

Summarised inspection findings

Loch Primary School and Nursery Class

South Lanarkshire Council

1 November 2022

Key contextual information

Loch Nursery Class is situated within Loch Primary School in the Springhall area of Rutherglen in South Lanarkshire. Children attend the nursery from 9am to 3pm each day. There are 22 children aged three to those not yet attending primary school. All children attending the nursery class access 1140 hours. The headteacher leads the nursery staff team. A team leader and six early years practitioners support the nursery class.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

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

- The nursery developed its vision and values through consultation with the whole school community. Children are very proud of their 'TEAM LOCH - we are all in this together' motto. This motto was particularly relevant and supportive for families dealing with the pandemic. Staff bring the vision and values to life through day-to-day practice and the interactions they have with children, parents and visitors.
- The headteacher plays a very active role in leading the nursery. She provides clear strategic guidance and direction to the team leader and practitioners. They value the support she gives them to develop their knowledge, skills and practice. The team leader supports the headteacher well in the day-to-day running of the nursery class. Together, they are highly motivated and create a positive and welcoming ethos. All staff strive to provide the highest possible standards for all children and families. There is a sense of strong teamwork and collaborative working across the nursery. Staff have effectively implemented the 1140 hours entitlement in consultation with parents. All children access their hours through full day sessions. This effectively meets the needs of families in the community. Practitioners continue to adapt the flow of the session. This is ensuring children have variety to their day.
- The headteacher demonstrates a strong commitment to career long professional learning for herself, the team leader and all practitioners. The clear focus on professional learning has impacted positively on practice in the nursery. The team leader and practitioners talk enthusiastically about their professional learning. Practitioners demonstrate the positive impact this has on practice in the nursery. This is particularly true of the team leader whose professional, accredited learning has built capacity and a culture of learning among all practitioners. Senior leaders encourage and support the team leader and practitioners to take forward improvements and share responsibility for change. Most practitioners have responsibilities for key developments within the setting, including creativity, nurture, outdoor learning, literacy and numeracy. Practitioners with leadership roles work hard to build their knowledge through research and professional learning. In turn, staff support others and influence practice in relation to their leadership area. The headteacher and team leader should continue to monitor closely and evaluate the effectiveness of these roles. This should ensure improvements continue to have a positive impact on children and families.

- Staff use a range of self-evaluation activities, taking account of appropriate national and local frameworks, to inform improvement planning. The nursery team value the views and suggestions of partners, parents and children. Practitioners provide opportunities for all stakeholders to share their opinions. All children have their views heard through 'The Tiny Talking Team'. Practitioners should continue to build on this participation with stakeholders in improvement and self-evaluation processes, encouraging greater participation. The improvement plan rightly focuses on improving health and wellbeing, particularly given the impact of the pandemic on children. The headteacher observes aspects of practice in the playroom and provides regular, helpful feedback to the team.

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

- Children are very happy, settled, and enjoy their time in nursery. The environment is well organised and provides spaces for children to explore independently. Practitioners plan purposeful play activities and support children with play experiences. They provide a range of open-ended resources including some natural materials. The planning of the environment and resources provides opportunities for children to express their ideas, develop skills, and consolidate their learning.
- Children make regular use of the outdoor areas including the new addition of the 'Hobbit Hut'. They are building their confidence with loose parts materials and benefit from opportunities for physical activity. Plans to develop the hut further, and reintroduce Forest Adventures, will further enrich outdoor experiences for all children.
- Almost all interactions are consistently warm and supportive. All children benefit from nurturing relationships with the staff team. Most practitioners use open-ended questions and commentary effectively to deepen and extend children's thinking and learning. Practitioners need to build on this to ensure all staff allow children space and time to follow their own ideas and interests.
- Practitioners made effective use of digital technologies to support continuity of learning well during the pandemic. Parents received support and information through the school app. Practitioners shared ideas for parents to play and learn with their child at home. They should continue to build on this to use digital technologies in the playroom to support and enrich learning experiences.
- Practitioners know individual children very well. They document individual observations of children within learning journals and on learning walls. Practitioners should now ensure that observations focus on recording children's significant learning. This will support all practitioners to know the children well as learners.
- Practitioners plan activities for individual areas based on observations of the children linked to the curriculum. As part of this process, practitioners should continue to consider how they could involve children more in planning. This will allow children to make decisions and have choices about what and how they learn.
- Transition arrangements to primary one include visits to the wider school community. Practitioners have developed an effective process for managing information on children's care and learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- The school community recently reviewed the curriculum rationale. The rationale has a strong focus on wellbeing and nurture which is evident across the setting. The team leader and practitioners should expand on this curriculum rationale to highlight specific aspects of the early curriculum in the nursery. Practitioners should continue to address holistically the wide range of experiences and outcomes, focusing on the development of knowledge, understanding, skills and communication.
- Children enjoy their learning and experiences when carrying out science, technology, engineering and maths activities. Practitioners should collaborate with teachers at early level in the school to provide effective continuity and progression in learning. Practitioners use the outdoor environment well to plan interesting tasks and activities for children.
- Practitioners manage transitions to nursery for children from home with care and sensitivity. They take time to listen to any wellbeing concerns parents wish to share. Practitioners support children well as they move to primary school.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- The Parent Council supports the work of the nursery and organises funding events. Parents are involved in self-evaluation activities to support improvement in the nursery. Almost all parents feel very welcome in the nursery. They enjoy being able to come into the nursery again following the pandemic.
- Practitioners have established positive relationships and effective communication with parents. This keeps parents informed about their child's learning. This communication includes informal daily chats, information on the school app, social media feeds and more formal opportunities to discuss children's learning, progress and care. Practitioners plan to reintroduce 'Stay and Play' sessions. This will offer parents opportunities to spend time in the nursery, allowing them to observe how their children learn. Commendably, throughout periods of school closures, practitioners continued to communicate well with parents. They facilitated virtual concerts, phone calls for parents' evenings, regular social media and website updates, newsletters and Peep learning together workshops. Practitioners are now planning a series of events to strengthen further parental engagement within the nursery now restrictions are lifted.
- Practitioners encourage parents to share children's achievements from home. The nursery has a home learning tree where children proudly display learning that takes place at home. Practitioners provide parents and carers with very helpful information about how young children learn and ideas about how they can support this at home. They plan to reintroduce story bags and numeracy bags with loose parts.

