

Summarised inspection findings

Beith Primary School Nursery Class

North Ayrshire Council

28 March 2023

Key contextual information

Beith Nursery Class is based within Beith Primary School. The nursery roll is 70 with the setting offering 16 different options for attendance as a result of 1140 hours. The nursery is open 52 weeks from 8am - 6pm. The nursery is led by the headteacher in the primary school and the early years manager. The early years manager is supported by a senior early years practitioner and the excellence and equity lead practitioner. There are 11 early years practitioners and a modern apprentice. The nursery has two play areas, a family room and two outdoor areas.

1.3 Leadership of change

very 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

- Strong relationships with children, families and staff, are central to the ethos of Beith nursery class. Staff across the school and nursery worked in partnership with the wider school community to develop the vision and values. Staff bring the vision and values to life through their day-to-day practice and the interactions they have with children, parents, partners and visitors. Senior leaders, as planned, should continue to review and refresh the vision, values and aims regularly with all stakeholders so they remain current and helpful.
- The headteacher provides clear strategic guidance and direction to the early years manager. Together, they create a positive ethos and a strong learning culture in the nursery. This in turn enables all staff to provide the highest possible standards for all children and families. There is a sense of strong teamwork and collaborative working across the nursery and the school. This is particularly evident in the implementation of play-based learning across the early level. The senior leadership team in the nursery take forward the direction and pace of change very effectively. This is supported by robust data to implement change and assess the impact of these changes.
- Staff have implemented effectively the 1140 hours entitlement. All children access their hours through a variety of different sessions. Staff's approach meets the needs of families in the community very well. Practitioners continue to adapt the flow of the session to ensure children receive continuity in their learning experiences.
- The headteacher and early years manager demonstrate a strong commitment to career long professional learning for all practitioners. They have a clear focus on professional learning, which is related to relevant nursery priorities. This has a positive impact on practice in the nursery. Almost all practitioners have responsibilities for key developments within the setting, including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Practitioners support each other and influence practice in relation to their leadership area. The headteacher and early years manager should continue to monitor closely and evaluate the effectiveness of these roles. This should ensure improvements continue to have a positive impact on children and families.

Practitioners should develop opportunities for children to undertake leadership responsibilities for key aspects of the setting.

- Staff use a range of self-evaluation activities very effectively to inform improvement planning, taking account of appropriate national and local frameworks. The nursery team value the views and suggestions of partners, parents and children. Practitioners should continue to build on this participation with stakeholders in improvement and self-evaluation processes, encouraging greater participation. The improvement plan focuses rightly on improving health and wellbeing, particularly given the impact of the pandemic on children. Practitioners' approach to wellbeing is helping children to settle well and feel safe and secure in the setting. Senior leaders and practitioners observe aspects of practice in the playroom and provide regular, helpful feedback to each other.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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 develop very good relationships with children and their families and have established a welcoming and nurturing ethos in the setting. As a result, children settle well and feel included, valued and safe. Children play very well together, demonstrating kindness and empathy towards each other. Practitioners provide well-timed support and encouragement when required.
- Practitioners have created a purposeful, calm and positive atmosphere in the playroom and outdoors. They support children skilfully through commentary, questions and by guiding them during their play. Practitioners use a very effective blend of adult-initiated and child-initiated learning experiences to meet the individual needs of all children. As a result, children are happy, motivated and engage very well with the wide range of learning opportunities provided.
- 'Area scripts' provide staff with guidance on providing quality spaces and meaningful interactions. As planned, practitioners should extend these to highlight opportunities to support further literacy and numeracy. Children have the time, space and freedom to develop their ideas, interests and curiosity and extend their play. Most children can discuss their learning with confidence. They would now benefit from more opportunities to lead their learning.
- Children access outdoor areas daily, engaging in a variety of exciting experiences in all weathers. They have access to a wide range of resources, including loose parts and natural materials, to support them as they play. Practitioners make very good use of the wider community to enrich further children's learning.
- Children enjoy digital learning, using tablets and the interactive whiteboard. They play games to support literacy and numeracy, carry out research and reflect on their learning.
- Practitioners know children very well as learners and have a very good understanding of how young children learn and develop. They use this knowledge very well to support all children, including those with additional needs. Almost all practitioners use observations effectively to inform timely interventions and relevant next steps in learning. Practitioners use online learning journals to capture children's progress and next steps well. All parents regularly share in children's progress and next steps through their engagement with online learning journals. Almost all parents feel their child is making good progress in the setting.
- Practitioners use a consultative planning approach through their visual planning wall, informed by children's individual targets and national and local guidance. Staff have successfully implemented a local authority framework, ensuring a clear focus on health and wellbeing,

literacy and numeracy. This is supporting children to make very good progress in their learning.

