

# Summarised inspection findings

**Newington Primary School Nursery Class**

Dumfries and Galloway Council

14 January 2020

## Key contextual information

Newington nursery class is situated in Newington Primary School, in the town of Annan. The nursery is registered for 50 children aged from three years to those not yet attending school. Children have various patterns of attendance, including full time and part time places. The nursery have introduced 1140 hours and practitioners have experienced significant changes to their provision. The nursery class has experienced significant changes since January 2019, this includes the recruitment of additional practitioners, the appointment of a nursery manager, changes to children's hours and the daily routine. The newly appointed manager had been in post for six weeks at the time of inspection.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

**satisfactory**

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

- Practitioners in the nursery class are implementing a few changes to have more positive outcomes for children and families. School staff and nursery practitioners are updating currently their previously well-established vision, values and aims. Parents, children and practitioners are being consulted appropriately to ensure the refreshed nursery vision, values and aims are relevant and meaningful to all. Practitioners should ensure the refreshed vision, values and aims take full account of the local context and reflect current thinking and best practice.
- The practitioner team have worked hard to implement the required changes to accommodate the 1140 hours. Practitioners show a professional approach to their role, displaying a sense of collective responsibility in taking forward improvements. They have received helpful support from the local authority in relation to the delivery of 1140 hours.
- The manager has introduced helpful weekly meetings with practitioners to ensure there is an opportunity for all to contribute to the improvement journey. Practitioners have access to relevant professional learning and development through the local authority, at in-service days and through attendance at the local Early Years Cluster group. All practitioners have completed a Professional Development Review and are now engaging in one to one supervision meetings with the manager. As a result of this input, practitioners are now at the early stages of embracing leadership roles.
- The joint school and nursery improvement plan, does not clearly identify important priorities for the nursery. The local authority early years principal teacher has recently supported the nursery class effectively to complete an improvement plan checklist. This identifies a number of key areas, which require improvement and ongoing development. As planned, the management team should continue to work on addressing the improvement actions. The manager is at the early stages of identifying meaningful distributed leadership roles at all levels, allowing ownership and responsibility for all which leads to improved outcomes for children.

- The depute headteacher of the primary school has responsibility for overseeing the nursery class and has supportive weekly meetings with the newly appointed manager. These help the management team to discuss and reflect on identified areas for improvement. Senior leaders do not yet have strategic and systematic arrangements for monitoring the quality of nursery provision. The manager and depute headteacher have taken positive action to address this to identify clearly what is working well and what needs to improve.
- Practitioners are aware of the national self-evaluation framework 'How good is our early learning and childcare?' and are at the early stages of using this to improve the quality of nursery practice. Senior leaders should build on this positive start to support practitioners further to develop their practice in line with current early learning and childcare national practice guidance. Practitioners are not yet reflecting fully on their newly developed practice. They should use their time more effectively to evaluate the nursery day. Senior leaders, with practitioners now need to increase the pace of change and take forward planned improvements to support children's learning.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

- Across the nursery class, children benefit from supportive relationships with the practitioner team. Most children are happy and settled. A few children are new to the nursery class and are still settling in and becoming more comfortable with daily routines. They need more adult support to enable them to gain confidence in the new environment. Most children are developing their independence well as part of nursery routines, for example, dressing to go outside and serving themselves at lunch.
- Practitioners have recently made significant changes to the learning environments, both indoors and out. The team provide children with a wide range of natural and open-ended resources to encourage their curiosity and creativity. Most children are still becoming familiar with the new contexts and opportunities on offer. To assist children, practitioners need to provide greater support and direction to promote more meaningful play in the newly adapted learning environments.
- For almost the whole session, children direct their own learning through play. Children would benefit from an increase in the time where practitioners lead and scaffold their play. The practitioner team is now well placed to review the balance of adult-directed and child-led learning experiences. Positively, children have free-flow access to the newly enhanced and increasingly exciting outdoor area to explore, investigate and enjoy energetic physical play. Children show the greatest engagement and enjoyment in their learning when outdoors.
- Practitioners are developing new approaches to planning children's learning in the playroom and outdoors. Children's interests and requests help to inform and shape planning. Practitioners have started to make effective use of floorbooks as a vehicle to take forward children's learning. This is supporting practitioners to have a stronger focus on building and deepening children's learning. Children use digital technology well at times to support their learning.
- Each child has their own Personal Learning Plan (PLP), which documents their learning through photographs and observations. The PLPs do not yet demonstrate children's learning across all curricular areas. The team are developing new approaches to recording observations of children's significant learning. Helpfully, practitioners consult with parents to identify next steps in learning for individual children. Practitioners are developing further ways to increase children's engagement with the PLPs to develop children's understanding of their own learning journey. Practitioners also need to develop further their approaches to tracking children's progress, as current arrangements are not yet systematic or robust.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- See choice QI

