

# CHILDCARE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

*April 2024 - March 2025*



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Greenway Women's Group

Greenway Women's Centre, 19-23 Greenway, Belfast, BT6 0DT

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## Childcare Managers' Statement

This Report will demonstrate the work that the Childcare Department has presented within the years 2024/2025, providing Day Care to children aged between 0-4 years and their families.

The 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025 marked 3 years of us both being in the Childcare Manager position. We have learnt so much over the past three years and continue to learn and grow within our position, to ensure the Childcare Department runs to its highest potential. We have faced some difficulties with staffing, i.e. recruitment, however we are finally on the other side and things are looking positive.

Natalie spent half of 2024 off on maternity leave after welcoming her second baby girl. Natalie returned to post after the July break. Jodie managed the Childcare Department solely during this time and got us through our annual inspection with two minor recommendations which were carried out within 1 month of inspection.

We said goodbye to one of our Childcare Assistants, Elisha Sharpe, as she embarked on her new journey with her career change. We wish Elisha all the best in her future endeavours.

We welcomed our newest staff member Nicola Walker in February 2025. Nikki has started her Greenway journey in our Toddler Room 2, alongside Jean Ho & Caroline Stratton.

Greenway has been fortunate enough to be a finalist for the Tesco Community Grant which would allow us to purchase new resources and equipment for the Childcare Department.

We will finish by saying we hope to continually develop our practice to provide the most effective, enabled and stimulating environment, building strong foundations for children to flourish.

*J. Wilson*

*N. Horrocks*



## Childcare Team 2024/2025



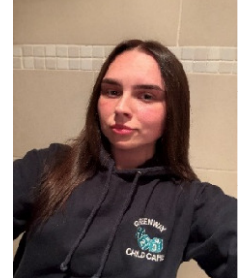
Jodie Wilson  
Childcare Manager



Natalie Horrocks  
Childcare Manager



Lynsey Gilliland  
Deputy Manager



Asha Caldwell  
Childcare Assistant



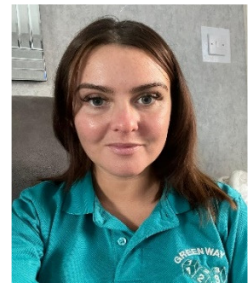
Sarah Robinson  
Room Leader



Suzanne Watson  
Childcare Assistant



Shannon Flynn  
Childcare Assistant



Nicola Maguire  
Childcare Assistant



Karen Downey  
Childcare Assistant



Elisha Sharpe  
Childcare Assistant  
(left December 2024)



Jean Ho  
Room Leader



Nikki Walker  
Childcare Assistant  
(joined February 2025)



Caroline Stratton  
Childcare Assistant

## Celebration Day



For this year's Celebration Day, we spent the day at Belfast Zoo. All the Staff, children & their families had the best day. The weather was beautiful with the sun splitting the trees and the children thoroughly enjoyed the day, which we finished off with a lovely picnic and some ice cream.

This trip was attended by 22 adults and 15 children.

## September Inductions

In September 2024, a mixture of Sponsored Day Care (SDC), Women's Centres Childcare Fund (WCCF), Pathway spaces and Private spaces became available.

With an extensive waiting list already in place we welcomed new families into our Childcare Department on a first come first served basis.

In terms of WCCF we offer 128 x 2-hour sessions. Eligibility for these places are as follows:

- In receipt of Income Support/Unemployed and registered for JSA **and**
- Engaged in part-time (less than 16 hours per week) paid voluntary/community development work.
- Engaged in vocational or educational development or training.
- Engaged in personal development training **or**
- *Within the last 12 months, progressed into employment following a period of unemployment.*

We then offer Pathway places to parents who are low-income but would not fall under WCCF criteria.

We provide Belfast Trust with Sponsored Day Care (SDC) places in line with our service level agreement and are contracted to hold 7 x 5-hour sessions per week. During the SDC contract meeting with Catherine Finlay & Alex Orr, BHSC once again spoke highly of the provision and services we provide, particularly from feedback from the families accessing the service.



## Halloween



*Chris from Ravine NI visited Greenway in October 2024 with a very generous donation of 30 pumpkins for the Greenway children to take home and carve with their families.*

During October 2024 all of our Childcare rooms were decorated for the Halloween festivities. This included art work of spiders, pumpkins and Halloween sensory tough trays. We did a lot of pumpkin carving and gave each child the opportunity to scoop out the inside of the pumpkins and we created a mixture of 'smiley' and 'scary' pumpkins! Children had the option to come into the setting on any day they attended dressed up in a costume. We had some fabulous outfits!



