



Spateston Early Learning and Childcare Centre

Improvement Plan

2026/27

Planning framework

As part of Children's Services, Spateston Early Learning and Childcare Centre has developed this improvement plan to address the needs of our setting in line with the local and national priorities listed below.

National Improvement Framework Key Priorities

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education;
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing;
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people; and
- Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

National Improvement Framework 7 Key Outcomes

- A globally respected, empowered, and responsive education and skills system with clear accountability at every level that supports children, young people and adult learners to thrive. The system enables the development of their knowledge, skills, values and attributes that give them the best opportunity to succeed and contribute to Scotland's society and economy.
- Young people experiencing the benefit of schools and early years settings working in excellent partnerships with wider children's services and other partners, families, and communities, in line with the GIRFEC approach.
- Inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all.
- High levels of achievement across the curriculum for all learners, with action to close the poverty-related attainment gap.
- Highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs.
- Improving relationships and behaviour, and attendance, with increased engagement in learning and a culture of dignity and respect for all.
- An education system engaging in digital technology to enhance all aspects of learning and teaching, supported by a digitally skilled workforce and tackling digital inequality.

Renfrewshire Council Plan Strategic Outcomes

← Cross cutting theme: Improving outcomes for children and families →

We will encourage kind and connected communities—where our citizens take pride in their **place**, attracting others to move here and share in the opportunities Renfrewshire has to offer.

We will support a strong and flexible local **economy**—with Renfrewshire able to adapt after the pandemic, building up resilience to support good green jobs and skills for all local people to enjoy the benefits of both living and working here.

We want Renfrewshire to be a **fair** place—where all our people have the best chances to live happy, healthy and fulfilled lives, to feel safe, supported and empowered to unlock the strength of our collective potential.

We are working towards a **greener** future—taking responsibility for our impact on the planet and taking brave, bold steps to protect the natural environment that supports and benefits us all.

We want our employees to feel proud to work for Renfrewshire Council because we are a **values** driven organisation, where we all understand and value our contributions, and we are passionate about making a difference for Renfrewshire.

Renfrewshire Council's Values

We are **fair**, we treat each other and everyone we deal with respectfully and work hard to build trust in Renfrewshire Council.

We are **helpful**, we care about getting things right and are always approachable.

We are great **collaborators**; we work as one team and with people who care about this place.

We value **learning** to help us innovate, improve and deliver better services.

Children's Services Vision

Working together to get it right for children, families and communities – protecting, learning, achieving and nurturing

Renfrewshire's Education Improvement Plan Priorities

Reduce child poverty in Renfrewshire and improving outcomes for children and families currently living in poverty	Place children and young people's human rights at the heart of the planning and delivery of services that affect them	Protect the most vulnerable members of our communities, including children and young people who are at risk	Support and nurture our children, families and communities	Create the best possible learning estate to allow children and young people to thrive	Raise attainment and enhance learning and teaching in an inclusive environment
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Our Philosophy

Within Spateston Early Learning and Childcare Centre we:

- Respect the individuality of all and nurture the skills and qualities they have. We support the thoughts and opinions shared and value how these can influence our approach. We believe that all should feel included and will ensure that with warmth and understanding we strive to achieve this.
- Ensure that the environment indoors and out is a resource that our children are excited to explore. It creates an invitation for them to expand their curiosity and enquiry skills. Our children thrive as we develop within them a deep understanding and appreciation of the natural world as they investigate the wonder this creates. Through play they connect to familiar aspects of life at home and together we build on this to unify their learning making it both emotionally safe and intellectually challenging.
- Create learning and development opportunities for our children to experience that are limitless. Together we provide them with the skills to develop their knowledge through the excitement of researching their interests to find out more. Practitioners inspire and encourage children's wonder of learning and are proud to observe as they celebrate their achievements together. Play opportunities are rich, stimulating, exciting and fun. Children have the freedom to follow their interest with supportive adults who inspire further learning.
- Make strong connections across our environment that links children's learning and development to home, family, culture, and the local community. We ensure that we provide a unified approach to the opportunities and experiences we offer. Working together in harmony we ensure that together as one we strive for a uniqueness in our approach to achieve the best outcomes for all.
- Encourage children to share their thoughts and feelings using their creative mind to express their imaginative and creativity skills. Having the freedom to explore, reflect and exhibit these through their learning gives them the opportunity to make connections and form an understanding of the world around them.
- Make certain our children feel secure within the Spateston Early Learning and Childcare Centre community. Together we create for them a sense of belonging through the connections we have as a team which includes, all families, practitioners, and the wider community. Our inclusive environment provides a harmonious learning community where children's social and emotional wellbeing is supported through the friendships they make.
- Have early years professionals who are dedicated to the importance of their role in supporting children's learning and development. We ensure that the knowledge and understanding they have about how children learn is visible within the environment and the flexible approach they have to individual children's needs. Relationships with children are warm and loving creating happiness and security as they engage in meaningful interactions. Their ongoing professionalism is sustained through the qualifications they gain, and the impact further research has on their understanding of young children's learning and development.

