

Ruchazie Family Centre

Evaluation

Year 2 report

2017

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## Executive summary

The University of Stirling was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the extent to which the services of the Ruchazie Family Centre extended the support available to families in need. This second year report focuses on the nursery provision, parent groups, and the involvement of parents in the life of the Family Centre. The evaluation team developed a programme of work and this report focuses on data collected by the nursery to identify children's developments and achievements, including seven case studies compiled by nursery staff, as well as interviews with parents whose children attend the nursery. The report also draws upon interviews with staff members and service users as well as a photo interview project and observations of activities in and outwith the Centre.

The Family Centre was awarded funding from the Big Lottery Funding (BLF) in 2014 to extend the nursery provision and develop wider family support activities. The nursery provision was extended to provide twelve full time equivalent places for children up to the age of three. Referrals come from health, social work, the Family Centre and parents themselves. The nursery offers twenty seven places and parents/carers pay a nominal contribution fee for snacks. Practice within the nursery focuses on child development, play, communication and nurturing activities as well as supporting parents to manage their children's behaviour and developmental needs. In this respect, parents are provided with strategies for meeting their children's needs. Parents are also able to access the wider family support activities available in the Family Centre.

We found that parents were overall very satisfied with the nursery and the support offered. Parents felt welcomed into the nursery and supported by nursery staff. Individual child plans were developed and complement the parenting work being carried out in the Centre. Children's development and achievements were captured by the nursery staff in several ways including individual records and photographs, and shared with parents in written and verbal forms. Parents told us that they appreciated the space and outdoor play opportunities for their children afforded by the newly refurbished garden area. This refurbishment was made possible by funding from the BLF and Spifox.

The funding from the BLF is also being used to develop and deliver a wider range of family and parenting support activities. A recurring theme in conversations with service users (parents and carers) is that the Family Centre offers a welcoming and accessible space where they can access support, seek advice and gain skills and confidence in their parenting as well as providing a social opportunity to combat isolation. Staff providing support are described as person-centred, accepting, non-judgemental and responsive to the changing needs of families.

The Family Centre engages with parents and encourages them to contribute to the work of the Centre through informal peer support, and through the Voices for Change group. The staff team endeavour to promote an enabling environment which encourages parents to identify and build on their strengths, recognising that whole family interventions impact on children's overall well-being in line with the principles of GIRFEC, keeping the child at the centre of their work. There are newly appointed members of staff whose voices will be included in the final year report to provide comment on development and training and their work with children and families.

The recommendations and ideas for action included in this report are designed to stimulate discussion amongst the parents who use the Centre, the staff team and evaluation Steering Group.

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## Introduction

In 2014 Quarriers were funded by the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) to extend their work at the Ruchazie Family Centre to engage more widely with parents/carers and their children. The University of Stirling was commissioned in 2015 to evaluate the programme between 2015-2019. This report is based on findings from our work in the second year of the evaluation.

## Methods of data collection and analysis

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the University of Stirling Ethics committee in 2015. Our approach to designing the evaluation in the second year (2017) draws on traditional qualitative data collection (focus groups, 1: 1 interviews with staff, people who use services, observations of activities and examination of publicity and information materials provided by the Centre).

Action research is an appropriate methods of data collection as it involves service users, and providers working alongside each other to gather data, which highlights processes of engagement and exchange. Critical reflection (Fook 2006) is used in this evaluation report to engage with service providers, feeding back on key themes and issues which emerge in the qualitative research data, and encourages them to consider how they might implement change to tackle issues or move developments in the service forwards, in many ways the critical reflection approach is designed to shift thinking about ideas and facilitate change in a non-threatening but challenging way.

All parents and staff members participating in the evaluation provided written consent. All of the data collated was anonymised, stored on password protected systems available only to the research team and pseudonyms have been used in this report. The qualitative data was analysed thematically. The secondary data provided by the nursery was mostly quantitative in format and analysis consisted of producing summary statistics and simple cross tabulations. Qualitative information was summarised and included in the analysis.

<b><i>Nursery Provision</i></b>	<b><i>Family Centre</i></b>
Quantitative analysis of secondary data provided by the nursery. Interviews (See Appendix 1 for questions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Individual interviews with 8 parents whose children attend the nursery</li><li>- Interview with nursery manager</li></ul> Anonymized case studies provided by nursery staff.	Interview with senior family support worker. Observations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Voices for Change group</li><li>- Dad's group</li><li>- Group activity at the centre</li><li>- Summer day out</li></ul> Photo project with 2 parents.

## Findings

### *Nursery provision*

As of September 2017 there were 11 members of staff attached to the Nursery, these include Early Years Family Practitioners. Children can attend part time, either morning, (9:30am – 12:00pm) afternoon (1:30pm – 4:00pm) or full time (8:30am – 5:30pm) sessions. In addition, the nursery is able to provide additional flexible hours to parents when they have to attend a social work meeting or health appointment; or to allow parents to take part in groups within the Family Centre. There are two rooms: baby room with space for 9 babies, and toddler room from 18 months plus, with space for eighteen toddlers. In total there is space for twenty seven children.

There is a priority system for referrals, first from social work, health visitors. Referrals also come from Family Centre workers as well as from parents and carers themselves, people in the community or siblings who have previously attended the nursery. There are also ring-fenced full-time places, 3 places in the 0-2 room and 5 places in the 2-3 room (from 8:30am to 5:30pm) for children whose parents or carers are returning to work or college.

Prior to a child starting at the nursery, staff visit the family at home and complete a 'Home Links' form which identifies children's preference for foods, play and other significant information to help ease their transition to nursery.

*...if we knew a wee kid's starting that really likes cars we'll make sure there's loads of cars out when that wee kid starts, you know, to settle them [Int. Nursery Manager]*

The family has an initial visit to the nursery to meet the staff and to give the child an opportunity to get familiar with the nursery staff and space. Each child has an allocated key worker and the same key workers may be allocated to siblings to build on existing relationships.

There is regular interaction between staff, parents and carers; at drop off and collection times in which staff and parents exchange information about the child, this also provides an opportunity for staff to check in with parents and carers about their own needs. The nursery sends out newsletters with information, dates to note and advice (for example, one of the newsletter articles mentioned the importance of applying sun cream) and holds Parent evenings every six months. Every six weeks the nursery sends home a 'Next Steps' document made up of observations of the child, their milestones and areas of focus. The key worker discusses this with parents/carers and they decide which area(s) to focus on.

The key worker supports the transition for children moving from the baby to the toddler room and liaises with the child, parent and new key worker. The third year of the evaluation will focus on the transitions for children leaving the nursery to attend the local authority feeder nursery.

### *Outdoor play: child development and parenting capacity*

There is research to suggest links between stress, poor diet and lack of outdoor activity (Education Scotland 2016; Scottish Government 2014; 2017a; 2017b). Some families do not have gardens and it is assumed that the bulk of their play activity is based indoors, using electronic devices, which may be linked to restlessness. There are also concern about unhealthy diets and obesity amongst some children. In response to this concern, the garden was renovated in early 2017 and this has allowed more opportunities for outdoor play. The nursery therefore promotes the practice of outdoors play in all weathers, this experience is:

*...giving them that place to just be outside and run and be free and make a big noise, 'cause sometimes at home they don't get that opportunity ... [Int. Nursery manager]*

The Nursery manager explained that there are some barriers to outdoor play such as parents' preference to keep their children dry and clean and some parents were unsure why the children were 'out in all weathers'. To overcome this there have been events and groups aimed at encouraging families to acquaint themselves with, and make use of the garden space; such as the implementation of gardening groups and walks in and around the community to promote the benefit of outdoor activity not only as a family but also for the parents themselves. The promotion of outdoor activities links with the broader aims of the Centre in regards to healthy living.

