

Summarised inspection findings

Dalgety Bay Primary School and Nursery Class

Fife Council

02 October 2018

Key contextual information

Dalgety Bay Primary School Nursery Class is registered for 50 children at any one time. Children aged 3-5 attend over 2 full days, 4 extended sessions or 5 regular sessions over the week. The setting is in a separate building in the school grounds. Children are based in either one of two playrooms, however they have free access to both rooms and the three areas of well-resourced outdoor space.

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
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- The vision, values and aims for the entire school community are embedded within the work of the Early Years and Childcare setting. The expectation for practitioners and children to respect, achieve and believe is core to the setting's work. Practitioners, children and parents have created a climate of mutual trust and respect. Children are encouraged to have high aspirations for themselves through the focus on developing the young workforce, when they have appropriate opportunities to be introduced to the world of work. Children help to look after resources. However, there is scope for them to be given more responsibility and leadership opportunities within the setting.
 - Priorities for improvement in the setting are fully included and mirror those in the School Improvement Plan. The four key priorities are making thinking visible, developing the young workforce, developing mental maths in numeracy and ensuring universal, targeted support through nurture. These are displayed in the setting, ensuring they are understood by all stakeholders. The plan for improvement is carefully audited by the Senior Leadership Team and practitioners to ensure appropriate progress. Progress with priorities is clearly evidenced throughout the setting and displayed prominently for parents and carers. Children's 'little voices' are respected when they recall and evaluate their experiences in the setting, and offer ideas about their learning. The nurturing approach to all children and families is at the heart of practitioner's work and is greatly appreciated by families.
 - There is a clear structure of line management and support for the setting. The headteacher and depute headteacher have overall responsibility for the setting and are proactive in their support and challenge. The Early Years Development Officer, practitioners and support assistants work very well as a team and, together, demonstrate strong leadership. As a result, practitioners are confident in their work, knowing they will be supported to do their best for children and families. The reflective team regularly evaluate practice using national guidance. As a result, they identified the outdoor area required upgrading and have achieved success in improving the area. We discussed with practitioners the importance of the setting being included in whole school priorities, whilst also identifying early years' specific areas for development.
 - Practitioners demonstrate a commitment to keeping abreast of current thinking and research in early years practice and identify necessary changes. Practitioners, ably supported by

senior leaders, focus on improvement, take on leadership roles and support others to develop their practice. As a result of this enthusiastic and thoughtful approach to developing the skills and talents of team members, the setting is on a journey of improvement to ensure positive outcomes for children. Practitioners keep up to date and benefit from their personal professional learning activities, school based activities and training from Fife Council.

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

- In the setting strong, nurturing and caring relationships are evident between practitioners, children and parents. As a result, there is a calm and happy environment where children are valued and respected. The setting layout, and use of natural and real resources, encourages children to lead their own learning. This promotes the development of children's creativity and curiosity during play. Almost all children have fun, are enthusiastic and engage well in the wide range of play areas indoors and outside.
- Children interact very well together, for example, in using blocks to build roadways and bridges and 'baking' cookies in the mud kitchen to sell in the outdoor shop. Practitioner interactions are sensitive and gentle. They skilfully encourage and praise children well during play. They respond well to build on children's interests, for example, in using books and videos to help them find out information and extend their knowledge.
- Children use the smart board within each playroom. They use these to support learning, including interacting with games, for example to develop their maths skills in matching and learning the names of 2-D shapes. During the inspection, we discussed opportunities to use information and communication technology resources more widely to support children's learning.
- Practitioners know children very well as learners. They make use of observations and E-Lips assessments to make sound judgements about children's achievements. They record and track progress children are making, and use this information to plan next steps in learning for individual children. Personal Learning Journals (PLJs) are in place for all children. These are used to talk with parents about the progress individual children are making, and celebrate success. Parents share achievements from home and outwith the setting and these 'star moments' are displayed and celebrated.
- Practitioners plan for children's learning over different timescales and link this to experiences and outcomes. Short-term planning for children's learning builds on their interests and observations by practitioners. Daily responsive planning helps practitioners to respond quickly and build on children's interests. Learning walls are used to share the development of learning and involve children in talking about planning and reflecting on learning.
- Free-play experiences are targeted at all children at a similar level. As there is a variety of developmental stages, practitioners should consider opportunities for some adult-initiated learning to ensure all children are challenged at a level that supports them to make the very best progress.

