

Summarised inspection findings

North Muirton Primary School Nursery Class

Perth and Kinross Council

24 March 2020

Key contextual information

North Muirton nursery class is located in a building in the grounds of North Muirton Primary School. The setting caters for children aged two to those not yet attending primary school. The setting can accommodate 32 children at any one time. The setting is in an early phase of providing 1140 hours. At the time of the inspection there were 49 children on the roll, including eight entitled two year olds. Eighteen children were accessing full days. There has been a number of staff changes over the last year.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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 aged two to three years have a quiet space to support them to settle when they arrive at the start of their session. Practitioners use wellbeing mascots to help children feel safe and secure. They have daily opportunities to access all areas across the nursery class however, this does not always meet their developmental needs. Practitioners should continue to review and reflect on the daily routine and experiences on offer for the youngest children.
- Overall, relationships across the nursery class are positive and, as a result, most children appear safe and secure. The majority of children are developing their confidence and independence skills well across the learning environment. For example, they engage in free flow play outdoors. The majority of children are beginning to form friendships with their peers and are learning to play cooperatively with others. A few children need support to help them to engage appropriately with their peers.
- The majority of children actively engage in learning through free, planned and spontaneous play opportunities. Practitioners have made positive changes to the indoor environment, which is beginning to support children's curiosity, enquiry and creativity. For example, the introduction of real life materials and open ended play is improving learning in the home corner. In order to deepen and extend children's learning further, practitioners should continue to review and develop the indoor and outdoor environment. In doing so, they should reflect on the current needs of all children, ensuring a range of rich and challenging learning opportunities are available. Practitioners need to support children to make purposeful use of the range of contexts and resources available. This is particularly relevant when new resources or contexts are added to the learning environment.
- Practitioners develop the learning environment to provide children with a variety of literacy and numeracy resources. However, children do not make full use of or engage well enough with these materials. The team needs to review and improve how the setting supports children to make the best possible progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Most practitioners interact with children in a sensitive and responsive manner however, they do not use effective questioning consistently well to support children's learning. There is scope for

practitioners to develop this further. Children have time and space to follow their interests. They enjoy learning through play, however this is not always purposeful or sustained for extended periods of time. Overall, children have the opportunity to join one adult-directed group experience daily. Practitioners need to review the balance of adult-directed and child-led learning experiences that are available across the full day. Children would benefit from engaging in more experiences, which are supported or led by an adult to enhance and extend their learning. This will require careful monitoring and planning to ensure children still have appropriate time to lead their own learning. Overall, practitioners do not provide sufficient digital technology to support children's learning.

- Practitioners are aware of children's individual needs and use observations and professional dialogue to inform judgements about children's progress. The nursery uses an online, digital sharing platform to capture increasingly descriptive observations of children's learning. As planned, practitioners should continue to develop and embed their approaches for recording observations to inform next steps in learning. Almost all parents engage with the online platform, enabling them to share learning at nursery and from home. Parents have daily dialogue with practitioners, regular learning updates on the application and twice-yearly formal meetings to discuss their child's progress and achievements. Practitioners should continue to explore further ways and opportunities to allow children to contribute and have greater ownership of their learning.
- Transitions into nursery for all children are sensitive and take good account of individual needs. Children moving on to school have a comprehensive transition programme which starts in term four. This supports their move from nursery and includes visits to the P1 classroom for story time, playground experience, buddies and teacher visits to nursery.
- Planning for children's learning takes good account of Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes, children's interests, targets and local authority developmental milestones information. Practitioners make use of local authority materials to track children's progress. They are also beginning to track literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to capture children's progress over time. This information contributes well to planning next steps. Fortnightly planning meetings led by the teacher and senior practitioner support all practitioners to contribute to planning. In order to maximise outcomes for all, planning, tracking and monitoring approaches should continue to be developed.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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.

3.2 Securing children's progress

weak

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 aged two to three years

- Children are mostly settled in their playroom and are becoming more independent in accessing and using resources. Children listen to adults and, with support, can put on their own jackets and shoes to go outside. Practitioners need to develop further children's ability to follow specific instructions. Their fine motor skills are developing well as they explore oats and utensils in a tray and manipulate playdough. A few children use appropriate vocabulary when interacting with familiar adults.

