

Summarised inspection findings

St Fillan's Primary School Nursery Class

Glasgow City Council

22 August 2023

Key contextual information

St Fillan's nursery class is situated within St Fillan's Primary School and is located in the Cathcart area of Glasgow. The nursery class has two playrooms, an adjacent outdoor space, a larger separate outdoor area and access to the wider school grounds. The nursery class can accommodate 40 children from three years of age at any one time. The nursery is open during term time. Around a quarter of children attending the nursery have English as an additional language. Most children attend for a morning or afternoon session. A minority of children access their funded hours through an extended day place. A few children access blended placements with other settings.

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

- Senior leaders and practitioners, in consultation with stakeholders, recently revised the nursery vision, values and aims. All staff in the team reflect the vision of 'providing quality early learning and childcare for all children and families, in a nurturing, joyful and relaxed environment.' Practitioners are highly committed and very responsive to children, parents and families across the St Fillan's nursery community.
- The recently appointed depute headteacher supports the nursery very well. She has a clear vision for continued development across the early level within the nursery and school. The Child Development Officer (CDO) team leader provides highly effective daily leadership of the nursery. She is a strong role model to the practitioner team and leads by example. The successful blend of leadership roles across the nursery helps to deliver very positive outcomes for children and families. There is a very strong sense of teamwork among practitioners. All members of the team are proud of the very welcoming and nurturing ethos they have created for children and families. Practitioners value their collective knowledge and share this well across the team.
- Senior leaders know practitioners very well and develop their skills, including through formal professional development reviews. All practitioners take on lead responsibilities with enthusiasm. This includes, for example, literacy, numeracy, digital technologies, outdoor learning and Children's Rights. Practitioners regular professional learning helps support improvements in practice and has a positive impact on children's experiences. Examples include nurturing approaches and professional learning to support children with particular learning needs.
- The CDO team leader and practitioners embed approaches to developing continuous improvement and self-evaluation very well. They follow a quality assurance calendar based on national guidance and include engagement with practitioners, children and families. Regular surveys to parents ensure engagement of all. The depute headteacher and team leader proactively look beyond the St Fillan's community and regularly engage with colleagues from

other settings, to review and reflect on practice. Practitioners constantly review aspects of nursery life through daily and weekly end of day discussions and formal meetings. Children are involved in decision making, for example in reviewing and amending their block play area, or risk assessing their outdoor forest learning area. Children are now ready to take an increased role in reviewing aspects of nursery life and continuing to make improvements.

- Senior leaders create conditions where practitioners feel confident to initiate well-informed change and share responsibility for the process of change. As planned, practitioners should continue to evaluate the impact of changes that are made, to secure continuous improvement.

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 know children very well and are very caring and nurturing. They create a very positive and inclusive learning environment where children and families are welcomed and valued. Practitioners are genuinely interested in all children and are highly responsive to their interests and needs. Almost all children explore spaces and resources with confidence and interest throughout the day. Friendships are well developed and help children in their learning. Adults skilfully help children resolve any disagreements that might arise.
- Practitioners use open ended questions and model language very well to support children's learning and to extend children's vocabulary. All practitioners have a very good understanding of child development and how children learn.
- Children's drawings, artwork, constructions and photographs of learning are displayed attractively throughout the nursery. Children enjoy playing and learning in their outdoor environments and are developing their curiosity and creativity through the variety of interesting experiences.
- Practitioners use a range of assessment information very effectively to meet the diverse range of needs. They observe children and record information about children's learning regularly in learning journals, including written observations and photographs. The team have improved their digital skills to successfully introduce digital platforms for sharing learning with parents. Parents are encouraged to share learning from home.
- Practitioners monitor the learning achievements of all children regularly to ensure each child is making appropriate progress. Practitioners create and share a much-valued 'memory' file of each child's progress and achievements with children and their parents. Children talk about their memories and learning experiences very confidently. Practitioners should continue to refine observations to record significant learning.
- Planning methods take very good account of the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Practitioners capture and respond to children's interests and ideas intuitively. They are continuing to develop their use of big books to find out children's interests. Practitioners use this information effectively to identify possible lines of development to explore with children. Children are now ready to take an increased role in leading and reflecting on their own learning.
- Practitioners use a local authority tracker to record children's progress very effectively. The team plan to extend further this approach to support tracking across all areas of the curriculum. Practitioners provide appropriate interventions for children requiring support and challenge in their learning. This leads to children being very well supported and making very good progress in their learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Children learn through play across the curriculum in a wide range of learning spaces. Children are learning about the environment as part of their Eco-Schools approach. The practitioner team are confident in using the experiences and outcomes of CfE to inform their work and provide children with a breadth of experiences. Practitioners work closely with teachers to support aspects of learning across the early level. This includes, for example, strategies to support children's wellbeing, emotions and build resilience. As identified, practitioners should continue to develop a clear curriculum rationale across the early level.
- Parents and children enjoy the return of events, celebrations and group activities which were disrupted due to COVID-19 mitigations. This now needs to be capitalised on to promote more real-life opportunities for children to develop their curiosity, inquiry, creativity and problem-solving skills within the nursery, outdoors and the local community.
- Children's individual needs are the focus for planning transitions into the setting and onto school. Children are supported very well as they settle into their learning. Practitioners apply their knowledge of children's interests, preferences, and stage of development very effectively.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Parents are valued partners in their child's learning at St Fillan's nursery. Practitioners seek parental views and involvement in improvement, for example through regular questionnaires about different aspects of the nursery. Practitioners ensure parents know that their views have influenced change through for example, the "you said, we did" feedback to parents.
- The strong approaches to partnership and parental engagement are improving outcomes for children and their families. For example, children's attendance at nursery increased. Parents gained confidence and trust in working with staff and were supported in encouraging their child to attend nursery. This resulted in children enjoying very positive experiences at nursery and progressing well.
- Parents are invited to attend formal and informal sessions at nursery. These include open invitations to the regular stay and play sessions. Parents appreciate the positive and regular communication between them and the practitioners using a digital communication platform. Parents feel supported and included by practitioners. They value opportunities to learn more about planned learning in the nursery. For example, what CfE means for their children. Additionally, parents share their skills with children at the nursery, for example in dance, yoga or gardening.

