

Summarised inspection findings

St Madoes Primary School Nursery Class

Perth and Kinross Council

24 March 2020

Key contextual information

St Madoes Nursery Class is situated within St Madoes Primary School and provides early learning and childcare for children from the village of St Madoes and surrounding areas. The nursery is registered for 20 children aged from three years. The current roll is 32. A few children have full day placements and all afternoon children have lunch at the beginning of the session. Support is provided to the nursery from a peripatetic nursery teacher.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- Nursery practitioners work well as a team and together with the peripatetic teacher, they have led change well. They are reflective and engage regularly in professional dialogue. This shared learning is building capacity within the team and influences improvement. Practitioners feel valued by the senior leadership team. They have opportunities to engage with primary colleagues as part of the whole school community.
- Practitioners promote the school's vision and values. They should develop this further by making them meaningful to children. Nursery practitioners have created a set of relevant aims. They reflect these in the positive practice and ethos within the nursery. In future reviews, practitioners should involve nursery parents and children fully in the process.
- All practitioners have a leadership role. They attend relevant professional learning to support them in their role. This has deepened practitioners' knowledge of early years pedagogy and influenced positive changes within the nursery. The learning environment for children is providing a wider range of open-ended and natural materials for children to explore and investigate. As a result, children's creativity and problem solving skills are developing well. Practitioners should continue to widen their knowledge of current developments within the early learning and childcare (ELC) sector to ensure continuous improvement.
- Practitioners engage in a few self-evaluation activities to identify what is working well and where improvements are required. Increasingly, they use national guidance to take a closer look at particular aspects of practice. Practitioners, along with the peripatetic teacher, identify key priorities for improvement. Progress meetings enable practitioners to measure the progress and impact of the improvement plan. Practitioners need to embed self-evaluation processes, involving all stakeholders, to decide future improvements based on sound judgements. Practitioners need to engage parents and children to be involved in the improvement planning process at a deeper level to inform improvements and celebrate success.
- The headteacher and education authority carry out visits to monitor aspects of learning and teaching. Helpful feedback supports practitioners to improve practice. Annual tracking meetings with the headteacher allows practitioners to discuss children's progress. This should

develop further to have a clear overview of progress over time. The headteacher needs to develop a strategic approach to leading the curriculum and managing and guiding the pace of change. Practitioners need this leadership and direction to provide the highest quality of early learning and childcare.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Relationships between adults and children are positive and encouraging. Practitioners respect and value children and as a result, children feel safe, secure and confident within nursery. Children arrive at the setting eager to learn and engage well with the range of interesting experiences available indoors and outdoors. Increased use of natural and open-ended materials support children to develop creativity. They sustain interest for extended periods as they complete jigsaws and create an obstacle course.
- Children benefit from long periods of time where they play indoors and outdoors with little interruption. Children are confident and make choices and decisions about their play. Practitioners are responsive to children's interests and ideas and provide the right level of support and encouragement to support children to lead their play. Practitioners provide opportunities for children to reflect on their experiences and learning. A few children are confident to share their learning with others.
- Practitioners interact well with children. They engage in discussions with them and make effective use of questions to support and extend learning and deepen thinking. Practitioners need to increase the use of digital technology to support learning and teaching.
- Each child has an e - portfolio, which contains observations and photographs of children's achievements. Practitioners should continue to support children to engage with their journal so that children recognise their achievements. They should work with children to identify what they might learn next and become more aware of themselves as learners. Practitioners continue to develop their skills in recording observations of children's learning. They need a consistent focus to capture significant learning and children's developing skills across the curriculum.
- Practitioners have made important changes to the planning process. They have introduced floorbooks to support a child-led approach to planning. As a result, children contribute confidently to influence their learning. Practitioners need to embed this into practice. There is an appropriate balance of child-led and adult-initiated learning to support children to develop a range of skills.
- Practitioners, track aspects of children's learning using developmental milestones provided by the local authority. They are beginning to make links with the national benchmarks to support their assessment of children's progress. They should improve monitoring and tracking of progress within the early level of Curriculum for Excellence. Practitioners need to know children well as learners. They should use this information to provide children with suitable levels of challenge in their learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners plan using the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence and are beginning to track coverage. Senior leaders and practitioners should be aware of any gaps in learning. Children should have increased opportunities to progress their skills in using digital technology and develop an awareness of diversity. Practitioners need to use the principles of curriculum design more effectively to continue to improve the planning cycle.
- Children develop curiosity, creativity and inquiry through the increased use of open-ended materials indoors and outdoors. Practitioners should continue to develop the outdoor environment to support children to develop and apply their literacy skills.
- Practitioners make occasional use of the local community. This needs to increase to enable children to learn through real-life contexts. To enrich the curriculum further, practitioners should widen the range of partners involved in the nursery.
- Children's transition into the nursery is supportive and flexible to meet their needs. Practitioners provide different activities for children to become familiar with the P1 classroom and routines of school. The P1 teacher and practitioners meet prior to children starting school to discuss progress and any particular support needs. They should develop this further to work collaboratively across the early level to support continuity in the curriculum.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have positive relationships with parents. They communicate informally on a daily basis and share information through helpful noticeboards and newsletters. Practitioners use an e-portfolio to share with parents information on their child's achievements and learning. In addition, they provide parents with a helpful written report twice per year to inform them about their child's learning.
- Parents share their skills and talents by working with children to develop interests and skills in baking, dancing and playing musical instruments. Practitioners should increase opportunities for parents to engage meaningfully in their child's learning. They should use home-link resources more effectively to support families to learn together at home.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Children benefit from positive and supportive relationships with practitioners. Practitioners use praise and encouragement appropriately to support children to be confident and independent learners. Children share their ideas and opinions and know they influence decisions made in relation to learning experiences. They should work with primary school colleagues to increase ways to involve nursery children in the school.
- Almost all children are independent. They take care of their personal hygiene and dress themselves appropriately or with some adult support when getting ready to play outdoors. Children demonstrate skills of sharing and taking turns when playing board games, during group activities and when completing jigsaw puzzles.
- Practitioners are aware of children's health and wellbeing needs and understand the importance of wellbeing in supporting children to develop and learn. They reflect the national wellbeing indicators in their interactions with children and through the ethos of the nursery. This enables children to relate specific indicators to their daily lives such as keeping safe and healthy. Practitioners need to support children to develop an awareness of all of the indicators through developmentally appropriate experiences. In doing so, they should make meaningful links with the school values and children's rights.
- Practitioners have a shared understanding of expectations. They promote positive behaviour in a consistent, respectful and sensitive manner. As a result, children understand the nursery 'golden rules' and demonstrate this through positive relationships and growing friendships with other children. They play cooperatively in small groups and in pairs.
- Practitioners are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to legislative requirements for keeping children safe and meeting their care and learning needs. As children begin nursery, practitioners gather important information from parents on children's health and wellbeing and prior experiences. They use this information to meet children's needs and develop their interests further. Practitioners meet regularly with parents to update this information.
- The nursery has an inclusive ethos. Practitioners create a calm, welcoming environment for children, families and visitors. They value individuality and diversity and will challenge discrimination in a developmentally appropriate way. They need to increase children's awareness of the wider world as an integral part of the curriculum. Practitioners should celebrate diversity with children through appropriate resources and meaningful learning experiences. Where barriers to inclusion or learning may exist for children, practitioners ensure children receive the necessary support. They do this in partnership with parents and supporting agencies to enable children to participate in all aspects of the nursery.

