

# Summarised inspection findings

**Auchterellon Primary School Nursery Class**

Aberdeenshire Council

3 October 2023

## Key contextual information

Auchterellon school nursery class is located within the main school building of Auchterellon Primary School. The nursery is located in the rural town of Ellon, Aberdeenshire. The nursery can offer 96 places to children aged three to those not yet attending primary school. At the time of the inspection the roll was 89. The manager of the nursery is a Senior Early Years Practitioner (SEYP) who is supported by two Lead Practitioners. The headteacher is the senior leadership team link for the nursery and provides strategic leadership for the nursery class. The centre is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. five days per week for 50 weeks per year.

### 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 have warm and respectful relationships with children. Almost all children are confident in the nursery environment and interact positively with each other and with adults. They engage in a variety of planned and self-chosen activities, across the playroom, and outside, including at Forest School. The majority of children engage with play for sustained periods of time in areas including loose parts play, creative mark making and exploring nature outside. Almost all children enjoy opportunities to help, for example preparing snack and watering the plants. They contribute to risk assessments and enjoy risky play outdoors. The playroom environment could be enhanced further to support children's developing skills and increase levels of engagement. The majority of children would benefit from experiences that developed further their responsibility, and independence skills.
- All practitioners are kind and caring, supporting children to settle quickly. They support children best when they scaffold learning and follow children's lead. Digital technologies support children's learning in literacy, numeracy and mathematics effectively. Children could have more opportunities to use digital technologies independently to enhance their learning. For example, using the tablets to take photographs and record their thoughts and ideas. As planned, practitioners would benefit from professional learning to develop further the use of open-ended questioning. This should ensure opportunities aren't missed to deepen and extend children's learning during play.
- Practitioners know children well and make useful observations which supports practitioners to understand where children are in their learning. Parents receive regular information through on-line learning journals. They increasingly contribute to these, sharing learning and achievements at home, for example the use of family learning packs. Observations now need to inform more accurately the planning for next steps across the curriculum. This should result in all children making better progress in their learning.

- All practitioners contribute to aspects of intentional and responsive planning. They provide opportunities for children to be included in changes to the learning environment, for example the development of the outdoor area. Practitioners should develop further evaluations of learning to inform future planning. This should include planning for stimulating play areas to ensure appropriate levels of challenge across the curriculum and explore areas of interest in more depth over time. Senior leaders should keep group times under review to ensure they consistently meet the needs of all children.
- Senior leaders and key workers discuss all individual children's progress at regular intervals throughout the year. Almost all practitioners find these meetings helpful in ensuring that all children's progress and next steps are considered. This leads directly to targeted interventions and planning for learning experiences which supports most children to make good progress.

## 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

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

#### Progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing

- Information from observations, assessment, trackers and overviews demonstrates that overall, children are making good progress in their learning since starting nursery.

#### Children aged three to five years

- Most children are making good progress in their communication and early language skills. Most children listen well in small group activities and join in with familiar stories, rhymes and songs. Children are developing a love of books through use of the nursery lending library. They enjoy listening to their favourite stories with practitioners. Most children recognise their name with a few developing their understanding of letters and sounds. Across early literacy, children would benefit from increased opportunities to develop and apply their skills in real and meaningful contexts, including outdoors.
- Most children are making good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. The majority of children are beginning to write numbers to 10. Most children count forward up to 10 with a few counting numbers beyond 10. Most children can identify common two-dimensional shapes. Children use positional and mathematical language in their block and loose parts play. A few children are ready for more challenging experiences to help them make progress in a wider range of early numeracy and mathematics skills.
- Almost all children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Most children play cooperatively with friends and take turns during games and learning experiences. Children are aware of healthy food and choose independently at snack and mealtimes. Most children understand the importance of keeping themselves safe. They climb, balance and assess their own risk using a wide variety of equipment and natural resources. Most children are developing their awareness of the wellbeing indicators. Children carry out and understand the importance of hygiene through regular handwashing. They brush their teeth during group time but would benefit from daily toothbrushing built into their routines.

#### Children's progress over time

- Overall, most children are making good progress appropriate to their stage of development. Staff track children's progress over time appropriately using developmental milestone trackers. The SEYP and practitioners have recently introduced key worker tracking meetings to more effectively use this information to evidence progress over time for all children. As identified, senior leaders and practitioners should establish more regular moderation linked to

national standards. This will develop further practitioners' confidence in their professional judgements.

### **Overall quality of children's achievement**

- Practitioners praise and encourage children to share their achievements and experiences from outside the nursery. Most children are developing well their independence skills, team working and social skills. Parents add their children's achievements using the online learning journals. These are displayed on a 'Home from Home' display in the nursery. Practitioners encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning through popular stay and play sessions. Senior leaders should now work together to develop further ways to track and build upon children's individual achievements at nursery and from home. This will provide a more holistic record of the child and identify more clearly any children who are at risk of missing out.

### **Ensuring equity for all children**

- Senior leaders and practitioners have strong and trusting relationships with children and their families. Parents feel valued and included in their child's learning. Senior leaders know children and their families well and have a sound knowledge of the socio-economic context. They work effectively with partner agencies including health professionals. The headteacher and senior practitioner meet weekly to review the progress of children with additional support needs and barriers to learning. This, alongside recently introduced key worker tracking meetings, helps inform any group or individual work to ensure children's needs are met well. Senior leaders and practitioners use this knowledge to provide valuable support to children with additional support needs and families experiencing challenges and potential barriers to progress. They have identified the need for a focus on wellbeing to continue as an area of priority for a few children. The team should continue to evaluate the impact of targeted interventions to help inform any group or individual work to close the poverty-related attainment gap.

## 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.