One of the recommendations in the first year report was for **the nursery to capture the impact that they have on parenting capacity**. The Nursery Manager said that nursery staff has more interaction with parents and family support workers and as a result they are more aware about the broader issues that affect parents and carers and how such issues intersects with children's development. Cross working and integration amongst the nursery and support centre staff is an ongoing area of development and requires further evaluation in the third year.

## The Nursery

### Findings from the nursery secondary data

Quarriers nursery provided anonymised information with regards to 184 children who had attended the nursery between January 2012 and March 2017. The data contained, amongst other things, demographic information (such as household composition and child's ethnicity), as well as information about the child's needs and outcomes. Information was also provided about support and other services provided to children and their families by nursery and the Family Centre staff – although it is likely that, due to the small number of families recorded as having accessed services and support, the information presented is incomplete. Another shortcoming of the data is that it does not state what specific actions were taken to address the needs of children and their family, or how specific actions may have impacted on the outcomes of children and their families.

Between 2012 and March 2017 a total of 184 children had attended, or were attending, the nursery. Of these children, 81 are female and 100 male (missing data for three children). Most children were living with both parents (N=84) or a single parent (N=79). Eight children were either in foster or kinship care at the time they started attending the nursery. The household composition of a further 13 children was not recorded. Approximately a third (N=59) of the children were the first children in the household, whilst another third (N=62) of the children had one sibling. A small number of families (N=25) had three or more children. Information about number of siblings in the child's household was missing in eight cases. Of those children for whom we know the ethnic background (N=96), most (N=71) are identified as being white (English, Scottish or Welsh) or white (other).

Children were, on average, 18 months when they started; with the youngest being just under two months old and the oldest being 34 months when they started. On average children attend the nursery for 500 days, or 16 months.

Most children (N=108) were referred to the nursery by health visitors (N=47), staff at the Family Centre (N=30) and/or social workers (N=26). Five referrals were made by other third sector organisations. All other children (N=76) were self-referrals.

Children were referred to the nursery for several reasons. The most common reason for referral was to aid the child's socialisation and development (N=51) followed by concerns about parental mental health (N=36).

Reasons for referral	Count
Child's socialisation and development	51
Parental mental health	36
Parent in work or returning to work	33
Respite for parent/carer	33
Child (and/or siblings) currently or recently on Child Protection Register	18
Social Isolation	18
Parent has additional caring responsibilities (i.e. grandparents, children with additional needs)	12
Parent in or returning to FE/HE	11
Child's health issues	10
Parental incarceration	8
Asylum seeking family	7
Parental health issues (other than mental health)	5
Other	33
<b>Total*</b>	<b>275</b>
*Total number here is greater than the total number of children because in most cases more than one reason for referral was recorded	

**Table 1: Reason for referral**

As stated earlier, all children are visited at home prior to starting at the nursery. This is an opportunity for staff to get to know the family and identify their specific needs. The table below summarises the key concerns identified with regards the children at the time they started attending the nursery. Children often experienced two or more of these concerns. In addition, 23 children were on the Child Protection register; with four of these also being looked after. Four children were identified as having no specific needs when they started attending the nursery.

Concerns	Count
Poor health (not specified)	101
Not meeting developmental milestones	60
Poor interaction with others	56
At risk	49
Attachment issues	42
Challenging behaviour	33
Isolation	31
Additional needs (not specified)	19
English is a second language	16

**Table 2: Key concerns when starting nursery**

Children’s progress is routinely monitored and recorded. Table 3 summarises children’s outcomes as of March 2017. Several things should be noted with regards the information provided in this table. First, due to the lack of consistency in which information was inputted into the spreadsheet used by Quarriers it was not always clear whether a child had achieved an outcome or not and we had to make some assumptions about what different recording systems may mean. Therefore, the number of children who have achieved their outcomes might be greater (or lesser) than what has been recorded. Second, from the information collected by Quarriers it was not possible to say which actions and interventions put in place by the nursery and/or Family Centre might have contributed to children’s outcomes. Whilst some information had been collected about the support and services provided to parents this was often incomplete and did not seem to reflect the full range of services provided. Third, it is unclear what sort of health problems or additional needs children had. It would be useful for this information to be collected so that Quarriers could better plan service provision according to children’s needs. For the purpose of the ongoing evaluation it would also be useful for the concepts of ‘risk’ and ‘attachment’ to be defined and examples of how children were made to feel safe and what work has been carried out to improve attachment to be provided.

Children's outcomes	Outcomes achieved	
	Yes	No
Meeting developmental milestones	131	53
Improved health & Wellbeing	132	52
Improved social interactions	133	51
Increased confidence to engage in new situations/activities	132	51
Child not at risk (stayed off Child Protection Register)	156	28
Child identified as at risk by Quarriers	154	29
Child made safe	131	53
Improved child/parent attachment	109	70

**Table 3: Children's outcomes**

Of the 23 children who were on the Child Protection register at the time of starting nursery, only seven remained on the register (at the time they had stopped attending nursery or as of March 2017 if they were currently attending nursery). The four children who had been identified as being 'looked after' when they started attending nursery were no longer subject to a compulsory supervision requirement at the time they stopped attending or as of March 2017 if they were currently attending nursery. From the data collected in the spreadsheet it is unclear, however, whether or how children's attendance at the nursery or parents' involvement with the Centre may have contributed to these outcomes.

As aforementioned, during their time at the nursery parents and children accessed a range of services and support such as family support, healthy cooking classes and so on. Table 5 provides an overview of the types of services and support accessed by most (N=122) of the 183 families whose children attended the nursery. Care should be taken, however, when looking at this table as the very low number of families recorded as accessing some of these services and support could be due to the fact that information is not being systematically recorded.

Activities at the Centre	Count
Baby massage	3
Book bug	34
Dads group	5
Drop in	36
Family support	87
Funday Monday	31
Growing together	20
Healthy cooking	3
Me time	5
Nursery transition support	49
Nursery family support	107
Nurture group	20
Post-natal group	17
Skills share	12
Yoga bugs	63

**Table 4: Activities at the Centre**

Information was also gathered about the issues affecting parents at the time their children start attending the nursery. As table 5 illustrates most parents were identified as being socially isolated (N=142); not in job, education or training (N=129) and/or as experiencing a mental health issue (N=108).

Parental issues	Count
Social isolation	<b>142</b>
Not in job, education or training	<b>129</b>
Mental health issues/trauma/bereavement	<b>108</b>
Substance/alcohol misuse	<b>86</b>
Poor lifestyle choices	
Not accessing services effectively	<b>84</b>
Parent/carer not coping	37
Domestic abuse (past or present)	22
Parenting capacity	19

**Table 5: Parental issues**

The figures presented in table 6 refer to parents' outcomes as of March 2017. It is unclear when the parents began their involvement with the Family Centre and which activities and input may have specifically contributed to changes in outcomes for parents. As previously stated in relation to the children's outcomes presented in table 3, information presented in table 6 must be treated with caution as information was not recorded consistently, and it is likely that there was missing information. Further consideration needs to be given as to how information can be consistently and regularly recorded so that a clearer understanding about what impact, if any, the nursery and/or Family Centre has on children and their families.