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have positive relationships with parents. Parents complete an 'all about me' and care plan which supports children's smooth transition into nursery. Key workers and parents use this information well to plan individual next steps for all children. Practitioners enable parents and children to learn together through well-planned termly 'stay and play' opportunities. The senior practitioner offers Parents Early Education Partnership (PEEP) to children and families within the nursery. Increased communication with parents includes regular messages via the school app, termly newsletters and a parent notice board. A few parents require more information on their child's nursery experience to support them to engage further in their learning. Practitioners should continue to explore methods to communicate more effectively with all parents, including sharing key information on their children's learning.
- Children's PLPs are accessible for parents, giving them the opportunity to comment on and contribute to their children's progress in learning. 'You said-We did' forms have been introduced to encourage parents to be more involved in self-evaluation, with a few parents contributing recently to the 'wet weather' question. A number of parents have recently volunteered to become parent helpers increasing parental engagement in the nursery. Overall, parents who responded to the pre inspection questionnaires were very positive.

## 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

satisfactory

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 ensure mutual respect and trust supports the development of positive relationships across the nursery. As a result, children are safe and secure. Most children and families settle quickly into nursery as a result of the welcoming and friendly ethos. Overall, most children are kind and considerate to their peers. A few children need the support of practitioners as they continue to develop their positive behaviour skills. Most children play well together in line with their age and stage of development, this allows them to share and take turns during small group game experiences.
- Children benefit from the implementation of 'Getting it right for every child' and the wellbeing indicators in daily nursery practice. The majority of children demonstrate what it means to be safe, healthy and active. Building on the positive start to introducing these, practitioners should continue to develop a shared understanding with all children and parents of what it means to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included. This would continue to promote the language of wellbeing and support further the development of positive outcomes for children and families in their community.
- Most children display confidence indoors and outdoors and are happy during their time at nursery. They are healthy and active through daily outdoor physical exercise and weekly visits to the gym. Children can climb confidently in the outdoor space, including when using a set of challenging wooden ladders. Children develop their physical skills well through riding bikes in the adjacent school playground and participating in singing and dance routines.
- Most children engage well through positive snack and lunchtime experiences. They contribute to the online ordering of the food and engage in receiving the food and storing it away. Most children are developing their personal hygiene skills well, including tooth brushing.
- Practitioners are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and keeping children safe. All staff have completed compulsory training and carry out their roles in line with their codes of practice. As identified by the senior management team, there is a need for them, together with practitioners, to review and refresh policies and procedures relating to the nursery. In doing so, senior managers and practitioners should include risk assessments and policies specific to early learning and childcare practice in order to assure themselves of children's safety.
- Practitioners promote inclusion and equality throughout the nursery, supporting children well to make progress. All children have an individual care plan and an 'At a Glance' sheet. These clearly document children's individual needs and ensure these are met timeously. Children who require additional support with their learning have a multi-agency plan in place, this allows targeted support to be delivered effectively. Progress for all children continues to develop, with the support of effective strategies, including additional input from experienced support staff.



