

Summarised inspection findings

Sanderson's Wynd Primary School Nursery Class

East Lothian Council

3 March 2020

Key contextual information

The nursery class is a self-contained wing within Sanderson's Wynd Primary School. Registration allows children aged two years to those not yet attending primary school to attend. Ninety four children are able to attend at any one time. The setting has four playrooms with a fifth playroom forming part of The Hub. Catchment includes the local town of Tranent with children attending the special provision, The Hub, from across East Lothian. Over the course of a week, 82 children attend the different parts of the nursery for their sessions and extended days. This includes five children aged two who access their entitlement to early learning and childcare. Eleven children attend the special provision, the 'green room'.

Staffing has changed significantly over the last 18 months. This includes the creation of new senior practitioner roles and changes within the practitioner team, including the appointment of an Excellence and Equity Lead. The nursery has been on a significant journey of improvement following a local authority review in November 2018 and Care Inspectorate inspection in January 2019. Currently, the setting has a number of separate playrooms, each providing a different provision including extended hours and enhanced provision. The setting is moving towards being one Early Years Centre, within Sanderson's Wynd Primary School, which successfully meets the range of needs of children attending.

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

- Practitioners have created a nurturing and inclusive learning environment. They welcome children individually and respond sensitively to their needs with care and respect. As a result, children are safe and secure in the setting and families are welcomed and included. Children are motivated and engage enthusiastically in their play. They enjoy playing with their peers, often seeking out children from other rooms and are developing friendships in a developmentally appropriate way. Most children engage well in the range of learning opportunities on offer, both indoors and outdoors. Real-life experiences such as visiting local shops and the library provide meaningful contexts for learning.
- The majority of practitioners use questions to help extend children's thinking. Practitioners now need to develop this further through an increased and consistent use of commentary and questions that promote higher order thinking. This will help ensure that there is a sharper focus on promoting depth, challenge and progress in learning. Practitioners working with the youngest children need to deepen their understanding of developmental stages to allow them to best support children's particular needs.
- Practitioners have reviewed and refreshed learning environments over the last year. As a result, they have created calm and stimulating playrooms. This supports the learning needs of most children. As practitioners continue to review and reflect on the quality of learning environments, they should include ongoing evaluation of the quality of learning opportunities

and consistency of experience that all children access in their playrooms. As planned, practitioners should continue with the development of the increasingly attractive outdoor learning spaces. Practitioners do not yet make sufficient use of digital technologies to support and extend children's learning.

- Practitioners have improved the quality of their observations of children at play. Recent professional learning, delivered by the visiting teacher, has supported this well. Practitioners make regular observations and these are beginning to inform judgments about the progress children are making in their learning. To improve the quality of observations further, practitioners need to ensure a consistently sharp focus on the significant learning of individual children. This will help identify next steps in learning for children. Sharing next steps more explicitly with children will help them understand what they need to do to be successful in their learning. Practitioners record their observations in children's individual learning story journals. Children are proud to share their journals as they recall their nursery experiences. Parents readily access journals and have opportunities to contribute, for example, sharing their child's achievements from outwith nursery.
- Practitioners have developed, and continue to refine, approaches to planning children's learning. This is helping them to be more responsive to children's interests and increasingly, to plan more effectively for individual learning needs. This is beginning to develop a consistent approach across playrooms. Practitioners are at the early stages of involving children fully in the planning process. The developing use of floorbooks will be helpful in taking this forward.
- Practitioners have recently introduced new approaches to track the progress children make in their learning in literacy and numeracy. They recognise that these new approaches need time to better inform planning and children's experiences. As planned, this should include the tracking of children's progress in health and wellbeing and the progress the youngest children make in their learning. As this embeds, practitioners will be able to identify when to intervene to improve outcomes for children. The introduction of whole school approaches, such as children's progress meetings, should be extended to support staff in evaluating the effectiveness of interventions.

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

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

- Children are making satisfactory progress in communication and early language. Children aged two enjoy listening to stories, learning rhymes and engaging in conversations. They are developing vocabulary at their own developmental stage. The majority of older children are able to identify their name and recognise and name some letters. They enjoy opportunities to copy familiar words and letters. A few children are able to write their name. They are beginning to identify and suggest words that rhyme. Children could be developing and applying their early writing skills through a wider range of mark making. The majority of children enjoy exploring books, both independently and with an adult, with most listening attentively. They are keen to share them with adults and visitors. Children are developing vocabulary and can express their thoughts and ideas with practitioners. They are confident, communicate well with each other and engage in conversation during play. A few children require support to engage in discussion while others need support to follow the rules of conversation.
- In numeracy and mathematics, children are making satisfactory progress. Children aged two are able to recognise and name different colours and are starting to count. The majority of older children can match, sort and count to ten. A few children can count and order numbers up to 20 and are beginning to 'add on'. They have opportunities to explore the concepts of time through the routine of the day and are learning about the days of the week. Older children understand the concept of size and use the language of measurement as they measure and compare their heights. They are beginning to use real money in play. Children need to apply their developing understanding of numeracy and mathematics in a wider range of interesting and stimulating situations.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in health and wellbeing. They show respect to each other and are beginning to form friendships. Children learn about healthy eating through the provision and preparation of healthy snacks and discussions with practitioners on how to keep themselves healthy. All children benefit from and have access to the outdoors. They enjoy the physical challenge of using wheeled toys and bikes. Children enjoy walking to and exploring the 'secret garden' and nearby woods. They discuss their feelings when they register in the morning. Practitioners should build on this practice to allow children more opportunities to develop their emotional literacy.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in their learning over time. Their progress is captured in learning journals and new approaches to track children's learning. Practitioners