3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They know about healthy foods and drinks and understand what they can do to keep healthy. Children recognise the importance of teamwork as they move equipment and transport materials during play. Children demonstrate spatial awareness and balance as a result of a specific programme using bikes. Almost all children demonstrate good fine motor skills as they use scissors, tools and investigate natural materials. Children are confident in helping to organise and prepare snack and undertake daily risk assessments for outdoors. Practitioners should support all children to develop leadership skills through a wider range of experiences within the nursery and school.
- In early language and literacy, most children are making very good progress. Children listen attentively to stories in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. They benefit from hearing stories during paired reading sessions with older pupils. Children retell with accuracy familiar stories using puppets and props. Almost all children are articulate and confidently share and describe their experiences. As a result of a communication programme, children are extending their vocabulary. They ask relevant questions to support their learning. Most older children recognise their name and explore letter sounds of familiar words. They mark make and draw with increasing detail. The majority of children form recognisable letters as they write their name and captions around the nursery. Children are ready to develop their early writing skills outdoors and through meaningful real-life contexts.
- Most children are making good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. They demonstrate skills in counting, ordering and recognising numerals through games, routines and when exploring natural and open-ended materials. A few children explore larger numbers. They name two-dimensional shapes and most are ready to explore three-dimensional objects. Children use mathematical language when making comparisons during block play. They should continue to develop skills in using money through real-life contexts to understand its value and purpose. The majority of children are ready to explore information handling.
- Children demonstrate creative skills as they explore a variety of art techniques such as modelling, collage and painting. They enjoy role-play and creatively use open-ended materials to represent familiar situations and act out stories. Children need to develop skills in using a wider range of digital technology.
- Practitioners capture and celebrate children's individual achievements through wall displays and within electronic journals. Parents are encouraged to share children's achievements from out with the setting. Children recognise their achievements and are proud to share them with

adults and their peers. Practitioners should build on this information to support the progression of children's skills. In addition, they should encourage children to contribute to the life of the school and wider community on a regular basis.

- Currently, there is not a clear record of children's progress over time across the curriculum. The headteacher should support practitioners to develop further the systems for tracking children's learning. In doing so, practitioners should use this information to provide levels of challenge to ensure children make the best possible progress. Practitioners are aware of potential barriers to learning. They implement effective strategies to support children to access the curriculum. Practitioners need to evaluate strategies used to make sure they continue to be effective in meeting children's learning needs.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.