

Summarised inspection findings

Greenhills Primary School Nursery Class

South Lanarkshire Council

30 April 2024

Key contextual information

Greenhills Nursery Class is registered with the Care Inspectorate to accommodate 54 children at any one time. The nursery is accommodated in one large playroom within Greenhills Primary School. Children access a secure outdoor space. Currently there are 31 children on the roll aged three to those not yet attending school. The nursery provides 1140 hours over 38 weeks for children who all attend on a full-time basis from 09.00 to 15.00. Parents can supplement funded hours to follow working patterns. Currently, no parents are doing so. Almost all children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data zones 2 and 3.

The nursery is managed on an operational day-to-day basis by the early years team leader under the management of the depute headteacher who took up post in August 2023. The headteacher has overall leadership responsibility for the nursery. Other staffing includes eight early years practitioners and an early years support worker. A visiting equity and excellence lead also supports the nursery. There have been a few recent changes in staffing.

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 headteacher, depute headteacher and all staff have a shared vision for the nursery which takes appropriate account of the school values of 'achieve, believe and create'. They revise these regularly with staff, parents/carers and children. Children's increasing awareness of their rights is starting to inform the vision, values and aims. Practitioners use appropriately Getting it Right for Every Child in developing these.
- In her short time in post, the depute headteacher has gained practitioners' respect. She works well with the early years team leader who effectively manages the nursery on a day-to-day basis. Nursery staff are reflective and engage in ongoing self-evaluation which aids improvements. Practitioners work very well with each other, sharing responsibility for making changes to improve provision. They contribute well to weekly meetings when reviewing the impact of planning on children's learning and progress. The early years team leader ensures that all staff feel valued, are included in decision-making, and contribute to change and improvement. Visiting staff engage in useful professional dialogue with the team. They offer relevant suggestions and ideas on how to make changes which have a positive impact for children. Practitioners would benefit from observing each other and discussing good practice.
- Together with the team, the depute headteacher and the early years team leader track and monitor children's progress and take appropriate actions to help children achieve. Collaborating with practitioners, the early years team leader identifies strengths and areas for nursery development. They refer to national and local guidance as well as current thinking, including from those practitioners undergoing national qualifications, to manage change.

They now need to continue to use a range of national guidance as they continue to develop provision.

- Practitioners engage in relevant professional learning which supports their own practice, including nationally recognised qualifications. All of this helps them to extend their knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and develop. Staff enjoy leading and supporting changes which result in better experiences for children. Those who do not yet have lead roles are keen and enthusiastic to do so. They enjoy leading initiatives and are being successful in refining and improving children's experiences in planning, outdoor learning, literacy and community links. Nursery improvement priorities make a positive difference. Staff recognise that children could be more involved in leading change and influencing practice. They are addressing this correctly through developments related to increasing the 'child's voice'.
- The early years team leader works hard to engage parents/carers through a parent committee which meets monthly. Senior leaders should continue to develop ways of involving parents/carers in nursery improvement.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- Almost all children are highly motivated and engage very well with each other and adults. Almost all enjoy taking responsibility and being independent learners. They make choices with confidence and are involved increasingly in making decisions and sharing personal interests. Almost all children like exploring and investigating the impressive range of experiences which they access both indoors and outdoors, including in the forest area. Their behaviour is positive as a result of engaging in relevant experiences which motivate them. A few children are ready to take on greater challenges in their learning.
- Practitioners have established exciting learning environments. They have nurturing relationships with children, including those who recently started in the setting. Practitioners ensure that the quality of children's play is not interrupted by unnecessary routines. All practitioners interact very well with children and enthusiastically support their learning. They encourage children to try new and varied experiences. The team engage sensitively with those children who are less confident or find it difficult to express themselves. Practitioners support inquisitive children to explore their surroundings, including when outdoors or when visiting in the local community. All practitioners take increased account of children's interests and opinions. They use this information well for children's learning and development. Practitioners question children skilfully to assess what they know and to extend learning.
- Practitioners regularly observe and record children's learning experiences. They use this information well to plan learning, including individual next steps for children. Practitioners share information appropriately with parents/carers at meetings and on an online learning platform with ideas to support what children could learn next. They know children very well and provide effective targeted support for those who require this. They now need to build their skills and confidence when planning to extend children's learning, ensuring that they maximise opportunities to do this. Children are not yet involved fully in developing their learning journeys. However, practitioners are addressing this and recognise the benefits of children being more involved in learning journals, including discussing next steps.
- Practitioners are working very well together to improve how they plan. They successfully achieve an appropriate balance between adult-led, adult-initiated and child-led experiences. Their plans take good account of children's interests and Curriculum for Excellence with clear information on when children achieve success. The team meet regularly to reflect on plans and activities, sharing responsibility across the playroom. This helps to ensure that planning supports children's progress. Practitioners capture effectively significant learning and identify relevant next steps for all children. They need to ensure children's next steps continue to be learning focused, reflecting on planned skills.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners use national and local guidance well when taking forward learning pathways. They ensure that school aims, and values are central when planning and providing children with varied and interesting experiences and activities. Practitioners use children's interests appropriately to inform areas of focus. They understand the importance of parental partnership and other community links to enhance children's curricular experiences and awareness of their surroundings.
- Practitioners pay good attention to local contexts when designing learning pathways. They plan and deliver relevant opportunities which promote children's skills in communication and early language and early mathematics. The team plan interesting experiences in other curricular areas, including science, technology and expressive arts. They now need to ensure that the experiences they offer give children appropriate depth and challenge to develop their skills progressively.
- Practitioners provide children with an attractive and nurturing learning environment which they can explore and investigate both in and out of doors. This helps children enjoy a breadth and range of opportunities to be creative.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Parents/carers receive helpful information on their children's learning and progress through learning journals, curricular evenings and reports. They can engage with their children in the nursery playroom through twice-yearly 'stay and play' sessions. There is scope to involve parents/carers more in the playroom. Practitioners work hard to engage parents/carers in supporting their children's learning at home. Parents/carers have commented favourably that activities such as 'stay and play', story sacks, and the lending library benefit their children's learning.
- Parents/carers are represented appropriately on the Parent Council. Practitioners have monthly meetings with a parent committee where parents/carers can be kept up to date with nursery activities. They engage appropriately with parents/carers daily at pick up and drop off times. Parents/carers are consulted about their thoughts on the nursery, including events. Parents/carers have positive relationships with the team who also offer helpful advice when needed. Staff help parents/carers to access other community partners, including speech and language therapists, which aids their children's learning. Practitioners recognise the need to continue to build strong and successful partnerships with parents/carers which benefit the children.

