

# Summarised inspection findings

Quarryhill Primary School Nursery Class

Aberdeen City Council

23 April 2024

## Key contextual information

Quarryhill Primary School nursery class has one large playroom with direct access to an enclosed outside space. Children, parents and staff redeveloped this space together last session. The nursery is open daily from 8am to 6pm. The maximum number of children who can attend at any one time is 48, and currently the roll is 54. Children attend from the age of three, on various full or part day patterns. Currently, around 20% of learners have English as an additional language (EAL). A visiting specialist provides support to the team regarding support for these learners. The acting headteacher has been in post for five months. The strategic leadership and management of the nursery has very recently been delegated to the depute headteacher (DHT), who is now the named manager. Staff absence impacted on the work of the team last session.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

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

- Practitioners are warm and attentive as they welcome children and families into the setting. There is a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The team are kind in their interactions with children. This helps all children, including those very new to the setting, to settle quickly and explore the nursery with increasing confidence. Children enjoy their time in nursery.
- Practitioners have worked well together to begin to improve their indoor environment. Children now access a wider range of play experiences. A minority of children move frequently between many different activities, often finding it difficult to concentrate or develop their play. A few children are engrossed and motivated as they take turns and cooperate well in their extended role play in the home corner. Staff need to improve a few spaces to sustain children's play for longer periods of time. Most children frequently choose to play in the large outdoor area. They enjoy transporting water, stones and leaves as they investigate natural materials. All children would benefit from increased opportunities to apply their skills, test out their ideas and explore their interests in more depth. Currently, there are too many missed opportunities to deepen and extend children's learning.
- Practitioners use a very new approach to planning learning that records how the team respond to children's interests and topics the team have planned. The DHT and practitioners should build and strengthen their shared understanding of these new approaches. There is not yet an appropriate balance between responsive and planned learning that supports children to build on and develop further their skills.
- Practitioners record notes about children's progress in a wide range of places. This includes online records that are shared with parents, trackers of learning and individual plans. Keyworkers complete regular observations about specific children that they also share with parents. A few parents share what children can do at home and what they might learn next. Most practitioners do not yet consistently record children's significant learning and the skills

children need to develop next. As a result, records of learning do not always accurately reflect children's progress over time. The quality, and use of staff's observations and identification of next steps needs to improve. Children's next steps in learning should better influence the planning of spaces, experiences and interactions.

- A minority of children have additional individual plans to support their development and learning. These plans outline children's specific medical or learning needs. In a few examples, there are clear strategies that practitioners implement in nursery and parents use at home. Practitioners should now develop this approach more consistently across the setting. Practitioners communicate and work well with partner agencies and families. Frequent sharing of information about children ensures the team are confident about what individual children's additional needs are and how they should offer support. The DHT and senior early years practitioners should now ensure that they develop processes to track and monitor the progress of children with additional needs more effectively.

## 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 make satisfactory progress in early communication, language and literacy skills. A few children use gestures, touch and facial expressions to communicate their needs. The majority of children use their developing vocabulary to enthusiastically share their interests and experiences from home. A few children listen well to practitioners and one another as they help to look after their playroom. The majority of children enjoy accessing books, singing and listening to stories in the book corner. A few children mark make for a purpose as they make appointments or record orders to their 'takeaway'. All children would benefit from increased opportunities to mark make for a purpose. For example, to re-tell stories using resources and materials and to create and share their own books and stories.
- Children make satisfactory progress in early numeracy and mathematics. A minority of children explore colour and shape as they sort, match and compare circles, stars and squares. Children enjoy exploring volume and capacity in the interesting sand and water areas. A few children use mathematical language appropriately as they measure in their play, and help practitioners prepare for snack and lunch times. Most children would benefit from a wider range of more challenging numeracy and mathematics experiences through play and real-life contexts.
- In health and wellbeing, children make satisfactory progress. Children build new relationships and care for others as they visit a local care home to sing songs and play games. A few children benefit from sensitive conversations with staff to develop their understanding of other children's feelings. All children would benefit from continued use of the language of wellbeing to help them express and understand how they feel. Most children are ready for increased leadership opportunities across their nursery experiences.
- Practitioners take time to notice and celebrate children's achievements through praise, photographs shared with parents online and in their displays. The team encourage families to share and celebrate children's wider learning outside nursery through an online platform. Practitioners should consider how they use this information with children. Practitioners should ensure what they know about children's achievements is used to influence their planning for individual children. Regular 'stay and play' sessions involve parents in finding out about what their children learn about and do at nursery.
- Practitioners understand the individual circumstances of children and their families. The team are respectful as they respond to the strengths and challenges within the local

community. Practitioners meet regularly with senior early years practitioners to discuss and identify families who require specific support. The team work well with parents and other professionals. Practitioners make referrals to other agencies to access practical support for families. This support includes parenting groups, clothing grants or support to maximise income. Senior leaders should develop the skills and confidence of the team in how to develop further and measure and the impact of such strategies on children's progress.

## 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.