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**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 20 FEBRUARY 2024**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: SINGLETON INSPECTIONS OF EARLY  
LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTRES – PUBLISHED  
REPORTS APRIL 2023 TO JANUARY 2024**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND  
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

## **1. REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 To inform the Committee of the content of singleton inspection reports of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) centres by Care Inspectorate which were published between April 2023 and January 2024. These were;

Curious Minds, Elgin  
Bishopmill Pre-school, Elgin  
Teddy Bear Developmental Nursery, Cullen  
Portknockie Nursery, Portknockie  
Ark Childcare, Miltonduff  
Mortlach Nursery, Dufftown  
Drumduan Kindergarten, Forres  
Strathisla – FCSS, Keith  
Lady Cathcart Nursery, Buckie  
Earthtime, Duffus  
Rainbow Days, Buckie  
Aberlour Nursery, Aberlour  
Aberlour & Craigellachie Pre-school, Aberlour

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to exercising the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Care Inspectorate carries out inspections of care services, including day care of children's services. Providers are inspected against a Framework of Quality Themes and statements and the National Standard.

2.2 The Care Inspectorate resumed face to face ELC scrutiny in Autumn 2021 after COVID-19 restrictions impacted on their work.

2.3 The services noted have been scrutinised under the current Care Inspectorate [Quality Framework](#).

2.4 Care Inspectorate Officers will grade services and publish these grades as part of their duty to provide information to the public about the quality of care services.

The six point grading scale:

- 6 excellent
- 5 very good
- 4 good
- 3 adequate
- 2 weak
- 1 unsatisfactory

2.5 Following publication, inspection reports are available through ELC centres and online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

2.6 The education authority will give guidance and support, as appropriate, to both school nursery classes and partner providers of ELC education. Following a Singleton Inspection the ELC centre is asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share the plan with parents and carers.

2.7 During this reporting period there were 13 Singleton Inspection reports received.

Name of Early Learning and Childcare Provider	Date of Inspection
Curious Minds, Elgin	6 Feb & 20 July 2023
Bishopmill Pre-school, Elgin	31 March 2023
Teddy Bear Developmental Nursery, Cullen	24 May 2023
Portknockie Nursery, Portknockie	7 June 2023
Ark Childcare, Miltonduff	25 August 2023
*Mortlach Nursery, Dufftown	30 August 2023
*Drumduan Kindergarten, Forres	30 August 2023
*Strathisla – FCSS, Keith	1 September 2023
Lady Cathcart Nursery, Buckie	21 September 2023
Earthtime, Duffus	5 October 2023
*Rainbow Days, Buckie	26 October 2023
Aberlour Nursery, Aberlour	29 November 2023
Aberlour & Craigellachie Pre-school, Aberlour	29 November 2023

2.8 The Gradings, Recommendations and Requirements arising from the reports are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

2.9 Services marked with a \* received grades 4 or above which means they are meeting the [National Standard](#). These services continue to work in partnership with Moray Council and have access to the Early Years Teaching Team alongside their respective Continuous Improvement Officer (CIO).

2.10 Services not yet reaching grades 4 or above are receiving support from the respective CIO and the Early Years Teaching and Learning Teacher to address the required actions resulting from the recommendations or requirements. Recommendations are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

2.11 The table below highlights the area where the grade(s) have dropped and the planned improvement work to support ELC settings;

<b>ELC Setting</b>	<b>Quality Framework Area</b>	<b>Plans for improvement/support</b>
Curious Minds, Elgin	How good is our care, play and learning? How good is our leadership? How good is our staff team?	Ongoing support being provided by both CIO West and Teaching and Learning Team. Action plan in place. Last inspected 10 July 2023 and improvement in grading from 3 to 4 in How good is our setting. Continuing to develop: planning using a balance of child led/adult led, Child initiated and adult initiated experiences. Promoting numeracy/literacy experiences throughout the setting. Supporting management with quality assurance tasks.
Bishopmill Pre-school, Elgin	How good is our setting?	To ensure that effective infection prevention and control practices and routines are in place and consistently practice. Staff working closely with Care Inspectorate re new nappy guidance and supported through CIO West. Setting was not asked to submit action plan to Care Inspectorate but will be revisited within the year.
Teddy Bear Developmental Nursery, Cullen	How good is our leadership?	New manager started 18.01.24. Once she has settled into post, the East CIO and Learning and Teaching teacher will support initially in the key