- Children who require additional support with their learning are skilfully supported and included by practitioners and support assistants. Practitioners work with other agencies and partners to share information as appropriate. Plans are developed with parents, as part of the review process, for individual children who require them. Practitioners are sensitive to individual children's wider needs and put in place strategies to effectively support them to overcome barriers to learning and participation.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- There is a clear curriculum rationale for the school and the setting. The school values, 'Respect, Achieve, Believe' are reflected within the setting. The pedagogical approaches in the setting reflect the vision well. Curriculum pathways have very recently been developed. There are opportunities for practitioners to use these as a focus to engage in professional dialogue across the early level to promote continuity and progression further.
- Literacy, maths and numeracy are promoted very effectively across the setting. There are rich opportunities for children to develop skills in listening and talking, and using books for stories and information. Children have opportunities to use numbers and mathematical language when measuring sunflowers and exploring shapes when building with blocks. Songs and music are beginning to be used to support some children to learn simple words and phrases in French.
- Practitioners make good use of parents and partners to enrich the curriculum, for example, in sharing their skills and promoting the world of work. In developing an understanding of the world of work, practitioners promote gender equality. Parental partnerships and involvement in learning enhances children's learning in science. Children are keen to investigate and experiment, which is helping them to develop an understanding of the properties of different materials.
- The local woods and beach are used regularly to enrich children's learning and help them to appreciate their natural environment and local community. Children are developing very good motor skills, walking in the woods and climbing the rocks on the beach. They enjoy finding and identifying shells and jellyfish, building fires and toasting marshmallows. They talk confidently about their local area and the places they enjoy visiting.
- Children in the setting participate in some school events. They spend time with children in the primary one class and have opportunities to meet and play with their buddies to help them prepare for starting school. An early years practitioner works across the early level to support continuity and progression in learning through play.

2.7 Partnerships : Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Working with children and families is a key strength of the setting. Parents we spoke with during the inspection highly praised the inclusive ethos of the setting, where all feel welcomed and where children quickly settle in the nurturing environment. Parents are highly supportive and keen to help. They willingly, and spontaneously, stay and play as well as attending on a planned basis and helping with outings. As a result of this positive ethos, children feel included and confident in the setting. Parents willingly share their skills to support learning. They visit the setting to talk about the skills required for their jobs and a few work directly with the children to enrich their learning experiences.
- Family learning is a strong feature in the setting. There are numerous groups available to support parenting and to provide structured leisure time for children, parents/carers and younger siblings. Groups for children aged 0-5 are often led by practitioners. For example, the weekly yoga session is enjoyable and relaxing for all involved and also supports younger siblings to become familiar with the setting ahead of entry.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The setting 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 communicate with each other and with children in a way that promotes mutual respect and trust. They model positive relationships and share in the responsibility for creating a calm and purposeful learning environment. The warm, nurturing and welcoming ethos within the setting ensures children are happy, secure and confident. Almost all children quickly relax and settle to their play. The open-door approach to energetic play, both indoors and outside, ensures children feel the benefits of fresh air and exercise. Children are learning to be independent as they spread butter on their bread and follow a recipe as they make play dough. They are learning what is required to grow their own vegetables in the garden and look forward to eating them in due course. However, practitioners could helpfully review the approach to healthy eating by limiting sweet treats. Children who stay for a full day would benefit from different experiences to break up their day. For example, a quiet time after lunch, or a burst of physical exercise, could be beneficial, depending upon the needs of the children.
- Practitioners know children's individual personalities very well and are alert to their feelings and dispositions throughout the session. Due to the strong emphasis practitioners place on listening, children know their thoughts and ideas are valued and respected. Children play together very well and are developing their empathy and respect for others.
- Practitioners ensure children entering the setting have taster sessions, and a soft start, to provide a gentle introduction to early learning and childcare. Children's on-going involvement in the life of the school ensures transitions are seamless. Regular visits from primary buddies, playing in the playground and involvement in activities throughout the year help children to feel included in school life. There is scope for children to be more fully involved with the school, for example, by regularly attending appropriate assemblies and by taking part in school groups, for example, the Pupil Council.
- There is a strong focus on children's wellbeing throughout the setting. The national wellbeing indicators are embedded and evidenced in practice. Children are beginning to understand how it feels to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are very aware of how to keep themselves and others safe, particularly at the beach or forest and when they walk to the local nursing home on weekly visits to the residents. They understand the class charter expectations that they should make friends, take care of resources, use gentle hands and feet and use words if they are upset. As a result, children can be confident their needs will be met within the setting.
- Practitioners are aware of, and implement, statutory duties to improve outcomes for children. A range of policies is in place to guide their work. They participate in professional learning to develop their roles and responsibilities, and keep their training up to date.

