

Summarised inspection findings

Cadzow Nursery School

South Lanarkshire Council

10 April 2018

Key contextual information

Cadzow Nursery School is in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council. The setting offers full day provision from 07.15 to 18.00. Almost all children attend full time sessions.

The setting has gone through a period of significant change of leadership and staff over the last few years.

The setting provides early learning and childcare for 18 babies aged under two years, 19 young children aged from two years to under three years of age and 40 older children aged from three years to those not yet attending primary school. A few children will be transitioning to P1 in August 2018.

There are four playrooms within the setting. Garden areas are allocated for each age range. There has been investment by the owners to provide good quality resources both in and outdoors.

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

- The setting is led by a skilled manager who is committed to developing the leadership skills of all practitioners within the setting. Local authority partnership meetings and cluster working support the manager. Senior practitioners are given appropriate responsibility to lead, mentor and support colleagues in playrooms. All practitioners are valued for their individual skills and experience. This is having a positive impact on their confidence and morale. Leadership is developing at all levels with practitioners taking increasing responsibility for aspects of the setting including leading improvement plan priorities. There is scope to increase children's leadership responsibilities to ensure they play the role they are capable of in the leadership of change within the setting.
- There is an established vision alongside a set of values and aims for the setting. When this is next reviewed, the manager plans to include all stakeholders. As discussed, it should reflect the work of the setting as it expands and continues on its improvement journey.
- Practitioners know individual children and families very well. They work effectively as a team and provide positive role models to children. Practitioners are committed to all children achieving their potential.
- Practitioners are motivated and enthusiastic in their work. The manager encourages and supports practitioners to participate in professional learning in early learning and childcare. Practitioners value planned opportunities to engage with colleagues from other settings.

During the inspection, practitioners engaged well with inspectors to develop their understanding and make improvements. The impact of training to support the setting's journey of improvement should now be formally monitored and evaluated.

- National and local guidance is used to enable the manager and practitioners to create an improvement plan. The current improvement plan has appropriate targets identified, which are leading to positive developments. These can be observed in the daily work of the setting. As planned, the setting should fully implement the national self-evaluation framework and guidance to support and drive further improvement. Parents and children should now be involved in evaluating the work of the setting. A more rigorous system to measure the impact of change needs to be developed.

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

- Across the setting, there is a welcoming ethos and culture where all children are treated and valued as individuals. Relationships between children, practitioners and families are a strong feature of the setting. This is resulting in all children feeling safe and secure within their playrooms.
- Children under two years of age are very sensitively supported by caring practitioners. Flexible and responsive routines allow practitioners to carefully address the needs of each child. Through this, children are gaining in confidence in exploring a range of resources, including treasure baskets and activities based on sensory exploratory play.
- In the playroom for children aged 2-3 years, practitioners know each child well and provide appropriate experiences. Children are familiar with their daily routines and most engage well in their play both indoors and in their outdoor area. Resources allow children the opportunity to learn and investigate and through play.
- Children aged 3-5 years are polite and are enjoying their time at nursery. They have very positive relationships with adults and have formed friendships groups. They make choices about where they want to play, accessing a range of appropriate resources to promote investigation and inquiry skills. Practitioners are developing a greater understanding of child development. This is having a positive impact on the quality of children's experiences. However, they now need to raise their expectations for children's learning to ensure that children's experiences and activities offer children depth and challenge in their learning.
- Practitioners interact in a responsive way, which helps build individual children's confidence and self-esteem. There is a good level of engagement across the session with most children demonstrating commitment to complete chosen tasks. A few children would benefit from further support and challenge from practitioners to help them to develop their levels of concentration in play.
- There are some good examples of practitioners using questions appropriately to support children to extend their thinking. Following on from a 'castle building' activity in the construction area, practitioners responded positively to children's requests for additional information and resources to support their ideas in play. Positively over the course of the inspection, this context was observed to provide an opportunity for children to revisit and build on their prior learning and interest.
- Practitioners are developing consultation strategies with children to support choice in learning. With increasing confidence, children offer their ideas and help practitioners to plan some activities. Through this, practitioners are responsive to children's interests and plan a range of

interesting experiences to support learning. These are recorded in floor books to provide evidence of the activities children have been involved in overtime. This practice could be built upon to ensure children understand the key role they play in directing their learning.