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

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

- Children thrive in the safe nursery environment where they are included and enjoy nurturing relationships with staff. Children settle well into nursery, resulting in them being secure. Practitioners are welcoming to children and their families at the start and end of sessions. They have appropriate arrangements in place when children first begin nursery. Children are supported effectively to move to P1 through helpful transition arrangements which develop their confidence and familiarity in the new classroom. Their use of the gym hall, dining facility and other school resources mean that children know their way around the school building.
- Almost all children are developing an awareness of the meaning of wellbeing indicators through different curricular experiences and through practitioners' sensitive interactions. Children understand how to keep themselves safe and are developing an awareness of how to help others be safe. Children are developing independence and social skills through staff's support. They enjoy social times with friends and adults. Practitioners use visuals to engage a few children to communicate with others. A few younger children need continued encouragement from adults to develop further their speech and language at social times.
- Children enjoy free flow play which promotes their independence skills and confidence in making decisions. Children's wellbeing is very well supported. They enjoy spending time in quiet areas and spaces when they want to be on their own. Children's emotional and physical wellbeing is enhanced through daily play outdoors and when using the gym hall. Practitioners encourage children appropriately to lead and risk assess their outdoor learning.
- Children are developing important skills for learning, life and the world of work, including food preparation and caring for others. They take responsibility for equality and fairness through engaging in supportive discussions with other children to resolve any differences which may occur during play. Children are beginning to develop an awareness of their rights through experiences linked to rights-based work. They now need to have more leadership roles and gain an understanding of the skills they are developing when undertaking these.
- All practitioners are aware of statutory requirements in relation to early learning and childcare, including their roles in helping to keep children safe and protected from harm. They undertake appropriate child protection training. Their wellbeing observations help them to identify and plan appropriate supports, including with partner agencies, for specific children and families. The team's staged intervention approaches are effective in meeting children's needs. Children have additional support plans (ASPs) which practitioners use appropriately to address specific care and health needs. Moving forward, practitioners should review and reduce the number of targets in children's ASPs to help them better meet specific needs.

3.2 Securing children's progress

very 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

- Almost all children make very good progress in early language and communication. They listen very well to adults. Almost all children enjoy recognising sounds and are interested in books and sharing stories. Most children use pictures to 'read' information, including from written instructions. They recognise letters, familiar words and accurately interpret information from environmental print. Most children are developing good early writing skills. They write their name, and a few write words with confidence. Others try 'writing' sentences. A few older children need to continue to develop skills in communication and early language. However, practitioners have added significant value, resulting in children making very good progress since starting nursery.
- Almost all children make very good progress in mathematics. Children match, sort and count with confidence groups of objects and colours. They accurately identify two-dimensional shapes. They use mathematical language correctly when selecting and comparing toys and materials. Children explore positional language with practitioners' support. They recognise numbers accurately in everyday routines. Children need to continue to develop skills in understanding number in 'real-life' contexts, including handling money.
- Almost all children make very good progress in health and wellbeing. Those who require additional support make good progress towards personal targets. Almost all children have important skills in personal hygiene, including dressing appropriately for outdoors. Almost all know who to approach when they have concerns and are caring and considerate towards others. A few children need to continue to develop social skills when interacting with others.
- Almost all children make very good progress in health and wellbeing, communication, early language and mathematics. The team now need to gather and review information about children's progress in other curricular areas to maintain an accurate assessment of their progress over time.
- Children's achievements are celebrated effectively, including with parents/carers at assemblies and the wider school community. Children like achievements from home being displayed on the 'Proud Cloud' board and receiving certificates. They are developing responsibility, resilience and confidence through various achievements. Children are developing skills as global citizens through community links, including visits to the local residential home where children and residents engage together in relevant activities.

- Practitioners' interventions address challenges which children face. Children's progress in communication and early language is improving as a result, including through promoting children's learning at home. Individual children, including those who require additional support, are making better progress through practitioners' targeted interventions in speech and language. Practitioners need to continue to support children who are accessing an additional year in the setting to ensure they make suitable progress.

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.