

# Summarised inspection findings

**Fyvie School Nursery Class**

Aberdeenshire Council

27 August 2024

## Key contextual information

Fyvie Nursery class is part of Fyvie Primary School in Aberdeenshire. Children attend the nursery from the village of Fyvie and the surrounding rural areas. The nursery has one large playroom, one smaller room, along with free flow access to their own outdoor garden. Additionally, the nursery makes use of access to the primary school facilities and extensive grounds. The nursery offers 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (ELC) for children aged from two years old until starting primary school. The nursery is registered to take a maximum of 32 children at any one time. At the time of the inspection, 26 children were on the roll, all aged over three years old. The nursery is open Monday to Friday during term-time, between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm. Children access their hours during different attendance patterns over the week.

The headteacher has overall lead responsibility for the nursery, along with the primary school. A peripatetic Early Years Senior Practitioner (EYSP) who shares her time with another ELC setting, has delegated responsibility for the ELC. Daily responsibility is shared with a Lead Early Years Practitioner (LEYP). In the past two years the nursery has experienced periods of change at headteacher and Lead Early Practitioner Level.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

**satisfactory**

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

- Senior leaders and practitioners reinforce the nursery values of 'play, learn and grow together' throughout daily life in the nursery and in their interactions with children and families. Children are becoming more aware of the values, through, for example, age-appropriate discussions in relation to sharing. As identified by senior leaders, practitioners should continue to share the values in meaningful and relevant ways with all children, in order for these to become embedded.
- Practitioners undertake a variety of helpful professional learning activities, for example in signing, in order to aid communication with children. Senior leaders carry out annual professional reviews with practitioners. Practitioners are reflective and are developing various leadership roles across the nursery. These include, for example, 'champion' responsibilities for managing and developing areas within the playroom or outdoors. As identified by senior leaders, leadership of change at all levels is at a developing stage and has been impacted by periods of staff absence over the last two years. Senior leaders need to review how practitioners are fully involved in the change process. Practitioners should now lead and take forward improvements more formally, linking clearly to the nursery improvement and action plans. The practitioner team would welcome reviving opportunities to visit other settings, to support a more outward focus.
- Children have a few leadership responsibilities, including, for example, setting up for nursery lunch in the school dinner hall. Children are ready to take on more leadership roles, for example, by linking with pupil leadership groups in the primary stages.

- Senior leaders know the overall strengths and areas of development for the nursery. The nursery self-evaluation and action plans have identified appropriate nursery priorities, such as planning, observations and increased opportunities for literacy and numeracy. There is now a need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all senior leaders, in order to support continuous improvements in practice. The headteacher and senior leaders should ensure that quality assurance activities, such as observing practice in the nursery, take place routinely on a formal basis. There is a need for more structured monitoring and evaluating the impact of changes. This will help the practitioner team to evidence the differences changes and improvements are making to children's experiences and outcomes.

## 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

- Children are happy, settled and confident. They enjoy their learning experiences. Relationships across the nursery are positive. Children demonstrate independence in their play, making choices about where they want to play and what resources will help them. Most children share resources and turn take in a developmentally appropriate manner. Practitioners use skilful, nurturing approaches to support children to regulate their behaviour. Children are engaged and motivated throughout purposeful learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors.
- Children are listened to, and their views are respected, for example, they are involved in the risk assessment of outdoor play and garden development. This is helping children to take ownership of aspects of their learning and deepen their knowledge. A few children are now ready to take on an enhanced role in leading and reflecting on their own learning. This will allow them to become more independent in their learning and sustain their interests.
- Most practitioners use effective questioning and timely interactions to extend children's knowledge and understanding, linking to their real-life experiences. As planned, practitioners should continue to develop their use of open-ended and skilful questioning to maximise deeper learning in activities and experiences.
- Practitioners continue to develop the stimulating indoor and outdoor environments to offer children a wide range of experiences supporting exploration, creativity and curiosity. Children benefit from enhancing their learning in the local community, for example, visiting the 'Jannie's Garden' and trips to the 'wee woods'. Children use a variety of digital technologies such as tablets and programmable toys in aspects of their learning. Practitioners could promote further the use of digital technologies to enhance children's learning.
- Practitioners use a range of assessment information effectively. They observe children and record information about their learning regularly in online learning journals and wall displays. Parents are encouraged to share learning from home. This shared contribution supports practitioners well to capture significant learning. Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners to identify specific next steps in children's learning.
- Practitioners' planning methods take good account of the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Practitioners work well together to plan a blend of intentional and responsive experiences which are developmentally appropriate and of a high quality. Practitioners' planning captures core learning, skills, experiences, spaces, and interactions well. Practitioners take account of children's individual learning styles, interests and their age and stage of development. Children's prior learning is recognised and built upon.