- Practitioners make observations of children at play and can talk about their progress. They recognise that their observations and knowledge of children need to be recorded more consistently and robustly to provide clearer next steps for children in their learning.
- The manager has recently introduced systems to support the tracking of children's progress through care plans, learning folders and e-learning journals. These now need to be streamlined to create a detailed profile of the child as a learner, to identify clearly the progress made and plan for future learning. As this progresses, children will benefit from having focussed conversations about their progress. This will help them to identify what they are good at and help them to understand their next steps in learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Across the setting, new approaches to planning for children's learning takes account of national guidance. Increasingly, practitioners are becoming more confident with these new processes. For younger children, learning is based on Pre-Birth to Three guidance and responsive care. For older children, practitioners make increasing use of the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence to plan for children's learning.
- For most children, the indoor and outdoor learning environments, resources and planned learning activities are ensuring that their experiences are well-matched to their individual needs. A curriculum rationale would support practitioners further to ensure learning experiences provide children with appropriate depth, choice, challenge and progression in children's learning. Further work is needed to plan more effective learning experiences for children in literacy and numeracy.
- During the inspection, we recognised the improvements the owner has made to the learning environment to be responsive to the changing needs and interests of the children. All children and practitioners eagerly await the opening of a new extension to the building. This will support enhanced learning experiences. As part of the improvements, the outdoor play areas have undergone development to provide children with more opportunities to explore and learn in different environments. Children aged 2-3 years have free access to their outdoor area on a daily basis to develop a variety of skills including physical, investigative and creative. The bespoke 'balcony' outdoor area for children aged 3-5 years offers children the potential for interesting and meaningful play and learning. As outdoor learning develops further, care should be taken to ensure maximum free-flow access over sessions for older children.

2.7 Partnerships : Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- The majority of parents report that their children are making good progress and enjoy being at the setting. Parents who met with Inspectors spoke highly of the welcoming atmosphere and positive relationships they have with the manager and practitioners. Most parents are satisfied with the setting and would recommend it to other parents.
- Information is shared with parents in both formal and informal ways. Parents value the newsletters and social media posts, which keep them informed of planned activities and current events. Practitioners regularly update e-learning journals to reflect children's progress. There is scope to increase parental contributions to these journals sharing children's successes and achievements from home.
- The setting involves children in the local community. Practitioners make good use of a range of facilities to support and motivate children in their learning. Regular visits to local charity shops to purchase real resources for the setting are helping the children to be aware of using money and raising awareness of skills for life.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The setting 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion **very 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

- There is a strong focus within the setting on the wellbeing and inclusion of children and families. Practitioners recognise the central importance of relationships in supporting children's social and emotional wellbeing. Children are greeted warmly and made to feel very welcome. Building caring, respectful and supportive relationships with families secures a partnership approach and a sense of community.
- Practitioners have a shared understanding of the wellbeing indicators of Getting it right for every child. They recognise the importance of their role in supporting children's health and wellbeing. Wellbeing characters created by the 3-5 year old children with practitioners are enabling them to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included. Children use these to describe their feelings and experiences in real-life contexts. As planned, the expansion of this initiative across the setting will be a positive next step alongside the inclusion of children in any further developments. Consideration should be given to making links with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Within the setting, there is a clear focus on supporting children to build relationships with others. Practitioners use the wellbeing characters to support positive behaviour which is promoted throughout the setting. Most children play together cooperatively and respectfully. When required, practitioners intervene to support children with their behaviour in a way that builds trust and understanding.
- Practitioners are aware of statutory requirements and their professional responsibility in fulfilling them. They keep up to date with important developments in early learning and childcare. There is a full range of relevant up to date policies and procedures, which clearly outline the expectations of the setting and are included in a welcome pack for new practitioners.
- Personal care plans incorporating the wellbeing indicators are in place for all children and regularly updated. Where children require additional support with their learning, the manager and practitioners are proactive in seeking support and making links with external agencies. This helps to support children's overall learning and development and secure positive outcomes for families.
- Children and families are supported in a way that encourages participation and promotes inclusion. Practitioners have a very good understanding of the individual circumstances of children and use this knowledge to support them in their learning. There is a clear focus on listening to the ideas and views of children.

- Practitioners have a good understanding of their responsibility to promote inclusion and equality through their interactions with families. As planned, practitioners should continue with this work to expand children’s awareness of equality and diversity.