## Santa's Grotto



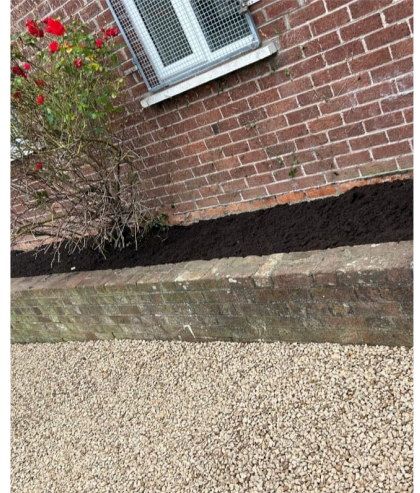
In December 2024 we invited parents/carers and all our children and their siblings to come along to our Santa's Grotto. In the Grotto this year we had a Bouncy Castle, Snow Globe, Santa's Grotto and fun activities set up in 2 different rooms for the children to explore. This event was attended by 43 parents/carers and 37 children.

It was great to see parents/carers attending with their children and getting involved in the holiday spirit.





## Childcare Garden



Thanks to funding from Belfast Childcare Partnerships, we were able to begin renovating the garden area at the front of the Greenway Childcare building, which had become overgrown and untidy.

The team from Stormont Garden Care carried out the work in September 2024 and they did an amazing job clearing the space, making it safe and fully accessible for our staff and children.

We are delighted with the results and the Childcare Team will now be able to use this fantastic outdoor space with the children. They plan to create bug houses, plant flowers and hopefully even grow vegetables.

## Evidence Based Outcomes



We continued to use the Wellcomm screen and the Tapestry baseline assessment to ensure that effective planning continues to take place. The benefits of these quality indicators include having a starting point for key workers to plan from, ongoing assessment of need and most importantly early intervention and referral if required. We have put together a new form of quarterly planning which links both assessment methods so they can be cross referenced if related.

Looking back on previous assessments has been insightful and helped with future planning as well as intervention. The assessments identify the areas where the child may be meeting milestones and staff can then go on to plan extended levels of difficulty within an activity in order to add additional challenges. The assessment is also important in planning who may need additional one-to-one support.

Whilst these baseline assessments are important in order to show that there is a need for our service in terms of early intervention and support, it is important that staff do not overlook play as they key method of learning for children and that creating a safe, warm and stimulating environment remains paramount to the provision we provide in order to provide the best opportunities for the children to simply play.

## Further Information

We are currently registered for 42 childcare spaces per day however we only facilitate 28 childcare spaces between 3 rooms. This consists of 1 baby room and 2 toddler rooms. We operate from 8.30am to 1.30pm every day, Monday to Friday.

The majority of the spaces are made up of funding we receive from the Women's Centres Childcare Fund (WCCF). These spaces are free of charge for parents providing they can meet the WCCF criteria. We must provide 128 x 2 hour sessions per week in order to meet our objective.

The funding via The Pathway Fund takes up the next biggest quantity of space within our setting, totalling 20 child spaces per week. These sessions are provided to families who do not meet the criteria for a WCCF place but still fall within the low-income bracket.

We also receive Sponsored Day Care funding via a service level agreement with the Belfast Trust which makes up 7 sessions per week. These spaces are allocated to parents directly from the Sponsored Day Care Team. The Trust has required every single space to be used up, which indicates a continued need for this service. This is particularly crucial to the work we carry out with families as it identifies the need for early intervention and support for vulnerable children and families.

We also have our own Private spaces throughout the 3 rooms.



## Quality Indicators

Feedback from parents/carers and the children themselves is very important to our service and helps shape how we move our practice forward in the most effective ways. We have had a lot of positive feedback this year, which we are always grateful for.

Parents' comments below:

"Greenway are a great example of child led childcare. My nephew is introduced daily to a range of activities that explores all areas of his development simply by playing and having fun. The staff are friendly, approachable and full of knowledge, and their daily update and observations on my nephew really helps to build a picture to how his day has went. I think the ethos greenway follow is crucial to our children's future as they are helping to scaffold each child's resilience, confidence and wellbeing through some well planned out activities. Due to this I would imagine it would also help with early intervention within the early years sector if needed meaning this could, in time cut down the waiting lists etc for any developmental issues that may otherwise not be documented until they reach school age. I have my own child down now on the waiting list to attend greenway childcare and I am excited to see how being apart of something that I believe is extremely special to our future generation will help Foster her natural curiosity and build help build upon her development as she grows."

