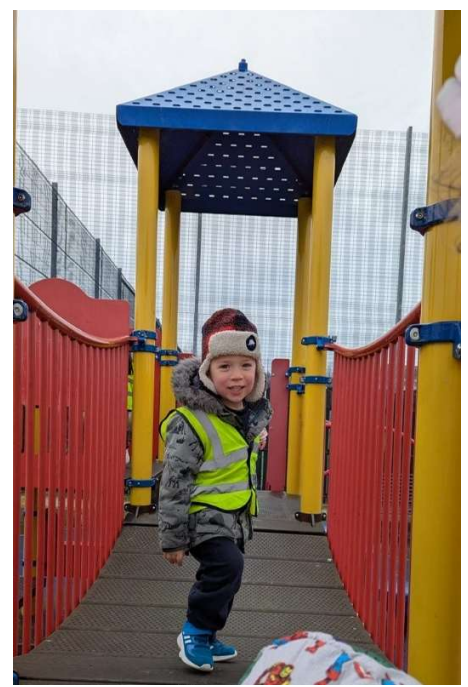


CHILDCARE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

April 2025 - March 2026



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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 2025/2026, providing Day Care to children aged between 0-4 years and their families.

The 1st March 2026 marked 4 years of us both being in the Childcare Manager position. We have learnt so much over the past four 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.

As the Childcare Managers, we are proud to lead a provision that supports children and their families within a caring, inclusive and empowering community environment. We always ensure we provide a safe, welcoming and stimulating space where all children feel valued, secure and confident to learn. Within our setting we promote a child-centered approach, recognising that each child is unique with their own interests, abilities and learning styles.

This year we said goodbye to one of our Childcare room leaders, Jean Ho. We wish Jean all the best in her future endeavours.

Nikki, who worked in Toddler Room 2 was off on maternity this year and has welcomed a beautiful baby girl into the world. We look forward to Nikki coming back from maternity leave. We welcomed Sommer Bambrick into our setting to help cover maternity leave whilst Nikki was on leave.

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 2025/2026



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



Sommer Bambrick
Childcare Assistant
(Covering maternity leave)



Jean Ho
Room Leader
(Left December 2025)



Nikki Walker
Childcare Assistant
(Maternity leave)



Caroline Stratton
Childcare Assistant

Celebration Day



For this year's Celebration Day, we hosted a UV party in our Centre. We had a bouncy castle, music, balloons, candy floss and lots of other treats. The children all participated in games of 'pass the parcel' and all cooperated very well. It was a fantastic day for everyone. Staff and parents had made comments about how they thoroughly enjoyed getting to meet their children's friends and their parents where they exchanged numbers to allow the children to stay in touch and meet up when they transitioned to different nursery schools. The feedback we got back from the parents that attended was great.

This event was attended by 25 adults and 25 children.



We wish all our children the very best in their new adventure!



September Inductions

In September 2025, 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 5 x 5-hour sessions per week. During the SDC contract meeting with Lisa McComish Brennan & Alex Orr, BHSCT once again spoke highly of the provision and services we provide, particularly from feedback from the families accessing the service.

Halloween



During October 2025 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!

We also had the pleasure of decorating our garden within the Centre to a halloween theme area where the children came and had more fun exploring!



Free hot lunches



Free Lunch

We were very pleased to announce to all of our families that we had secured some funding via family support and were now in a position to use this money to pay for all children's hot lunches.

This meant that from Monday 24th November to Friday 3rd April 2026 Parents will not be required to pay money towards children's lunches. (This applied to all children in setting.)

Parents gave us positive feedback:

“Greenway staff and services are fantastic and much needed. The benefit of free meals ensures that all children will enjoy food on a daily basis together and during this ongoing cost of living crisis, it is vital for wee ones to grow and thrive.”

“It’s great to know that a free lunch is provided for the children. Helps families financially that the money they don’t have to spend, on lunch’s can help with other things at home. Sometimes we forget to lift their lunch or sleep in. Knowing there is lunch provided for your child is a wait lifted off too. Great that greenway security this for our children.”

“Having one less meal to worry about each week is great and my son is a restrictive eater so being in an environment with other children eating the same thing and the same time has really helped encouraged him to eat. The staff are brilliant.”

