

Summarised inspection findings

Lairg Primary School Nursery Class

The Highland Council

10 March 2020

Key contextual information

The nursery class is situated within Lairg Primary School. The provision offers five full-day options for children aged three to those not yet attending primary school. Eleven children are currently attending the setting.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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 teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Practitioners support children well to make choices and to follow their interests through play. The indoor and outdoor areas effectively promote social interaction through a range of imaginative and explorative play experiences. As a result, children cooperate well with their peers during play. Children appear settled and happy in the setting. They are able to resolve disagreements amicably, often without the intervention of an adult, as they negotiate during their play. Children share resources well and most sustain their play for extended periods of time in the home corner. They benefit from free-flow access to the stimulating outdoor area. Practitioners need to develop further the use of digital technologies in the nursery.
- Practitioners use their professional learning opportunities effectively to review and improve the learning environment for children. This is supporting children to learn through exploration and play. Children are encouraged to share books in the new cosy area. They benefit from regular storytelling and the established links with the local library. These positive approaches to promoting an enjoyment of reading need to be developed further. This includes being reintroduced as a home link focus. Practitioners have rightly identified a number of approaches to both increase and deepen the links with the school and local community that will enhance children's learning and promote creativity. Practitioners recognise they need to provide more opportunities for children to develop their literacy skills through meaningful contexts indoors and outdoors.
- Relationships between adults and children are respectful and children feel valued. Children respond well to opportunities to take on leadership roles, for example, preparing and organising snack. All children are increasingly developing their confidence well. They are learning to take turns when playing games and will easily make up their own rules. Practitioners engage in extended conversations with children to support their learning and there is an appropriate balance between adult and child-directed activities. It will be important moving forward that adult-directed activities build consistently on children's knowledge and skills. Practitioners use questions appropriately to help children express their needs and to enable them to talk about their interests. They now need to help children develop higher order thinking skills through these discussions.
- Planning for learning has been reviewed recently and currently takes appropriate account of children's interests. This review has created a better balance between new learning

opportunities linked to specific real-life events that practitioners acknowledge are important experiences for children.

- Practitioners record regular observations of children's learning. These are detailed narratives about aspects of children's learning that are recorded in individual profiles and shared with parents. The majority of children are interested in sharing and talking about their profiles. A few are able to discuss what they need to do to improve in certain areas. A next step for practitioners is to ensure that evidence of progress across developmental milestones in children's profiles is used to help challenge children who have mastered them easily. There is a focus on coverage of experiences and outcomes, which articulate with progression pathways and National Benchmarks associated with the early level. This is at a very early stage of development.
- Monitoring of children's progress has predominantly been undertaken informally by the playroom staff. They need to provide more support and challenge for individual children and make relevant links to the early level.

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

satisfactory

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

- The majority of children are making appropriate progress with early language and communication skills. Most are confident when talking to adults and each other and are able to talk about play experiences and willing share about their own interests. Practitioners support well children who require additional help with the development of their language skills. Practitioners seek advice from speech and language specialists to help them support individual children. Children listen well to stories and are eager to participate in songs and games. The majority show an interest in mark making and a few write their name. Practitioners should make writing contexts more purposeful and provide greater challenge for a significant number of children.
- The majority of children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy. They count items during their play and when helping with snack and readily join in with counting activities throughout the session. Most are beginning to recognise numerals and can order numbers to 10. Children explore measurement during cooking activities and enjoy exploring different aspects of volume in the water troughs. They use some mathematical language as they compare the size of items in the home corner. A few children talk about using money to shop during imaginative play. Children recognise and attempt to use accurate vocabulary to describe and talk about shapes. It is important that they hear adults use correct terms to avoid children becoming confused. Children should be better supported to develop numeracy and mathematical skills through a wider range of real-life contexts across the playrooms and outdoors.
- Most children are progressing well in health and wellbeing. Children are kind, caring and respectful to each other. Most children talk about a range of emotions and relate them to different situations. A few demonstrate empathy for other children and most value their developing friendships. All children take part in daily energetic play and confidently use a variety of bikes in the outdoor area. They regularly use the gym hall to take part in more challenging physical activities. Most children talk about healthy food choices when eating snack and are aware of the importance of basic hygiene routines such as, handwashing and tooth brushing. They are proud of winning a local competition for having grown the best carrots. Most children have their lunch in school. Practitioners should review this experience to ensure children develop more independence within the current routine. This should build on the positive skills children are developing in the playroom at snack times. Children are developing an understanding about how to keep themselves safe. A few can talk about the strategies they use to help them do this.

- Children's achievements are recognised in a variety of ways, including during the session and in weekly certificates. The online system for parents to contribute information about children's achievements from home is at an early stage of development. Information about children's achievements beyond the nursery could be used more regularly by practitioners to enhance progress.
- Children respond well to the current range of resources that promote diversity in the playroom. Practitioners are aware of challenging stereotypes and have reviewed the playroom resources to remove any examples of gender bias. A next step is to develop further the approaches to support and celebrate the differing linguistic and cultural backgrounds represented in the community.

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%