

# Summarised inspection findings

Happyhansel Primary School Nursery Class

Shetland Islands Council

27 June 2023

## Key contextual information

Happyhansel Nursery Class is part of Happyhansel Primary School and is located in the village of Walls, on the west side of Shetland, within Shetland Islands Council. At the time of the inspection, 15 children were on the roll. Children can attend from age three until they begin primary school. Children attend the nursery from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. during term time. The headteacher of Happyhansel Primary School has overall leadership and management responsibility for the nursery. The senior practitioner has responsibility for the daily running of the nursery. The senior practitioner is supported by a team of three full-time equivalent staff. A teacher visits the nursery for three days over a two-week period. In the last two years, the staff team have gone through a period of high staff turnover and is now more stable.

### 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

- The Happyhansel practitioner team are currently reviewing the nursery's vision, values, aims and motto. They have involved children and parents well in this process. For example, children and their families use buttons to vote about their preferred choices for the values and logo. This enables practitioners to gather their views successfully.
- The senior practitioner mentors the practitioner team effectively and has developed a culture of reflection and professional learning. This has been particularly important given the very high staff turnover. Practitioners are committed to improving their practice. They support each other well and use national guidance to help them reflect on their professional learning needs. Practitioners work well with other Shetland Island practitioners through participation in working groups. This has increased their understanding of early learning and childcare. This has impacted positively on the life of the nursery. Local authority support and training is also utilised well by the practitioners.
- Practitioners are at the early stages of undertaking leadership roles. However, these have already led to positive improvements in children's learning, such as the improvement in literacy. Practitioners would benefit from continuing to develop their leadership roles to incorporate current effective practice and guidance. This will also help develop a clear understanding of the roles of the team, including the early learning and childcare teacher. Children have opportunities for leadership responsibilities, such as being the leader when going on mindfulness walks. Senior leaders should now provide children with further opportunities to develop their leadership skills.
- There is a joint improvement plan for the school and the nursery. However, this improvement plan has insufficient detail on the key priorities to improve learning in the nursery. The headteacher, along with the nursery team, should develop a separate improvement plan to

include detailed timescales and actions. Practitioners' professional learning should also be linked to key priorities within this improvement plan.

- The senior practitioner carries out weekly evaluations with the team on what is working well and areas for improvement in learning. Senior leaders should now undertake more formal monitoring and evaluation of learning within the nursery to identify clear action points. This will enable senior leaders to support practitioners to look more critically at their practice. Senior leaders and all staff should implement the use of the national self-evaluation framework, How good is our early learning and childcare? This should help them to identify clearly the nursery's strengths and areas for improvement. Staff should prioritise their focus on improving the tracking of children's progress.

## 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

- Relationships between practitioners, children and parents are very positive and nurturing across the nursery class. Children are relaxed, responsible and confident when playing and talking with other children and adults. Almost all children are caring and kind to each other and play well together.
- Practitioners support children to lead their own learning and have effectively improved the environment in the playroom in consultation with the children. Most children engage well with the range of experiences provided. Children have access to a wide range of open-ended resources and natural materials to support their play. Children particularly enjoy the reading area in the playroom. Practitioners should continue to develop the spaces for play inside and outside to provide opportunities to increase children's creativity, resilience and independence. Practitioners offer children opportunities to engage in outdoor play at the nursery. Children have direct access to the outdoor area. They also benefit from learning experiences in the 'mindfulness walks' in the community where each child has an opportunity to be leader. The lead child decides on areas in the local community to visit. Practitioners provide helpful pictures and maps in the nursery to help the lead child decide where they will visit.
- Practitioners know children well. They carefully listen and respond well to children to ensure their views and choices are respected. They understand children's care needs very well. They should now use their knowledge of children's interests and strengths to provide more challenge for children in their learning. Most practitioners make effective use of questioning to engage children in their learning. They should continue to develop their skills in interacting with children during experiences. This will help children to deepen their learning as they build on their previous knowledge and experiences. Practitioners should continue to review the balance between child and adult-initiated learning. A few children would benefit from more adult direction and support to engage in purposeful play. At times, children access a range of digital technology. However, this could be made more easily available to further extend their learning.
- Practitioners use learning journals to record observations about each child's progress. These include photographs and descriptions of children's learning experiences. Practitioners are growing in skill and confidence in identifying children's significant learning. They are now ready to use observations more effectively to take children's learning forward. This will help ensure that experiences consistently extend children's interests and ideas. Practitioners should track children's progress and achievements more regularly. This will enable them to share with children their next steps and support them to plan and reflect upon their learning.

- Practitioners use floor books well to plan children's learning clearly. Their planning is based on children's interests as well as activities that practitioners use to support children's learning. This is reviewed weekly to ensure that it is providing learning experiences which continue to capture children's interest.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners provide a curriculum that is play-based and increasingly responsive to children's interests. They should now develop a rationale to underpin the curriculum framework delivered in the nursery. Senior leaders and practitioners should ensure that the curriculum rationale incorporates the uniqueness of the setting.
- Practitioners plan learning carefully and take account of each child's needs and stages of development. They ensure planning is flexible and takes account of children's interests. The nursery team should continue to focus on the curriculum to ensure learning is planned across all areas of the curriculum.
- Practitioners are sensitive to the needs of individual children and their families as they begin nursery or move into P1. As a result, they plan transitions into and within the nursery well. Children who have additional support receive an enhanced transition which helps ensure they move successfully into nursery or P1.