Parents' outcomes	Yes	No
<b>Improved parenting capacity</b>	124	60
<b>Improved resilience</b>	122	62
<b>Improved lifestyle choices</b>	97	87
<b>Improved confidence</b>	119	65
<b>Less isolated</b>	125	58
<b>More engaged in the community</b>	119	64
<b>Accessing universal services</b>	83	100
<b>Parent in job/training/education</b>	56	128

**Table 6: Parents' outcomes**

The following section of the report offers contextual information and examples of changes in outcomes for both children and parents.

### Interviews with parents and case studies

Nine parents were interviewed between March and June 2017 – eight mothers and one father. Between them they had ten children who attended or were currently attending the nursery on a part time basis. An additional seven case studies were provided by the nursery staff with further information about how families were being supported by the nursery and Centre staff.

Ten parents self-referred, four families were referred by their social workers, one by a Family Centre's staff member and one by a Health Visitor. Reasons for referral varied from parents experiencing mental health issues to social isolation and children being on the Child Protection Register. Other reasons for choosing the nursery was based on the positive reputation it had in addition to one parent who found the nursery by chance as she was passing through the area. Three parents had been involved with the Family Centre prior to applying for a place for their children at the nursery. Only two of the parents felt that there had been a small delay from the time of applying to the time the child started at the nursery. One talked about the relief and happiness she felt when her son got a place at the nursery.

*I was like my wain's never going tae get a place, and then I, I got a phone call one day and it was like X's got a place, and I was like "aw my God," so happy. [Int. 6]*

All parents said that their children love attending the nursery and were very fond of the staff. Parents observed that the nursery staff were very good with children and were able to quickly develop strong bonds with them. Staff supported parents to make the settling in sessions easier for both children and parents.

*I think they are great. I've got no problem. I think they are great with the kids. [Int. 3]*

*The first time I brung [sic] him in [to nursery] he ... did'nae really know what tae dae, 'cause he's never been cared for by anyone other than me. The nursery teachers handled it really, really good, she took him away and turned him away fae me ... she was like "say bye-bye," [Int. 6]*

Five parents noted that the nursery provided opportunities to their children that they would otherwise not be able to provide; such as time for messy play in the garden or book bug sessions. Through their observations of the children staff were able to identify their talents and skills and to provide activities to nurture and further develop these. Nursery staff also encouraged parents to nurture and develop their children's talents and skills by providing information and materials that parents could use at home. All parents agreed that their children's development had been enhanced by attending the nursery.

*She is really happy (at nursery). As I said, she wouldn't go with anybody and now she happily goes into the nursery to see one of the key workers! A big difference in her...which she was a little bit slower than [other child attending nursery] and then you notice that [child] is actually catching up. [Int. 5]*

*I've noticed he's, he noo knows a lot mair animals and stuff, like when I see an animal he'll look and know what it is noo, he's got a wee book, and if I say like "where's the cat?" he'll look at the cat noo, and "I'll say where's the lion," he'll go "raaaarr," and he knows things like that ... [Int. 6]*

*Nursery offered the child a safe and secure environment with plenty of space to play, something that was missing at home. (Case study 5)*

The garden was noted as an area that children particularly liked within the nursery – and parents liked the opportunity to observe their children playing when attending the drop in at an adjacent room with views to the garden and nursery.

All parents were very satisfied with the nursery. Staff was described as friendly and approachable, and responsive to children's needs as well as that of parents. One parent talked about the importance of relationships with the staff, which meant that she didn't have to repeat information. It was reassuring to know that the staff would 'check-in' with families on a regular basis.

*The nursery staff are very approachable as well, they are always there, and when you go in they ask – how are you? How is everything going? Is everything all right? [...] So, yeah, they are very approachable as well so, if you are having a bad day they check on you – so it's quite good to know there's somebody looking out for you as well. [Int 1]*

*...they try to involve you in things, like, for parents, you know, they introduce you and things like that, so it's a bit more. The other nursery [that older daughter attended], it was fine, I was quite happy with the teachers and that, but I think there is more support in this nursery for you, not just the child. [Int 3]*

By developing these relationships nursery staff were also able to support parents to seek the help they required, and for Centre staff and other services to work more effectively with families.

*Mum's health visitor/social worker were concerned about her low mood and reluctance to co-operate with them. The key worker has built a good working relationship with mum and as such was able to have an open and honest discussion with her. (Case study 2)*

*...joint partnership working with nursery, project staff and the health visitor enabled staff to have a clearer image of how best to support mum. This led to mum being allocated a projected worker and being offered more one to one intensive support. (Case study 4)*

Five parents felt that the nursery listened to and worked in partnership with them so that there was consistency between what was being done at home and at the nursery. Some parents commented that this was their only source of support.

*It was actually the nursery teacher that came and spoke to me and I ended up getting one to one meetings with the nursery teacher, she would speak to me and try to help me, how to deal with [child's] behaviour, which actually helped me A LOT, 'cos I actually didn't think I would get that help and I did. She took me aside and she told me, 'would you like it', and I says, 'well, I don't exactly have anybody else to help me, so I would'. It benefited me a lot. [Int. 5]*

Two parents referred explicitly to some of the parenting strategies that they used drawing upon skills and knowledge gained from their work with the support worker and consistency from the nursery staff. One parent talked about being able to understand and manage her children's tantrums more effectively and ways to stay calm although she admits this is hard. She said she tries to understand her child's behaviour:

*and...let them know that we love them no matter what and just to like, understand why, the way they are, and ... the way you have to be with them, so, you just have to like not be stressed, be calm and, and talk to them at their level. [Int. 7]*

The case studies also contain various examples where staff have helped parents to gain new skills and knowledge to support more effective parenting.

*The child and their parent attended the 'Growing Together' group with the aim of offering mum a better understanding of her child's behavior, developmental stage and activity ideas to try out at home. Mum was also offered guidance on health eating and snack choices as the child was often noted as eating crisps and sweets. (Case study 3)*

Parents felt that the nursery staff kept them informed about what their children had been doing during their nursery session. They were happy with the opportunities they had to talk to staff about their child's progress through the parents' meetings. Three parents also noted that if they wanted to find out more about their children that they could contact the staff at any time.

*Usually they have like a parents' meeting to tell me how [child] is getting on and I have or if there have been any problems. So I can speak to them and let them know, 'oh, I don't like the way you do this' or that kind of thing. [...] You can ask any questions and they take you through all of [child's] books, just to give you a view of what she has been doing and stuff like that. [Int. 5]*

The observations and notes made by staff are also crucial to support the work developed in partnership with other agencies, and ensuring that children and their families receive the right support.

*The children's keyworkers were able to use their observations of the children to provide detailed development plans and reports, both of which have been utilized by health and social work services to ensure that the individual wellbeing needs of the child are being fulfilled. (Case study 1)*

Parents were very appreciative of the support they got from nursery in dealing with issues they were encountering at home (such as behavioural issues) and with key milestones (such as potty training).

