

# Summarised inspection findings

**Barrhill Primary School Early Years Centre**

South Ayrshire Council

25 June 2024

## Key contextual information

Barrhill Early Years Centre is part of Barrhill Primary School, in the village of Barrhill, South Ayrshire. The early years centre (EYC) provides early learning and childcare places for children living in the community of Barrhill and surrounding areas. Children can attend the nursery from the age of three until starting primary school. The setting provides places for 10 children at any time. Currently, there are six children on the roll. Children attend between 9 am and 3 pm, during school term time. There is one playroom and children have direct access to a small outdoor area and the wider school building and grounds. The principal teacher has delegated responsibility for the EYC, with the headteacher overseeing the strategic leadership. There are two early years practitioners who support children in their learning and care and are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the EYC.

### 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

- Practitioners successfully deliver the whole school vision of creating a place “where everyone is encouraged to grow and learn in an inclusive and nurturing environment”. They ensure that the values of kindness, respect, honesty, confidence, and achievement are embedded in the daily life and work of the EYC. Children, at their developmental stage, demonstrate the values effectively in their interactions with each other and adults. Practitioners should use the vocabulary of the vision and values more explicitly with children to help them understand how they link to their actions and learning.
- Practitioners are highly skilled, professional and demonstrate enthusiasm and energy in their delivery of early learning and childcare. They provide positive role models and work together very well. Together, they are reflective and have developed the EYC to be of a high-quality and they strive for continued improvement. Practitioners participate in an interesting range of professional learning experiences that significantly informs and influences their practice, including the development of high-quality outdoor learning. The headteacher has empowered the team to manage the direction of change to best meet the needs of children. Practitioners successfully take forward aspects of improvement through a structured programme of professional enquiry, based on their skills, interest, and needs of the EYC. For example, staff have led improvements in the development of outdoor learning and the use of digital technologies. This is resulting in significant positive impact on practice. Practitioners work with colleagues in the school and wider cluster of schools to make improvements to identified aspects. Recent examples include professional learning in science and an increase in related learning opportunities. Practitioners confidently articulate how approaches are helping build capacity for change and are proud of the positive impact this is having on outcomes for children.

- Senior leaders have created an annual calendar for evaluation and improvement of the work of the EYC as part of the whole school. They make use of self-evaluation frameworks to monitor and evaluate the quality provided. Senior leaders monitor the work of the EYC regularly. They could record their feedback more formally to support and challenge practitioners to continue to develop. Practitioners make very good use of self-evaluation frameworks to evaluate their practice. They have developed the use of a helpful floorbook to record their reflective practice and consultation with parents. Practitioners detail the well-considered changes made, including responding to how families want to be involved in their child's learning. They should ensure they fully evaluate the impact of changes made. The EYC is part of the whole school ambitious plan for improvement. Recent examples of improvements that are having positive impact include increasing children's awareness of diversity and their rights.
- Children have leadership responsibilities, including helping with routines and enjoy the challenge of creating simple videos to share good practice in handwashing. Practitioners could support children to build on existing examples of leadership appropriate to individual developmental stages.

## 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 created an ethos and pedagogy that demonstrates a strong commitment to children's rights. Children demonstrate an increasing understanding of their rights and are confident, happy and feel safe and secure. Practitioners are very respectful and nurturing of children and ensure the child's voice is strong. Children are very motivated in their play and learning and engage for extended periods of time in their chosen activities. Practitioners have developed the indoor and outdoor spaces very carefully to offer challenge and opportunities for children to be creative, curious and make decisions. Practitioners are highly responsive to children's interests and learning needs. This allows children to have a key role in leading their own learning, often through real-life experiences.
- Practitioners have very good understanding of how children develop and learn. They understand what makes early learning pedagogy high-quality and skilfully put this into practice. They know children very well as individuals and as learners. They use this knowledge to support individuals effectively. Practitioners appreciate the significant time they can spend with individual children. This helps children make strong progress in their learning and development. Practitioners interact with children using a sensitive and skilful balance of commentary and questioning that consolidates and extends learning. They offer an unhurried approach to learning that provides an effective blend of child-led and adult-initiated experiences. They are skilful in provoking children's interest using child-centred approaches. Children are developing an awareness of themselves as learners and practitioners should continue to promote this.
- Practitioners have developed the use of digital technologies well to enrich and support children's learning. Children are learning to use matrix bar codes to access their learning journals and some resources. Practitioners should continue to embed the use of digital technologies to support children to make confident use across their learning.
- Practitioners are skilled at supporting children to develop their language and literacy. They have benefitted from professional learning from speech and language therapy colleagues and the local authority. They maximise the benefits of having small numbers of children and plan for each child individually.
- Practitioners observe children as they learn, and record and share children's progress and achievements with families effectively using online learning journals. They make careful, personalised observations of learning significant to individuals that support accurate judgements about children's progress. Practitioners use their observations to reliably inform local authority trackers and developmental milestones and plan what children need to learn next. To ensure rigour in assessment, practitioners could use their existing networks beyond the setting to develop and ensure a shared understanding of children's progress. Practitioners