Children aged three years and over

- The majority of children can explain the benefits of healthy eating as they make positive choices at snack and lunch. Practitioners offer weekly cooking and baking activities, which allow children to develop an awareness of healthy eating in different and meaningful ways. A few children demonstrate well-developed fine motor skills as they use scissors, manipulate small resources, and knead dough for scones. Children benefit from their daily access to outdoors. In this context, the majority display their well-developed skills in running, jumping and climbing skills. The practitioner team needs to ensure that all children benefit from daily energetic play in the outdoor area to support each child to develop their physical skills and an understanding of the importance of physical activity for a healthy lifestyle.
- Children are beginning to have an understanding of the wellbeing indicators as they become familiar with the nursery wellbeing mascots. Practitioners need to develop further children's ability to make links between their experiences within and outwith the nursery and the relevant wellbeing indicators. Most children can identify different emotions they may be feeling as part of the 'daily emotion check-in'. The practitioner team should review how the 'daily check-in' is organised and develop further these approaches to ensure they have a positive impact on children.
- A few children, who experience barriers to their learning, receive significant adult support and can access a dedicated learning space in the setting. The senior leadership team (SLT), with support from the local authority as appropriate, need to review regularly such arrangements. This is necessary to ensure children develop friendships with their peers and to assist them to access a wider curriculum.
- Overall, children's progress in communication and language is satisfactory. The majority listen well for short periods of time during group activities. Many children need constant prompting by adults to listen and follow instructions during free play and during particular

activities such as tidy up time. A few children display appropriate subject specific-language as they play in imaginative play contexts. A few recall the new vocabulary they have been learning as part of their weekly 'sparkle word' sessions. Across the playroom, only a few children demonstrate an interest in mark-making. There is considerable need for children to develop their early writing skills across the setting. Only a few choose to engage independently with texts and books. A few children enjoy exploring a book about castles with a practitioner. The majority can identify the characters in their current 'book of the fortnight'. They recall and re-enact parts of the story well with puppets and wooden spoons. Overall, too many children are not making sufficient progress in communication and language.

- Overall, children are not making sufficient progress in numeracy and mathematics. A few children count naturally as part of their play and order numbers to 10 and beyond. The majority of children use appropriate mathematical vocabulary as they fill and empty containers. They use measuring tapes and rulers in their play, however, the majority do not yet understand how to use these in a meaningful way. Overall, the majority of children do not display an appropriate understanding of the purpose of money, time and how to interpret and display data.
- Practitioners track and record children's progress in meeting developmental milestones three times per year. This is beginning to show that the majority of children are making progress over time in some aspects of their learning. This session, the SLT are developing new approaches to track children's progress across literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This is at too early a stage of development to demonstrate children's continuous progress across these areas.
- Practitioners celebrate children's achievements through praise and at times, positive encouragement. A few children's individual successes are recognised and celebrated at weekly 'together time'. They are proud of the certificates they receive to take home. Children are developing a sense of responsibility as they take on leadership roles such as 'lunch helper'. There is scope to develop this further. Children are learning to recognise when they are successful in different ways and are encouraged to display their own artwork in the nursery's art gallery. Children and parents make use of the new online sharing platform to share children's successes and contribute achievements from home.
- Practitioners take a proactive approach to ensuring appropriate children have access to 1140 hours. They provide additional support in learning for individuals and groups of learners, which takes account of potential barriers. This is helping children to make better progress in learning. When required, they work well with partners to provide support to children. All children have opportunities to participate in a wide range of funded trips and special events. This is enabling them to gain a greater understanding of the world around them.

1. Quality of care and support

Parents and carers were actively encouraged to be part of the nursery. We found strong relationships had been formed through a welcoming and supportive environment. Staff provided opportunities for children and significant adults to take part in tailored sessions, such as baking and rhyme time, to enhance children's outcomes and develop new skills. Staff told us that feedback they had gathered from parents, showed that this had a positive impact on children's experiences both at nursery and at home. We found staff to be passionate and dedicated to parental involvement, enabling an inclusive ethos within the service.

During the inspection, children were seen to be familiar with the rhythm and routines of the nursery. We found that they were able to engage with a good balance of organised and freely chosen play. Staff were able to demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs and were confident in explaining strategies that were in place to support them. On occasions, we found opportunities were missed to ensure all children were engaged and included throughout the day. We discussed the importance of staff maintaining a responsive approach to ensure children's care is right for them.

Staff told us they were developing their approach to emotional resilience to support children's wellbeing. Children were encouraged to identify how they were feeling at the beginning of their session. We found that staff were not consistent in checking back in with children to see if their emotional state had changed or improved. We would encourage this to be further developed to ensure children feel listened to and are appropriately supported to manage their emotions. SHANARRI animals had also been introduced to enhance children's understanding of their wellbeing. We recognised that this was in the early stages of development and would encourage staff to continue to promote the use of these throughout the sessions.

Children were given opportunities to take part in various learning activities every day. We discussed the importance of these experiences being child centred, ensuring that they were purposeful and meaningful to the individual child. We asked the service to review this to ensure children are not sitting for prolonged periods of time when they could be engaged in self-directed play which stimulates their natural curiosities.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

2. Quality of environment

Children's play and learning was promoted through access to a wide range of toys and games. Dedicated areas throughout the nursery were provided to enable children to develop skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving. At times, children were seen to be wandering around the nursery, missing out on opportunities for play and learning. Staff should monitor the use of the environment to ensure children are suitably engaged and stimulated throughout their day.