"The staff go over and above to help parents children they are so devoted to the children and work hard daily. They all need to know we support them in everything they do."

"The support greenway childcare has given me is beyond. The setting is inclusive and staff were brilliant with my daughter. They offer a range of help and services such as support from their family support officer."

"Our daughter attended Greenway prior to starting nursery. I can't recommend the girls enough. Both my daughter and ourselves received amazing support and I truly believe that my daughter would not have been able to attend nursery without the keyworker input she received from the Greenway staff. My daughter still talks about her playgroup which just shows how much she enjoyed and depended upon the staff there."

"Greenway are brilliant with all the kids and the service they provide is just invaluable. My son has really progressed from he has started at Greenway. He loves going in every morning and everyone is so welcoming and friendly. I love how much the staff really care about all the children. The updates daily are so personal and really encouraging and I really love how much the staff notice how well the child is progressing and are always so proud of their development. I have seen such a massive difference in my son's social skills with other children. He has problems with his speech but the staff are really working with him and have noticed him starting to say more as well."

"My little girl attends here she has come on so much talking, singing and activities like messy play etc She absolutely loves going to crèche and all the workers are amazing."

As part of our remit to our various different funders, we must take part in monthly/quarterly/annual monitoring and inspections of the Childcare service.

Our annual inspection took place over 2 parts, in May 2024 and September 2024. The Report will be available to all parents/carers upon request.

- Belfast Health & Social Care Trust – via Service Level Agreement (Sponsored Day Care Team)
- Department for Communities (DfC) – via Women’s Centre Childcare Fund (WCCF)
- Health & Social Care Board – via Service Level Agreement administrated via Women’s Support Network.
- The Pathway Fund – via Early Years The Organisation

Greenway’s Centre Manager, Childcare Managers, Chairperson and Training & Education Officer also represent/ have formed relationships with or are members of, the following:

- Outer South and East Family support Hub
- Inner East Family Support Hub
- Housing Executive Scrutiny Board
- Surestart Management Committee
- Eastside Early Years Network
- Eastside Partnership
- Belfast Childcare Partnership
- In Kind Direct
- EBCDA Health Forum
- Inner East Surestart
- Early Years The Organisation
- NICVA
- Cregagh Interagency Forum
- Play Resource

## Staff Training and Development

All staff have updated their mandatory training and have been taking part in additional training courses relevant to their job role within the Childcare rooms.

Below is a list of training that staff have completed within the last year:

- First Aid
- Fire Safety
- Fire Marshal
- Fire Extinguisher
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding
- Manual Handling
- Food Allergy and Intolerance
- Autism
- Early Years Teamwork and Leadership
- Encouraging Language Development in Early Childhood
- Managing Complaints
- ACES
- Case Conference
- Working with Children and Young People in Care
- Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Behaviour
- Children's Perspectives on Play
- Supporting Children with Learning Disability
- Understanding Language and Learning
- Understanding ADHD



## Moving Forward

Moving forward we aim to grow and develop while continuing to deliver a high-quality Childcare service within the Cregagh estate, at the heart of east Belfast.

We continue to meet new children and new families daily and couldn't be happier to be able to support the local community.

We are hoping to open our 4<sup>th</sup> Childcare room in the near future, allowing us to provide daily Childcare to our full potential. In doing this we look forward to welcoming new staff members, more children and more families to join us at Greenway Childcare.



## Funders and Contributors

- Department for Communities (DfC) - via Women's Centres Childcare Fund (WCCF)
- Belfast Health & Social Care Trust (BHSCT) - via Service Level Agreement for Sponsored Day Care
- Belfast Childcare Partnership - IT and Outdoor Equipment Grant
- Early Years The Organisation - The Pathway Fund



Belfast Health and  
Social Care Trust



Department for  
Communities



The  
Pathway  
Fund

## Greenway Women's Centre Services

Greenway Women's Centre offers a number of services which benefit women and their families:

- Childcare
- Family Support Services
- Training & Education Programmes
- Volunteering Opportunities
- Student Placement Opportunities
- Employment Opportunities
- Advice, signposting, referral and support
- Counselling Service

Further information can be obtained by visiting our website:

[www.greenwaywomenscentre.org](http://www.greenwaywomenscentre.org), following us on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/GreenwayWomensCentre](https://www.facebook.com/GreenwayWomensCentre), picking up a leaflet onsite or calling in to talk to one of our staff!

- Lindsay Cooper - Centre Manager
- Liz Oslon - Chairperson/ Registered Person
- Helen Smyth - Training & Education Officer
- Jodie Wilson & Natalie Horrocks - Childcare Managers