

# Summarised inspection findings

Coldingham Primary School and Nursery Class

Scottish Borders Council

22 January 2019

## Key contextual information

Coldingham nursery is based and managed as part of Coldingham School. From August 2018, the setting is providing children with up to 1140 hours. There are 11 children in the nursery who stay for the full day.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

good

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

- The vision and values were recently reviewed by the school and nursery practitioners, children and stakeholders. It was agreed that they reflect the shared philosophy of children's rights. The aims of both the school and nursery will also be reviewed shortly. Nursery practitioners were fully involved in the development of the vision and values. They have embedded the vision and values in a meaningful and practical way to make them live for the children. Children are able to talk about the vision and values.
- Practitioners responded positively to the opportunities for professional dialogue during the inspection. They are reflective practitioners who are committed to improve the standard of their work, and deliver an early learning and childcare service that meets the needs of their children. Learning walks have taken place to other settings in order to learn from others. Detailed notes and pictures were taken during these learning walks. As a result of the learning walks, practitioners have implemented changes to their room and planning, which have had a positive impact on children's learning. Practitioners should continue their learning walks with a focus on key priorities to improve the nursery. Self-evaluation activities highlighted the need to improve the outdoor area. This has been implemented with the support of the early years authority teacher. Further improvements are planned in the outside area.
- Practitioners would benefit from continuing to develop their leadership roles further in the continuing improvement of the nursery. The children carry out risk assessments and help at snack time. Further opportunities for children to adopt leadership responsibilities should be considered.
- The nursery and school improvement plan were developed as one whole plan. The improvement plan for 2017/18 has had some positive impact on the quality of experiences for children, for example, to evaluate the outcomes and experiences for children using the seven principles of curriculum design. An action plan has been completed ensuring that the agreed priorities are implemented in the nursery within a set time. The progress of actions is helped by the use of an approach in which actions are separated into three phases firstly, to do, then in progress, and finally done. These phases are highlighted visually in the nursery through the effective use of sticky notes. Sticky notes outlining the key actions are moved as each action is progressed.

- Practitioners in the nursery previously received formal recorded feedback on their work from the principal teacher, which they found extremely helpful. Due to changes of staffing in the nursery, this has not taken place recently. Formal feedback should be introduced again, once the responsibility for the nursery is agreed within the senior leadership team. There are regular evaluations of the nursery class context, looking at what worked well and next steps. To build on this evaluation, the nursery team should fully implement the use of the national self-evaluation framework *How good is our early learning and childcare?*. This will help practitioners to identify clearly the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. Evaluative activities should continue to have a focus on continuing to improve the quality of learning and teaching, and ensure depth and challenge for more able children. Practitioners have benefitted from the support of the local authority both in professional learning, particularly the pedagogical leadership course, and visits from the early years teacher.

## 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

- The nursery has a very welcoming ethos where all children are recognised and valued as individuals. Children demonstrate a confidence as they make choices and decisions about their play. They are able to move freely between indoors and outdoors, allowing them to become independent and direct their own learning. Children are friendly, enthusiastic and are keen to learn. Most children engage happily in the range of purposeful learning experiences that capture their imagination and curiosity. There is scope to build on children's positive engagement in learning by developing the language of learning, appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Practitioners should continue to explore ways in which children can access digital technology to support and challenge further all areas of their learning. A range of digital technologies is available to support learning. Practitioners need to be mindful of the need to support children to access these meaningfully and to their full benefit. Outdoor learning is a key feature of the nursery and there is a clear focus on providing a range of high-quality learning experiences. Children confidently access their immediate outdoor play space, the wildlife garden and the nearby woodland to engage in learning activities across the curriculum.
- Practitioners know individual children well and make accurate observations of significant learning taking place. Observations, with photographs, examples of children's work, progression pathways and achievements, are collated in individual learning profiles. Practitioners use this information to help identify what children need to learn next, and identify where progress in learning can be measured over time. As discussed, the information on children's next steps should be shared more clearly with both children and their parents. This will strengthen and build on children's successes. Parents have regular access to their child's learning journal. As discussed, consideration should be given to further engage parents in commenting on their child's next steps in their journals. Parents have the opportunity to engage daily in informal dialogue. This is in addition to the twice-yearly formal parent's nights to discuss their child's individual progress.
- Practitioners use questions to support children to extend and deepen their learning. They should now continue to build on these skills to deepen children's levels of understanding and support increased challenge in learning.
- Practitioners, after discussion and information from the learning walks in other settings, developed a new planning format, which is ensuring well a mix of adult and child-led experiences. This is leading to positive outcomes for all children. The use of floor books, which now involve children more, supports the documentation of experiences and is a vehicle to talk

to children about their learning and areas they would like to explore in more depth. This helps motivate and involve children in their learning.