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

- On the information gathered from all inspection activities, it is clear that children across the setting are making good progress over time that reflects their age and stage of development. To ensure all children make the very best progress they are capable of, practitioners now need to build consistently on what children already know and have achieved within the setting and outwith. Building on the positive examples evidenced, children could play a greater leadership role in the setting.
- Strong relationships between practitioners, and the youngest children, under two years of age, and their families ensure that children are settled, happy and thriving. The children are curious and motivated by the interesting range of real objects, natural resources and developmentally appropriate toys on offer in their playrooms. Practitioners skilfully support them to access the cosy book areas, home corner and sensory area. Practitioners maximise opportunities to use songs, rhymes and stories to develop children's vocabulary and listening skills. Children join in enthusiastically, developing their confidence and extending their vocalisations through these joyful experiences. Most children find particular pleasure in well-planned experiences that enable them to explore materials using all of their senses.
- Children aged 2-3 years benefit from positive relationships with practitioners and are developing their confidence and independence. They communicate well with each other and practitioners. Most are building their vocabulary and learning to talk in short sentences. Practitioners use their knowledge of schemas well to support children's social, emotional and physical skills. Children learn about number, colour and shape through their play experiences indoors and out. Malleable materials and other sensory activities are enabling a few children to develop early mark-making skills.
- Children aged 3-5 years are making good progress in communication and early language. Practitioners provide good support to develop children's listening and talking skills. Children communicate well with each other and engage in conversations with their friends and adults. Almost all enjoy looking at books for information and listening to stories being read by an adult. A few demonstrated knowledge of their favourite authors and enjoyed retelling familiar stories. Most children are at an early stage of learning about rhyme and letter sounds. Activities to promote mark-making allow children to have a developing understanding that writing has a purpose. However, there are missed opportunities to develop children's literacy skills in real-life contexts across areas of the playrooms and outdoors. Practitioners should provide ways in which these can be developed further.

- Children are making good progress in developing their skills in early mathematics and numeracy. In planned activities and daily routines, they are developing good one-to-one correspondence skills and developing an understanding that numbers represent quantities. A few of the older children confidently count up to 20 and beyond, and were observed to recognise numerals on dials and scales during a weighing activity. Through exploration of an interesting range of materials, children have good opportunities to develop early mathematical concepts. Overall, as planned, practitioners should continue to provide a challenging range of experiences for children to develop and use skills in numeracy and mathematics across learning.
- There is a strong focus on health and wellbeing and as result almost all children are making good progress in this area. They play and work independently across the learning environment and are developing good self-help skills. They dress themselves to go outside, help themselves to snack and are learning the rules of personal hygiene. Most children are developing their understanding of the feelings of others and are caring towards each other.
- Regular access to Cadzow Glen has led to children developing strong teamwork and exploration skills. They have a very good awareness of risk and can apply this effectively in outdoor learning contexts. Children demonstrate knowledge of changing seasons and changes in the environments.
- Children show an enthusiasm for technologies and show skill in using woodwork tools to create models and construction materials to represent their ideas. They make some use of tablets and a range of digital technologies to extend their learning. However, digital learning needs to be used across a wider range of experiences to help children develop their skills both inside and outside.
- Practitioners use praise effectively to recognise children's efforts and achievements. Children are successful, confident and able to exercise responsibility. Their achievements outwith the setting are valued and contribute to the overall picture of each child's progress. This encourages a positive sense of self-esteem.

Setting choice of QI: 2.6 Transitions

- Quality of support for children and their families
 - Collaborative planning and delivery
 - Continuity and progression in learning
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- Practitioners recognise the importance of building relationships with children and parents during the transition process. Children and families visit the setting prior to starting. This arrangement is flexible and adapted to suit the needs of children and families. Key workers spend time with parents and gather important information about children's interests, preferences, their care and medical needs. This enables children to make a positive start in the setting and ensures their needs are met. Parents spoken to during the inspection commented that their child's introduction to the setting had been handled sensitively and was a positive experience.
 - Transitions across the setting are planned along with parents to meet the needs of individual children. Parents and children have opportunities to visit new playrooms and meet new adults and peers as part of the transition process. Key workers take very good account of the different needs and circumstances of each child and family. They use transition sheets effectively to record and share useful information relating to children's care, development and learning with the new key worker. Children who require additional support have enhanced transition arrangements planned in consultation with families and other relevant professionals. Practitioners support children who attend more than one setting well, by establishing communication to share relevant information.
 - Links have been established with the range of schools that children may attend. Teachers from those schools visit the setting to support smooth transitions for the children. Practitioners create a 'Big Book of Transitions' with the children, which helps them talk about their new school and share their experiences of induction activities such as meeting buddies or trying a school lunch. The manager is proactive in sharing information on children's progress with primary school staff before and after transitions. There is scope, working with local schools and the local authority, to support the development of transitions in learning across the early level with an emphasis on continuity and progression.

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.