need to build consistently on what children already know and have achieved, to ensure they make the best possible progress.

- Practitioners promote positive attitudes by recognising children's individual achievements through the effective use of praise and encouragement. Examples include children developing skills in food preparation and simple cookery and awareness of safety while out in the local community. Practitioners display examples of children's work and share these more widely using social media. Whole school approaches, such as recognition boards, could provide another way for children's achievements to be recognised. Parents share children's wider achievements from home through children's learning story journals.
- Staff promote equity through creating a supportive and inclusive ethos and identifying potential barriers to children's progress. Practitioners have a well-developed understanding of the individual circumstances of children and families and readily identify strategies to support children. This includes sensitive and subtle changes to practice. Practitioners work with a range of partners to plan and deliver appropriate support, including additional staffing within the setting.

Quality of provision of Special Unit (contributes to nursery class evaluations)

QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

- The green room has a supportive, nurturing culture and ethos with a strong emphasis on positive, high quality relationships. This enables all children to feel safe and cared for, which prepares them to be ready and be engaged in learning.
- There is a strong focus on the promotion of different communication strategies to help ensure that children with complex needs engage well in their learning. Children use visual timetables, which helps them focus on their learning activities. Their learning experiences match very well to their needs and interests.
- With high levels of support and direct intervention from practitioners, most children work well on tasks. Practitioners are skilled at managing challenging behaviour when it occurs. They are able to re-engage children swiftly into an appropriate learning activity. Children engage well in purposeful activities during less structured times such as snack and outdoor play. Practitioners should continue, as planned, to increase the opportunities for children to participate in spontaneous interactions with each other.
- Children use the wide range of resources well which helps meet their varied learning needs. They benefit from physical exercise, group activities and individual play when using the soft playroom, sensory room and well-resourced, safe outdoor area. Children use tablets, talkers and switches well to access learning. Practitioners use a wide range of contexts and learning environments to enhance children's learning such as the local supermarkets, café and library. They should continue to use more community resources. Children also benefit from access the mainstream nursery when appropriate.
- Practitioners and other professionals work seamlessly together to provide consistently high quality learning experiences. They ensure that children are settled and ready to learn. Almost all children work on tasks supported by a high level of direct staff intervention. Practitioners use body language and eye contact as well as tone, pace, rate and volume of spoken communication, to support learning needs well. Children move well between tasks, supported by well-managed transitions. Practitioners make effective use of questioning, which in most cases involves concrete prompts, to check for understanding and skills development.
- Practitioners make sound professional judgements about children's progress. They use a range of assessments to determine how well children are learning. They assess robustly children's progress at regular intervals using their effective early development and learning document and other appropriate tools. Each child also has an individual learning story, which documents progress and next steps. Practitioners are beginning to use the authority tracking and milestones for learners with complex additional support needs.

QI 3.2 Securing children's progress

- Almost all children are working on individual milestones and making good progress from their prior learning. All children have long and short-term targets for literacy and communication, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing in their individual educational plan. They incorporate relevant success criteria and next steps. Practitioners review these regularly and effectively to ensure that children are making the best possible progress.
- In early language and communication, almost all children are making good progress. Children have a real interest in looking at books and enjoy listening to stories. Practitioners are very skilled at incorporating rhyme and songs in the nursery unit. Children enjoy mark making in a range of contexts using different textures. They particularly enjoy using sensory materials.

- In numeracy and mathematics, children are investigating shapes and objects through a range of activities. A few children are learning to touch count.
- In health and wellbeing, children are developing turn taking and sharing skills. They are developing the skills to use appropriate utensils for eating and drinking.
- Children benefit from a wide range of high-quality experiences over time that supports them to make good progress over time. Practitioners promote equity for all children by making appropriate adaptations and ensuring access to suitable resources.

1. Quality of care and support

Children were happy, confident and they enjoyed their time at nursery. Staff were caring and respectful in their interactions. Parents and children were warmly greeted by staff on arrival to the service, supporting them to feel welcomed and included.

Children were supported to be independent and we saw that some children were engaged and busy in their play. They made full use of the toys and activities on offer. Children enjoyed showing us their learning stories and were able to talk about the photographs in their folders. Some progress had been made as next steps had been identified for some children and planning was in place. Further development needs to continue for children's next steps, as they were not always consistent and meaningful for all children. This would improve the depth and challenge of children's learning.