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

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

- All practitioners are very nurturing towards children, showing high levels of care throughout nursery life. Practitioners use a variety of languages in nursery routines, for example in welcome time. As a result of the very inclusive approach and practitioners' focus on wellbeing, children settle well, are confident, including with visitors and are keen to contribute.
- Children are kind and caring with each other. Almost all children talk about being safe and healthy, including during their forest learning activities. Practitioners provide regular and familiar routines, which contribute meaningfully to wellbeing. Practitioners use various strategies very effectively to support children in understanding and regulating their emotions. Through this, almost all children show that they are learning to manage their own emotions and recognise how others feel.
- Practitioners support children develop their skills in independence well, for example in daily routines such as signing in or preparing for the outdoors. Practitioners recently introduced lunch at nursery and are continuing to develop the lunchtime experience. Practitioners sit with children and engage in conversations, while allowing children the opportunity to engage with their peers. In taking forward the lunchtime experience, all involved should take full cognisance of national guidance.
- Access to the immediate outdoors, along with their forest area allows children time to explore their wider environment. Outdoor learning supports children's wellbeing well, developing resilience and a sense of freedom to explore and take risks.
- Children learn about their rights through focused activities and learning. They share their views very confidently, making choices based on their interests. Children know that their opinions are valued. Children are active participants in the Eco-Schools committee. Practitioners should support children to develop further their leadership roles and responsibilities across nursery life.
- Prior to children starting nursery, practitioners invite parents to complete "My world" documents with them. Children's personal care plans are reviewed regularly. Senior leaders follow a staged intervention process, with appropriate individual education plans in place as required. These plans are developed in conjunction with parents and professional partners, such as Educational Psychologists or Speech and Language Therapists. This ensures that children's needs are identified well and are met very effectively.
- As a result of regular professional learning in statutory duties practitioners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Children feel safe and know who to go to if they are worried or upset.

- Practitioners promote inclusion and equality, treating children and families with respect. This includes a strong focus on those facing challenges or children who face barriers in their learning. All children feel valued across the nursery. Staff and children celebrate cultural events throughout the year with due sensitivity to children and family needs. As a result, children have a strong sense of belonging.

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

- Almost all children make very good progress across their learning.
- Almost all children communicate very effectively with practitioners and each other, using a rich and wide range of vocabulary. Children enjoy and listen attentively to stories and use puppets and digital devices to create their own imaginative stories. Almost all children recognise their own name and other common words. Most children show a keen interest in early writing and regularly write their name and copy simple words. Children would benefit from practitioners extending this further by providing additional real-life opportunities to develop early writing skills.
- Almost all children make very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children count and order numbers with confidence during play. Almost all children sort, match and name shapes and create simple patterns, including experimenting with symmetry. Children understand positional language and correctly use front, behind, above, below, forwards and backwards during play. Children compare length, size and amount and are developing their problem-solving skills while playing at the block area.
- Almost all children make very good progress in health and wellbeing. Well-established nursery rules, a shared respectful ethos and embedded routines help children understand how to look after themselves and others.
- Children discuss their feelings and emotions very well and use learned approaches to support each other during play and interactions with others. Children talk about how to keep themselves safe and risk assess aspects of their play environment including outdoors.
- Almost all children are making very good progress over time, including those with additional support needs. Practitioners share evidence they gather about children's learning in their key groups to support children effectively in all play spaces. As a result of these moderation processes, practitioners make confident judgements about children's progress.
- Practitioners celebrate children's achievements both within and outwith the nursery well through praise and encouragement, or on the achievement board. Parents share achievements by contributing to children's profiles. As planned, practitioners should continue to develop opportunities for children to contribute even more to the life of the nursery, the wider St Fillan's community and as global citizens.

- There is a strong supportive and inclusive ethos within the nursery. Practitioners have a very good understanding of children's family backgrounds and individual challenges. Children who require extra help are supported very well by staff to thrive and make very good progress through well-planned targeted interventions. Senior leaders support practitioners very well in evaluating how well-planned interventions contribute to equity for children.

Practice worth sharing more widely

High quality interactions and experiences in the nursery class, resulting in children who make very good progress in their learning.

The Child Development Officer Team Leader provides highly effective daily leadership of the nursery. She is a strong role model to the practitioner team and leads by example. The successful blend of leadership roles across the nursery helps to deliver very positive outcomes for children and families. Practitioners have created a very positive and inclusive learning environment where all children and families are welcomed and valued. Practitioners are genuinely interested in all children and are highly responsive to their interests and needs. This includes using a variety of languages in nursery routines, for example in welcome time. Practitioners use a range of assessment information very effectively to meet the diverse range of needs. They observe children and record information about children's learning regularly in learning journals, including written observations and photographs. Practitioners use a local authority tracker to record children's progress very effectively. Friendships are well developed and help children in their learning. Adults skilfully help children resolve any disagreements that might arise. As a result, almost all children make very good progress across their learning and over time.

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.