

# Summarised inspection findings

**Howden St Andrew's Primary School Nursery Class**

West Lothian Council

1 October 2024

## Key contextual information

Howden St. Andrew's Primary School nursery class serves the Howden area of Livingston. It is located in a purpose-built area within the primary school with free-flow access to a large outdoor space. The nursery is open all year and children can attend a combination of full-day or half-day sessions. The nursery is registered for 42 children at any one time. There are currently 60 children on the roll. The nursery has a shared Early Learning and Childcare Area Support Manager (ELCASM), two senior early years officers, four early years practitioners and three part-time support workers. The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery during term-time. The ELCASM has responsibility during school holiday periods.

### 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 in the nursery create a nurturing ethos with a strong commitment to children's rights. They support children effectively to feel settled, valued and secure. As a result, children are happy in the nursery and are caring and kind towards each other. They are developing independence and take responsibility for their play. Children engage well in their play in the outdoor area and in the playroom. Most children play together successfully and are learning to share resources and take turns. They engage in imaginative play and have opportunities, space and time to explore and be creative. Children concentrate at the dough table and take part in interesting conversations with each other and with practitioners. A few children would benefit from engaging in more challenging experiences to extend their learning.
- Practitioners know children well and understand their personalities and preferences. They develop warm, responsive relationships and listen attentively to children. Practitioners take account of children's interests and support their play well. They provide an appropriate balance of child-led play and adult-initiated experiences. Children enjoy engaging in well-planned sessions to support their language and numeracy development. Practitioners interact well with children and use questions and commentary effectively to help children discuss their experiences. They should now develop further their questioning techniques to support children to think about and deepen their learning.
- Children use the interactive board to play games and practise their mark making skills. Practitioners should continue to develop how they use digital technology to enhance and extend children's learning.
- Practitioners observe children during play and while they engage in planned activities. They record aspects of children's learning regularly in online journals. This information provides details about children's experiences and development. Practitioners would benefit from support to help them recognise and capture children's significant learning in their observations. This would show more clearly what children are able to do and help practitioners to plan accurately

for children's next steps in learning. There are examples of parents' contributions to children's online journals. Practitioners should explore how they can involve children and parents more fully in this process.

- Practitioners plan regularly using a useful format. They focus on children's interests and link these well to the curriculum. Practitioners talk to children about what they would like to find out and plan interesting and engaging activities. They should now use more in-depth discussion to build on this positive foundation. Children require more challenge within planned experiences to ensure and depth and progression in their learning in literacy and numeracy.
- Practitioners use a local authority tracker effectively to record the progress children are making in agreed areas. They should consider how they can capture the ongoing progress of younger children and children with additional needs as they achieve personal milestones.

## 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
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- Children are making good progress in their early language and communication skills. They are developing new vocabulary through targeted interventions during play experiences. Children enjoy stories individually and in small groups, participating in recall, sequencing and discussion. Most children add detail to their drawings, with a few mark-making, writing their names and copying words. Children listen to each other during play and follow instructions. Most children clap out syllables and participate in rhyme. Younger children are supported appropriately through play experiences.
  - Children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Most children count on and back from 10 with a few able to count beyond 20. Younger children count within five. Children identify two-dimensional shapes accurately with a few identifying three-dimensional objects. They compare size, volume and amounts during outdoor play at the water tray. A few children enjoy the mud kitchen where they make recipes from a range of herbs, coloured liquids and utensils. They describe amounts needed to make mud soup.
  - Children are making good progress in their health and wellbeing. They are happy and settled and understand who they can ask for help if required. Almost all children enjoy energetic play outdoors where they run, climb, build and balance. Children extend and challenge their own skills, with a few able to ride balance bikes. A few children use a bat and ball with confidence and a few balance well when using stilts. Children are guided to think about their emotions, using emotion books to express how they feel. Practitioners skilfully help children to regulate their emotions.
  - Practitioners use online journals well to share children's learning with families. These journals provide helpful evidence of the progress children are making across the curriculum. Practitioners record children's progress over time effectively using an appropriate tracking system. Most children make good progress over time. The senior leadership team should now provide increased opportunities for practitioners to discuss and review children's progress together. This will help to ensure appropriate pace and challenge and support understanding of national standards at early level.
  - Practitioners are inclusive and welcoming to all families and children. They have engaged in appropriate training to help them assist children who require additional support. They develop and use individual plans effectively to help children make progress. Practitioners take account of families' cultural, socio-economic, and linguistic backgrounds. Senior leaders and practitioners should now consider how families can share their language and culture

within the nursery community. Practitioners understand their role in promoting equity and provide sensitive and valued support and advice. They provide well planned interventions in literacy and numeracy with a focus on equity for all children.

## 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.