

Summarised inspection findings

Bell's Brae Primary School Nursery Class

Shetland Islands Council

26 September 2023

Key contextual information

Bell's Brae School Nursery is accommodated within a self-contained wing of Bell's Brae Primary School in Lerwick. Children benefit from access to two large playrooms, an 'indoor-outdoor' area and a self-contained outdoor area. Children attend from the age of three years until starting school. The setting can provide places for 65 children at any one time. Currently there are 45 children attending. Children attend during term time with places offered between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm. Parents have high levels of flexibility in how they use the 1140 hours allocation of childcare. Children have different patterns of attendance as a result.

A teacher supports the nursery three days a week, working alongside the team of practitioners and support workers. The nursery has had significant staffing challenges including absences and ongoing recruitment. The team will change again in August 2023, when a new teacher takes up post.

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 settled and enjoy their time in nursery. The environment is attractive and well considered. Practitioners have worked together to create spaces for learning that allow children to make choices about what and where they will play. They have created 'zones' that allow for effective staff deployment to support children in their learning. Children engage well with experiences on offer. Practitioners should continue to reflect on the most effective use of spaces and make ongoing changes to best meet the needs of children.
- Children engage well with each other and benefit from nurturing relationships with practitioners. Most practitioners use questions and commentary well to deepen and extend children's thinking. They are at the early stages of using digital technology to support learning and are keen to develop this. All children have opportunities to learn outdoors for extended periods of time each day. Practitioners are working together to continue to develop resources and opportunities for learning outdoors. This is having a positive impact on children's engagement in learning.
- Practitioners know children very well as individuals and as part of their families. They observe children as they play and document their observations in individual learning journals and floorbooks. Practitioners are careful to also include children's comments and thoughts in these. The information that practitioners record now needs to be more focused on children's significant learning. Practitioners have begun to identify the skills that children are developing as they play and learn. They should continue to develop and apply their understanding of this to help identify the progress children are making.

- Working together, practitioners and senior leaders have developed and recorded their shared understanding of what high-quality early learning and childcare involves. This provides a helpful tool for staff to support reflection on the quality of the provision they offer. Practitioners plan for learning in response to children's interests. Practitioners are responsive to children's requests for specific resources and activities. They now need to plan learning consistently that provides children with a breadth of experiences across the curriculum and develops their understanding in more depth.
- Practitioners and the nursery teacher use a range of different approaches to track children's development and progress in learning. This helps identify where children may benefit from additional support. Working together, and with roles and responsibilities clearly identified, they should consider how they can use existing processes more effectively track the learning of all children. This would help the staff team identify what individual children need to learn next to build on their prior learning. Children are ready to be more involved in documenting their own learning. This will help them recognise and celebrate what they have learned.

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

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

- In communication and language, children are making good progress. They readily engage with texts and enjoy re-telling a story in their own words and actions. Children enjoy interactions with each other and familiar adults, where they readily share their thoughts and ideas and question to further their own understanding. They listen well, for example, to instructions. In the 'message centre' and other areas, most children explore mark making. A few children confidently form letters and recognise and name letters that are important to them. Almost all children recognise their written name. The minority of children could be supported to develop and apply a wider range of skills in literacy and communication.
- In mathematics and numeracy, children are making good progress. They sequence numbers and a few are confident counting backwards. Children enjoy looking for, and creating, lines of symmetry in the environment. They recognise and can recreate simple patterns. They enjoy gathering and displaying simple data, for example about favourite animals. Overall, children would benefit from increased experiences in all aspects of mathematics.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They are increasingly independent in routines, including snack and lunch where they serve themselves. Children are ready to take on increased responsibilities, for example managing their own risk, routines and play spaces. They demonstrate kindness to each other and demonstrate good manners. In physical play, almost all children are developing gross motor control as they climb, run, pedal trikes, balance and play with balls.
- Children are making good progress across the curriculum, and over time, because of their nursery experiences. Practitioners support children well, including those who have barriers to their learning.
- Children benefit from having responsibility and contributing to the life of the nursery. They enjoy sharing their nursery experiences with their important adults at events, such as learner breakfasts. Building on their use of the local community, practitioners could support children to contribute more as local and global citizens of 21st century Scotland.
- Practitioners have created a very inclusive ethos where everyone is valued and respected. They know families and their context well. They should continue to make full use of all information and data available to promote and ensure equity for all. This should help them

make informed decisions about strategies and interventions that will support all children to make the best possible 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.