

# Summarised inspection findings

**Cornhill School Nursery Class**

Aberdeen City Council

26 November 2024

## Key contextual information

Cornhill School Nursery Class is situated within Cornhill Primary School, Aberdeen City Council. The setting is registered for 80 children. There are two nursery settings that both have free flow access to an outdoor area offering different provision models for children aged three years to those not yet attending school. There are currently 64 children on the roll, 39 children attend from 9am – 3pm five days a week term time, 25 children attend either am or pm sessions 46 weeks per year. Most children are in their pre-school year, there are 35 children with English as an additional language and 13 children in a deferred year, and a minority of three-year-olds.

The primary school headteacher has overall responsibility for the quality of learning in the nursery. He delegates the leadership of the nursery to the principal teacher who is supported by three senior early years practitioners, six early years practitioners, three support workers and two modern apprentices.

### 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

- All practitioners create caring, nurturing relationships with children and families. They support children effectively to help them settle. As a result, most children are calm and enjoy their time in nursery. Throughout the session, most children engage well in the interesting variety of experiences on offer. They have time and space to explore the environment and follow their interests. However, there is scope for practitioners to review the flow of the day and reflect on how they plan spaces more effectively to ensure all children are engaged.
- Older children participate actively in selecting snack and clearing up while younger children are learning how to help themselves. Children enjoy the relaxed atmosphere during snack and show a good understanding of the routine. They have opportunities to be curious and use resources in creative ways. Children show a keen interest in the online "Huxley challenges" where a pet dog sets tasks for children. Practitioners could explore how they can continue to build on this exciting initiative throughout the nursery.
- Practitioners support children to use puppets and other strategies to help them understand, talk about, and manage their feelings. Children play well together and share resources and with help from practitioners, children can use their words to resolve conflicts. This support is starting to impact positively on how children cooperate with each other and manage daily routines.
- Practitioners know children very well. They speak to children in a friendly manner and ask questions about their play. Most practitioners have positive interactions with children. However, the quality of interactions with children varies across the nursery. At times, practitioners miss opportunities to extend children's learning. Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners to develop further their understanding of quality interactions. Children have opportunities to use digital technology to support their learning. Practitioners encourage

children to use computers to take photographs and support them to use interactive boards to play number games.

- Most practitioners observe children during play and collect a variety of valuable evidence about what they can do. This includes photographs, videos, comments, and more detailed written information. They share this information with parents through online learning journals.
- Practitioners plan effectively for children's learning using a suitable balance of intentional and responsive planning. They have an effective system in place to track children's learning. This is helping practitioners to ensure children are making progress and enables them to identify gaps in learning. Practitioners recognise children who require additional support and plan appropriate activities to help them make progress. They explore and evaluate the impact of these experiences on children's learning. This is helping children make good progress in their 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

- Across the nursery, most children are making good progress in their communication and early language development. They confidently communicate with adults and engage in meaningful conversation. Most children independently access a range of books and enjoy listening to familiar stories. They link their learning to valuable imaginative play as they use open-ended materials and role play resources. Most children enjoy regular mark-making and draw detailed pictorial representations of people and themselves. They write familiar words linked to real life experiences.
- Almost all children are making progress in mathematics. They use mathematical language related to size and shape routinely and accurately both indoors and outdoors. Most children sort and compare resources during carefully considered transient art experiences. They learn about capacity appropriate to their stage of development during well considered opportunities in water play. A few children collect data and make simple calculations as they select and communicate lunch choices on the interactive board. They use suitable language of direction using programmable toys. Children would benefit from more frequent opportunities to develop their skills in numeracy in their play.
- Almost all children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They have a sound understanding of emotions. All children confidently share their feelings as they arrive, and at regular points during the day. They talk clearly about all areas of their health and link it to their learning throughout the session. All children are encouraged to keep things tidy and consider safety. Practitioners support children develop their physical skills as they climb, balance, and slide skilfully. Children regularly and independently dress themselves when accessing outdoors.
- Practitioners and the leadership team ensure children's key learning is identified and built upon over time. They track progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing. This is robust and reflects accurately the progress children are making. All children who require additional support are making good progress. Practitioners provide comprehensive detail in trackers and use this information effectively to contribute to children's termly targets. Practitioners continuously reflect and review children's progress through individual assessment sheets. Practitioners share children's targets with families through well informed progress meetings. As a result, children are making good progress in their learning.
- Children successfully recognise valuable achievements as they create their own digital posts to share learning achievements with parents. Their wider achievements are also celebrated

through star of the week lanyards, and on attractive wall displays. As planned, more parental engagement could achieve mutual goals from nursery and home. The leadership team and practitioners welcome and support all children and their families very well. The senior leadership team make prompt referrals to other agencies to support children. They are committed to meaningful communication with partner agencies, including health visitors and speech and language therapists for the benefit of children. They take meaningful account of families' cultural and linguistic background. In doing this, practitioners strive to ensure that they close any gaps in children's learning.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were well supported by staff who were caring and nurturing. Staff supported children giving them praise, encouragement and reassurance throughout the day. This helped children feel happy and relaxed in the nursery. Positive relationships had been built with families, supporting everyone to feel welcomed and accepted. Staff used opportunities to support children's resilience and emotional wellbeing. They discussed feelings with children, provided quiet areas and encouraged children to consider and recognise their emotions. Children's privacy and dignity was well supported by staff during personal care routines, such as visiting the toilet or nappy changing. This helped children feel secure and nurtured.

