

# Summarised inspection findings

**Athelstaneford Primary School Nursery Class**

East Lothian Council

5 November 2024

## Key contextual information

Athelstaneford Nursery Class is part of Athelstaneford Primary School. It is situated in the rural village of Athelstaneford, in East Lothian. The interior accommodation consists of a small playroom, kitchen and toilet facilities. Children also have direct access to an extensive outdoor area.

The nursery class is registered with the Care Inspectorate for 20 children at any one time, aged from three years to those not yet attending school. At the time of the inspection, staffing allowed for 16 children to attend and there were 14 children on the roll. Children can access their 1140 hours of early learning and childcare over 38 weeks. The nursery is open from 8.45 am to 3.15 pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30 am to 12.30 pm on Friday.

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery. The senior early years practitioner (SEYP) post is vacant. The nursery team consist of two part -time early years practitioners and a part-time early years support worker. An education support officer and quality and equality lead provide targeted learning and support for the nursery on a regular basis.

### 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

- All children are happy, calm, and very settled in the playroom. They arrive each day eager to explore their learning spaces. Almost all children concentrate for extended periods and display a high level of curiosity and creativity. Practitioners give children independence and provide support when needed. They help them to play well together and explore the richly resourced play spaces. Children are confident to invite practitioners and their friends to join their play.
- Practitioners have very warm and caring relationships with children. This supports almost all children to feel valued and secure in the setting and helps them to interact positively with each other. Practitioners are very good role models for children. They encourage them to behave gently and kindly towards each other. Practitioners give older children responsibilities to care for younger children. Their roles include helping with care and lunch time routines and they carry out these activities with confidence and skill. Practitioners link this learning effectively to children's rights and wellbeing indicators.
- Practitioners have recently reviewed the learning environment and organised the playroom to make resources more accessible for the children. This has helped to enhance learning experiences. Children have free-flow access to a well-resourced outdoor environment. This provides space for them to engage in energetic play and experiences that support them to develop skills across the curriculum. As a result, almost all children are motivated and engaged in their play. Children make effective use of a sensory room where they have time and support to manage their emotions. Children have access to digital technology. Practitioners should

provide an improved range of opportunities for digital learning to support children to develop their skills in this area.

- Practitioners know individual children's interests and strengths. They use effective questioning and offer ideas to develop learning further. Practitioners effectively plan a responsive range of appropriate experiences for those children who require additional support. Practitioners ensure most children have a strong voice within the planning.
- Parents view their children's learning through 'plan, do and review' books and learning stories. This supports parents' engagement and inclusion in identifying and supporting children's next steps in learning. As planned, senior leaders should support practitioners to streamline planning and tracking formats. This should help practitioners identify more clearly judgements of children's progress and learning. Senior leaders need to monitor closely coverage of the early level experiences and outcomes to ensure that all children experience depth and challenge in their learning.

## 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

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

- Most children are progressing well in early language and communication. They interact purposefully with adults and other children and communicate their thoughts clearly and with confidence. Practitioners should continue to encourage children to take turns when speaking. Children listen with interest to discussions and stories in small and large groups. They are knowledgeable about story characters and events and transfer this knowledge to other areas of the curriculum. Almost all children have a suitable awareness of print. They share their writing in a meaningful way and produce very detailed drawings.
- Most children are making good progress in early numeracy. They recognise numbers throughout the nursery and count forwards and backwards with confidence when playing. Children are developing sound early mathematical skills, supported by a range of effective resources. They learn about size and shape as they play with loose parts. Children use appropriate mathematical language as they compare capacity and weight of containers in the mud kitchen and water stations. Staff now need to offer increased challenge for all children.
- All children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They move around the setting confidently and enjoy climbing and cycling. They spin and swing on equipment with skill. Children keep themselves safe when playing outdoors and help risk assess the outdoor play spaces. They are developing their awareness of healthy lifestyles through a range of healthy food offered during mealtimes. Children serve themselves independently and make their own choices for daily snacks. Practitioners should continue to encourage children to take responsibility for looking after playroom resources appropriately.
- There is a strong focus on recognising achievements that happen within and beyond the nursery. Practitioners celebrate all children's achievements very well. They do this on a daily basis in a range of age-appropriate ways. Practitioners capture and share children's achievements through meaningful visual displays and regular valuable gatherings with children. They encourage all children to do their best. Children clearly feel proud, confident and excited to share their achievements with practitioners, peers and parents.
- Almost all children are making good progress across all areas of the curriculum. Children who require additional support are making good progress in relation to their individual developmental stage. Practitioners have a sound knowledge of the needs of the children and families within the context of the local community. They are well informed about school, local and national policies and ensure children who require support receive the help they need to

achieve. Practitioners set appropriate personal targets for all children to reduce potential barriers to learning and support children to stay on track.

## 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.