

# Summarised inspection findings

**Colinton Primary School Nursery Class**

The City of Edinburgh Council

8 October 2019

## Key contextual information

Colinton nursery class operates from within the primary school and provides early learning and childcare for children from the Colinton area of Edinburgh. The Colinton area includes both the Redford and Dreghorn Barracks. Around 70% of children attending the nursery are from forces families. The nursery class has places for a maximum of 20 children aged from three years and offers morning and afternoon sessions. The nursery has one large playroom with access to secure outdoor spaces, including the school's large garden. Children are able to access the school library and gym. There has been significant change in the nursery team this session with an entirely new team being recruited from February 2019.

### 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 teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Children enjoy their time in the nursery. The new nursery team are committed to improving learning experiences and outcomes for children. In the short time that they have worked together, they have made a positive and well-considered start. This has included an audit of the learning environment, involving children in making improvements to the layout and design of the playroom. We were able to see the impact of this work in improved opportunities for children to make choices and to develop their play more independently. As a result, most children engage well in play.
- Practitioners recognise that a few children would benefit from further, focused support to help them engage more fully throughout the session. Overall, there is a need for practitioners to improve further the level of support and challenge in learning for children.
- Children help keep the nursery and outdoor spaces tidy. Arrangements for snack time provide some opportunities for children to take responsibility in the nursery. There is significant scope to explore further opportunities for children to develop their early leadership skills.
- Children are able to access outdoor spaces of the nursery throughout the session. This provides children with a range of opportunities to develop their curiosity, creativity and imagination well. Children enjoy the freedom of the large school garden and the opportunities it provides to explore the natural world. Practitioners have identified this as a focus of continuing improvement.
- Interactions are consistently warm and supportive. As a result, most children are already becoming confident around the new team. In developing practice further, practitioners should look for opportunities to promote shared problem solving and collaborative play. It will be important to ensure consistent use of effective strategies to support children's early communication skills.

- Practitioners record observations of children in their individual online journals. The nursery team have identified the need to improve the quality and consistency of these observations. Senior leaders should, as planned, work with the nursery team to develop their use of observations as part of effective, planned assessment. As assessment practice improves, practitioners will be able to target learning experiences to provide appropriate support and challenge to meet children's individual learning needs more effectively.
- The nursery team are seeking to increase scope for children to plan and lead their own learning. They have made a positive start in beginning to use a range of appropriate approaches to engage children in conversations about their learning. They should, as planned, continue to develop this further, using national guidance, professional reading and self-evaluation to inform improvements.
- Senior leaders should work with the new nursery team to improve existing approaches to track and monitor progress, and to plan next steps in learning for children. In identifying next steps, they should involve children, parents and carers as fully as possible. This will ensure that all children are able to make best possible progress in their learning and development.
- Building on existing transition arrangements, colleagues in the school and nursery class should work together to develop consistent approaches to high quality early learning and teaching. Joint moderation activities will enable practitioners and teachers to develop shared expectations of children's progress across the early level.

## 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

weak

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

- The new nursery team have made a start to improving the learning environment and pedagogy. This is helping to increase children's engagement during play. Practitioners now need to ensure children experience the right level of support and challenge. This will enable children to make the progress they are capable of, and develop and apply their literacy and numeracy skills across learning. Senior leaders recognise that existing systems for tracking and monitoring do not provide a reliable picture of children's progress in learning. Overall, the progress children are making in their learning is weak.
- In health and wellbeing, most children are making satisfactory progress. Children are developing their physical skills including coordination and balance during energetic outdoor play. They are developing their fine motor skills through play with natural materials and a range of loose parts. Practitioners have begun to encourage children to consider how they might use some simple rules to promote harmonious play. The introduction of yoga and mindfulness practice is helping children feel relaxed and calm. Practitioners should continue to develop approaches to help children to talk about their emotions.
- Children would benefit from more opportunities to develop their listening skills further. Whilst most children are becoming more confident when talking about their play they would benefit from more frequent, focused interactions that encourage conversation and listening to others. Children enjoy singing and are learning rhymes. The majority of children enjoy sharing stories, particularly in small groups and one to one. Practitioners should provide further opportunities for children to share, explore, and create their own stories. They should support children to learn about and use non-fiction texts for a wide range of meaningful purposes. Children are encouraged to experiment with mark-making tools. Most children can recognise their name written down. Older children are becoming more confident writing their own names.
- Children are learning about shapes and patterns in play with resources including magnetic tiles. They are becoming aware of numbers, number order and early counting routines. A few children are more confident in counting. The majority of children are developing some appropriate language to describe position and size, for example when measuring dinosaurs with blocks. Practitioners should now develop further opportunities for children to develop their numeracy and mathematical skills in meaningful, and challenging, ways in routines and play throughout the session.
- The recently introduced 'home achievement wall' is raising the profile of children's achievements in the nursery. Practitioners should involve parents and children in ensuring that

learning in the nursery reflects the home experiences of children as fully as possible. This will make experiences more exciting and relevant, and enable practitioners to build on what children have already achieved and learned. Practitioners should develop further opportunities and approaches to enable children to contribute to the life of the nursery and wider school community more fully.

- The nursery team have been successful in creating a positive culture in the nursery. They are building their knowledge of children and families. The management of information about children's care and learning requires to be significantly improved. This will ensure continuity of care and increased progress for all children. It will be important for senior leaders to monitor, and improve further, the effectiveness of recently introduced approaches to address any potential barriers to learning for children. Going forward, senior leaders should ensure a clear focus on the impact of planned change on ensuring equity for children and families.

## 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.