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

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very good

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

- The setting has developed a strong sense of community where the wellbeing of children is paramount. The headteacher, team leader and practitioners recognise the importance of positive and nurturing relationships. These relationships impact positively on children's wellbeing. All children are valued as individuals with their own personalities and needs. Practitioners use the knowledge from their professional learning on nurture and attachment effectively to ensure that children are supported and ready to participate in their play.
- Practitioners have a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators. The wellbeing indicators are embedded in the life of the nursery. They are clearly demonstrated through the experiences and relationships with families and partners. Practitioners should continue to build on their practice to support children and parents to develop an awareness of the wellbeing indicators in meaningful ways. Through the 'Tiny Talking Team', children's opinions influence change, for example, in the resources available in areas across the nursery and in organising celebrations.
- Practitioners know each child and their personal circumstances very well. Parents speak very positively of their relationship with practitioners. These strong relationships allow practitioners to provide appropriate and sensitive support for children and their families at an early stage. Practitioners plan effectively for children with potential barriers to their learning. They make effective use of the local authority staged intervention process to plan targeted support. Practitioners monitor and review the robust individual plans effectively. This rigorous approach ensures each child makes appropriate progress. They promptly seek help from other professionals when required. Children benefit greatly from this positive partnership working.
- Practitioners promote inclusion and equality well. The nursery has a strong sense of community where everyone is valued and included. Children are developing an awareness of diversity through recognising and celebrating a range of events in the calendar year. The leadership team has a clear understanding of the families that attend the setting and how this influences the work they do. This helps practitioners to celebrate the multi-cultural context of children in the nursery. Practitioners should continue to promote gender equality effectively with children, to ensure potential stereotypes are consistently recognised and challenged.

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
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- Overall, children make good progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing. Children are confident to try new experiences and engage with new learning. Practitioners promote the importance of the rights of the child through play. Almost all children play together well. They are learning to cooperate and take turns. Plans to develop a children's rights team will provide positive leadership opportunities for children.
 - Staff have a strong focus on health and wellbeing, which is having a positive impact on children's learning, development and achievements. Children are settled and becoming increasingly confident and resilient. They are developing independence skills as they help prepare snack and get dressed for outdoor play.
 - Almost all children are keen communicators. They enjoy sharing their experiences with peers and adults. Most children recognise their name as they are encouraged to use mark making to self-register. Children share a good knowledge of the books they explore in the nursery. They are encouraged to use different props and resources to explore further characters and events in a story.
 - Children are making good progress in numeracy. They are becoming aware of numbers, number order and early counting routines. A few children are making good use of mathematical language as part of their play in the water and block play areas.
 - Practitioners plan for literacy and numeracy within the nursery through adult-initiated experiences. Practitioners should reflect on the current balance between adult and child-initiated learning experiences. This should support children's independence and application of skills within the play environment.
 - 'Nursery on a page' provides data on Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and additional support needs. This approach to capturing data supports tracking of children's progress and helps practitioners to identify any potential barriers to learning and engagement. Practitioners have a strong knowledge of the children within their key groups.
 - The headteacher and team leader monitor the children's progress using a well-established tracking system. As planned, the practitioners should reintroduce the running records. This should help ensure that observations focus on significant learning. This should also provide

evidence that practitioner's professional judgements are robust and underpin tracking of children's progress over time.

- Children's key workers identify termly literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing targets using the local authority 'Together We Can and We Will' learning goals. Practitioners share these targets with parents. They should now consider how to involve children in setting and knowing their own targets. This will help children to understand themselves as learners and develop skills and attitudes to be motivated lifelong learners.
- Individual plans support targeted interventions for children who require additional support with wellbeing and learning. Visual cues and symbols support inclusive practice, meeting the needs of all children.
- Practitioners actively celebrate children's achievements through star of the week awards. Practitioners display certificates and photographs on the Achievement Tree. Children are very proud of the achievements that are celebrated in this way. They are developing an appreciation of the qualities and skills of their friends. Parents are encouraged to share their views on children's progress and achievements.
- The headteacher, team leader and all practitioners take very positive steps to ensure equity for all. Parents are welcomed into the nursery and staff treat all families with fairness and respect they have strong positive relationships.

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.