Who did we consult?

To identify our priorities for improvement, we sought the views of practitioners, children, and their families. We used a variety of methods to capture the views of those who are involved in the life and work of Spateston Early Learning and Childcare Centre. Flexible opportunities, including family 'Pop In' sessions, conversations, questionnaires and improvement groups, enabled stakeholders to share their views and contribute to our self-evaluation and future priorities. Children's voices were captured through play, discussions and reflection on their experiences, ensuring their ideas remained central to our planning. Practitioners engaged in professional enquiry, research and collegiate dialogue to evaluate practice and identify areas for further improvement. We also worked closely with local and national partners, using guidance from Education Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, the Froebel Trust, Strathclyde University and colleagues across local authorities to inform our thinking. The evidence gathered has shaped the priorities within this plan, ensuring they reflect the needs of our setting and align with local and national priorities.

How will we know if we are achieving our aims?

Progress towards our improvement priorities will be measured and evaluated using key self-evaluation frameworks from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate. A robust quality assurance calendar underpins this process, incorporating observations of practice, monitoring of pedagogical documentation, analysis of children's progress through the Early Level Progression Tool and learner pathways, and regular professional dialogue. Both formal and informal monitoring activities support reflective practice, challenge professional thinking and strengthen practitioners' knowledge and skills. Examples of effective practice are shared across the team to promote continuous improvement and ensure consistently high quality experiences for children. Our annual Standards and Quality Report and Self-Evaluation are reviewed by Renfrewshire Council Children's Services, providing further support and challenge to our improvement journey.

Improvement Priority 1 – Enhancing Early Numeracy Through Responsive Pedagogy, Professional Enquiry and High Quality Learning Documentation

NIF Priorities

Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

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

Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy

NIF 7 Key Outcomes

Develop knowledge, skills, values and attributes to support children and young people to thrive

Excellent partnerships in line with GIRFEC

Inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment

High levels of achievement across the curriculum with action to close the poverty-related attainment gap

Highly skilled practitioners and leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment

Improving relationships behaviour and attendance with increased engagement in learning

Engaging in digital technology supported by a highly skilled digital workforce & tackling digital inequality

