

Summarised inspection findings

Campie Primary School Nursery Class

East Lothian Council

27 August 2024

Key contextual information

Campie Nursery class is located within the Campie Primary School building. It operates term time from 8.45 am to 3.15 pm. Children have access to one playroom and two outdoor areas. Children can attend from three years of age until starting primary school. The centre is registered for 60 children with a current roll of 55. The head teacher is supported by two deputy head teachers and a senior early-years practitioner.

1.3 Leadership of change

weak

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

- Strategic leadership of the nursery is weak. There is an urgent need to clarify the strategic roles and responsibilities of senior staff. Practitioners in the nursery require clear leadership and direction to support the improvement of children's experiences and outcomes.
- The nursery has a shared vision with the school 'Achieving every day'. This was developed a number of years ago. Since then, the school and nursery has undergone a significant number of changes. Staff, children, parents and other partners should now work together to develop a refreshed vision. This will help to set an agreed future direction for the school and nursery.
- Nursery practitioners have participated with primary school staff in reviewing and confirming the existing values. Practitioners are aware of the values of resilience, creativity, respect, challenge, nurture and sustainability and use child friendly language to share these with children. They have identified the need to use these in their conversations and play to make these more readily understood by young children.
- Practitioners are not engaging in self-evaluation activities. They need more support, and a planned approach, to use evaluative resources such as 'How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare'. This will help them to understand what high-quality early learning and childcare looks like and provide opportunities to be able to reflect on their practice. This will help them identify what is working well and what needs to improve.
- Senior leaders need to develop and implement robust approaches to monitoring the work of the nursery. The absence of quality assurance procedures is an important weakness. Senior leaders and practitioners must ensure that learning experiences are of sufficiently high quality. They will require support from the local authority to understand what high quality early learning and childcare looks like.
- With support from the local authority, senior leaders need to put a plan in place for relevant professional learning opportunities that will help practitioners to build their knowledge and understanding of high-quality experiences. This would include support in using national practice guidance and looking outwards, including visits to other nurseries.

- Practitioners have recently taken on leadership roles as play champions. They are enthusiastic and have indicated that this is supporting their understanding of different types of play. They require guidance in taking forward this role to ensure that they impact positively on children's experiences.
- A school improvement plan is in place and this includes nursery priorities. The plan has not been taken forward effectively. Senior leaders need to work with practitioners to monitor regularly the progress and impact of the plan.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

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

- The welcoming, calm ethos of the nursery is a strength. Relationships are positive and respectful and children follow instructions well. They are involved actively in spontaneous play, such as games they have created themselves, which offer opportunities to risk assess and negotiate with others. The outdoor space is used frequently by children throughout the day. However, children are not engaging in rich, well-planned play experiences. A minority of children lack focus throughout their day. They do not engage well or sustain concentration with the play experiences. They need more support from practitioners and rich, challenging experiences to develop their skills and extend their learning.
- Practitioners have identified correctly the need to improve the environments and spaces with a focus on improving children's engagement. Practitioners need to develop the use of spaces using open-ended resources as this will help to encourage more curiosity and creativity. They need to improve indoor and outdoor play spaces using high-quality, inviting provocations to enhance learning opportunities and engagement from children. Practitioners should develop robust and effective systems that enable them to be more responsive to children's needs.
- Interactions between practitioners and children are warm and nurturing. In a few examples, practitioners use open-ended questioning to further children's learning. Practitioners must now improve the quality, consistency and effectiveness of questioning and interactions to support all children to make progress in their learning.
- Practitioners should reflect on the pace and balance of transitions for children across the day to ensure children are able to engage fully in their play and learning. At present, children's play is interrupted too often throughout their day.
- Digital technology is accessible to all children throughout the day. This is not yet used effectively by all children.
- Practitioners record observations of children's activities in individual learning stories. The observations of children's learning are largely descriptive. Practitioners would benefit from high-quality professional learning to develop their skills in observation and assessment. Their observations need to focus more on learning. This will help to identify the next steps for children and show the progress they are making in key areas.
- Practitioners plan activities that are responsive to children's interests but are not sufficiently clear on what the planned outcome of the learning is. They should continue, as identified in the improvement plan, to develop approaches to planning. This will help them to ensure learning is responsive and engaging and promotes skill development as well as continuity and

progression across all key aspects of learning. Children would benefit from being involved in planning to ensure that practitioners are responsive to their ideas, interests and prior learning.