Personal plans were in place for each child and they contained relevant information. Strategies had been identified for some children who required additional support. However, these were not always consistent and should be reviewed and the impact measured to ensure children are supported fully. We also discussed that medication forms should be updated every six months to keep them relevant to individual needs.

Staff had reviewed the lunch time routine for the children. Children now eat in the school dining room and were happy and most ate their lunch. We observed some improvements. However, the dining room was large, noisy and some children were distracted by other children in the room. Staff have agreed to review this routine to ensure that children receive a calm and nurturing experience.

Children's independence and self-help skills were promoted by helping to buy, choose and prepare snack. They self-selected from the range on offer and helped wash and clear their dishes away. It was a social time and children enjoyed sitting and chatting to their friends whilst staff encouraged social conversations that promoted learning opportunities.

Staff were knowledgeable about safeguarding the procedure for keeping children safe. Regular online training was undertaken by staff. It would be beneficial to discuss safeguarding scenarios during team meetings, this would deepen staff's understanding. Staff worked in partnership with outside agencies when necessary.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

2. Quality of environment

The environment was warm and welcoming across all the playrooms and they offered a balance of active, cosy and quiet spaces. Children benefitted from the free flow access to the garden meaning they had the freedom to choose where and when they wanted to play. Some children were engaged in their play and enjoyed their time exploring and investigating. There was some availability of loose part materials inside and outside which helped children's curiosity and inquiry. The environment was divided into different rooms some of these spaces provided children with positive play experiences. However, some of the environment limited children's opportunities for uninterrupted creative play. The service should now consider reviewing the rooms to ensure all children receive a service that meets their individual needs.

Children throughout the nursery had good links with the local community with regular visits to the library and walks to the local park. Some children were confident in the wider school environment especially those who stayed for lunch. Opportunities should be made available to all children to become familiar with the wider school environment.

Children were kept healthy and active by accessing regular physical exercise and fresh air. We saw them having fun outside using a variety of push/pull toys, balancing equipment and practicing their basketball skills. Staff spoke of their plans for the garden this included more numeracy and literacy opportunities, an improved mud kitchen and a growing area for fruit and vegetables. We agree with this area for improvement. Teepee Tuesdays were held weekly which meant children accessed a local wooded area, where they were developing an appreciation for the natural world and the environment around them.

Care Inspectorate grade: adequate

3. Quality of staffing

Staff were warm, caring and had positive relationships with the children. Respectful and nurturing interactions supported children and staff were responsive to their individual needs. Staff were supportive to parents and were building up their confidence. Opportunities for stay/play sessions, seasonal crafts along with having a brew and blether with staff, ensured staff were engaging with parents and working in partnership with them.

Staff had worked hard since the last inspection and were working as a team to improve outcomes for all children. Staff were positive about the changes and we saw supportive relationships and a caring ethos towards each other. Staff meetings were being used productively and staff assigned tasks with agreed timescales which could be monitored, and action documented. Senior staff also met regularly; this was beginning to have some impact on consistency across the rooms.

Staff were taking on leadership roles to support children's experiences and we saw this having some impact on the outcomes for children. Staff were undertaking relevant training opportunities and they could discuss the impact this was having on their practice. Staff also shared learning from relevant training courses and practice visits from other nurseries. Senior staff have identified that staff still need support in providing children with challenge to progress their learning and will continue to review children's planning, observations and next steps to ensure that relevant and significant learning is identified.

Monitoring of staff's practice had been started. This varied in detail and content. We have asked the management team to ensure monitoring systems have a purpose and impact should be measured to ensure outcomes and experiences for children continue to improve.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

4. Quality of management and leadership

Senior management team had a clear vision for the service and were enthusiastic and committed to its improvement and development. They demonstrated their understanding of the strengths of the service and the areas to develop and improve on. At the last inspection, we recommended that an effective monitoring and quality assurance system be introduced to improve outcomes for children. An action plan based on the previous inspection report was in place and it identified clear targets for staff. We saw that this was beginning to have some positive impact within the setting.

The service should now ensure a robust quality assurance system is in place that considers all aspects of the service and ensures experiences for children continue to develop and improve. Monitoring systems should be embedded to identify any gaps in quality of the service. This should include experiences for children, the environment, and staff practice.

Staff were confident and were fully engaged throughout the inspection. They felt supported by the senior management team and were motivated and committed to providing positive experiences for children.

Staff and the management team understood the importance of trusting relationships with families. They had developed a range of opportunities to involve them in the life of the nursery. Stay and play days, craft sessions and staying to take part in “brew and blether” days encouraged families to spend time in the nursery. Parents spoke appreciatively of these times and enjoyed seeing their children enjoying themselves at nursery.

Care Inspectorate grade: adequate

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and three recommendations. From these, three recommendations have been met. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no recommendations.

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.