Santa's Grotto

In December 2025 we invited parents/carers and all our children and their siblings to come along to our Santa's Grotto which was held within the Centre. In the Grotto this year we had a Bouncy Castle, Snow Globe, Santa's Grotto, face painting and fun activities set up in 3 different rooms for the children to explore. This year we created a small room which was allocated as a 'Quiet room'. From last year's feedback parents had suggested this as some children became overwhelmed and this worked very well this year. We had a special visit from Chase and Marshall from Paw Patrol as well as Peppa Pig, and the children thoroughly enjoyed seeing them!

This event was attended by 42 parents/carers and 33 children.

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



Breakfast with Santa



In December 25 we were all invited to Cregagh Community Centre to have some breakfast with Santa. The children loved this! There were tables set out for all the children with different snacks for them and Santa made an appearance, welcoming the children to have some breakfast with him. After breakfast the children got to speak to Santa and receive a gift! We would like to thank Cregagh Community Centre for hosting this and inviting us to come along it was a great experience for the children!

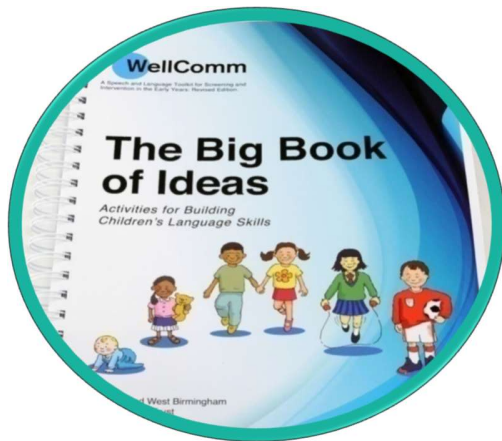


The Giggle Patch

Thanks to funding from Belfast Childcare Partnerships, we were able to renovate the garden area at the front of the Greenway Childcare building in 2024. The children have been having such an amazing time spending their day in the garden. They have been able to help plant flowers, vegetables, build bug houses and lots more! We have also decorated the garden area for Halloween and Christmas time! This has created a great place for the children to explore the outdoors.



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 22 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:

He loves it, loves playing with other children his age, and has learnt how important it is to share and "kind hands". I believe it also helped with his potty training too. Helped him socially, playing with other children his age, sharing, his confidence and helped with potty training as he was with other children at same stage. - TR2 Parent

The staff are absolutely amazing and treat my son like their own. They are great at communicating and let me know how my son has been and what they have been doing that day. The children are kept busy at the park, doing artwork and with various activities which are great for their development. The childcare service at Greenway goes above and beyond what I have experienced in other places but it's all down to the staff. My son runs in in the morning and comes out happy at pick up which says it all! - TR1 Parent

Girls are brilliant with children to adapt individual needs of each child, my little girl has been attending since 6 months old, now near 2 years and loves going to Greenway. My daughter has developed widely in all areas of child development particularly speech, colours and currently learning potty at the minute. Still learning everyday with the lovely work of the girls. - TR2 Parent

Just knowing that my daughter is so safe and happy. Seeing her dynamic change from being nervous when she first started as was I, her bond with the girls at the doors just knowing that they've made her feel like one of their own is what warmed my heart and knowing she was having a fun day each day. After a couple of months settling into crèche her speech and development had came on leaps and bounds interacting with wee friends. - BR Parent

I am really happy with the childcare service my daughter receives from the team. She loves going to 'school' as she calls it and playing with her friends, singing, doing arts and crafts etc. The girls are amazing in their job. - TR1 Parent

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 in two parts in May 2025 and June 2025. 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
- East Belfast Alternatives

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
- Autism
- Early Years Teamwork and Leadership
- Encouraging Language Development in Early Childhood
- Case Conference
- Working with Children and Young People in Care
- Understanding ADHD
- Exploring Inclusion and Identity Through the Lense of Play
- Sharing Sensitive News With Parents
- Introduction to Physical Disabilities
- Anaphylaxis and Epi Pen Training
- Supporting Children with a Learning Disability in Early Years
- Introduction to Observing Children
- Nurturing Creativity
- Understanding the Recruitment Process

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 4th 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



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, following us on Facebook:

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

Greenway Women's Group
Childcare Annual Report 2025-2026
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