*...so if you speak to the nursery that you are trying [potty training] at home, they say to you 'no problem we will try to take him at every interval to the toilet'. They are great that way. So you can speak to them. (...) if there's any problems so you can speak to them about anything they will give you the support you need, they will be there and say, 'that's not a problem'. [Int. 3]*

One of the distinctive features was the complement of the nursery and Family Centre, which offered parents the opportunity to access the support and services available at the Family Centre; as well as some respite and 'me time', while their children are in nursery. Engagement with the Family Centre also provided families with opportunities for family day outings and groups outwith nursery hours.

*The family have benefited from being able to attend the Funday Monday group. They have also enjoyed attending many of the Centre and nursery trips both of which have enabled the whole family to spend quality time together enjoying each other's company. (Case study 6)*

There were, therefore, clear links between the nursery and Family Centre with the Centre referred to as a 'one-stop shop' for families. As the Nursery Manager said: 'It's not just the children that thrive, the parents thrive as well'.

## The Family Centre

We carried out interviews with parents who attended the Family Centre this included families whose children did and did not attend the nursery, as well as a photo-project with two parents. In addition we carried out observations of the Dad's group, Voices for Change, a meeting with parents and representative from the Caravan Club and a summer trip to Troon beach.

### *Interviews with parents and case studies*

From the interviews with parents it was clear that the Family Centre is a lifeline that they and the community could not do without. It is where they come for support both from staff and peers, to learn new skills and gain confidence, and to meet and socialise with others. One parent said she came to the Centre for her own 'sanity and to feel better'. She said it helped her to combat isolation, and to know that she is not experiencing hardships on her own.

*I don't even know what I'd be doing [if not accessing the Family Centre] to be honest. I'd have nobody to talk to and I think that I'd be still really down to be honest. I would hate for it not to be here anymore [...] coz I see a big difference in the children and myself. [Int. 5]*

The role of the Centre in minimizing families' social isolation is also highlighted in the case studies.

*The Family Centre received a referral from social work services regarding a lone parents...social work was concerned that mum was new to the area and would be socially isolated. [...] The nursery/Centre offered mum a safe place to meet peers and build friendships. (Case study 5)*

The Family Centre was described by all parents as being welcoming and having an open doors policy and accessed by people whose children were not at the nursery. Some of the draws of the Centre are Funday Monday, opportunities for parents to interact with peers and for children to socialise.

*I see people coming in here, just anybody can come here, even if your child is not at the nursery, and I've seen people coming in here crying, being really distressed and then they will just talk to somebody here and feel much better. [Int. 1]*

*Mum attended groups which aim to assist her wellbeing needs and offer her a safe environment to discuss her issues as well as offer peer support. This was recognized by all as being a great achievement for mum who is usually very introvert. (Case study 2)*

Staff were described as friendly, trustworthy and responsive, knowing when to refer to external agencies. Parents felt that they were listened to and not judged by staff. This was often contrasted

with other services (such as health visitors and social workers) that parents felt were judgmental and less responsive to their needs. Parents felt safe in the knowledge that they could pop into the Family Centre at any time for support and that there would be someone there to help them.

*I know that there's a lot of support in the Centre and there's always somebody in here that you can talk to... there's always a staff member, or there are other ladies at the drop in which is really good – somebody else out there who is in the same boat as yourself... [Int. 1]*

Mum and dad often enjoyed chatting in the drop in room with other parents and carers.  
[Case study 7]

One member of staff was personally mentioned by many of the participants. Some of the qualities that made her involvement effective was her non-judgemental approach and capacity to recognise the potential in individuals. She was described as a positive role-model and maternal figure. She was noted to go 'above and beyond' for families; taking people to appointments and staying on when the Centre is closed to get the help that families need. One participant said that it felt reassuring when said member of staff was at the Centre and uneasy when she was not there.

*She's one o' the nicest people I've ever met in my life, she really does go far and beyond tae help yae... she knows how tae interact wi' yae, she asks yae how yae are, instead o' telling yae how yae are, and how you're supposed tae dae things, she asks yae ...' [Int.8]*

There were many examples given about how the Centre had helped families. For example, a mother who was finding it difficult to cope with her older children's behavior got support from staff to attend meetings in an advocacy and supportive capacity.

*Project staff were able to attend appointments with mum if she required emotional support and act as an advocate at these. [Case study 6]*

Another mother, who was identified as having mild learning difficulties, was supported by staff to apply for college.

*With the correct support and encouragement from the families project worker mum was able to apply for and be accepted to college. [Case study 7]*

One parent talked about the child development knowledge she had gained from attending groups, for example about schemas, which had helped her to understand why her child was scattering toys and other items around the house. This knowledge motivated her to think of relevant games and activities to use with her child.

As in the first year report, all parents have noted that it was not always clear to the community what the purpose of the Centre was and who could and did attend it.

*I didn't know what the Centre was about at first, that wasn't really out there. I didn't know who come in, I just didn't know...I just stay around the corner and I still didn't know what this was used for. [...] it should be more out there that it helps you. I said that before – it should be more out there. [Int. 5]*

As reported in the year 1 report, the loss of drop-in worker continues to trouble some parents who report that there are now fewer activities available. Some parents were reported to have

volunteered to ensure the drop-in group continues to run. While said voluntary work was perceived as a way to enhance parents' skill set, there was a concern that this could lose focus and become, in the words of a parent, a *'bitch fest'* without the presence of a staff member.

Finally, the presence of the Health Visitor in the Family Centre was identified as a useful inclusion, although there was comment that this did not happen regularly. There were also comments about repeated changes in Health Visitors and poor relationships with them.

### *Interview with Family Support staff*

The practitioner talked about the difficult circumstances that surrounded people's reasons for coming to the Family Centre. This included issues relating to poverty and deprivation; mental and physical health difficulties, stigma from family members and other professionals as well as social isolation and housing difficulties. The family support work involves accompanying parents to meetings, advocating on their behalf, providing one to one and group skill sessions and referring parents to further services. Other tasks included responding to crisis situations such as seeking housing for homeless families. As such it was clear that the practitioner had strong links and positive relationship with external agencies. Despite the challenges of the work she says she is *'honoured'* to work with families and to see them thrive.

The participant adopted a person-centred approach to her practice as she appeared to have a good understanding about the families and their unique situations. She was aware when individuals were having a bad day but would display values of acceptance, consistently conveying her belief in the individuals and their capacity to change or to succeed. The practitioner said that she always tried to have **'genuine curiosity'** about the families she works with and recognised that *'...for many people coming to the Centre is a huge step'*. She gave a number of examples about the progress that some of the parents had made since coming to the Centre and how families' lives had consequently improved. One example included a woman who first became a volunteer in the Centre, then gained a qualification and eventually paid employment. She also talked about a woman who came to the post-natal group, after experiencing post-natal depression. From engaging with the sessions she now has confidence in her parenting abilities and was thrilled to become pregnant for the second time.

The changing demographics of the area has meant that the Centre is attended by families seeking asylum as well as migrants who have English as a second or other language. The practitioner said that this has raised a number of challenges, one of which is insufficient support for interpreting provision and lack of information about immigration status and rights, as well as knowledge about culturally sensitive practice. The participant said that staff are in the process of developing their knowledge base to better inform their practice and to also advise and educate existing users of the Family Centre, for example to explain the reasons that people might seek asylum.

### *Observations*

Two observations were carried out at the Centre: a Dad's group session and a meeting with Caravan Club attended by parents (all women), all attendees were advised about the researcher's role. In both sessions **food** was provided for the attendees and there appeared to be a sense of **collectivity** as parents and staff got drinks for one another. There was a real sense that the Centre was a space for everyone and there was no clear hierarchy, with the caretaker attending the Dad's group and playing a supportive, peer-mentoring role.

