

Summarised inspection findings

Law Primary School Nursery

East Lothian Council

2 May 2023

Key contextual information

Law Primary School Nursery is situated on the Law Primary School community centre campus. The nursery consists of three playrooms, a separate building for snacks and lunches and an outdoor area.

The depute head from Law Primary School has responsibility for overseeing the nursery. She is supported by a nursery manager, who also manages two nearby settings. There are two senior practitioners and 17 practitioners in the nursery. They work a variety of shift patterns. The nursery is registered to provide early learning and childcare for 90 children aged three to starting school. They currently have staff to provide places for 72 children at any one time. There are 140 children on the roll. Children attend five full days per fortnight. The pattern is Monday, Tuesday and alternate Fridays or Wednesday, Thursday and alternate Fridays, full days from 8.15 a.m. until 5.45 p.m. 48 weeks each year. A breakfast club is being piloted from 7.15 a.m. for children who moved to the nursery recently from a nearby setting. The practitioner team has been affected over the last few years with periods of absence and vacancies still to be filled.

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 a strong commitment to children's rights and encourage children to make choices about their play. Most children are interested and enthusiastic as they explore the range of developmentally appropriate experiences in the playroom. Children have a high level of freedom and engage well with the opportunities on offer. They are happy and settled in the playroom. A few children show a good level of confidence and are starting to lead their own learning. Children are excited about the move to the new nursery and have a high level of involvement. They participate enthusiastically in planning for the move and make suggestions about the playroom layout. Most children play in small groups, or by themselves. A few are starting to make important friendships. A few children are tired towards the end of the day and are struggling with transitions in the playroom. They would benefit from taking part in more relaxing experiences in a calm environment.
- Children are known well by most practitioners. These practitioners show a good understanding of child development, with caring and nurturing relationships. Most practitioners use questioning and commentary well to support children in thinking about their learning and talking about their experiences. Most practitioners interact sensitively with children. They listen attentively to children, being responsive to their needs and interests. Children use digital devices to play interesting number games to complement their learning. Outdoors, children have free flow access to the spacious play area, which has a variety of surfaces and interesting spaces. Practitioners should develop further the use of the outdoors. This will help to provide

greater challenge and increased opportunities for children to develop further their creativity, resilience and independence.

- Practitioners observe children and record information about their learning in individual 'learning stories'. A few practitioners document children's learning clearly. Children enjoy looking at their 'learning stories' and take pride in sharing them with friends. However, the quality and frequency of observations is inconsistent. Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners to develop the quality of their observations. They should provide clear guidance for practitioners to ensure greater consistency in the quality of practice across the setting. Practitioners should continue to increase parental involvement in contributing to children's 'learning stories' to provide a fuller picture of children's learning. Senior leaders recognise the need to continue to use the information about children to plan their next significant steps in learning. They should continue with their plans to support practitioners to take this forward.
- Practitioners plan over different timescales across areas of learning. They are starting to capture children's voices in the planning as they use floorbooks. They should continue to develop consistency in this approach to ensure appropriate depth and challenge for all children. There is a tracking system in place, however this is not used consistently by all practitioners. This should be developed as a priority to help identify gaps in children's learning and support all practitioners to plan more effectively.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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 make good progress in communication and early language. They engage readily in conversation, using a wide range of vocabulary. Children listen well in small group activities. The majority of children choose to look at books independently. Most enjoy listening to stories. A few children enjoy creating their own books that record their imaginative stories. They are beginning to form letters, for example from their name. A few children enjoy the challenge of copying words and show a keen interest in early writing. They are developing a good awareness of letter sounds and are beginning to recognise words that rhyme. Across early literacy, practitioners should support children to develop and apply their skills, including outdoors.
- In numeracy and mathematics, most children are making good progress. Children learn about shape and pattern through their play. They recognise familiar numerals, and the majority can order them correctly. Most children count within 10 and a minority are confident working with numbers beyond 20. Children are developing an awareness of time as they explore clocks and calendars in play contexts. A recent focus on measurement is supporting most children to explore length, capacity and weight. They enjoy a range of challenging tasks to apply their developing mathematical understanding.
- Practitioners have a strong focus on health and wellbeing. This results in children making good progress. Almost all children develop a range of physical skills well as they run, balance, jump and climb outdoors. They could be developing skills further through more challenging experiences. Most children understand the importance of keeping themselves safe, for example as they cut and peel fruit and vegetables for snack. Through routines, most children persevere and are developing independence. Children are ready to take on increased responsibilities, for example managing their own risk and play spaces.
- Children are making good progress across the curriculum and over time. Practitioners support children who have barriers to their learning well. As a result, children are making the progress of which they are capable. Learning stories and tracking information do not yet consistently show the progress children make in their learning as a result of their nursery experiences. As practitioners continue to develop skills in observing children's learning, a more accurate picture of progress should emerge.

- Children enjoy being responsible, including caring for the nursery stick insects and wild birds in the garden. Links with the local community, for example North Berwick in Bloom, provide opportunities for children to compete in horticultural competitions. Practitioners should continue to encourage parents to share children's achievements from home and other settings children attend. This will help them track and build on children's existing skills.
- Practitioners have created an inclusive ethos. They value and respect children and families. They know families and their context well. Practitioners use this knowledge to provide valuable support to children and families experiencing challenges and potential barriers to progress. They should now make full use of all information and data available to promote and ensure equity for all. This should help them make informed decisions about strategies that will support all children to make the best progress.

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.