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

- Practitioners have strong, respectful relationships with parents. Parents are extremely positive about the support they and their children receive from the nursery. Practitioners work well with families and encourage a partnership approach to developing children's wellbeing and skills. Practitioners encourage parents to discuss any concerns about their children's development and learning as early as possible. This enables practitioners to provide early intervention support. The senior practitioner and the team work well with partners to provide effective support to children and their families.
- Parents have daily opportunities to review children's learning journals. They also attend stay and play sessions and volunteer for nursery trips, sports day, concerts, parent appointments and are members of the Parent Council. Parents participated in reviewing the vision, values, aims and logo. Practitioners share weekly newsletters with parents which provide information on what the children are learning and useful links to informative websites on early learning. Parents have led helpful learning sessions in the nursery using their skills and experience.

## 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

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 promotion of the wellbeing of children and their families underpins practitioners' work. Positive relationships between staff and children are a key strength of the setting. As a result, most children settle quickly and appear happy, safe and secure. Practitioners nurture children and demonstrate clearly the values of being respectful and inclusive. They encourage children to be kind to each other and they display children's acts of kindness on the noticeboard.
- Children are developing their awareness of the national wellbeing indicators, in particular the importance of being safe, healthy and active. Practitioners help children develop their understanding through meaningful contexts, such as preparing food and physical play. They should support children more effectively to develop an understanding of the full range of wellbeing indicators through relevant contexts. This should help children to talk about all aspects of their health and wellbeing.
- Practitioners are fully aware of statutory requirements in relation to early learning and childcare. They are clear about their responsibilities for keeping children safe. Each child has a personal plan, which outlines their care and health needs. Support strategies are outlined in this plan which is reviewed every six months. Children who require additional support have an individualised support plan, which outlines targets and strategies to meet their needs. Practitioners update these plans in consultation with parents and, where appropriate, other professionals. Partners are extremely positive about their close working relationship with practitioners which helps ensure that, together, they are supporting children to make progress.
- Children and families benefit from the highly inclusive, nurturing and respectful ethos within the nursery. A few children and families, who do not have English as their first language, are supported well. Practitioners translate information and signage, demonstrating the commitment to include all stakeholders in the life of the nursery. They also teach children how to use sign language. Learning experiences in the community support children to consider the needs of others. For example, children visit the local care home to entertain the residents.
- Practitioners encourage the children to be aware of their rights, particularly the right to play, by promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Practitioners value the views and opinions of children. Children's opinions influence change, for example, changes to the environment in the nursery. They enjoy using buttons to vote. This ensures their views are heard. Practitioners should continue to explore how they can engage children in relevant experiences to learn about diversity and equality.

### 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, children are making satisfactory progress in developing their early language skills. A few children are making good progress. The majority of children communicate confidently with adults and each other. Most children show a keen interest in books and can recall familiar stories. Children benefit from book sharing sessions with familiar adults and enjoy borrowing a book each week.
- The majority of children recognise their name as they self-register. A few recognise the names of all the children, identify letters, initial sounds and are beginning to blend letters. The majority of children demonstrate mark-making skills, and a few 'write' their own books. Children would benefit from continuing to develop an awareness of writing for a variety of purposes. This will help them to communicate their thoughts and ideas. Practitioners should continue to build on the improvements they have made to enrich environments to support children's emergent literacy skills. For example, children should engage more in rhymes and songs, letter names and sounds and continue to practice mark-making.
- The majority of children make satisfactory progress in mathematics and numeracy with a few making good progress. Most children count beyond 10 and a few can order numbers and enjoy the challenge of larger numbers. Most children count during routines, in their spontaneous play and when sorting loose parts. They recognise familiar numerals. A few recognise numerals to 100 and beyond. They use appropriate mathematical language in context, when supported by practitioners. The majority of children name and recognise basic shapes. A few can recognise and name more complex shapes. Practitioners should continue to support children to build their confidence and experience across all early mathematical concepts as they play.
- Practitioners guide children very well to recognise a range of emotions. Every child has a self-regulation toolkit which they use to find activities to regulate their behaviour and help them feel better. Almost all children apply this understanding very well during the day. Practitioners should encourage children to share how they are feeling with the nursery staff team each day as they self-register at the nursery. Most children are competent at dressing for outside play. All children are gaining an understanding of healthy eating through discussion and making healthy choices at snack. Most children understand how to take care of their body by brushing their teeth and taking part in physical activity in the gym hall and outside.

- Practitioners celebrate children's achievements through praise, encouragement and displaying photographs and certificates on the achievement board. They create an inclusive ethos where all children are valued and respected.
- Practitioners know their families very well, including data related to children's socio-economic context. They are also aware of the challenges families may be experiencing with the current cost of living crisis. They provide sensitive support through signposting them to appropriate resources, including access to food through a food redistribution organisation.

## 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.