### *Dad's group*

In the Dad's group there was a session led by a member of staff who used a variety of methods to encourage the group to talk about the area they lived in and to think about issues such as youth crime, drug and alcohol use and poverty. The facilitator encouraged the group to think about the barriers that affected young people in society. There was lively discussion and debate amongst the group with both service users and staff sharing their thoughts. Participants said they enjoyed the session as it got them thinking more broadly about the area they live in and the opportunities and barriers that affect young people.

The session also offered an opportunity for conversations about parenting to emerge. For example a father talked about some of the ongoing difficulties he was experiencing in parenting his daughter and advice was offered by other group members. This father welcomed this advice and seemed relieved to have had the opportunity to voice his concerns in an informal setting and get advice from others who had experienced similar issues. During the session a number of other instances of peer support, nurturing and inclusion amongst participants were observed. For example, one father was helped by other members of the group to care for and feed his child during lunch.

### *Meeting with Caravan Club Representative*

As part of its activities the Family Centre liaises with the Caravan Club nearby to provide holidays, as well as emergency accommodation, to local families. A representative from the Caravan Club came to speak with people who had recently been to the caravan site. The purpose of the session was for families to give feedback about their experience and for Quarriers to maintain their positive relationship with this external agency. All of the parents had an opportunity to talk about their experiences, including positive and negative aspects of the trip, with quieter members of the group being encouraged by the support worker to contribute to the discussion. It was clear that the Caravan club had provided both holidays and emergency accommodation for families and the responsiveness was commended by staff and families. Feedback from families was (mostly) positive with one woman commenting on the '*look on the wain's face*' when he opened the door to the Caravan. One mother talked about the safe outdoor space surrounding the caravan which meant her child could play outside. Some constructive feedback was given about extending entertainment to younger children. Families and staff also commented on the Caravan Club's responsiveness when families required emergency accommodation. As with the Dad's group several instances of peer support, nurturing and inclusion amongst participants were observed. For example, participants took turns looking after a child whose mother was feeling unwell during the meeting.

### *Summer Activity*

This section is informed by observation and discussion with parents on the day and afterwards.

We observed a daytrip to Troon beach which was attended by families and staff from Quarriers Centres in Ruchazie and Barlanark. This was one of the four summer outings offered in 2017. These events are very popular and because of this a system is in place to ensure that families are able to attend at least one summer activity. The group composition was varied with single parents, nuclear families including parents of different ages, different ethnic groups and different levels of English language proficiency.

It was clear from our observations that a lot of thought, attention and energy had been put into this event. There were a lot of logistics staff had to attend to on the day. For example, staff arrived early to buy food and make sandwiches, and they had to fit a large number of car seats into three coaches and advise families where to sit. Whilst staff wore luminous armbands to signify their role as

Quarriers staff, it was not clear which member of staff was responsible for coordinating the event, and this lack of leadership was commented on by parents later in the day. At the research review meeting, the Centre manager advised that there is a 'dilemma' between optimizing opportunities for families to go on the trips along with staffing ratios and the majority of staff on this trip were new to the service and did not know the families very well.

On the way we stopped to pick up families from Barlanark. There did not appear to be a member of staff to greet the family as they came onto the coach or guide them to sit the child in the car seat. As far as visible, the child was not seated in a fitted car seat

Upon arriving to the beach staff set up a canopy and put the prepared sandwiches, drinks and snacks on a tarpaulin and staff appeared to stay close to this area. Families were given time to explore the beach and play park. Some families went to explore the area by themselves and others explored in groups. Families who stayed by the lunch area were seen talking with staff. Otherwise, staff did not seem to be actively engaging with or offering support to families.

Due to wet weather and a section of beach that was out-of-bounds, staff advised families that they would arrange access to the soft play Centre after lunch. This contingency plan was welcomed amongst the families, particularly as the rain got heavier. The children appeared to enjoy the soft play facilities. Some members of staff were talking with parents and it was noted that new relationships were made between families and staff.

For one parent it was the first time he had been out on a trip with Quarriers and his first time going to the beach in Scotland, he told the researcher that he had a '*brilliant day*' and it was great to see his children enjoying the beach and soft play. He also said that he was reluctant to come to regular groups as he felt that he would not be welcome amongst the regular members.

The researcher observed a couple of situations where parents were in clear need of assistance but that was not forthcoming from staff. One parent was clearly distressed and support was offered by other parents. Such negative experience may prevent this parent, as well as others, from engaging with the Centre in the future as they may feel unwelcomed or consider that the support on offer is not adequate. It is therefore important to ensure that staff are available to support families during days out and that they are on hand to avoid difficulties. By taking a more active role during the outing staff could build and strengthen their relationships with families.

The summer activity programme provides an opportunity for families to experience new places or places that they would not usually go to for different reasons including: cost, time, lack of support, and concern about going to new places. The activities have the potential to offer a fun day out to bond with the children in a supportive context. The activities also offer an opportunity for staff to engage with families, to help to develop new relationships between families and to promote the Family Centre. For some parents, the experience offers them the chance to apply their acquired parenting skills in practice. The activity also attracts parents and families who are new to Quarriers. It would be useful for staff to have a clear understanding about the families attending and to seek opportunities to promote the Centre activities and to help to challenge and encourage people to come to the Centre. This retention would offer evidence of a 'return on investment' if for example, isolated parents are found to come to groups following on from their experience in the summer activity. One recommendation is therefore, for the Centre to carry out a second evaluation after the summer activities to identify whether more families are engaging with the Centre as a result of attending a summer activity.

The summer activities are on the whole positively received by families and they were grateful to have had the opportunity to go out for the day. There was comment from numerous families to suggest that some preferred the other summer activities as they were better organised. It is also important to note that the closed beach and wet weather are likely to have influenced people's perceptions.

Our observations suggest that families would have benefited from further information about the day. For example, parents were unsure about the time of departure and time of return and there was a delay in getting families onto the coaches. As a result, some parents (particularly those who were visibly struggling to occupy their children as they waited to get onto the coaches), become disgruntled. Similarly, at the end of the day, some parents wanted to leave earlier than planned but it was not clear who was making the decisions and whether parents were consulted about the time for departure. On the coach there was some disquiet amongst the families as there was delay in setting off and seemingly no announcement to explain the reasons for this. An initial announcement to inform families about the length of the journey and details of a pick up at Barlanark as well as a plan for the day may have been useful for the families. In addition, it may have been appropriate for staff to 'raise the energy' and excitement amongst the families, with more staff on hand to talk informally with families as we travelled and to check that everyone was comfortable and seated safely. It may have also been useful to invite families to bring their swimming kit, towels and a change of clothes; and to have spares items for those families who might have been unable or have forgotten to bring these with them. At the research review meeting, the manager said that there is a system in place to advise families of the departure times, lunch. However, it appears that this information was not shared.