Rationale for change	Outcome and Expected Impact	Measures	Interventions
Through introducing Learning Lens as a small test of change, we have recognised the value of capturing children's learning as it unfolds, making their thinking, relationships, and experiences more visible. This approach has strengthened children's voice and enabled us to better understand the depth and continuity of their learning over time, reflecting the Froebelian belief that children construct knowledge through play, exploration, and meaningful interactions. Following a positive evaluation of this approach, we have identified the opportunity to further develop our practice by drawing on the strengths of digitally skilled practitioners to enhance the way learning is documented and shared. This will enable us to preserve authentic moments of learning more effectively, deepen reflective practice, and ensure children's experiences continue to shape our curriculum in meaningful and responsive ways.	Learning reels will become an integral part of our planning cycle, providing timely, meaningful documentation that captures the depth and continuity of children's learning. Practitioners will confidently use digital documentation to reflect on children's thinking, play, and development, informing professional dialogue and responsive planning. By revisiting learning through the reels, children will have meaningful opportunities to reflect on their experiences, share their perspectives, and influence future learning. This will strengthen children's voice, support a more responsive curriculum, and deepen practitioners' understanding of each child's learning journey in keeping with Froebelian principles.	We will know this change has been an improvement when learning reels consistently provide rich, current evidence of children's thinking, play, and learning. Practitioners will use this documentation to inform planning discussions, shape meaningful provocations within the learning environment, and accurately record children's progress in learning stories and tracking. We will see children's ideas and interests increasingly reflected in the experiences we provide, demonstrating that their voices are influencing the curriculum. Increased engagement from families, through sharing learning reels and ongoing dialogue about children's experiences, will provide further evidence of the positive impact of this approach.	We will further embed Learning Lens within our planning cycle as a meaningful approach to pedagogical documentation. Practitioners will use digital documentation to capture children's learning as it unfolds, making visible their thinking, relationships, creativity, and the depth of their play. Learning videos will be used to support reflective professional dialogue, enabling practitioners to respond thoughtfully to children's interests, ideas, and theories when planning future experiences and provocations. A small team of digitally skilled practitioners will have dedicated time each month to curate significant moments of learning into Learning Lens reels. These will strengthen our shared understanding of children's learning journeys, support ongoing reflection, and create meaningful opportunities to revisit learning with children and share it with families, ensuring children's voices remain at the heart of our Froebelian curriculum.

Analysis of our Early Years Progression Tool has highlighted an opportunity to strengthen children's mathematical development. Current data shows that 75% of children consistently demonstrate the skill of identifying and using numerals to 10 during play, while only 45% consistently recognise how many objects there are without counting. This is significantly lower than the average of 76% achieved across the other numeracy measures (based on data from 71 children). These findings have prompted us to reflect on how mathematical thinking is nurtured through play and everyday experiences. In response, we will strengthen our approach by providing rich, purposeful opportunities for children to explore number in meaningful contexts, ensuring all children, regardless of their stage of development, can develop confidence, curiosity, and mathematical understanding through play.	Through focused support and rich, play based numeracy experiences, we aim to improve children's confidence and competence in key aspects of early mathematical development. We will increase the proportion of children who consistently identify and use numerals to 10 during play from 75% to 90% (almost all children) and increase those who consistently recognise quantity without counting from 45% to 74% (the majority of children). These targets move us closer to the current average of 76% across all numeracy measures and reflect our commitment to providing equitable learning opportunities for every child. By strengthening children's mathematical thinking through meaningful, responsive experiences, we will support more consistent progress across numeracy and contribute to closing the attainment gap, regardless of children's stage of development.	The opportunities for support and challenge provided for all children, regardless of their stage of development, will be observed and evaluated to determine their progress in early numeracy. Through our practitioner enquiry, we will establish each child's starting point within the identified numeracy skills and compare this with their progress following the planned interventions. Learning documentation, observations and children's learning stories will provide qualitative evidence of changes in children's engagement, confidence and mathematical thinking. We will evaluate the impact of the levels of support and challenge provided, alongside the Bookbug groups children participated in, to identify how responsive, play based experiences and pedagogical approaches best meet individual needs and promote progression. The findings will inform ongoing reflection and responsive planning, ensuring children continue to experience meaningful opportunities that support their unique learning journeys.	We will build on the successful implementation of Bookbug to enhance children's early numeracy through meaningful, play based experiences. Children will be supported to choose where they access sessions, enabling practitioners to respond to their individual needs and stages of development by providing appropriate support and challenge. A qualitative professional enquiry will evaluate the impact of these responsive approaches and changes to the learning environment on children's engagement and progress, informing ongoing improvement.
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Improvement Priority 2 – Strengthening Unity, Connectedness and Community Through Responsive Pedagogy, Community Connections and Outdoor Learning

NIF Priorities

Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
 Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy

NIF 7 Key Outcomes

Develop knowledge, skills, values and attributes to support children and young people to thrive
 Excellent partnerships in line with GIRFEC
Inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment
 High levels of achievement across the curriculum with action to close the poverty-related attainment gap
Highly skilled practitioners and leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment
Improving relationships behaviour and attendance with increased engagement in learning
 Engaging in digital technology supported by a highly skilled digital workforce & tackling digital inequality

