

Summarised inspection findings

Craigowl Primary School Nursery Class

Dundee City Council

31 October 2023

Key contextual information

Craigowl Primary School Nursery Class serves the area of St Mary's and the wider Strathmartine locality in Dundee. The nursery is registered for 34 children. At the time of the inspection there were 34 children on the roll. The staffing consists of a nursery teacher, a senior early years educator, three early years educators, one early years educator for families and one early years support assistant. There is also a vacancy for a part-time early years support assistant which has still to be filled.

Children can access flexible hours between 8 am and 5 pm for their 1140 hours. If parents need regular additional hours beyond the 30 hours each week, they can purchase additional hours from Dundee City Council.

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

- Nursery practitioners are very nurturing, caring, and supportive. They demonstrate the school values in their interactions with children. Practitioners show children that they are loved, loveable and support them well in how they can show love to each other. Children who are new to nursery, or unsettled, are very well nurtured with one-to-one support for as long as they need it.
- Children are confident in moving around the indoor and outdoor spaces independently. Practitioners ensure that they capture children's needs and interests well across the playroom and outdoors. As a result, most children engage well in their learning and show sustained concentration in the wide range of activities, both indoors and outside.
- Practitioners have made very good efforts to obtain children's views and opinions. These views are recorded across the nursery, in for example, their floor books. They encourage children to lead their learning well and to choose resources to enhance their play from the wide range on offer. Practitioners capture children's learning in their individual journals. Children access these frequently talking about their learning and how much fun they had.
- Practitioners across the nursery have very strong relationships with parents. Practitioners share children's learning regularly with parents allowing them to make comments about their child's learning. Parents are very positive about how well they are included in their child's learning. Parents and children benefit from the nursery's designated early years educator for families. The early years educator for families works well to ensure parents receive regular learning opportunities on how to support learning at home. The early years educator for families also works effectively with parents to identify aspects of home life that parents would like to learn more about. For example, toilet training routines, sleep patterns and managing challenging behaviour. The strong partnership between the early years educator for families and parents helps improve outcomes for these young children.

- Practitioners make highly effective use of open-ended questions and explanations to extend and challenge children's thinking. They listen carefully to children's thoughts, ideas, and interests, and encourage them to extend their thinking. They skilfully manage children, responding in a very nurturing manner as they support children in social situations.
- Staff work together very effectively to ensure the best possible outcomes for children. They know children and their families very well and use this understanding to support them effectively. They create rich learning spaces equipped with natural and real-life objects to encourage children to investigate and be creative. Staff plan in a very child centred way. They develop children's ideas and document their learning successfully in floor books, learning journals and on an online platform.
- The senior early years educator, practitioners and the nursery teacher work well together to meet children's needs very effectively. They plan together to deliver interventions in literacy and numeracy to improve children's progress in these areas. They work well with parents to inform them of these interventions and how they can support these at home. For example, practitioners provide parents with useful leaflets, resource bags and videos to help them develop literacy and numeracy interventions further at home.
- Practitioners record individual observations of children in learning journals and online journals, which they share with parents. They track children's learning well in early language, early mathematics and health and wellbeing against the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. This helps staff identify children's progress through the early level. In addition, they use progression pathways for literacy and numeracy for each child. This supports staff very well in identifying children's next steps in learning. The leadership team and staff should now work together to streamline the way they track children's progress.
- Practitioners track children's progress resulting from the interventions they put in place to improve attainment. This provides robust information which helps practitioners plan children's next steps in learning and ensure they meet children's needs effectively. Practitioners plan well for universal and targeted support in literacy and numeracy. The nursery teacher and the senior early years educator provide very clear direction to staff on how to plan effectively for children with additional support needs. They set clear short-term targets for children based on their strengths and their specific barriers to learning. They work well with parents and other agencies to help children achieve these targets. As a result, practitioners meet children's needs very well both indoors and outdoors.
- Practitioners are well supported with planning by the full-time nursery teacher and senior early years educator. They plan well over different timescales and are responsive to children's interests. They provide a skilful balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated experiences. They meet weekly to discuss their observations and agree how to support and challenge children effectively. The high adult to child ratio helps ensure that practitioners know children well and meet their needs effectively through their play.