### *Photo project*

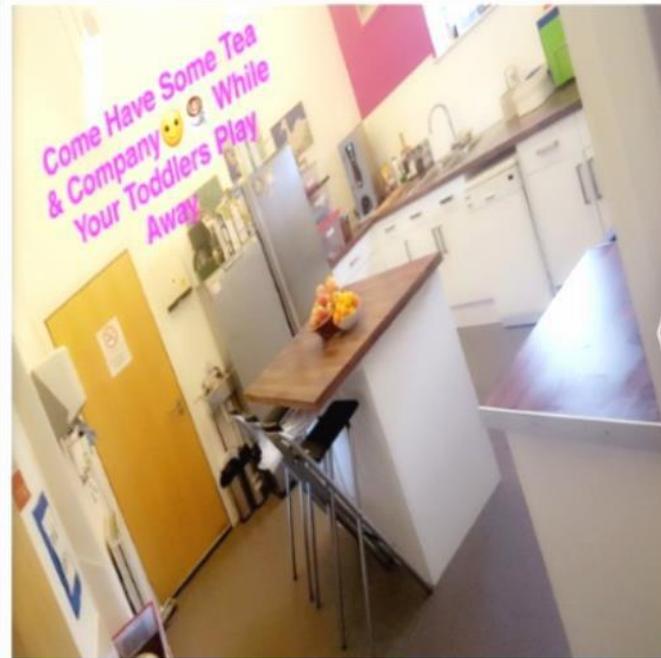
Two parents participated in a photo project (see guidance in appendices). Parents were asked to take photos of objects or spaces to depict their experiences of attending groups and activities in the Centre and what was important to them about the Centre. The parents met with the researcher to discuss what the photographs represented. They were each gifted a framed photograph of their choice. The following photos and text are taken from the interviews. Two of the photos include text added by the participant.

Figure 1 below shows the open doors of the Centre. The participant said she feels lucky that the Centre exists in this area as she knows that there is a lack of support for families in other areas. She explained the relief she feels in the knowledge that the Centre is open during the week as it provides a '*sanctuary*' for her. She commented that weekends were particularly difficult times and she missed being able to attend the Centre during this time. She also felt a sense of relief in the knowledge that certain members of staff were available and working in the Centre.



**Figure 1: Entrance to Family Centre**

The second photo is of the kitchen. This was identified as a significant place in the Family Centre and an extension of the other social areas as it was used for both preparing food and socialising. As well as offering a place for people to interact it also provided a place for quiet time. The participant said that she enjoyed going there to have '*me time*' when she was not in the mood to socialise. She talked about the importance that food plays in the day-to-day life of the Centre, and how she enjoyed offering people a hot drink as this task gave her an important purpose and role. The kitchen was identified as a useful open access space, and a '*home from home*' environment. The glass door in the kitchen allowed people to control to some extent their privacy if they wanted to have a private conversation but still see allowed people to see into the surrounding spaces.



**Figure 2: The Kitchen**



**Figure 3: The main corridor**

The corridor was described as *'nice and bright'* and not clinical and this made the participant feel happy. It was noted that some staff were seen using social media in their offices as people walked down the corridor and the participant questioned whether this should be allowed. Participants said that there was occasionally lack of staff and manager presence in the Centre.

The space and layout of the Centre was commented on by both participants. The participants appreciated the availability of rooms and the option to go into a quiet, private room if needed and

this offered a *'place to feel safe'*. The participants appreciated being able to see their children in the nursery through the window and to be able to see their children playing outside when they were using the indoor social areas. One participant said it was reassuring to be able to see that her child was 'OK'.

One participant talked about the different feelings that she got from the colours and presentation of particular rooms (see the mural in figure 4). She talked about certain colours having a calming effect on her, she also enjoyed hearing the rain on the roof.



**Figure 4: Family Centre mural**

The family room: this multi-purpose room was described as space that could be used for one: one sessions, group work and for people to off-load to staff and peers. The participants valued the opportunity to use the phone. This was identified as a *'life line'* in cases where individuals needed to urgently respond to agencies such as the job centre and housing, and it also avoided expensive phone bills to premium numbers.

One participant thought that clarity about the purpose of the rooms would be useful. For example, during the interview she needed to use the phone to make an urgent call but the 'phone room' was occupied by staff.



Figure 5: Social area

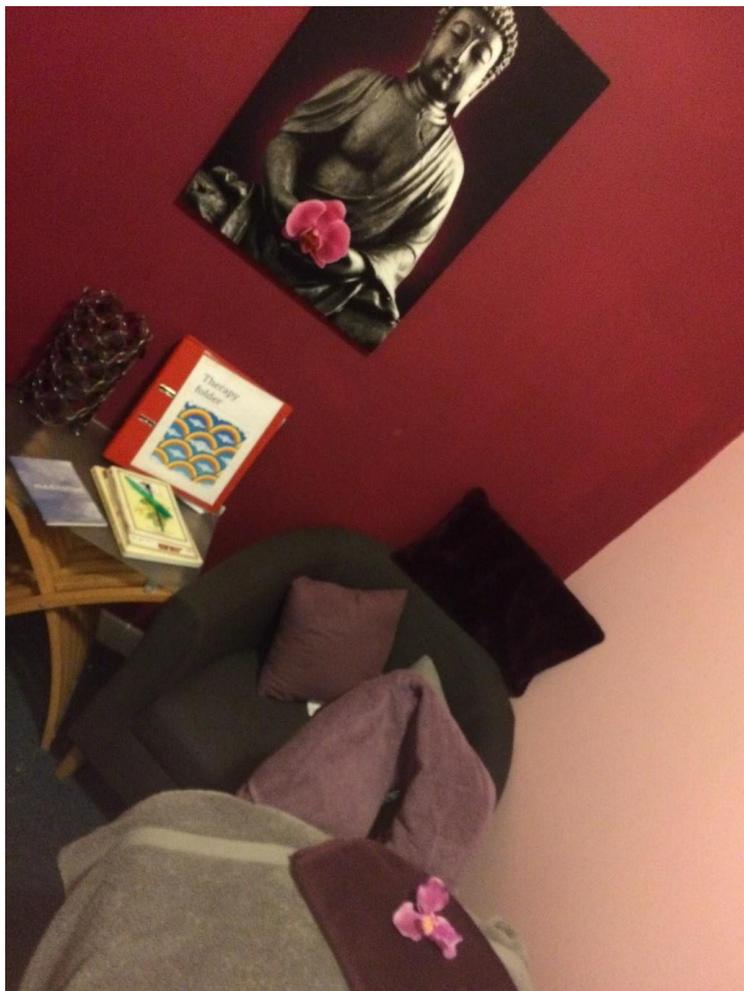


Figure 6: Massage and relaxation

The massage room was refurbished following suggestions from the Voices for Change group. One of the participants talked about the massages she gave to other women. She said it was a good opportunity for her to make use of her skill set as a beauty therapist. She said that she gave a massage to a woman who had experienced enduring domestic abuse. After the massage the woman was cited to say: *'...they were the gentlest hands that have touched me'*.

This participant's skills as a beauty therapist were valued amongst the staff and Centre users and this gave her a sense of pride and achievement. It was this experience that prompted her to get further training in baby massage which she offered in the Centre and latterly apply for a grant for development work in the Centre. The participant's experiences at the Centre over the past three years have improved her confidence not only in parenting but also in her employment skills and she has since completed further education training, gained accreditation and secured employment. This examples suggests that the service has offered a clear 'return on investment' in regards to her life chances and parenting capacity



Figure 7: What's on at the Centre



Figure 8: Soft play

Figures 7 and 8 include examples of what is on: showing a notice board, PC used for different purposes leisure and job seeking, CV writing and soft play area suitable for children aged 0-3 years in figure 8. The participants talked about the variety of activities and groups that were on, there was comment that the Centre was particularly quiet during the school holidays and often this was the time when families needed support. As previously noted, there was concern that there was no funding from a paid drop-in worker and feeling that the parent led groups were not as effective and this was missed by many families.