		<p>areas of self-evaluation and quality improvement. An action plan will be created to monitor progress. National practice guidance documents will be used to support this. Any training needs will be identified via the action plan and building of a working relationship with this new manager. Potential to invite service to join Cullen nursery staff for joint in-service training to share good practice and training opportunities.</p>
<p>Portknockie Nursery, Portknockie</p>	<p>How good is our setting? How good is our leadership?</p>	<p>Service is engaging in the Care Inspectorate's improvement programme. Further, the CIO and Learning and Teaching teacher will create an action plan to support the improvement of both leadership and the setting. Priority areas are self-evaluation, monitoring of quality improvement and safer recruitment for leadership. Infection control is a priority for the setting, specifically the changing spaces for the youngest children.</p>
<p>Ark Childcare, Miltonduff</p>	<p>How good is our care, play and learning? How good is our leadership? How good is our staff team?</p>	<p>Ongoing support being provided by both CIO West and Teaching and Learning Team. 2 Action plans in process of being finalised in conjunction with Ark Management Team. One for 0-3 and one for 3-5 Areas of improvement will focus on: Self-evaluation for self-improvement, planning – developmentally</p>

		<p>appropriate and offers challenge</p> <p>Monitoring of processes.</p> <p>Environment – spaces, interaction and experiences.</p>
Lady Cathcart Nursery, Buckie	How good is our leadership?	<p>Service has experienced a number of changes to the manager which has resulted in a lack of consistency. The CIO and Learning and Teaching teacher are creating an action plan to review the whole service. The interim manager has sent a draft self-evaluation template to their Care Inspectorate’s advisor for feedback before implementing this format. National practice guidance documents will be used to support this process. There is a whole staff meeting planned for 31.01.24 to ensure the views of all staff are included in the action plan. This will support team buy-in.</p>
Earthtime, Duffus	<p>How good is our leadership?</p> <p>How good is our staff team?</p>	<p>Ongoing support being provided by both CIO West and Teaching and Learning Team. Action plan in place.</p> <p>Areas of improvement will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-evaluation for self-improvement</li> <li>Quality Assurance systems</li> <li>Planning – developmentally appropriate/challenge</li> <li>Supporting with Vision, Values and Aims</li> </ul>
Aberlour Nursery, Aberlour	How good is our leadership?	<p>The CIO and Learning and Teaching teacher will create an action plan with the manager to review self-evaluation formats</p>

		used to ensure the positive impact of this on outcomes for children & families. The manager will commit to more frequent staff 1:1, support & supervision for staff including observation of practice.
Aberlour & Craigellachie Pre-school, Aberlour	How good is our care, play and learning?	The service will be supported to review the use of spaces to maximise the opportunities for child-led play and self-selection of resources. The team will consider the balance of adult-directed and child-led learning. The CIO and Learning and Teaching teacher will support the team to consider how to ensure next steps are identified and catered for individual children.

- 2.12 The current gradings of these services will not impact on their partnership agreement with Moray Council to deliver funded Early Learning and Childcare hours as we believe they have the capacity to improve with enhanced support.

### 3. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

This report relates the priority 'Provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence' from the Corporate Plan and to 'Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray' from the LOIP.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

The Care Inspectorate inspects all registered services regulated under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, which includes nursery classes and playgroups.

The authority has a duty to provide a quality early learning and childcare place for every 3 and 4 year old whose parents wish it and for eligible 2 year olds.

**(c) Financial implications**

None arising directly from the report.

- (d) Risk Implications**  
None arising directly from the report.
- (e) Staffing Implications**  
None arising directly from the report.
- (f) Property**  
None arising directly from the report.
- (g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**  
An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on performance.
- (h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**  
None arising directly from the report.
- (i) Consultations**  
Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Continuous Improvement Officer (West), Continuous Improvement Officer (East) and Principal Teacher Early Years Education Service and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

## 5. **CONCLUSION**

### 5.1 **That the Committee scrutinise and note the contents of this report.**

Author of Report: Hazel Sly, Early Years Service Manager  
Background Papers:

<b>Name of Early Learning and Childcare Provider</b>
Curious Minds, Elgin
Bishopmill Pre-school, Elgin
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