Rationale for change	Outcome and Expected Impact	Measures	Interventions
As our Froebel Garden project has developed, we have observed the positive impact that authentic community partnerships have on children's learning, confidence, and sense of belonging. These experiences have demonstrated the value of extending children's learning beyond the setting and creating opportunities to engage with a diverse range of people and environments. Our decision to strengthen links with the local high school is rooted in our Froebelian belief that children learn and flourish through meaningful relationships and strong connections with the wider community.	Children will regularly visit the high school to participate in music and art experiences, while high school pupils will support the ongoing development of our Froebel Garden and join Forest School sessions. These reciprocal learning experiences will nurture curiosity, creativity, collaboration, and a sense of belonging through meaningful relationships and shared experiences. Children will develop confidence, resilience, communication skills, and positive aspirations, supporting their holistic development and helping to reduce barriers to learning. The partnership is underpinned by the strong professional relationship and shared vision of the high school's Pupil Support Teacher and our Senior ELCO, ensuring meaningful, sustainable opportunities for children to flourish within their wider community.	Improvement will be evidenced through children demonstrating an increased sense of belonging, confidence, and curiosity during shared learning experiences with the local high school. Children will build positive relationships, engage confidently in new environments, and contribute their own ideas within collaborative experiences. Children's voice, observations, learning stories, and pedagogical documentation will capture their wellbeing, engagement, and application of new skills through play. Feedback from families, high school staff, and pupils, alongside ongoing professional dialogue, will provide evidence of the quality and sustainability of the partnership and its contribution to children's learning, wellbeing, and equity.	By developing a partnership with the local high school, we aim to further strengthen children's connections with their community through reciprocal relationships and shared learning experiences. We believe these interactions will provide rich opportunities for collaboration, inspire curiosity, and foster children's sense of identity as capable, valued contributors within their community. This partnership reflects our commitment to creating a connected learning community where children experience continuity, belonging, and meaningful participation, in keeping with Froebelian principles.

Following a recent incident within our forest environment, we recognised the need to intentionally rebuild confidence in our use of this valued learning space for both children and practitioners. Through reflection and professional dialogue, we identified the importance of reestablishing regular access to the forest as an integral part of our curriculum, ensuring that children continue to benefit from the rich learning opportunities that nature provides. Guided by Froebelian principles, we recognise the natural world as a fundamental context for children's learning, wellbeing, and holistic development. Time spent in nature nurtures children's curiosity, creativity, resilience, independence, and sense of connectedness with the living world. As a result, we are committed to strengthening practitioners' confidence and ensuring that high quality, thoughtful risk benefit approaches enable children to experience the freedom to explore, investigate, and learn through first hand experiences in the forest. By restoring these opportunities, we aim to create a culture where children and adults feel confident, safe, and inspired to engage with the natural environment as an essential and meaningful part of everyday learning.	By reestablishing regular forest experiences, we expect children to develop greater confidence, resilience, curiosity, and a stronger connection with the natural world. Practitioners will feel increasingly confident in facilitating high quality outdoor learning again in the forest, enabling children to engage in rich, child led experiences that support their wellbeing and holistic development. Through consistent access to the forest, children will have meaningful opportunities to explore, take appropriate risks, solve problems, and build positive relationships, ensuring nature remains an integral part of our Froebelian curriculum.	We will know this change has been an improvement when children engage confidently and enthusiastically in regular forest experiences, demonstrating increased curiosity, resilience, independence, and a strong sense of belonging in the natural environment. Practitioners will show increased confidence in planning and facilitating outdoor learning, with the forest experience returning as a consistent and valued part of our curriculum. Observations, children's voice, learning documentation, and reflective professional dialogue will demonstrate the positive impact on children's wellbeing, engagement, and learning, while feedback from families will provide further evidence of the difference these experiences are making.	Regular forest sessions will be reestablished, providing children with consistent opportunities to explore, investigate, and learn through play in nature. Practitioners will use observations and children's interests to plan meaningful experiences, supported by ongoing reflection and professional dialogue to continually improve practice. Children's views, observations, and feedback from families will help us evaluate the impact of these experiences on children's confidence, wellbeing, resilience, and engagement in learning.
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Improvement Priority 3 – Strengthening Equity and Belonging Through Responsive Pedagogy, Anti-Racist Practice and Children's Rights