The participants said that they were aware that some families would not be aware of what is going on at the Centre, including the soft play facilities which could be booked out for groups. Participants thought that the Centre could be better advertised. Another suggestion was to add a leaflet about the Centre to the 'Bounty Pack' and to encourage Health Visitors to promote the Centre.



Figure 9: Mother's Day



Figure 10: Easter Bonnets

Figures 9 and 10 shows examples of arts and crafts. The participant said she was not expecting to receive a mother's day card and it was a really nice surprise to receive a painting from her child who had been at the Nursery, she said it made her feel valued as a mother. She said the card is stuck on the fridge and 'won't get taken down'. The Easter Parade was held in the garden and people paraded wearing their personalized bonnets; it was described as a 'beautiful day'.

The garden was talked about by both participants (see figures 11-14). The parents talked about how the outdoor space was used, for example, in the Easter parade and summer BBQ; and vegetable growing with the children helping to plant the leeks and onions which were used in the kitchen. The fresh lavender and vegetables were referred to as tactile objects that were attractive aesthetically, such as the smell of lavender, and educationally as children and parents were informed about growing plants and vegetables. The garden also provided the opportunity for children to play, 'to feel free' and express themselves. One participant said that she does not have a garden at home so the big open space is a pull factor, she said her child enjoyed playing in the garden tunnels and xylophone (figure 12) making as much noise as he wanted without fear of complaint.



Figure 11: Growing Vegetables



Figure 12: Outdoor play

One participant talked about growing a sunflower for the first time at a Funday Monday session, this was a task that she undertook with her child and they enjoyed documenting its growth, regularly attending to it. They felt really pleased that the sunflower grew and this provided a really nice bonding experience for the family.



Figure 12: Growing from seed



Figure 13: Growing Together

## Summary

Building on the first year evaluation, it is clear that parents value the Centre and want it to continue, there are clear development opportunities for children and families as a whole. Children's progress in the nursery is routinely monitored and recorded and **parents are very satisfied** with the provision.

Both members of staff who were interviewed were of the opinion that the nursery and Family Centre are better linked. Staff from both sections go to major events in the Centre and the parents valued this. A development in the second year of this evaluation is that there are now regular scheduled dialogues that take place between nursery and Family Centre staff in which relevant information about families is shared so that relevant staff are aware of the families' circumstances and needs and can refine involvement accordingly. Staff from the nursery go into the Centre to get experience of working with parents and project staff plan to go into the nursery to show their presence and availability to parents.

There is a sense of **belonging** in the Centre, for example, informal and formal support is offered between peers and staff, in many observations there was no clear hierarchy of roles amongst parents and staff, this can be perceived in two ways: as a strength in promoting values of inclusivity but also a weakness in cases where staff presence and guidance was lacking. **Social interaction** is a significant theme and numerous parents talked about the benefit of being able to talk with others who have similar experiences and to know that they are not on their own. **Peer support** continues to be a significant factor in individual's growth and development. Parents valued staff participation in Centre activities (nursery, support staff and manager) as this promoted a sense of **community**.

Staff were often described as **responsive** to the needs of parents and able to **recognise the potential in individuals** seeking **opportunities for service users' personal growth**. This highlights the importance of getting to know families and understanding their unique circumstances. The importance of **active listening** was highlighted by parents, who valued being able to approach individual staff in the knowledge that they had an understanding about the issues in their personal or family lives. This meant that parents did not have to repeat themselves and could get into deep conversation or solution focused conversations. This understanding helped staff to anticipate experiences and triggers that could result in families' stress and helped them to take action to prevent this. The **consistency** and **reliability** of staff was cited as important reasons for parents returning to the Centre.

The Centre provides an opportunity for parents to gain practical and emotional support. While the groups may offer a primary function such as relaxation therapy, dad's group, stress management, the act of attending regularly and participating in the everyday life of the Centre were cited as important factors in the wellbeing of parents.

In addition to the variety of groups and support on offer, it is important to acknowledge the **space and design of the Centre** as this had an effect on whether people wanted to spend time there, as well as affecting people's moods. Centre resources and facilities were viewed as positive, welcoming spaces. The kitchen was found to be a significant place for families and staff and the **symbolic meaning of food** is integral to convey a sense of comfort and community. In a similar way, the **outdoor space** is valued and used by both children and adults, this meets the Centre's overall aims to improve wellbeing by offering additional outdoor activities and social spaces.

The summer activity programme offer families an opportunity to visit a place of interest and to socialise with other families and staff. These events provide real opportunity to promote the Centre, to encourage future involvement at the Centre and for families to apply the skills and knowledge gained from the services accessed at Quarriers.

As in year one, there have been some changes to the group activities including withdrawal of funding for the drop-in worker. This was commented upon by a number of parents who continue to miss the formal nature of this service. Weekends were reported to be a difficult time for families and it would be welcomed if weekend provision were available. In a similar vein the Centre was said to be quiet over the school holidays with groups running on a term-time basis. Some parents wanted there to be more groups on over the holidays.

## Recommendations

In line with the year one recommendation it would be valuable to learn whether and how the Centre monitors and explores referrals to and from child protection services when the Centre is addressing needs and supporting parents where there are identified risks to children.

### Nursery Provision

Whilst children's progress in the nursery is routinely monitored and recorded, further consideration should be given as to what information is being collected, how and for what purpose. It would be useful in the third year to gain more understanding about the intended purpose of the data capture tools and to explore in more detail key concepts and outcome measures such as 'risk' and 'attachment'. Furthermore, it would be helpful to have examples of how children were made to feel safe and how attachment is promoted (cf. Table 3).

One of the recommendations in the first year report was for nursery staff to capture the impact that they have on parenting capacity: "*... the nursery key workers might ask parents what they found difficult or challenging and then devise the individual plans to focus on these aspects which could be reviewed regularly through the formal meetings with parents using the outcome measures*" [Year 1 Report, p12]. It will be useful to learn more about how staffs in both sections of the Centre support families holistically.

### Family Centre

While it appears that peer support is encouraged in the Centre this needs to be managed effectively. Parents expressed the need for a worker to structure and build the service and to facilitate new events and activities, such as accessing services in the community. As a result of there being no staff presence, parents are less inclined to use the Centre.

### Accessibility

As in the previous report, all parents have noted that it was not always clear to the community what the purpose of the Centre was and who could and did attend it. Publicity of the Centre therefore remains an ongoing area for consideration, to think how the reputation of the Centre can be promoted in the wider community and how it responds to the changing needs of the population and the challenges this presents.

In regards to major events in and outwith the Centre, it would be useful for the staff to think about ways to promote the work of the Centre and to build relationships with and encourage participation of newer members. It may be worthwhile allocating a buddy system pairing newer and existing members together.

### Evaluation

It would be useful to have a clearer evaluation strategy following group activities and to see how this affects attendance and engagement in the Centre and to consider how feedback is used in the design of future activities via parent feedback and the Voices for Change group.

It may be useful to link with the Communication Team to review the newspaper articles that relate to the Centre and to consider whether these narratives (cf. Evening Times, 2017) match with the views of users of the Centre, and whether there are more positive and less stigmatizing narratives that could be used. It may be useful to explore the purpose of advertising and promotion and how this intersects with broader fundraising efforts.