Children benefitted from meal and snack times that were relaxed, unhurried and sociable experiences. Staff used these times to build relationships and chat with children, further supporting their confidence and self-esteem. Staff sat at each table to maintain close supervision, promoting children's safety. They were aware of when children may need extra support and encouragement and provided this.

Staff ensured children had opportunities for rest and were mindful of times when children would become tired. At these times children could rest on sofas, where they could read independently or simply have a quiet time. Blankets and cushions were offered to promote their comfort.

Children's wellbeing was supported through effective personal plans that were developed in partnership with parents. Information gathered about children and families was of good quality and supported staff well in caring for the children. The plans detailed strategies of support which staff used in a consistent way to help meet the individual needs of children. Further information such as internet links to suggested activities was given as a way for parents to access these agreed strategies at home. This supported a shared approach to children's care.

Children's safety was promoted through staffs understanding of their role in identifying, recording and reporting any wellbeing or safeguarding concerns. Links had been formed with other agencies involved in children's care, such as other nurseries or speech and language therapists. Information was shared to promote a cohesive approach which supported children to reach their full potential.

**Care Inspectorate evaluation: very good**

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children had opportunities to lead their play through a selection of planned and spontaneous activities. Children were engaged and enjoyed activities such as water play, construction and mark making. Staff used their knowledge of children and feedback from parents to plan experiences around children's interests. This supported children to engage and have fun.

Children accessed mark making materials and enjoyed story telling. This supported children's literacy skills. Staff were mindful to develop children's numeracy language during play. They used words such as above, below, now and later in their descriptions of actions. These activities and interactions supported children's progress.

Practitioners encourage links with home are encouraged through the use of "Huxley's Challenge". This had been successful in encouraging children to try new tasks such as catching a ball or

making pictures from footprints. Children enjoyed regular outings into the community to enjoy local green spaces. Further community connections were made during previous visits to a local sheltered housing complex. Staff spoke about benefits this had for children in developing relationships and communication skills. Plans were in place to reintroduce these visits.

Observations of children's learning were shared with parents using an online system. This promoted children's confidence and self-esteem by celebrating their achievements. Most observations of children's learning identified ways in which their learning could continue to develop. However this was not yet consistent across all children. Senior staff had identified this as an area of improvement and a plan was in place to further develop this area of practice.

Children were confident in accessing resources and different areas of the rooms and outdoors. This supported their choice and enabled them to follow their interests. Some daily routines, however, interrupted the children's engagement, potentially disrupting their learning. We suggested reviewing the end of day routine and how this could be further improved to maximise children's opportunities to lead their own play.

There were times when children's experiences and learning were extended by skilled staff interactions. However, there were other occasions when opportunities to do this were missed or interactions did not have the desired impact. Senior staff recognised the need for further development in this area and had included this within the improvement plan.

**Care Inspectorate evaluation: good**

### **3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well.**

Children benefited from an ethos of continuous improvement. Leaders promoted a shared vision which helped staff and parents know what was important for the setting. Parents told us they felt they could make suggestions for improvements. Staff shared examples of improvements they had been involved in planning and implementing, such as the refurbishment of the outdoor area. This helped promote positive experiences for children.

Leaders recognised the importance of involving children and families in the evaluation and development of the service. Various methods were used to gather feedback including a "question of the month" for parents. A child friendly "smiley face" approach was used to gain children's feedback. Information gathered had then influenced evaluation work and identified areas of development for the service. This supported families to feel valued and encouraged to influence change within the setting.

Quality assurance such as audits and monitoring had identified where further improvements were needed. For example children's lunch time experience had been a key area of development which led to improved experiences for children. Opportunities for shared leadership and responsibility for ongoing quality assurance were in the early stages. Staff were keen to take on more responsibility, this will support ongoing sustainable progress.

The improvement plan was a shared document used by the whole team. It was available to parents online. This meant that everyone was involved in supporting progress. Key staff had responsibility for actioning aspects of the plan. For example the outdoor area, literacy and parental engagement were all key areas of development. As a result staff were committed to the planned improvements resulting in improved experiences for children. Staff were enthusiastic about achievements and eager to share where progress had been made. Progress information was



shared with parents and families through a digital platform, displays and discussions. This further supported parental engagement.

### Care Inspectorate evaluation: very good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and one area for improvement. From this, one area for improvement has been met. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no areas for improvement.

## 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.