

Summarised inspection findings

Alehousewells School Nursery Class

Aberdeenshire Council

10 June 2025

Key contextual information

Alehousewells School Nursery is situated in the village of Kemnay. Within the nursery, there is an established team comprising an early years senior practitioner, an early years lead practitioner, five early years practitioners and one early years support worker. An excellence and equity lead practitioner has recently joined the team. The nursery is registered to provide early learning and childcare to a maximum of 50 children at any one time. Children attend from the age of two years to starting primary school. The nursery roll is currently 33. The setting consists of a large playroom and an enclosed outdoor area within the school building. Children access school areas such as the library and the gym, as well as facilities in the local community, for example the local café, shops and green spaces.

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 have developed relationships with children that are consistently warm and nurturing. Almost all children are happy, positive and confident in the nursery setting. Most children concentrate for extended periods of time as they explore, investigate and create, indoors and out. The team observes the way children use the rich range of learning experiences and respond well as needs arrive. For example, they created welcoming cosy spaces to support children's wellbeing. Practitioners ensure children have access to a variety of real-life experiences such as using the fire pit, baking and links with the local community. This is supporting them to develop relevant skills and improved social skills.
- Practitioners interact sensitively with children. They use skilfully a range of strategies to support children's emotional wellbeing. Most children play well together, cooperating and sharing spaces and resources. Most practitioners support and enrich children's play and learning, using commentary and open-ended questioning to encourage children to follow their interests and process their thinking. The team should build on this as they continue to develop consistency in high quality interactions across the team.
- Practitioners know children well as individuals and as learners. They observe and gather evidence of children's interests and skills in online learning profiles. The team provides a summary of each child's learning three times a year, noting appropriate next steps that are included as they plan for further learning. Senior staff should continue to support staff in identifying learning in individual observations.
- Practitioners engage children well in using digital technologies as they explore music and drawing or research topics they are interested in. Children are also supported to engage with their online learning profiles and discuss their learning. As a result, most understand what they do well.

- Practitioners plan children's learning to ensure coverage of the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence. Practitioners use books and stories as a context for learning. This supports children well to express their ideas and lead their play and learning. Recently, children have been motivated by their exploration of the number one million and exploration of shadows. The team has correctly identified the need to review approaches to intentional planning and skills development. In doing so, the team should ensure that individual plans clearly state learning targets and strategies, and that individual progression can be monitored effectively. Where children need additional help with their learning, practitioners meet their needs effectively in the playroom and outdoors. The team works well with partners to gather information on how best to support individual children's 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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 making good progress in communication and early language. They are keen to talk and share their experiences with adults/other children. They revisit familiar books, confidently, retelling stories using props. Most children express ideas and feelings about familiar stories with adults. Children create their own stories through roleplay. Children recognise their name when using spoons to self-register and communicate ideas through mark making as they play indoors and out. Practitioners should now consider providing increased opportunities for children to develop and apply their literacy skills through routines and play experiences across the curriculum.
- Most children make good progress in mathematics. They use mathematical language as they play to compare sizes and name familiar/simple shapes. Children measure structures during block play and explore patterns using natural materials. They gather data and create bar charts, for example, as they vote for the names of the home link teddy bears. Children use numbers and count with support where appropriate. The team should now develop further opportunities for children to deepen their knowledge of number and numeral recognition in challenging play and real-life contexts.
- Most children make good progress in health and wellbeing. Children confidently make choices in the playroom and outdoors. They are developing independence in daily routines, including getting ready for the outdoors, brushing their teeth, and serving themselves at snack. Children listen to the changes in their body such as increased heartbeat following physical activity and talk about how this feels. They develop well gross and fine motor skills as they run, balance, kick, thread beads and use scissors. Most children work well together, solving problems as they use loose parts to build channels to explore rolling. They use a range of resources to support them to recognise and name successfully their feelings. Most children make decisions to help independently manage their feelings, for example, through making use of cosy spaces if they need quiet time.
- Most children are making good progress over time. Practitioners have introduced a new tracking system which is ensuring that progression is recognised and evidenced. There are a few children who would benefit from further challenge to make the best possible progress.
- Staff value and display children's learning around the nursery. This includes drawings, early writing and photographs. Practitioners value children's achievements at home and encourage

families to share children's experiences with them. Children are proud to see these celebrated through online learning profiles and shared on the 'memory wall'.

- All practitioners have a clear understanding of children's individual circumstances and are aware of any potential barriers to learning. The team offers families practical support such as the 'community sharing trolley'. Their thoughtful interventions and individualised support have a positive impact on children's wellbeing and learning development.

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.