## Focus in Year 3

- To gain ethical approval to focus on the transitions and outcomes for children joining the feeder nursery and to interview nursery staff.
- To observe drop off and collection times at Quarriers' nursery.
- To continue to observe activities and interview parents who use the Family Centre including families who are new to Centre, to learn how parents' viewpoints feed into the changes and developments in the Centre.
- To learn more about practitioner's (nursery and family centre staff) approaches to practice – are there similarities and differences amongst workers and which models and approaches are most effective for parents and children?
- To interview new members of nursery and support staff to explore their professional development.
- To explore the development of understanding amongst staff to support families from minority ethnic groups.
- To attend Voices for Change meetings and to interview members to learn about partnership and how users' views are fed into the strategic plan.
- To explore cross working and integration amongst the nursery and support staff and to identify which actions and interventions put in place by the nursery and/or Family Centre contribute to children's outcomes.

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## Appendices

### **Appendix 1: Ruchazie Family Centre Evaluation: Focus group questions**

1. What brought you to the centre?
2. How has the centre helped you, your children, and your family?
3. How did you find out about the centre?
4. What do you like/not like about the centre?
5. What difference has the centre made to your community?
6. How long have you been using the centre?
7. Tell me about the centre? How would you describe it
8. How would you like to see the centre develop in the future?

## **Appendix 2: Ruchazie Family Centre Evaluation: Interviews with parents and carers**

Does the community view the centre in a negative way? (i.e. need to be with a social worker to access). Why do you think this is?

Do you think that can affect people from going to the centre? Did it affect you?

Do you think the centre is easy to get to?

Do you think a lot of people know about the centre? – Is it well advertised?

What are the main services you access in the centre?

What do you get from going to the group?

How has it affected/changed you/your life? How has it helped you?

What is about the group that keeps you involved?

How can the centre change/develop to better meet your needs? Do you think you can help with this change?

We are a small research team from the University of Stirling. Our names are Andressa Gadda & Siân Lucas. We are carrying out research to evaluate the difference that the Ruchazie Centre has made to children and their families. This research is funded by the Big Lottery and began in 2015.

So far we have interviewed parents face-to-face...we now want to be ambitious and ask you to help us by getting involved with a photo collage project.

### Photo Collage



If you are a parent who attends the Ruchazie Centre and attend organised groups/activities or drop in, we would like to hear **how your experience at the centre helps you personally, as well as your family and community.**

We are asking people to take photos using their personal mobile phones to document their experiences, feelings about the role of Quarriers in your life, that of your child(ren), your family and in the community more generally.

The photos will provide a way for us to understand how the centre has influenced your lives and experiences.

You do not need to be an expert photographer - you just need to have a camera on your phone.

Please note that:

- Photos can be of yourself or objects that represent your experiences of the centre (coffee mug/dinner etc).

- If you would like to include other adults in the photo, including member of staff, please ask them if they are happy for you to take their picture first. If you would like to include your children on photos, please make sure they cannot be identified (e.g. you can take a picture of them playing with their back to the camera). Please do not include other children on your pictures.
- The photos will be securely stored in a secure, password protected file storage facility.
- The researchers and selected Quarriers staff will be given access to the photos.
- You will have the opportunity to see the photos and any that you are not happy with will be deleted.
- With your permission the photos may be used for publicity purposes (Quarriers website, Quarriers' social media pages (Facebook/Twitter), Quarriers' publicity materials).

Once you have taken your photos you will meet with the researcher to consider what they mean to you. At this point the researcher will download the photos onto her laptop. Photos will be stored securely in a password protected file at the University of Stirling.

Some of the photos will be selected for an end of project exhibition that will take place at the Family Centre. Members of the community will be invited to the exhibition launch and you will receive a framed copy of a selected photo.

**If you have any questions about the project please speak with Mandy Morrison, or the Project Lead, Siân Lucas [s.e.lucas@stir.ac.uk](mailto:s.e.lucas@stir.ac.uk) 01786 467980**

## Hello parents!



Is your child attending the Ruchazie nursery? If so, we would like to talk to you about your experiences of the nursery.

We are a small research team from the University of Stirling. Our names are Andressa Gadda & Siân Lucas. We are carrying out research to evaluate the difference that the Ruchazie Centre has made to children and their families. This research is funded by the Big Lottery and began in 2015.

We are now interested in learning more about parents' views and experiences of the nursery so we would like to hear from you even if you have talked to us before.

Andressa will be coming to the Centre on the following dates to talk with parents:

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 9:30am – 4:30pm**

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 9:30am – 4:30pm**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 9:30am – 4:30pm**

If you are willing to take part in a short interview, please let Christina (nursery manager) know what date/time is most suitable to you. If these dates are not suitable but you would like to talk to us about your experiences, please let Christina know and we will find a suitable date.

Your views are very important to us and we hope you will be able to take this opportunity to share them with us.

If you have any questions about the project please speak with Mandy Morrison, or the Project Lead, Siân Lucas [s.e.lucas@stir.ac.uk](mailto:s.e.lucas@stir.ac.uk) 01786 467980



# Hello parents!

If you are a parent who attends the Ruchazie Centre we would like to hear how your experience at the centre helps you, your family and community.

We are asking parents to take photos over a period of 2 weeks (insert dates) using their phones to document their experiences of the Centre.

Photos can be of people, places or objects that represent your experiences of the centre.



*If including people in your pictures please ask them if they are happy for you take their pictures for this project first.*



Once you have taken your photos you will meet with the researcher to consider what they mean to you.

Some of the photos will be selected for an end of project exhibition that will take place at the Family Centre and you will receive a framed copy of your selected photo.

If you have any questions about the project please speak with Mandy Morrison, or the Project Lead, Siân Lucas  
[s.e.lucas@stir.ac.uk](mailto:s.e.lucas@stir.ac.uk) 01786 467980

## Appendix 6: Interview schedule for parents using the nursery

- 1) How did you find out about the nursery?
  - a. Were you referred or did you self refer?
  - b. Were you aware of the centre previously? Did you attend the centre before?
- 2) What were your reasons to seek a place for your child to attend the nursery?
- 3) When did your child(ren) started attending the nursery?
  - a. How long did you have to wait to have a place for your child?
  - b. Is your child attending full time or part-time? Does that suit you?
- 4) How has your experience of the nursery been so far?
  - a. Of the space (i.e. easy to get to? Welcoming? Clean?)
  - b. Of the staff (i.e. easy to talk to? Responsive? Interested on you and your child?)
  - c. Of other parents (i.e. opportunities to talk? Peer support?)
  - d. Any issues?
- 5) How does your child like the nursery?
  - a. The space (i.e. opportunities to play, get messy?)
  - b. The staff
  - c. Other children
  - d. Any issues?
- 6) If you could change one thing about the nursery, what would that be?
- 7) Have you started planning the transition to mainstream nursery? (If child close to her third birthday)
  - a. What prep work is being done?
  - b. How helpful is this?
  - c. Would you like any further support?
- 8) Do you engage with other services at the centre?
  - a. If so, which ones?
  - b. Could you tell me more about these? What are your experiences of these services?
  - c. How helpful are these/have these been to you? And your family?
- 9) Are there other support/services you would like to have in place for you? For your child?
- 10) If the centre was to close its doors, what impact would that have on you? And the community?