### 3.2 Securing children's progress

satisfactory

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

- Overall, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress in early language and communication. They enjoy conversing with adults and visitors, sharing information about their learning experiences. During free-flow play, the majority of children engage in conversations with their peers. A few use subject-specific vocabulary related to their growing interest in water and playdough. During small group 'welcome time' and music activities, most children listen well to their key worker to follow instructions. Across the setting, only a few children choose to write for a purpose or write their names independently. A few mark make in the playroom and outdoors. There is considerable scope for children to develop their early writing skills across the setting. Children enjoy listening to stories and discussing the story books they have taken home to share with their parents. A few actively seek out visitors and familiar adults to share their favourite storybooks as part of 'Children and parents early reading' (CAPER). They identify their favourite parts of the story. Only a few children choose to spend time engaging with different texts across the playrooms. A small group of children make positive use of puppets and a puppet theatre to re-enact familiar fairy tales. There is scope for children to make further progress in early language and communication.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. The majority of children can count to ten with a few able to count beyond ten. A few children show a good understanding of 1-1 correspondence and numerals as they identify the number of sea creatures on the white board. The majority are developing an understanding of mathematical language, as they weigh items using their outdoor scales. Children's understanding of volume is increasing as they fill and empty containers as part of water and sand play. Children's understanding of the purpose of money and data handling is less well developed. Overall, there remains scope for children to make further progress in numeracy and mathematics.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Their physical skills are developing well, particularly when playing outdoors. Most children run, jump, and climb with confidence. Most use wheeled toys well to develop their gross motor skills and balance. Children have a growing awareness of the importance of healthy eating as they help to prepare snack and make healthy choices at the snack bar. Children need to develop further their progress in emotional wellbeing.
- Individual children's progress is not yet clearly documented and recorded within children's PLPs'. Practitioners need to establish clear arrangements for monitoring and tracking children's

progress over time and use information gathered to help ensure children make the best possible progress.

- Children's successes and achievements are recognised and praised throughout the session. They are developing as responsible citizens as they confidently get undressed after playing outdoors, put away their wellies, and hang up their jackets in the cloakroom area. Their achievements from home are at the early stages of being captured fully and shared. Practitioners now need to develop a system to monitor, track and celebrate children's achievements, to ensure all children recognise the feeling of success.
- The nursery actively promote equity for all. Practitioners create an inclusive ethos and are alert to the different challenges faced by families. All children are being supported to make the best possible progress in their learning through the introduction of targeted interventions. For example, a coordination and movement programme is supporting a small group of children well.

## Choice of QI : 2.2 Curriculum

- Rationale and Design
- Learning and development pathways
- Pedagogy and play
- Skills for life and learning

- Practitioners offer children a curriculum based firmly on play. Overall, they take account of national guidance. While practitioners show an understanding of the importance of play, there is considerable scope for them to review their roles and responsibilities in supporting children to make best possible progress. The team needs to develop a clear rationale, which underpins their delivery of the curriculum. In doing so, practitioners need to be supported to develop a shared understanding of early years pedagogy. Practitioners should revisit their understanding of how to ensure the curriculum takes full account of the principles of curriculum design. Currently, children are not experiencing appropriate depth, challenge and coherence in learning.
- Practitioners promote aspects of literacy, numeracy and health wellbeing in different areas of the playrooms and outdoors. However, they do not yet do this in a coherent and progressive way. When planning areas of the curriculum, practitioners need to take better account of each child's individual needs and stage of development. There are too many missed opportunities for developing these areas across the nursery class. The nursery team need to develop a shared understanding of how they can develop learning and developmental pathways, which focus on challenge, depth and progression of children's skills across all curricular areas.
- Practitioners meet with the parents of new children to explain nursery routines and to identify children's prior learning. These consultations help practitioners to create children's PLPs and identify early next steps for their learning. Practitioners have systems in place to support children's transitions to P1 in the summer term. However, practitioners need to ensure that these approaches across the early level start earlier in the session to improve continuity for children's curricular experiences.
- Children benefit from a few opportunities to develop skills for life, learning and work. For example, as they take on leadership roles and help practitioners to construct new nursery resources. The setting has established partnerships with a few local business and resources. For example, a positive partnership with the local supermarket has been fostered. Practitioners need to make better use of the 'Career Standard (3-18)' to provide them with a clearer understanding of how to develop young children's skills for life, learning and work.

## 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.