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

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

- Overall, most children make very good progress in communication, early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing. Children with additional support needs make very good progress towards their targets.
- Children are confident in listening and talking across all areas of their play. They play well in pairs and taking turns in groups. They listen to others and ask and answer questions. Children are confident in expressing their opinions and ideas. Practitioners value and act upon children's opinions. They provide targeted and universal interventions that improve children's vocabulary, speech and language and listening skills. They measure children's progress in these areas carefully. As a result, children are making very good progress in listening and talking.
- Most children show a love of books and stories. They show an interest in non-fiction books and enjoy reading about butterflies and the sea. Almost all children are keen to hear stories and are confident in retelling stories and rhymes. They actively seek out adults to hear a story in the popular library area. Children particularly enjoy the books made about their own outings such as visits to the local park. Most children can identify common words around the room and are able to find their own name. Children regularly access the local library and the book bug sessions offered by early years educators. Children benefit from a weekly nursery lending library which is supporting them develop further their love of books. The opportunity for children to select books to take out of the nursery class helps parents support children's enjoyment of reading while at home.
- Most children develop their mark making skills effectively across the playroom and in the outdoors. For example, children write their name, draw on the smart board and paint outdoors. They are confident in mark making independently in the shed, their learning journals and in the paint area. Most children are confident in having a go at writing and recognising their name. Children show an understanding of the need to write in a range of play activities such as the home corner and in the flower shop.
- Most children make very good progress in developing their skills in early mathematics and numeracy. Practitioners have a specific focus on developing numeracy through play and in their group time. They work well with parents, providing them with ways to develop numeracy at home. As a result, most children are making very good progress in this area. Most children recognise numerals to 10 and a few can count beyond 10. For example, they count money in their flower shop. They can recognise and copy simple patterns. Most children can count

confidently up to 10 and a few can count beyond 10. They show confidence in using dice for games and can count back and count forward within 10. Most children can describe and compare lengths and volume through their play using water and sand. They are confident in using the measuring tapes in the numeracy area outdoors.

- Practitioners have very warm, positive and nurturing relationships with children. Children are developing well their understanding of their rights through their links with a school in Uganda. Almost all children can express how they are feeling. They can show, through the use of concrete materials, that they understand that they have a right to clean water, food and family. Most children are able to discuss the wellbeing indicators in relation to risks from their school trip. For example, they can talk about the risks from the roads, the car park, and the reservoir from their own book.
- Most children are very sociable and engage willingly with trusted adults in the nursery about their learning. They are very independent in preparing snack and lunch. They have useful opportunities to develop their independence when getting changed and making up paint and play doh. Practitioners give children responsibility for developing the nursery garden aided by a local volunteer. Children grow their own strawberries and eat them for snack. Most children show independence in using the toilet, handwashing and in tooth brushing. At lunch, children are provided with an appropriate choice of lunch from two choices plus salad and fruit. Children eat well and are developing effective social skills in sharing food and eating with others.
- The nursery teacher and senior early years educator show clearly, through a thorough analysis of data, that children are making very good progress in their learning. Practitioners have regular meetings with the nursery teacher and the senior early years educator to review progress and plan learning. They keep a range of robust up to date records of children's progress over time. This helps practitioners identify children needing extra support or interventions to improve their progress. The senior early years educator, the nursery teacher, practitioners and staff provide a high standard of universal and targeted support in groups.
- Parents share information on children's achievements at home through an online platform and in discussion with staff. Practitioners celebrate these achievements and those from the nursery through children's individual folders and displays. They work effectively with parents to help children achieve success. For example, the family worker encourages parents and the nursery staff to work together to achieve success in areas such as sleep and toileting. Practitioners encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning. They do this through videos to support literacy and numeracy and parent sessions such as book bug and stay and play sessions.
- Practitioners know children and their families well and provide equity for all children. They can show clearly how they ensure accelerated progress for children adversely affected by their socio-economic circumstances. They have an appropriate understanding of the challenges some families face and support them well. They ensure that parents can access a range of activities in nursery with no cost. They have very good relationships with other agencies to help support children and families. The nursery is a very inclusive learning environment which ensures all children have a rich nursery experience regardless of their barriers to learning. Children benefit from the flexible approach to the hours provided by the nursery class and parents can buy additional hours to suit their working needs. A few children can access holiday cover in another nursery depending on the needs of families. The nursery provides a foodbank for parents.

Other relevant evidence

- Dundee City Council provide this community with generous staffing which includes a nursery teacher and a senior early years educator. This results in very strong leadership of the work of the nursery. Staff have a very good approach to tracking children's progress.
- Dundee City Council provides a flexible model for delivering 1140 hours. Parents can access 8.30 am to 2.30 pm or 9 am to 3 pm. They offer additional hours for parents to buy from 8 am and from 3 pm to 5 pm. Parents can blend their hours with other nurseries or child minders.

Practice worth sharing more widely

All staff are committed to ensuring that interventions have maximum impact by looking at a variety of ways of involving parents. Led by the nursery teacher and the senior early years educator, practitioners provide a range of interventions for all children and specific interventions for targeted children. These include listening and talking skills, word aware, vocabulary building and numeracy. Practitioners work well with parents and offer workshops and videos to families that help them support children at home.

Staff deliver focused universal interventions through group time. The nursery teacher extracts children for targeted support. Practitioners track the progress children make because of these interventions. They ensure they have a baseline assessment before the intervention and assess progress at the end of a block.

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.