

Summarised inspection findings

Kirkcowan School Nursery Class

Dumfries and Galloway Council

24 January 2023

Key contextual information

Kirkcowan Nursery Class is situated within the primary school. The setting has one playroom and access to a large outdoor area. Children attend from the age of two until starting school. The setting is registered for 18 children at any one time. Currently, the roll is six. Children access 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (ELC) and can attend the setting from 8.30 am until 3.30 pm on a term-time basis. Not all parents choose to access 1140 hours of early learning and childcare for their children. All children have lunch within the playroom. The nursery manager has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the setting.

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

- Practitioners create a strong sense of family in the playroom. They know children very well and develop positive relationships. Children in the nursery are relaxed and behave well. They are confident playing and talking with other children and known adults. Children are developing friendships and they play and interact well together. They engage well with the good range of experiences on offer and choose where they want to play. Children participate enthusiastically while making bread and enjoy creating at the dough table. The experiences on offer help children to develop curiosity and creativity well.
- Children play enthusiastically in the outdoor area and access a range of interesting experiences. They do not have free-flow access to the outdoor area but enjoy daily visits outside where they play well together as a small group. Children are learning to share resources. They work well with each other while investigating and creating with pumpkins.
- Practitioners interact with children in a caring and thoughtful manner. They understand the needs of individual children and support them well. Practitioners give children time and space to follow their own interests. They support children's learning through sensitive interactions where they join in their play, promoting creativity and imagination. Children use digital technology to explore their interests and expand their learning. They use interactive boards to develop their mark making skills. Practitioners should continue to develop the use of technology in the nursery and support children to learn about internet safety.
- The nursery manager and practitioners work together well to plan key focuses for children's learning. They make effective use of school guidance to plan contexts for learning. Practitioners also plan responsively and provide experiences based on children's interests. Moving forward, practitioners would benefit from developing further their approaches to planning. They need to focus more on developing children's key skills and ensuring children have the opportunity to deepen their learning.
- Practitioners capture information about children's learning as they play and record this information in personal learning profiles and big books. Practitioners should consider how they

can involve and support children in using these profiles to reflect on their learning and achievements. This will support children to understand and talk about their next steps in learning.

- Practitioners use helpful local authority frameworks to track children's experiences. They meet monthly with the manager to review children's wellbeing needs and discuss their progress. Practitioners should consider how to set targets that are more appropriate for individual children. This will help them to plan more effectively across the curriculum and ensure children are accessing a broad and balanced education.

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

- Overall children are making good progress in key areas of their learning. Children are respectful of each other and play well together. They are confident in the nursery and demonstrate good independence skills during snack time. Children can talk about how to keep safe and what they need to do to be healthy.
- Almost all children listen well to each other and to adults. They can answer questions and recall characters from stories. A few children are not yet ready to engage in conversation with adults who are not familiar to them. They need time and support to develop confidence. A few children are making very good progress in early mark making and can write their name independently. The majority of children are attempting to mark make and are at an early stage of development. They will benefit from more opportunities to gain experience and develop confidence in mark making in appropriate play-based situations.
- In numeracy and mathematics, a few children are starting to develop a good understanding of numbers and can count objects up to ten. Younger children will benefit from more experience of counting and using numbers regularly during play. Most children are starting to use mathematical language appropriately and talk about measuring and weighing during baking activities. Practitioners should continue to provide experiences to support children to develop their confidence in money, time and information handling.
- Practitioners provide children with rich, real life learning opportunities. They use the local environment very well and encourage children to participate in events in the community. This is a strength in the nursery and children can recall information about their learning and experiences. Children are learning about planting and growing vegetables. They are gaining confidence when using gardening tools. Children are learning about climate change, sustainability and re-cycling through appropriate experiences and can share their knowledge. They are able to take on "re-cycling hero" roles and can talk about their duties. Staff should continue to give children more responsibility and opportunities for leadership roles across the nursery.
- Practitioners have strong links with families and encourage parents to share information from home, for example photographs of family members and celebrations. They should continue with their plans to develop further approaches to celebrating and building on children's achievements outwith the nursery.

- Practitioners understand the socio-economic context of the rural community and recognise how it affects children and families. They plan an interesting variety of trips to help children gain experience of the wider locality. For example, they recently visited a nearby airport and used the train for part of the journey. Children are able to talk with enthusiasm about their trips and benefit socially from these rich experiences.

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.