- The senior practitioner developed and introduced recently an approach to tracking children's progress in literacy and numeracy. The depute head teacher is using this information to support recently introduced tracking meetings with practitioners. Staff need further training and guidance to assist them to make reliable judgements about children's progress.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners provide a range of play-based activities and experiences for children. They have indicated that this is responsive to children's interests. The practitioners, working as a team, need to improve their understanding of the curriculum. In particular, they need to develop their knowledge of continuity, progression and relevance in learning along with ensuring appropriate breadth across the curriculum.
- Practitioners promote aspects of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum but are not sufficiently developing progressive skills. Practitioners need to develop their understanding of skill progression within key areas and across the early level of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Working with senior leaders and the local authority, the nursery team need to now make use of the national practice guidance. This should help them to improve and promote spaces, interactions and experiences.
- Practitioners have put in place transition arrangements to support children when they start nursery. They gather useful information from parents to help them to get to know children as individuals. Practitioners should use this information more effectively to help them to meet the development and learning needs of all children.
- Prior to starting school, children have opportunities to spend time in the primary one class and take part in school events. There now needs to be more collaboration among practitioners and primary staff working within and across the early level. This will enhance transition and support continuity and progression in learning across the early level.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have developed positive relationships with families. Parents appear comfortable and welcome in the nursery setting when dropping their children off.
- Most parents feel their child likes being at nursery and that it helps their child to build confidence. Most parents report that they are able to approach staff with questions, suggestions or problems. Practitioners have reintroduced opportunities for parents to participate in stay and play sessions. Parents take time, during these sessions, to access their children's learning stories and to share the achievements and progress their children are making. Learning stories are also sent home once a term. Practitioners should develop further these approaches and encourage parents to contribute to their child's learning story.
- Practitioners recognise the importance of involving parents in their child's learning. They provide books to encourage story telling at home. Parents are not yet involved in nursery self-evaluation activities. Senior leaders need to explore ways of involving families more fully, for example, through parent focus groups and gathering parents' views on aspects of the work of the nursery.
- The nursery team link with partners and agencies such as speech and language therapy. Partners visit the nursery and provide strategies to support children's progress. Systems need to be in place to better use these strategies to support children make progress in their learning.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter for urgency.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

weak

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

- The nursery has important weaknesses in their approaches to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. These are impacting on children's ability to succeed and achieve.
- Positive relationships are evident between children and staff. Practitioners are gentle and kind in their interactions with children. As a result, children are calm, relaxed and regulate their emotions well in the nursery environment. Practitioners ensure that children's personal care needs are met. They are aware of wellbeing indicators and have developed characters to support children in promoting their wellbeing. During large group times, practitioners talk to children about play areas, risks and how to keep themselves safe during play activities.
- P7 pupils visit the nursery regularly to help children to develop an understanding of children's rights. Practitioners support children further in developing and understanding their rights during play.
- Children benefit from nurturing lunch experiences. Children are becoming independent in accessing their lunch and following routines. Staff sit with children to encourage and develop social interactions.
- Practitioners know children well and use 'All about me' booklets to gather important information about individuals to support their care needs.
- There are significant gaps in children's personal plans. In partnership with the local authority, senior leaders need to ensure that they comply with statutory requirements. Current plans are not effective in identifying children's wellbeing needs. Practitioners must review and update all plans on a systematic and timely basis. They should involve parents in agreeing targets for their child. Practitioners need to review and update targets within set timescales.
- The nursery environment has resources which reflect cultural diversity. There are opportunities to enhance approaches further to embracing the cultural background of children and their families. There are a number of children with English as an Additional Language who are not being provided with appropriate support. Practitioners should implement strategies to support children and families better, whose first language is not English.
- Practitioners recognise that there are children who face barriers in their learning, but have not put in place clear plans, strategies or interventions to support these children. Senior leaders need to work with the nursery team to develop appropriate plans that set out clear targets and strategies. This would help practitioners to provide effective support that meets the individual needs of children.

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's progress in early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing is weak. There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate the progress children are making in their learning since starting nursery. Learning stories provide an attractive record of children's engagement in a range of activities. These stories are not yet sufficiently focused on children's learning. Practitioners would benefit from support to understand how to promote learning better through interactions, experiences, and spaces.
- Most children listen well, and the majority are confident in their interactions with one another. Children enjoy listening to stories with staff and would benefit from encouragement to use books independently. Children's early drawings are developing well. They need more support to explore early writing in different contexts. Practitioners need to increase opportunities for children to develop progressive skills in communication and language to ensure children make sufficient progress.
- Most children are developing an awareness of counting and numbers during play activities. They are beginning to develop an awareness of mathematical concepts such as symmetry with support from practitioners. Children need a wider range of experiences to make more progress in developing their skills and understanding in early mathematics.
- Children enjoy free access to enclosed outdoor play spaces for fresh air and exercise. Most are confident climbing, running and throwing and catching outside. Most play co-operatively with one another and are confident in choosing where they want to play. Most children follow routines in the nursery and at lunch independently. Practitioners should continue to promote children's independence, for example, during baking and at lunch. Children are developing friendships with one another. They are confident in playing together and can instigate games, such as hide and seek, independently in small groups. Practitioners need to implement better approaches to support children's wellbeing more fully.
- Children's learning stories do not provide sufficient information about children's progress in learning. The nursery has recently implemented a new approach to gathering information and tracking the progress children are making in key areas of literacy, numeracy and mathematics. The senior leadership team have also recently started to meet with practitioners and use this information to help them identify children who are not making appropriate progress in learning. Senior leaders and practitioners would benefit from local authority support in taking this forward. This will ensure the reliability of the information gathered and clarify how they will use

this alongside other assessment information to monitor children's learning and achievements over time.

- Senior leaders and practitioners have not used targeted interventions to support children to overcome barriers in their learning. They should now work together to gather cultural, linguistic and socio-economic data alongside information about children's learning. They need to use all of this information to identify and implement appropriate interventions that will support children and families and improve outcomes.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

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|-------------------------|---------------|
| 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.