- Staff use a robust system for tracking literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, capturing very effectively children's progress in learning. Practitioners and the equity and excellence lead practitioner support children who require additional help with their learning very well. They tailor their interactions and plan focused interventions to ensure children continue to develop and learn.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners use national and local guidance and their knowledge of children very well to provide a broad and balanced curriculum firmly based on play. Practitioners are responsive and flexible to ensure the curriculum provides developmentally appropriate experiences for all children. Children would now benefit from opportunities to develop their understanding of cross cutting themes, such as diversity.
- Practitioners successfully improved children's learning spaces to ensure they promote literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They use self-evaluation and national guidance to create stimulating and attractive learning spaces. Practitioners support children well in these spaces through the support of 'area scripts'.
- Practitioners have a very good understanding of the benefits of learning outdoors. They provide high quality learning experiences in the school and nursery grounds and in the wider community to support learning across the curriculum.
- Children's individual needs are the focus for planning transitions into the nursery and on to school. Practitioners manage transitions to nursery from home with care and sensitivity. They work closely with families and support children to develop confidence and settle quickly into the setting. Practitioners and teachers across the early level work together to support continuity and progression and ensure successful transitions. They provide very good support to children as they move from nursery into P1. Families feel well informed about how to support their child to transition into nursery or on to school.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners engage very effectively with families at an early stage to build close relationships between home and the nursery. Parents enjoy taking their babies, as young as six weeks, to baby massage. Almost all parents then continue to attend a parental programme with their children, run by practitioners. This helps them use fun activities to improve very early communication skills and children's social and emotional development.
- Parents feel welcome in the nursery. They are encouraged to become involved in the life of the nursery in a variety of ways. Parents help with resources and provide feedback regularly about a range of matters. 'Stay and Play' sessions offer parents opportunities to spend time in the nursery, allowing them to observe how their child learns in the setting.
- Senior leaders and staff communicate effectively with parents to keep them informed about their child's learning. This includes informal daily chats and more formal opportunities to discuss children's learning, progress and care. Parents enjoy looking at their children's learning profile. This enables them to be more aware of, and understand further, the knowledge and skills children gain while in the setting.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very 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

- Practitioners recognise the central importance of relationships in supporting children's social and emotional wellbeing. The caring and nurturing relationships are a very strong feature of the setting. As a result, there is a warm, respectful and positive atmosphere in the setting which helps children to be happy, confident and settled. Practitioners are very responsive in their interactions and children approach them for help and support. They are very skilled when supporting children to discuss their feelings and the emotions, and feelings, of others. Practitioners effectively deliver a programme which is improving children's self-control, emotional awareness and interpersonal problem-solving skills. Children talk well about how they can keep themselves healthy and are aware of healthy food choices. Practitioners use praise and language effectively to reinforce their expectations of behaviour.
- Practitioners have a very good understanding of the wellbeing indicators. They demonstrate them clearly through their interactions with children, parents and partners. Children have a developing understanding of what it means to be safe and healthy. Practitioners should continue to build on their practice to support children and parents to develop an awareness of the wellbeing indicators in meaningful ways. They should also continue to encourage the children to be aware of their rights by promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Practitioners know each child and their personal circumstances very well. Parents speak very positively of their relationships with practitioners. These strong relationships allow practitioners to provide appropriate and sensitive support for children and their families at an early stage. As a result of this support, children are fully included in all aspects of the setting. Practitioners plan effectively for children with additional support needs. They make very effective use of the local authority staged intervention process to plan targeted support. Practitioners monitor and review the robust individual plans effectively. They promptly seek help from other professionals when required. Children benefit from this effective partnership working, resulting in improved wellbeing and increased progress for identified children.
- Practitioners are aware of their responsibility to promote inclusion and equality. They have created a strong sense of community where everyone is valued and included. Children are developing an awareness of diversity through learning about families' experiences of living in other countries. Practitioners should continue to explore how they can engage children and themselves in relevant learning about diversity and equality.
- The leadership team has a clear understanding of the families that attend the setting and how this influences the work they do. They know the challenges they may be experiencing with the current cost of living crisis. The leadership team provide sensitive support through signposting families to appropriate resources including access to food and other items.

3.2 Securing children's progress

very 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

- Children are making very good progress in developing their early communication, language and literacy skills. Most children can confidently express their thoughts and feelings and communicate well with each other and practitioners as they play. A few younger children are gaining in confidence to share their ideas and needs. Children recall familiar nursery rhymes with actions accurately. They enjoy sharing a book with adults and listen very well to stories. Most children recognise their name. Children demonstrate their mark making skills in different contexts including making their own books or notices for the role play areas. Increasingly, they can write their own name and create drawings with detail.
- Children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Most children show confidence in counting for a variety of purposes and demonstrate good number recognition skills. They are developing an understanding of shape and pattern. They have opportunities to develop their understanding of volume and measure while making playdough or baking. Children are exploring money through routines in the playroom and different play contexts including bake stalls. Children would now benefit from an increased focus on numeracy and mathematics. This would enable children to use number meaningfully in all aspects of their play and make better progress.
- Children's progress in health and wellbeing is very good. Children learn to manage risk well when going outdoors and increasingly take responsibility for their own safety. Almost all children understand the importance of being active and keeping healthy. They jump, balance and climb with confidence in the outdoor areas. Practitioners encourage children to learn to ride a bike. With support, children are learning to identify and manage their emotions. They are encouraged to make and serve their own snack and have developed very good hygiene routines. All children develop oral health skills well as they engage in fun toothbrushing daily.
- Almost all children are making very good progress, including children who have additional support needs, since starting nursery. The leadership team and practitioners monitor children's individual progress regularly. This identifies any barriers to learning and informs children's next steps. Practitioners' timely interventions ensure that children receive developmentally appropriate support and challenge.
- Practitioners capture and celebrate children's progress and achievements in a variety of ways including online profiles, floorbooks and wall displays. Parents engage well with profiles, sharing information about children's achievements beyond the setting.

- Practitioners promote equity very well. They identify quickly potential barriers to learning and put effective support in place for all children. They work closely with families and professionals to implement effective strategies and interventions. Practitioners know children and their families very well and take full account of the differing cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Practitioners use 'Realising the Ambition - Being Me' to help them to develop the spaces across the nursery. Through regular audits of the environment, they ensure that areas are offering the appropriate opportunities to support learning and develop curiosity and creativity. Practitioners created detailed 'area scripts' which provide clear guidance regarding the appropriate resources for each space. These 'area scripts' also provide guidance for high quality interactions and outline the role of the adult and child in each space. They include a section to record the child's voice. These 'area scripts' ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of how they can provide the highest quality experience for children in each of the spaces. This ensures continuity across the setting through providing clear guidance and support to permanent or temporary staff and students.

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.