- A progression framework is used to track and children's developing skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This supports the effective assessment and tracking of children's progress.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Planning for all children is based on Curriculum for Excellence, and practitioners are planning learning using the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence. A new planning format is being embedded to support effective planning of progressive learning pathways for children across all ages and stages. Planning is responsive to children's ideas and interests. Practitioners have implemented a floor book approach to gather children's ideas. This should continue to be embedded in the nursery. Practitioners are keen and committed to making improvements to build their confidence, skills and deepen their understanding of what is required to deliver high quality early learning throughout the setting.
- All practitioners should take further responsibility for developing numeracy and literacy skills through play, and should continue to develop the learning environment. This will provide children with increased opportunities for investigation, curiosity and inquiry. The nursery could make more regular use of the local area and resources to support and extend children's learning. This will support the setting further in being part of the wider community and help children to develop an awareness of the world in which they live and grow. Consideration should be given to specialist teachers in the primary school supporting practitioners to deliver specialist activities in physical education and music.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have strong positive relationships with parents. They work well with families and encourage a partnership approach to developing children’s wellbeing and skills. Practitioners have tried a variety of ways to increase parental involvement in the life and work of the nursery. Parents were involved in reviewing the vision. There are regular newsletters and twice-yearly parents’ evenings.
- Practitioners involve parents by encouraging them to come to ‘stay and play’ sessions where they can see and contribute to the variety of learning experiences available to children. Parents take their children’s learning journals home regularly, which helps communicate, and record learning experiences and comment on the content. As discussed, the promotion of learning goals for children would be a useful way to involve the parents more in their child’s 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.



### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

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

- Caring and nurturing relationships are a strong feature of the setting. Practitioners recognise the central importance of relationships in supporting children's social and emotional wellbeing. As a result, there is a warm, respectful and positive atmosphere in the setting. All children are happy, confident and settled. Practitioners are responsive in their interactions and children approach them for help and support. Positive behaviour is encouraged and promoted using praise and language effectively to reinforce expectations of behaviour. Practitioners, with support from the principal teacher in the school, have begun to embed a resilience and confidence building programme. This aims to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Practitioners have a good understanding of wellbeing, which supports social and emotional wellbeing. They have previously enabled children to develop a strong understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Practitioners now need to reintroduce this practice and continue to support children and parents to develop an awareness of what it means to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included. This should be done in meaningful ways. Practitioners need to encourage children to be aware of their rights by promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This could be implemented in conjunction with the development of understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Practitioners value the views and opinions of children. Children's opinions informed the selection of resources and discussing the setup of the room. Practitioners now need to continue to encourage children to express their choices and opinions.
- Practitioners know each child and their personal circumstances well. This allows them to provide appropriate support for families. Practitioners are strongly committed to improving outcomes for all children. The senior leadership team and practitioners are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to legislative requirements for keeping children safe and meeting their care and learning needs. They have improved the quality of their personal plans this year and consult well with parents on the content of plans. A few children with identified additional support needs are supported well by practitioners. However, as discussed, practitioners should consider having more detailed planning for children who have additional support needs, along with appropriate input and support from a range of other agencies. Practitioners would benefit from attending appropriate external training, for example to support children with autistic spectrum disorder, in order to build on their skills to support children.
- Inclusion and equality are promoted throughout the work of the nursery. Practitioners have completed online training on diversity, equality and human rights. This is helping them to have a robust understanding of issues relating to equality and diversity in order to ensure best practice. Practitioners have a clear understanding of the families that attend the setting and

how this influences the work they do. Recognising and celebrating a range of events in the calendar year is enabling children to develop an early awareness of diversity. Practitioners should continue to explore how they can engage children, and themselves, in relevant learning about diversity and equality. Gender could be explored more deeply to ensure potential stereotypes are consistently recognised and challenged.

