

Summarised inspection findings

Kilbowie Primary Early Learning and Childcare Centre

West Dunbartonshire Council

1 April 2025

Key contextual information

Kilbowie Early Learning and Childcare Centre (ELCC) is part of Kilbowie Primary School and provides early learning and childcare (ELC) in the Clydebank area. The nursery is registered for 60 children at any one time. It caters for children aged three to those not yet attending school. There are currently 40 children on the roll. Children attend between 8.45 am and 2.45 pm, during term-time. The headteacher of the school has overall responsibility for the ELCC, supported by a full-time Lead Early Learning and Childcare Officer (LELCO). Further staffing includes five full-time and four part-time practitioners, a learning assistant, a lunchtime assistant, a facilities assistant and an Excellence and Equity Lead. A part-time teacher works one and a half days over a two-week period.

The headteacher and LELCO have taken up post within the past year following a period of unsettled staffing. The building consists of three open plan playrooms with direct access to an outdoor area. There is a further outdoor space that is accessed from the corridor. Children make use of the school hall for lunches.

1.3 Leadership of change	good
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community■ strategic planning for continuous improvement■ implementing improvement and change	

- The headteacher and LELCO provide effective strategic leadership. They are creating a collegiate approach to improvement since taking up their posts at the start of this session. Practitioners are enthusiastic and are committed to striving to provide high-quality ELC through continual improvement. The senior leadership team provide supportive and motivational leadership. This is resulting in a team who feel increasingly confident and empowered to contribute to the improvement agenda. Working together, senior leaders and practitioners are very well placed to continue to improve.
- The vision, aims and values of respect, achievement, inclusion, safe and secure, and equality and diversity (RAISE) are shared with the school and are well-established. All practitioners strive to demonstrate the values in their day-to-day work with children, their families and the wider community. P6 children are beginning to work alongside ELC children to support their understanding of the values in a meaningful and developmentally appropriate way. Practitioners identify the positive change this work is having, for example, children more confidently linking the values to their everyday experiences and learning.
- Practitioners demonstrate a professional commitment to continually improving their practice. They undertake professional learning and further qualifications enthusiastically to enhance and develop their knowledge and skills. Recently practitioners have been empowered to take on leadership roles relating to the development needs of the setting. This includes working groups focused on developing numeracy and health and wellbeing. There is scope to develop these roles further to ensure that the depth and quality of this work leads to ongoing improvement.

- The newly formed senior leadership team have accurately identified the strengths and areas of development for the ELCC. A detailed calendar to monitor quality of provision has been developed and, although at the early stages of implementation, is used well. It will be important that all aspects identified for improvement are taken forward to ensure direct impact on improvement and the quality of ELC being delivered. Practitioners have used national guidance effectively to support improvement, for example, developing interesting spaces to promote creativity. Senior leaders have correctly identified that self-evaluation frameworks could be used more consistently to support ongoing reflection and to measure the impact of improvement.
- Children have simple leadership opportunities including risk assessing the garden, being snack and lunch helpers, and welcoming visitors to the ELCC. Practitioners could support children to build on these experiences further as appropriate to their stage of development.

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 created a very welcoming and relaxed ethos and, as a result, almost all children are happy and settled. The pace of the session allows children to have extended time to engage in play that is self-selected. Most children play together cooperatively and engage well in learning experiences of their choice. Practitioners are rightly proud of changes they have made to the environment, for example extending space available for block play and relocating spaces for snack. These changes are well-considered and have resulted in stimulating and engaging spaces that meet the needs of children very well. Practitioners provide a stimulating range of natural and open-ended resources, both indoors and out. This is supporting children's engagement for more sustained periods of time.
- Practitioners interact enthusiastically with children and match their interactions to individual needs. They have a clear focus on developing children's skills and understanding in literacy and numeracy. Most practitioners provide high-quality questioning and commentary to support, extend and challenge children's learning. They should continue to develop this to ensure consistency across the team and over time. Children access a range of digital technology to enhance and support their learning. This includes accessing stories in their first language and consolidating maths understanding using the interactive board. Practitioners could develop this further, for example, embedding recently introduced matrix bar codes to access resources independently and using technology to research areas of interest.
- Practitioners have extensive knowledge of children as unique individuals and as learners. They make helpful observations of children's learning and use local authority tools to identify what children know, can do and what they need to learn next. Practitioners should ensure that the identified next steps in learning are significant for each child and the progress they make is able to be measured. They could share these next steps with children in meaningful ways. Practitioner's observations are documented, with photographs and children's artwork, in learning journals. Children are proud of their journal and enjoy sharing their nursery experiences with others. Practitioners engage in regular professional dialogue with each other and the visiting teacher to support their professional judgement about children's progress.
- Practitioners carefully plan adult-initiated experiences that support children to make progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They also plan interesting experiences and provide resources that respond to, and at times, extend children's interests. They use floorbooks to involve children in talking about and documenting their learning. This approach could be developed further to support children to be involved more fully in the planning process.
- Practitioners carefully monitor children's learning in literacy and numeracy using a helpful local authority tracking format. This provides valuable information about how children are progressing in their learning and identifies any potential gaps. This session, practitioners are