Children had regular access to outdoors every day. Children were encouraged to be independent when getting ready to go outdoors. Staff told us they had worked with parents to develop the outdoor area, including the extension of loose parts play. During the inspection, we saw children splashing in puddles and enjoying the space available to them.

Children were able to take part in daily risk assessment which encouraged them to identify potential hazards within the environment. We discussed how this could be further developed so

that children are included in making informed choices and decisions about risks within their play and experiences. Staff should be confident in how they support children to manage their own risks.

Children were provided with a range of opportunities to access their wider community. A variety of trips were organised to enhance children's experiences and outcomes. Staff told us that parents spoke highly of these opportunities, enabling them to broaden their children's experiences. Children were included in local community groups which developed their social skills and enabled them to create friendships.

Children were supported to have a calm, unhurried lunch experience. Staff provided various levels of support for children, depending on their age and stage of development, in a way that was right for them. Children were provided with some opportunities to be responsible through helper roles, enabling them to feel trusted and valued.

Accidents and incidents were promptly recorded by staff and shared with parents. We highlighted how staff should use the recorded information to best meet the needs of the children in a safe and effective way.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

3. Quality of staffing

Parents and carers told us they found the staff team to be open and approachable. This allowed important information to be shared regularly between staff and parents. We found that this enabled children's needs to be identified and supported within the service.

Staff were confident in discussing their continuous professional development, such as play on pedals and food hygiene. Staff told us they were able to share learning with others within their team during regular staff meetings. We discussed the importance of reviewing the needs of children within the service and ensuring staff's training enhances children's experiences.

Leadership roles were used within the service to build on children's experiences. Staff were able to draw on their strengths and interests within areas such as outdoor learning and parental engagement. We found staff to be passionate and enthusiastic to share their progress and how they feel this has impacted positively on children and families using the service.

Children were able to take part in self-directed play. However, at times we saw missed opportunities to extend children's learning experiences. We asked the service to review interactions during this time to ensure staff are confident in facilitating children's play and enhance outcomes.

At times, staff were able to demonstrate warm, respectful interactions that resulted in children feeling safe and secure. We discussed how this should be more consistent throughout the service. Staff should work together to embed a nurturing approach that allows more inclusive relationships that help children thrive. A recommendation has been made. See recommendation one.

Care Inspectorate grade: adequate

4. Quality of management and leadership

We found that the management team had a visible role within the service, enabling them to build positive relationships with children, parents, carers and staff. As a result, they were able to form a good understanding of the varying needs of children and families using the service.

Children benefitted from staff and other professionals working together to enhance their experiences and outcomes, when required. We found that this was organised well, enabling staff and parents to have a clear understanding of children's care. We asked the service to ensure strategies for care and support were reviewed regularly on an individual case by case basis. Through discussions, we found staff felt well supported within the service. One to one meetings enabled staff to have the opportunity to discuss their performance and identify training needs. We would encourage the manager to consider the frequency of these meetings to enable staff to follow up on agreed actions and feel further supported within the service.

As part of the inspection, we reviewed the service's procedures in relation to the induction of staff. There were inconsistencies in how this was being monitored and we found limited opportunities for new members of staff to review their progress. We signposted the service to guidance, available through our hub, to support them to have a more robust and efficient induction process. A recommendation has been made. See recommendation two.

During the inspection, we reviewed the service's quality assurance calendar. We discussed the importance of building on this to create a robust quality assurance framework, including the implementation of consistent monitoring and auditing procedures. This would ensure that the service develops and improves outcomes for children attending the service, as well as addressing the necessary improvements identified throughout the inspection. A recommendation has been made. See recommendation three.

The service has a duty of care, in line with their registration with the Care Inspectorate to inform us of all relevant information in a timely manner. We signposted the manager to further guidance on this, which is available on our website.

Overall, we found children to be experiencing good outcomes within the service. The management team should now address the areas for improvement identified during the inspection to ensure children experience consistent care and support.

Care Inspectorate grade: adequate

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and three recommendations.

Recommendations

- Children should experience care that meets their individual needs in a way that is right for them. Staff interactions should be improved to ensure children's care is consistently delivered in a nurturing and inclusive way. This is in line with the health and social care standard, I experience a high quality of care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice (4.11).
- Children should have confidence in the people who support and care for them. The manager should improve the induction process to ensure that the service further develops and continues to improve through reflective practices.

This is in line with the health and social care standard, I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes (3.14).

- In order to ensure that the service develops and improves outcomes for children attending the service, the provider must develop a range of robust quality assurance processes. This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard which states I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes (4.19).

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.