- Practitioners are reflective about their day to day practice, and make adjustments where appropriate, to meet the needs of children and families. All children and their families are included in the life of the setting. They are treated with fairness and respect. Practitioners should continue to proactively plan opportunities for all children to learn about aspects of others' cultures and faiths in a meaningful way. There is scope to promote further children's awareness of global citizenship and support them to be more actively involved in helping those who are not as fortunate as themselves.
- Practitioners work closely with families and agencies where children have particular educational, development or health needs. Minutes of multi-agency meetings identify children's next steps. Parents report their high level of appreciation of the fully inclusive, caring and supportive practitioners who make a positive difference to their children and also their families.

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
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- The setting is nurturing and sensory, and promotes wellbeing and the development of children's confidence very well. The playrooms and outdoor areas enable almost all children to be independent and develop increasing responsibility for managing risks, and talk about keeping themselves and others safe during play. Children demonstrate confidence in using bikes, climbing and balancing in the outdoor area. They are skilled in using small tools, for example, scissors to create pictures.
 - Almost all children are developing very good skills in early language. They use these skills to listen well to adults, follow instructions well and participate in conversations and games. They regularly read stories with practitioners and can talk confidently to recall the main parts of the story from the book of the week. Nursery rhymes are helping children to identify words that rhyme. Most children are eager to make marks and are making good attempts at writing their name at the writing area. They would benefit from more encouragement to develop and use writing skills in a wider range of play and real life contexts.
 - Children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. During play, for example, when making dough, they are confident in measuring while following visual instructions. At the beach, they use mathematical language to compare the size and weight of stones and pebbles. Almost all children recognise numbers during their play and in walks in the local community. They are becoming confident in touching and counting objects, for example, gathering sticks on the beach.
 - Children's progress is monitored through trackers and assessments of the development of skills for learning, life and work. PLJs show observations and individual tracking of children's progress. PLJs show that children are making very good progress. Practitioners meet with parents and children twice a year to share children's progress and targets. As planned, there is scope to consider how to provide a clearer overview of progress and targets, to support children to talk more about their learning, achievements and next steps.
 - Children are confident in making choices about their play and learning. The experience of learning about different jobs has enabled them to talk confidently about roles and jobs they may like in the future. Participating in different science experiments is encouraging children to investigate, explore and talk about their observations.
 - Practitioners demonstrate a very good awareness of the needs of individual children and families. They are sensitive in working with parents and other services to provide

personalised support to individuals to overcome barriers and improve outcomes for children. Practitioners, including support assistants, provide flexible, personalised supports and strategies that effectively meet the different needs of the children.

Choice of QI : Developing creativity and skills for life and learning

- Developing creativity
- Developing skills for life and learning
- Developing digital skills

- Throughout the setting, children are encouraged to be creative in all aspects of their learning. They have access to a very good range of open ended materials to encourage them to be imaginative and inquisitive. Children are developing resilience, independence and confidence through a range of interesting and stimulating learning experiences. Practitioners continually seek ways to enable children to develop skills for life and learning. Indoor, outdoor, and forest or beach kindergarten experiences encourage children to explore their environments, take risks and encourage imaginative play. Children engage enthusiastically in role play and confidently enact real life scenarios, for example, wedding parties and hairdressers. They include others in their imaginative play and maintain roles for extended periods of time. They confidently experiment with colours and various materials as they express themselves through art and craft.
- Practitioners ensure children's emotional, social and physical needs are met very well. As a result, children are confident to express themselves, take risks and use others' ideas to help them in their thinking. Disagreements between children are gently explored and they are supported to come to agreeable resolutions. The strong, nurturing approach makes them feel valued and secure in the setting. Children know their 'little voices' are respected and, as a result, they are confident that their ideas for improvement within the setting are taken seriously.
- A relevant focus on Developing the Young Workforce supports children to develop skills for life and learning. Visitors to the setting discuss their jobs and promote children's very early understanding of different roles and the skills they will need in the future. A focus on non-gender specific roles challenges the traditional stereotypes, for example, visits from a female scientist and a female minister.
- Children independently access the smart boards to reinforce their skills in numeracy and to research particular interests. They creatively use loose parts such as telephones and keyboards to support their role play. We discussed with practitioners their ideas to extend opportunities for digital literacy to develop children's creativity further and enhance the curriculum.

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.