NIF Priorities

Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
 Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
 Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
 Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
 Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy

NIF 7 Key Outcomes

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Rationale for change	Outcome and Expected Impact	Measures	Interventions
Our successful achievement of RNRA Ruby Accreditation has strengthened our nurturing ethos and reinforced the positive impact of relational, child-centred practice on children's health, wellbeing, and learning. As we progress towards Amethyst Accreditation, we will deepen our understanding of the nurture principle 'the environment offers a safe base', recognising that emotionally and physically safe, predictable, and responsive environments enable children to develop confidence, resilience, and a strong sense of belonging. Building practitioners' knowledge through professional learning and leadership opportunities will further enhance our ability to create an inclusive environment that respond to each child's unique strengths, needs, and stage of development, ensuring every child is supported to flourish.	Children will experience nurturing, responsive environments that provide a secure base for learning, play, and exploration. Through high quality interactions and consistent relational practice, children will demonstrate increased confidence, emotional security, independence, and wellbeing. Practitioners will continue to strengthen their understanding of nurturing pedagogy, enabling them to respond effectively to children's individual needs and create environments where every child feels valued, included, and able to reach their full potential.	Improvement will be evidenced through observations, children's voice, learning stories, and pedagogical documentation demonstrating that children feel safe, secure, and confident within the setting. Children will increasingly engage in sustained play, form positive relationships, show greater independence, and confidently explore their environment. Practitioner reflections, professional dialogue, and feedback from families will demonstrate increased confidence and consistency in applying nurturing principles. Progress towards RNRA Amethyst Accreditation will provide further evidence of the impact of these developments on children's wellbeing and practitioners' nurturing practice.	Practitioners will participate in professional learning led by the Educational Psychologist to deepen their understanding of the nurture principle The environment offers a safe base and its application within daily practice. Two practitioners will undertake RNRA leadership training to strengthen leadership capacity and support the ongoing development of nurturing practice across the setting. Using professional dialogue, observation, and reflection, practitioners will evaluate how the environment, routines, and interactions promote children's sense of safety, belonging, and wellbeing, making responsive changes that meet children's individual needs and stages of development as we work towards RNRA Amethyst Accreditation.

Building on our Children's Charter and Rights Respecting approach, we will strengthen anti-racist practice to ensure our setting continues to provide a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where every child experiences a strong sense of belonging. As we deepen our understanding of anti-racist pedagogy, we will create safer, braver learning spaces where diversity is valued, children's identities are celebrated, and respectful conversations are encouraged. This work reflects our commitment to the RNRA nurture principle 'the environment offers a safe base', ensuring all children feel seen, heard, respected and empowered to develop positive relationships with themselves and others.	Children will experience an inclusive environment where diversity is authentically represented and celebrated through relationships, play, resources and daily interactions. They will demonstrate increasing respect, empathy and confidence in recognising and valuing differences while developing a strong sense of identity and belonging. Practitioners will strengthen their confidence and understanding of anti-racist practice, embedding children's rights and equity within everyday pedagogy to ensure every child feels valued, included and able to flourish.	Improvement will be evidenced through observations, children's voice, learning stories and pedagogical documentation demonstrating that children show an increasing sense of belonging, respect and confidence in celebrating diversity and challenging unfairness. Children will increasingly use the language of their Children's Charter and rights within their relationships and play, demonstrating empathy, kindness and inclusion. Practitioner reflections, professional dialogue and self-evaluation will evidence increased confidence in embedding anti-racist pedagogy, while feedback from children and families will demonstrate that the setting continues to provide a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment where every child feels represented, respected and able to thrive.	Practitioners will engage in professional learning to develop their understanding of anti-racist practice and create safer, braver learning spaces that promote equity, belonging and respect. We will review our environment, resources and experiences to ensure they positively reflect diverse identities, cultures and families. The Children's Charter will continue to be embedded across the setting, with Rights Respecting Officers supporting children's participation and ensuring children's voices remain central to decision making. Through responsive interactions, high quality texts, play experiences and professional dialogue, practitioners will nurture children's curiosity, challenge bias appropriately and foster respectful relationships where every child feels safe, valued and included.
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