### 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

- In communication and early language, most children are making good progress. They listen to stories well and confidently answer practitioner questions. Children engage well in conversations with peers and practitioners during free play and planned experiences. Opportunities to self-register by signing-in are supporting mark making, with a few children confidently writing their name. Home learning opportunities support the development of communication and language as children report back on their experience of taking home a named mascot. Almost all children choose to access books independently and share their thinking and reasoning around the story of the week. As discussed, the continued development of a rich literacy environment will support and encourage children's communication and language development. The majority of children are developing an awareness of initial letters and their associated sounds. They show a developed understanding that print carries meaning, and a few are able to produce their own illustrated books. Children's literacy is further developed by engaging at home with story sacks. Children are at the early stages of developing a range of Polish vocabulary through books, Polish parents reading Polish stories and listening to songs in Polish. By reinforcing this, children could be supported to increase the progress they make in their learning.
- In mathematics, children are making good progress. Opportunities to count in routines and planned opportunities for number recognition are supporting children to develop their mathematical skills. Most children are observed to count to ten, with a few confidently counting beyond ten. They estimate and measure their height using language such as longer and shorter. Children were observed discussing height and number as they gathered materials to make strong houses that would not be blown down. This was an activity based on the storybook about three pigs building houses to keep them safe. Most children identify colour and shape as they explore their environment. Across all aspects of numeracy and mathematics, and across the playroom there is scope for a wider range of skills and understanding to be developed and applied to avoid missed learning opportunities. Improving numeracy is an area which practitioners have identified, through self-evaluation, as the next priority in the nursery.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They are caring towards each other and cooperate well during play. Children are learning well how to build their resilience and confidence by participating in a range of activities from a published programme. They

recognise the importance of healthy foods and making choices at snack time. Daily opportunities to participate outdoors is supporting children to be healthy and active. Children run, climb and use physical equipment with confidence. Children are encouraged to be independent, for example in dressing. Consideration now needs to be given to raising expectations in other routines such as lunchtime. This will encourage children to do more independently than they are often currently allowed to.

- Discussions with children, observations of their play and a review of floor books, learning profiles and tracking information demonstrate that children are making good progress in their learning over time, appropriate to their stage of development. Practitioners should continue to improve the quality of observations and identification and sharing of next steps with children and parents. This will help them evidence the value added to learning from nursery experiences.
- Practitioners know children well and use praise effectively to promote positive attitudes to learning. As a result, children are becoming confident, independent learners and making good progress. Children participate in relevant aspects of whole-school life, including fundraising for national charities. They are encouraged to share important events and achievements from home, which are displayed in the setting. Practitioners need to record these more consistently to allow learning and skills to be built upon. Parents also contribute to their child's learning journal and add relevant comments.
- Equity is promoted across all aspects of the work of the setting. Practitioners know children, their families and their backgrounds well. They use this understanding well to support children and families in a way that meets their needs and promotes equity. We have asked practitioners to continue to build their understanding of how to reduce potential barriers to learning through their inclusive practice.

## Setting choice of QI: 1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

- Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- Evidence-based improvement
- Ensuring impact of success for children and families

- The setting has embedded self-evaluation principles well. Practitioners reflect on their practice and are committed to providing a high quality service to children and their families. Practitioners have carried out research, looked out-with the setting and visited other establishments to improve their practice. They implemented and evaluated some of the ideas learned during these visits, which have had a positive impact on children's experiences. Practitioners have worked collaboratively with the principal teacher and the authority early years teacher to carry out self-evaluation and improve the nursery.
- Practitioners are using parts of the national self-evaluation framework "How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare?" to audit practice. Self-evaluation practices have led to both improvement in the setting and improved outcomes for children, particularly in the changes in planning. This process has been documented effectively. Practitioners should ensure that they continue to evaluate planning and monitoring and tracking to ensure a successful impact for children and families.
- Practitioners use a range of self-evaluation tools. They have also begun to use Building the Ambition as an audit tool. There is a culture of improvement in the setting and practitioners have correctly identified relevant priorities to improve the setting. Practitioners should continue to participate in a coherent professional learning programme on current effective practice. This will support them to implement the identified priorities effectively.

### 1. Quality of care and support

The level of care and support provided in the nursery was good. Staff collected a range of information about children through discussion with parents and the use of formal registration forms. Information had been regularly updated to ensure that it was relevant to providing a service, which met care, and support needs. To support this system staff should ensure that where they make a recording in a child's care plan that the outcome of their action is noted as this will help them assess if further support is needed.

Staff were warm, responsive and respectful towards children. There were very positive relationships between staff and children, which helped children, develop children's confidence in their ability to express themselves and work through differences. Staff supported positive behaviour through agreeing with children the ways that they were expected to behave. Children had formed some significant friendships in the group and were well supported by staff to ensure that all children were included.