beginning to use this approach to track the learning of all ages of children and they should continue to embed this.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Practitioners provide a varied curriculum that is play-based and allows children to make progress at their individual pace. They make extensive use of their outdoor spaces and are keen to develop further the use of the local community to provide real-life, exciting contexts for learning. Senior leaders track coverage of experiences and outcomes to help identify potential gaps in learning, for example, science. They should continue to do this to ensure children receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Practitioners provide a very personalised approach to settling children into the ELCC. Parents appreciate the support their child receives. They would welcome more information, for example a handbook, to support them and their child to transition successfully. Practitioners work with staff across the early level to provide transitions that are responsive to the needs of individuals. The development of a shared play strategy is supporting this well. Senior leaders and practitioners are working together to begin to develop a 'one-ery'. This aims to provide an enhanced transition for children who may benefit from additional support as they start school. It also allows learners in P1 to access play pedagogy in the ELC setting. This may help ensure children make sustained progress and experience continuity as they move across the early level and beyond.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have established productive links with a range of partners, including, parents, a range of professionals and those within the local community. These partnerships are supporting children's development and leading to positive outcomes.
- Practitioners engage parents well in the life of the setting through a variety of approaches. 'Stay and play' sessions provide opportunities for parents to engage in play experiences and share in their child's learning. Practitioners encourage learning in the home. A helpful display board highlights 'things to try at home' in relation to learning in literacy and numeracy. Learning at home bags containing story books and guidance sheets also encourage learning beyond the setting. The planned re-introduction of an online communication tool could further support partnership working. As identified by senior leaders and practitioners, there is scope to deepen this work further and increase opportunities for parents to be involved in the life of the setting.
- Children's experiences are enriched by partnerships within the local community. These include visits from the local fire brigade and most recently a partnership with a local shop to promote and learn about fairtrade.

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. Areas for development have been agreed with the setting and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

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

- Positive relationships are a strength of the ELCC and can be seen between children, practitioners, families and senior leaders. Practitioners emphasise the importance of children's emotional wellbeing and this is at the centre of their work. A range of developmentally appropriate interventions are used to support children to be able to identify and understand their emotions including stories, check-ins throughout the day, and yoga. Practitioners know their families well and take time to build positive, caring relationships. The newly formed senior leadership team prioritise staff wellbeing. They provide sensitive, encouraging support to practitioners which is building a strong ethos of teamwork and professional confidence. All staff report feeling happy and motivated resulting in them being well placed to support the wellbeing of children and their families. Children are happy and settled as they learn to share, take turns and negotiate with their friends. If children are upset, practitioners intervene calmly and sensitively to support them.
- The majority of children recognise and name different emotions they experience. Practitioners use helpful visuals to support children to understand and talk about their emotions and navigate social situations. Practitioners use the national wellbeing indicators to support the life and work of the ELCC. They have recently introduced wellbeing characters to embed children's understanding of wellbeing in a developmentally appropriate way. Children understand how to be safe and healthy through real-life experiences. They keep themselves safe at the woodwork bench and carry out risk assessments in their outdoor spaces. Children are becoming increasingly independent as they self-serve their own snack and lunch and make their own playdough by following visual instructions. They are becoming more aware of their rights. These are beginning to be made explicit within the playroom to support understanding, for example, the right to clean water through the self-serve water station.
- Practitioners, guided by the senior leadership team, are aware of their statutory duties relating to ELC. They understand their responsibility in keeping children safe and the necessary procedures to follow. Practitioners gather helpful information about all children's care and welfare needs. Senior leaders should ensure consistency in the creation, implementation and review of individual care plans to ensure legislative requirements are met. Practitioners readily identify when children require additional support to ensure their learning needs are fully met. Where appropriate detailed plans are created in partnership with other professionals and families.
- The team have created a positive ethos where everyone is welcome and treated equally and with respect. They recognise the uniqueness of each child and celebrate all that they bring to the setting from home. The team value diversity and have found ways to ensure that children's first language is supported within the ELCC. They should continue to provide a range of

experiences that support children to understand differences out with their immediate environment.

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 from their individual stage of development in early language and communication. They are learning to listen well in different situations. Most children are developing their understanding and use of a range of vocabulary, including more challenging words. They enjoy listening to stories and exploring texts in depth. The majority of children are identifying words that rhyme and enjoy games with an adult to explore rhyme. The majority of children show interest in letters and the sounds they make. They are enthusiastic about mark making, with older children forming letters and writing familiar words, including their names.
- Most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They recognise and use numbers within 10 confidently in their play and routines. A few children enjoy the challenge of exploring larger numbers and simple addition. Practitioners carefully introduce children to a full range of mathematical concepts and as a result most children are developing interest and understanding. This includes exploring symmetry, money, time and recognising and recreating patterns. As a result of a focus on information handling the majority of children enjoyed gathering data using tally marks and to produce a simple bar chart.
- Children's progress in health and wellbeing is good. They enjoy preparing foods for others and are proud as they share their freshly baked produce. Most children are developing gross motor control and demonstrate resilience and perseverance as they navigate different surfaces outdoors. The majority of children confidently describe how to keep themselves safe, for example when using fire in nursery and using real tools.
- As a result of their nursery experiences, most children are making good progress over time. Practitioners readily identify potential barriers or gaps in children's learning. They use a range of approaches to support all children to make the best possible progress in literacy and numeracy. This is helping to limit any potential gaps in outcomes and is accelerating progress for a minority of children in aspects of their learning. Senior leaders should work with practitioners to ensure that children make progress over time in all areas of the curriculum.
- Practitioners meaningfully recognise and celebrate children's successes and achievements well through praise and encouragement and the use of certificates. As planned, practitioners could develop further links within the community to allow children to develop and apply understanding and skills as local and global citizens of 21st century Scotland.

- Practitioners understand the potential challenges within their local community and have created an inclusive ethos that promotes equity for all. Senior leaders make effective use of assessment information relating to children's progress in literacy and numeracy to promote equity. Practitioners, working with senior leaders, should continue to develop confidence and skills in the effective interpretation and use of all available data and information. This includes to help plan any required interventions and ongoing monitoring of their effectiveness.

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.