

# Summarised inspection findings

**Grange Primary School Early Learning and Childcare Class**

Falkirk Council

26 September 2023

## Key contextual information

Grange Primary School Early Learning and Childcare Class (ELCC) is situated within Grange Primary School, in Bo'ness, Falkirk. The setting provides 1140 hours of early learning and childcare between the hours of 8.45 am - 2.45 pm, term time. Children attend from the age of three until starting primary school. The setting is registered for 56 children at any one time. It is currently staffed to accommodate 48 children and the current roll is 47. The setting has a playroom with direct access to an outdoor space. Practitioners also make use of spaces in the wider school environment and local community.

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the ELCC and has delegated the responsibility for management of the ELCC to the principal teacher. The senior early years officer (SEYO) has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the setting. The SEYO is supported by six early years officers and three early years assistants.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- Practitioners have very positive relationships with children and their families. They are kind, caring and nurturing and know children very well as learners. They take very good account of the needs of all children, supporting children effectively in their play and learning. Children enjoy their time in the ELCC. They settle quickly and confidently into the setting, showing independence when accessing the range of experiences and resources on offer. Children are kind to each other, are good friends and show support to others when they need it.
- Overall, practitioners use their interactions with children very well to extend their learning. They make sound decisions on when to provide support and when to step back and enable children to explore experiences without adult direction. This responsive approach supports children very well to follow their interests and, where required, sustain their engagement in their play and learning. Practitioners use highly skilled questioning to challenge children's thinking and promote their curiosity. Children are inquisitive and excited about their learning as a result. Practitioners develop very well children's early literacy and communication skills through the well-considered literacy rich experiences on offer. They skilfully extend children's vocabulary, supporting very effectively children's language acquisition. Practitioners should consider how to develop further the experiences for children during their daily 'together time'.
- Practitioners use digital technologies to support children's learning in literacy and numeracy using the interactive whiteboard. They encourage children to research their interests using tablets. As planned, practitioners should consider how to extend children's learning about digital technologies, taking into account the broad range of experiences and outcomes in this curricular area.

- Practitioners record very well important and helpful information about children’s experiences and skills in learning journals, floorbooks and an online application for parents. Children and parents enjoy accessing learning journals. They contribute well by sharing ‘wow’ moments children experience outwith the setting. Practitioners capture children’s voice effectively through journals and floorbooks, which they use well to inform planning.
- Practitioners draw upon a wide range of observations to make judgements about the progress children make and their next steps in learning. They use a focused approach as a team, as well as timely observations that capture children’s significant learning. This approach supports practitioners very well to monitor closely the progress children are making in achieving milestones appropriate to their age and stage. The regular ‘huddles’ and helpful local authority frameworks support practitioners to make increasingly accurate judgements on the progress children are making. Practitioners note next steps in learning as a result of focused observations. They should now link these next steps to the local authority’s assessment and progression framework.

## 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

very 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

- Children are making very good progress in developing their early language and communication in line with their own stage of development. Almost all children listen well and communicate effectively with adults and with their friends. They enjoy sharing stories and recall familiar nursery rhymes with actions accurately. Children use regular visits to the local library to select books of their choice to share with friends. Almost all children recognise their written name, selecting their card confidently to self-register at snack. Children demonstrate confidently their mark making skills in different contexts including designing patterns for handbags and making their own books. A few children write regularly for a range of purposes using well-formed letters and numbers.
- Children are making very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Almost all children use number confidently and meaningfully in their play and daily routines. Children use both comparative and positional language when building towers. They have opportunities to develop their understanding of volume and measure while making playdough and playing at the water tray. Practitioners should continue to support children to develop early numeracy and mathematical skills, including time and information handling, through real-life contexts.
- There is a strong focus on the health and wellbeing of children. As a result, children make very good progress in this area. Children develop friendships, play well cooperatively and enjoy helping adults with daily routines. They demonstrate kindness and care towards their peers. Almost all children show high levels of independence at mealtimes and understand the need for personal hygiene. Children develop well their fine motor skills through manipulating dough tools and using knives to help prepare healthy snacks. Outdoors, most children are developing a wide range of gross motor skills including climbing and jumping and manage risk well to keep themselves safe.
- Almost all children are making very good progress over time, including those experiencing barriers to learning. Practitioners have worked very well together to make increasingly accurate judgements about children's progress at regular points throughout the year.
- Working with families, practitioners carefully capture and celebrate children's individual achievements both at the ELCC and at home. Children are proud of their achievements and enjoy seeing them shared attractively across the setting. Children demonstrate skills in being responsible citizens when making playdough, watering the plants in the garden and preparing snack.

- All practitioners understand their role in promoting equity and provide sensitive, valued and bespoke support and advice. As a result, most parents feel comfortable approaching the staff team if they have concerns. Practitioners provide effective support for children with additional support needs and actively engage in partnership working to support children with communication needs. The use of visual cues and symbols is helping to meet the needs of children who require support to communicate.

## Other relevant evidence

- Practitioners think carefully about the environment both inside and out. They use audit toolkits very well to review the spaces and resources resulting in engaging, high-quality environments. Practitioners take account of the range of needs of the children in their care. Children, as a result, are highly-motivated by the wide range of learning experiences on offer throughout the day. For example, children enjoy using the garlic press to crush individual cloves to make garlic bread. Children move freely between experiences, making purposeful choices based on what they want to find out more about. Practitioners support this very well by placing children's voice at the heart of all they do, demonstrating a high respect for the views and opinions of children.
- Practitioners plan beyond the setting to enhance children's experiences further and support them to play and learn in a wider range of contexts. They have established positive partnerships with the local library and care home. Children visit the local care home regularly to share their learning in songs, rhymes and games with the residents. Children gain confidence and further develop their communication skills as a result of these positive experiences. Practitioners utilise well the local area to plan regular Forest School outings for groups of children. This regular event supports children very well to develop important life skills such as assessing risk and developing skills in teamwork. In addition, regular outings within the local community are supporting children effectively to learn important skills such as crossing the road safely.

## Practice worth sharing more widely

### **The use of the planning and moderation cycle:**

The SEYO leads the practitioner team very effectively to use the planning and moderation cycle to inform the team's practice. She is supported very well by the principal teacher to analyse evidence using robust self-evaluation processes. As a result, practitioners have a deep understanding of children and their individual strengths and needs.

As a team, practitioners understand very well their role as the adult in supporting and extending children's experiences. They use highly-effective interactions to support children's play and learning. This is enhanced by the implementation of a range of effective approaches to gathering evidence about children's progress. They gather children's and parents' views and opinions using a 'what matters to me' document. They use ongoing observations of significant learning and a focused team approach to gather detailed and helpful information about what children can do. Practitioners successfully use regular 'huddles' to share information with the staff team about children's interests and next steps in learning. This supports the staff team to plan for learning to meet the needs of all children. As a result, children learn at a pace that suits their own development. Practitioners moderate evidence as a staff team, using the local authority assessment progression framework effectively to make sound judgements about children's progress. These discussions, 'huddles' and tracking meetings support the full team to plan provocations that lead to high-quality learning experiences for children. As a result, children are making very good progress across almost all aspects of their learning and development.



## 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.