Health and wellbeing was well supported in the nursery through physical activity, healthy eating, tooth brushing and the supported hand washing and infection control procedures. Children could now attend the service for a full day session. Staff had given very good consideration of how to meet children's needs during the longer day. Staff needed to ensure that the local authority medication procedure was followed to ensure that medical needs were accurately recorded and medication procedures followed. Action had been taken to address this during our visit.

Children showed us their learning journals, which were used to track their development. It was apparent that children had good input into the completion of these books, which were shared regularly with parents. Planning for play and learning was responsive to children's interests and ideas, clear and regularly evaluated to ensure that it supported children's progress.

There were good opportunities for children to develop their sense of independence and confidence through snack routines, outdoor play and being given tasks. We talked to staff about increasing these opportunities through offering children more independence at lunchtime and increasing the opportunities for children to take risks during their play. Risk would help increase children's understanding of what they were capable of, encourage problem solving and cooperative play.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

### 2. Quality of environment

Children and parents were welcomed into the bright and attractive classroom. Well-displayed art work and information for parents contributed to the visual appeal of the safe, secure and clean environment. A number of policies and procedures had been developed and shared with parents to ensure that they knew of the measures staff took to promote safety, security and wellbeing in the service.

Children had access to a good range of resources and most children were engaged in their play and learning. Staff were looking at ways in which to increase the use of loose and real life

objects in the indoor environment to promote more opportunities for children to problem solve and use their imagination. We talked to staff about using more supporting resources to enable children to extend their own learning. For example, sheet music, outdoor musical instruments and opportunities for woodwork.

The outdoor garden area was a significant strength. It was used for long periods of the day and good progress had been made in developing the area to ensure that it provided children with a range of play and learning opportunities. To increase children's choice to play indoors or outdoors we have suggested that children could access this area independently. This would entail developing a monitoring method for children going in and out of the building. Senior staff agreed that this could be easily achieved to ensure that children could only access the outdoor area.

To promote safety and security staff and children carried out regular risk assessments and safety checks indoors and outdoors. Children were included in the checking of the outdoor area and were very familiar with what they needed to look for to make sure it was safe for them and their friends to use. Accidents were recorded. We asked staff to be consistent in what they recorded and to ensure that parents received a copy of the signed recording for their information.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

### 3. Quality of staffing

Staff were motivated, committed and capable of achieving positive outcomes for children. They held a good knowledge of childcare issues and used their knowledge to support children in a nurturing manner. To develop and promote a skilled, competent and trained workforce all staff working with children must register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Some staff could be more familiar with the codes of practice and begin the process of using the post registration training log (PRTL) to track training and identify what impact training had on their practice.

Staff worked very well together and communicated throughout the day to share roles and information about individual children. This resulted in sessions being well planned to ensure that they ran smoothly and calmly. Staff were sensitive and skilled in sharing information with parents at the end of the session, which encouraged parents to ask for feedback about their child and helped them to continue with children's learning at home.

Staff were proactive about their own professional development. Staff had attended several courses to increase their knowledge about the curriculum and provide an environment to promote positive outcomes for children. They were familiar with current guidance on good practice and had used reading and professional dialogue to share information and views. An area where additional training would benefit all children could be courses on communication using signalong and Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS).

There were good opportunities for staff to get together as a team to carry out planning and attend staff meetings. Staff said that they felt very much part of the school staff team and were included in the life of the school. The senior team were very supportive of the work carried out in the nursery and had supported staff to develop their skills. Opportunities to visit other services had been accommodated and used to very good effect enabling staff to reflect on their practice.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

## 4. Quality of management and leadership

A good range of work had been carried out by all staff to evaluate the quality of the provision for children. Staff had adopted a reflective approach to their practice, which was well supported by the senior team. Input from the local authority early years team had been effective in the continuing improvement of the experiences provided for children.

Leadership roles were clearly defined and used to share some roles within the service. This is an area of practice, which could continue to be strengthened.

A good range of information was provided by the service for parents to ensure that they were included in the life of the setting. We asked staff to look at this information and ensure that it reflected the aims, vision and values of the setting. Parents confirmed that they had regular opportunities to be part of nursery life and this was an area, which staff were continuing to develop. Children were included in the direction of the service through their daily discussions and the responsiveness of the planning system.

### Care Inspectorate grade: good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, three recommendations were made. From these, all recommendations had been met. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no recommendations.



## 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.