- Practitioners track children's progress in key areas using developmental milestones across the early level. Senior leaders have recently introduced a new online system to monitor and track children's progress in literacy, with plans to develop this further. Senior leaders should continue to develop their approaches to tracking children's progress across the curriculum, involving parents further in target setting for their children.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners implement the curriculum through play effectively using CfE experiences and outcomes. The curriculum is underpinned by nursery values. Practitioners offer children rich learning opportunities across the curriculum both indoors and outdoors. Practitioners promote strong nurturing attachments for children in their care.
- Practitioners use the local environment well to enhance children's learning through exploring the school garden and nearby woods. Children are developing skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing through real-life experiences. Practitioners ensure that literacy and numeracy experiences permeate across all areas of the setting. Through learning experiences, practitioners promote children's curiosity, inquiry, and creativity.
- Practitioners and staff work together to create a helpful programme of activities for transition into P1. This includes the P1 teacher uploading information to the child's learning journals. Practitioners could now consider how to work more closely with P1 teachers throughout the year, to enhance continuity of learning for children across the early level.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners encourage parents to be involved in the nursery through a variety of approaches. For example, parents join 'stay and play' sessions. These sessions help parents to engage in their child's learning and share in their experiences. As planned, senior leaders and practitioners should continue to extend how they involve parents in their child's learning experiences.
- Practitioners use an online platform well to share children's experiences, learning and progress with parents. Practitioners could now consider how they involve parents in reviewing their child's learning journal on a more regular basis within the nursery. This would support parents to be more fully informed about their child's learning and progress.
- A few parents are members of the school Parent Council supporting the nursery, including by fundraising, to enhance children's experiences.

## 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

- As a result of positive, caring and nurturing interactions from the practitioner team, almost all children settle quickly and appear safe and secure. Children are kind and respectful to their peers, demonstrating age-appropriate behaviour.
- Senior leaders and practitioners prioritise the wellbeing of all children. Children are gaining confidence in engaging with the wellbeing indicators through, for example, the use of puppets and characters. Practitioners use various strategies effectively to support children in understanding and regulating their emotions. Through this, almost all children show that they are learning to manage their own emotions and recognise how others feel. Practitioners are developing their use of the language of children's rights. As planned, practitioners should continue to embed children's knowledge of what the wellbeing indicators mean to them, linking this to their work on children's rights.
- Children engage in an enjoyable lunch routine in the school dinner hall. Practitioners sit with children and engage in social conversation, allowing children the opportunity to enjoy their food in a calm manner. Children develop their leadership skills through, for example, helping prepare nursery snack and setting up for lunches in the school dinner hall. As a result, they are becoming increasingly independent as they pour their own water and milk.
- Almost all children enjoy learning and playing in the outdoor area, school grounds and local woods, where children can explore, develop their curiosity and have fun. Children's outdoor learning experiences help to support their wellbeing, resilience and confidence well.
- Senior leaders and practitioners continue to develop their understanding in terms of fulfilling their statutory duties. Senior leaders need to ensure they are fully aware of all requirements for notifiable events to the Care Inspectorate.
- Senior leaders and practitioners know their children and families well and aim to do their best to meet their needs. Senior leaders are proactive at seeking support from outside agencies. They create appropriate individual education plans for children with barriers to learning, involving parents and partners throughout the process. Children have an 'all about me' personal plan, which includes targets for learning. Senior leaders need to ensure that all personal plans are reviewed with and signed by parents, at least twice a year.
- Senior leaders and practitioners promote inclusion and equality well throughout the setting. They treat children, families and visitors with respect. Practitioners should continue to develop ways to help children understand diversity in meaningful and relevant contexts.

### 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

- Children's progress in communication and early language is good. Almost all children are confident asking questions, following instructions, and listen well during group activities. Children benefit from an environment which is rich in literacy opportunities. Most children are starting to scribe their own name, including using capital letters appropriately. They recognise print in the environment and are beginning to sound out letters. Children would benefit from continued support in developing mark making and pre-writing skills across their learning.
- Children's progress in mathematics is good. Most children are using numbers confidently in their play. Most children use money, shapes, colours, and measurement using appropriate mathematical language. A few children are recognising numbers in their environment and using numbers throughout play experiences, confidently counting to 10 and beyond. Children enjoy using numbers during real life experiences. This includes, for example, counting fruit at snack and recording tally marks for birds in the garden. A few children would benefit from additional challenge to develop their mathematical skills.
- The ethos of the nursery and approaches used by practitioners results in children making very good progress in health and wellbeing. Children confidently access a range of equipment outdoors, including, for example, the swing. Children's gross motor skills are being developed well through accessing the school gym hall and community spaces. Children participate calmly in yoga/mindfulness sessions. A few children talk enthusiastically about growing their own healthy food and eating it for snack. Almost all children are independent at lunchtime and getting themselves ready for outdoor play.
- Most children are making good progress over time. They are enthusiastic and motivated learners who confidently embrace new experiences. Children demonstrate curiosity and creativity across the setting, particularly in the purposeful outdoor learning environment, which offers a wide range of stimulating resources. This includes the mud kitchen, sensory garden, sand play and water wall. Practitioners capture children's progress well through observations, learning journals and use of an early level tracker. Practitioners should continue to identify children's significant learning, next steps and how these are built upon, to support children to make further progress.
- Practitioners use praise well and make visible children's achievements throughout the nursery. They encourage parents to share achievements from home within learning journals.

- Practitioners have a detailed understanding of children, families and the local community. They provide support to families sensitively through a range of initiatives, for example, providing breakfast, pre-loved clothing, fruit and other foods. Practitioners should continue to gather and use a range of data effectively to improve outcomes for children and families. This will help to inform strategies and interventions to further reduce barriers to learning.

## 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.