026/27

1. Wellbeing and Inclusion: Up, up and away
2. Curriculum: Learning, Teaching and Assessment- Tracking and Moderation

3. Pedagogy and Meta Skills: Outdoor Environmental Update

## What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

Hillhead Early Years Centre has benefited from a stable, committed staff team who are eager to lead further improvements to benefit staff and learners. Progress has been made in all areas of our Centre. Improvement Plan, as can be seen in the data above. Staff willingly take on leadership roles which is having a positive impact on environment and learner experiences. This approach will continue into next session. Self-evaluation processes highlight the progress that has been made this session to improve the quality of care at our centre. Further Improvement Priorities will continue to be monitored and data analysed to ensure positive impact for all. Family engagement continues to be high and parents are supportive of the work of the nursery. We have a clear vision and a dedicated team of staff, parents and children, to drive forward centre improvements.