

SSSA Entry Form 2018 :

NOMINATION DETAILS

Who is being nominated?

Organisation

Name of organisation:

Broxburn Family Centre

AWARD DETAILS

Which category are you entering?

Category 10: Excellence in Children's Services

Please confirm that the work carried out relates to the last two years (up to January 2018):

- Yes
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Q1. Overview: (max 200 words)

Our aim is to inspire everyone we come in contact with. We aim to do this through Play, by encouraging our children and young people to explore and push the boundaries of risk, both physically and emotionally, within a supportive environment maintaining their own comfort level. We recognise that children need to do so to build confidences and skills in a challenging world. We therefore design our play spaces to be challenging, with an element of supported and managed risk. We encourage active outdoor play in all weathers and environments. As well as this we have continued to inspire the whole children's services throughout Scotland by staging Scotland's National Play Conference Play Works, this is done by our very small but inspirational Play team who continue to surpass all expectations. On top of our excellent childcare, both early years and Out of School Care, which has top grades of 6 across all of the quality themes from the Care Inspectorate, we also have free open to all drop in play sessions throughout the year, as well as our renowned summer programme which attracts children and families from far and wide with our notorious Manky Mondays and Wet Wednesday.

Q2. What did you do? (max 500 words)

In the last couple of years we have listened to children who have used our services say that they are not going on school camp, some of the reasons behind this are varied but the main one is money, school camp can cost quite a lot of money. It is armed with this information that we set out to changed this situation, not that they couldn't go on camp but the children who didn't get to go on camp still had something awesome to talk about after that week of school camp. We worked with our local primary school, to speak to the children who were not going on school camp to see what they would like to do, we showed them all some photos and video clips of the sort of play that we facilitate in order to gauge if that is something that would interest them. After the first year of us doing this some children did not want to go on school camp the next year as they had heard how awesome the week with our team was. It was from this work that our next idea was born, children who are being excluded from school or are struggling in school because it is not meeting their needs. Again we worked closely with our local primary school to highlight a group of children of different ages who were maybe struggling with school life for whatever reason, we then met with this group of children to discuss the sort of things that we could offer them, we listened to their ideas and the things that they wanted to do and together came up with a programme that we all agreed on, this was a 15 session long programme over 2 terms, word spread and we started to work with 3 schools as well as a nursery to promote and deliver an outdoor learning experience through Play. As well as this we have inspired over 600 of the children's workforce across Scotland through our National Play Conference - "Play Works" which is a Play conference like no other, inspiration is the name of the game. We have also had over 200 children come to our outdoor site, situated in some woodlands contributed to us through our partnership with Hopetoun Estate, our outdoor site has portable zip lines both small and huge, slack lines, rope bridges, fire and best of all our tree top nets. Our outdoor site has had children from 3 up to 18 come and build their confidence and self esteem through outdoor adventurous free play. Relationship building was another benefit of our outdoor site, children playing with children they would not normally choose to play with, these relationships have continued to grow outwith the outdoor site. We have provided free fruit, water and milk to over 215 different children and over 35 parents per week. We have targeted sessions offering children new experiences. We also do some outreach work through play at the local homeless unit.

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Q3. What did you achieve? (max 500 words)

Below is our key outcomes – we have provided an example of our achievements.

Our children have improved confidence & self esteem – An example of this is child O, child O took part in our pilot alternative curriculum programme that we ran in partnership with Kirkhill Primary School. Child O was chosen to take part in our alternative curriculum programme because of his behaviour issues. Child O had a fractious relationship with his teachers for various reasons, this led to confidence and self esteem to plummet at school, leading to a vicious circle of challenging behaviour. While on the alternative curriculum programme child O not only flourished but stood out as a leader amongst his peers. This led to his teacher seeing him in a different light which in turn transformed the way child O was perceived within the school setting. Feedback from all staff involved and the child himself noted massive improvements in his self-esteem and confidence.

Our children have improved independence – In the last 2 years we have employed 2 trainees who came to our service as children. 1 is now a practitioner and about to complete her SVQ Social Services (Children & Young People) level 7. The other employee, despite his additional support needs has thrived in his position as trainee playworker, both have become valued members of our excellent staff team.

Our children increasingly act as role models – We live in a world where children often have their days and evenings planned out for them. More and more children who come to us have often forgotten how to play. With this in mind, it was refreshing when a child who had been attended our setting for some time started taking new children under their wing and acting as role models. One great example of this was a day at our outdoor site. One of the children who has attended for a couple of years noticed some new children had started on this day, when we arrived at the outdoor site this child showed the new children around the site explaining the boundaries and safety issues. Then instead of letting those children just get on with it he started a game, he got everyone involved, he went with one of the new children and the game commenced. The laughter that ensued was all down to this child who had supported and welcomed these new children and led the way in memory making.

Our children participate in an increasing amount of physical and active play - Active play makes a significant contribution to health. We provide 'active play' to over 202 different children per week and over 450 different children per week during the summer holidays. This may include street play or our daily adventures. We also regularly play at our outdoor site which boasts portable zip lines, slack lines, rope bridges, tree bridges, and our famous tree top nets. All our children are involved in planning their play, after all, it is theirs.

Q4. Why should you receive an award? (max 100 words)

I think we should receive an award as I believe that we are a sector leading organisation carrying out innovative, inspiring, alternative life opportunities through Play. The whole staff team put their heart and soul into what they do with a passion that clearly comes across in everything that they do. We say that Play is our work, and this is truly our mantra when trying to inspire the children who attend our services as well as the wider children's services world. We are recognised nationally as inspiring and our regulator believes us to be 'excellent'.

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