

Summarised inspection findings

Drumoak Primary School Nursery Class

Aberdeenshire Council

31 March 2020

Key contextual information

Drumoak Nursery Class is based within Drumoak Primary School. Children attend from three years of age for morning or afternoon sessions. The setting is registered for 30 children at any one time. The current roll is 27. The headteacher has been in post since April 2019. At the time of the inspection, the Senior Practitioner had been in post for four days.

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

- The headteacher in consultation with practitioners and parents has reviewed and refreshed the school's vision, values and aims to promote a culture of learning and achievement. Practitioners have made good use of national and local guidance and professional learning to improve the quality of children's experiences. As a result, almost all children engage well for most of the session, freely accessing a range of interesting and stimulating resources to support their play. This includes natural and real-life materials, which children use creatively.
- The majority of children sustain a high level of interest in experiences for extended periods as they create flags or make pancakes from playdough. Practitioners encourage a 'can do' attitude and support children to persevere in tasks. Increasingly children contribute to the nursery and are encouraged to share their views. They have shared and recorded their suggestions for improving the outdoor area through drawings and photographs.
- Practitioners are caring and respectful in their interactions with children. They are highly responsive to children's emotional needs. Increasingly, they are implementing a child-led approach to give children sufficient time to follow interests and lead their play. This change in approach is encouraging practitioners to reflect on and review their practice. Together, with senior leaders, practitioners need to reach a shared understanding of early years pedagogy. This should enable practitioners to ensure a consistent approach to learning and teaching. Overall, practitioners use questions well to encourage children's curiosity and thinking skills. They use available digital technology well to extend children's learning on specific interests such as flags and wildlife.
- Each child has an electronic learning journal. This includes observations of children's experiences and learning. There is not yet a consistent approach to identifying and recording significant learning. Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners with these skills. Currently, within children's journals, there are too many gaps in evidence to demonstrate children's learning across the curriculum. As a result, there is not a clear record of children's progress over time. Practitioners require ongoing support from senior leaders to make effective use of observations to plan for children's individual next steps in learning. Children should have

the opportunity to reflect on their learning to recognise their achievements and what they might learn next.

- Practitioners track aspects of children’s learning using a local authority skills overview. As planned, they should now implement and embed the local authority tracking system to record children’s progress across the curriculum. Senior leaders need to monitor rigorously children’s progress to support practitioners to identify where further support or challenge is required for individual children.
- Increasingly, practitioners are responsive to children’s ideas and provide relevant resources and experiences to support and extend children’s ideas. They continue to develop their skills in using ‘big books’ to reflect children’s learning through specific contexts. Practitioners should ensure that these books are a record of children’s learning building on from what children already know. They should continue to increase their knowledge of the curriculum and children’s skills to ensure an appropriate blend of child-led and adult-initiated planning. They need to use the seven principles of curriculum design in depth to develop further planning for children’s learning experiences to improve outcomes for children.
- Senior leaders and practitioners should revise and develop the systems for planning for children who require additional support with their learning. They need to identify clear measurable targets and strategies to ensure children’s individual needs are met. This should be done in partnership with parents and partner agencies. The headteacher needs to ensure nursery practice reflects local and national policy.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

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 are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They are independent as they choose and prepare snack. They identify risks and how to keep safe during outdoor play and when visiting local woodland. Children demonstrate well a range of physical skills such as balance and coordination when using a range of apparatus and open-ended resources outdoors. Children's fine motor skills are progressing well through a range of interesting experiences. Practitioners embed the school values of 'be kind, be fair, be your best and be safe' through daily practice. As a result, most children play cooperatively and demonstrate the school values. Practitioners should continue to support a few children to develop an awareness of their own emotions, feelings and behaviour and how this impacts on others.
- In early language and literacy, children are making good progress. Most children are confident communicators and engage readily in conversations with their peers and adults. They ask relevant questions. Most children enjoy group stories and listen well. A few children would benefit from hearing stories on a one to one basis or in smaller groups to support the development of early language and communication skills. Children explore rhyme through stories and song and recognise letter sounds in their name and other familiar words. All children explore mark making. They demonstrate emergent writing skills as they represent their ideas through drawings and write their name during self-registration. A few children are ready to develop these early writing skills further through real-life contexts.
- Children are making good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. They are encouraged to count during play and nursery routines. Most count to 10 and a few beyond 10. A few identify the number before and after. Children use appropriate mathematical language as they make comparisons of quantity, length and weight. They sort objects using a variety of criteria. Most children recognise basic two-dimensional shapes. A few are ready to explore three-dimensional objects. Practitioners should continue to support children to develop skills in using money and recognising coins during enterprise projects. In addition, children should develop skills in gathering and recording information through a range of real-life experiences.
- Children are confident using the interactive whiteboard to support early mathematical and problem solving skills. They demonstrate appropriate range of early science skills as they plant, grow and harvest fruit and vegetables and learn about different types of weather and wildlife.
- Practitioners' capture and celebrate children's achievements naturally during play and through 'WOW' moments. They record these in individual learning journals and on displays for children to recognise success. Children demonstrate early citizenship skills through charity work and a

few leadership roles within the nursery. They are ready to develop a wider range of leadership skills including work with the local community. Practitioners are beginning to track children's wider achievements to ensure equity for all. They now need to use this information to build on children's developing skills and talents.

- Children continue to develop and learn as a result of the supportive and inclusive ethos. Practitioners ensure all children access the full range of nursery experiences. Practitioners make effective use of transition information and discussions with parents to build their knowledge of children and individual care and health needs. They should, as planned, develop further their use of data to have an overview of children's progress in learning. Practitioners are aware of children who may experience potential barriers to learning. It will be important to monitor and evaluate the impact of identified strategies to ensure children's learning needs continue to be met.

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.