work collaboratively with parents and children to create targets for learning. Children have a developmentally appropriate awareness of their targets.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Senior leaders and practitioners have developed a clear curriculum rationale and a 'learning in Barrhill' vision statement that describes what learning will look, feel, and sound like. Practitioners implement this through the provision of a curriculum that is highly responsive to children's interests. They are proud of the pedagogy they have created together. As a result, children experience learning that is motivating and sustains their engagement well, both indoors and outside. Practitioners have a strong focus on developing children's literacy and numeracy understanding and skills. They also ensure children experience a breadth of learning by planning for and tracking children's progress across all areas of the curriculum.
- Practitioners provide a range of opportunities that support learning for sustainability. Recently, children have explored birds. They demonstrate a sense of wonder as they explore the natural world and develop their depth of knowledge.
- Practitioners make effective use of the local community to enhance the curriculum. They visit nearby woodland, the local shop and surrounding area. They are creative in ensuring children have a range of experiences despite the rural location of the EYC. For example, children use the local service bus to visit the beach and library. Practitioners also invite a range of visitors into the setting. This is helping develop children's understanding of the world of work.
- Practitioners work effectively with colleagues across the early level to promote continuity and progression in children's learning. They provide a planned programme of visits to the junior class in school that help children become familiar with routines and the environment. This complements children's participation in whole school events, such as regular outdoor learning days that support transition well.

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

- Practitioners have valuable partnerships with parents and carers. They have engaging and purposeful interactions at the beginning and end of each day. Practitioners support parents very well to play an active role in their child's experiences at nursery by fostering two-way communication focused on children's learning. They regularly provide motivating learning links. For example, staff have provided sunflower seeds to grow at home. Families strengthen the partnership by sharing learning and experiences from home ensuring that these are celebrated and built on in the EYC. Parents are regularly invited into the setting to join their child at events such as 'Make and Taste', storytelling, singing and concerts.
- Practitioners keep parents fully informed with relevant communications and information about children's progress in their learning. They share their detailed observations through online learning journals and a regular social media feed. Parents also contribute fully to the creation of plans for children's learning and care through termly meetings.

## 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

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

- Practitioners have very respectful, nurturing relationships with children and families and each other. They are positive role models to children, respecting children's agency and valuing them as individuals. Practitioners provide high-quality care and have an extensive understanding of children's needs. They have developed a helpful centre charter that clearly states the high expectations of everyone. Practitioners engage children in dialogue about the charter and children understand the importance of this. Children increasingly use the charter to independently manage social situations. Almost all children play and learn well together. Practitioners offer sensitive support to children to develop understanding of their emotions and the impact of their actions. Building on existing approaches, practitioners should continue to support children to develop language to describe and strategies to manage their emotions. This could include language related to the wellbeing indicators.
- Practitioners ensure the wellbeing of children and each other is a priority. Almost all children have a very well-developed understanding of factors influencing a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy applying their understanding in real-life contexts. For example, they support children to learn about keeping themselves safe as they cross the road and offer opportunities to explore a range of healthy food options at snack and lunch. They understand the importance of developing skills such as fine motor control and how this helps them with their learning. Children benefit from the calm and purposeful environment for learning that supports them to be relaxed and engaged in their learning, adding to their sense of wellbeing.
- Practitioners are clear about their statutory duties in relation to early learning and childcare and carry these out with due care. They know their roles and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe. Practitioners work very closely with families to develop and implement individual plans to support children's care and learning needs.
- Practitioners have developed a very inclusive ethos where all children learn to treat each other with respect. Children who may benefit from support or challenge in their learning are very well supported. They have detailed plans that children, families and practitioners create and review regularly together. Practitioners introduce children to cultures that are outwith their immediate experience. Children are very curious about the lives of others and how they compare to theirs. Practitioners should continue to develop ways to help children understand and respect a wide range of diversity in meaningful and relevant contexts.

### 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 communication and early language. Almost all children listen well to stories and for information. They use a range of vocabulary and are very well supported by practitioners to develop complex vocabulary. Children are curious and readily question what they don't understand or know. The majority of children identify rhyme and most identify syllables in words. Almost all children explore mark making and early writing in their play at their own developmental stage. Most children are adding increasing detail to their recognisable drawings. Most children are excited to explore letters and can identify associated sounds.
- Children make very good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They confidently recognise numerals in their play and count accurately within ten. Most children use a wide range of mathematical language accurately as they measure, order and compare. Children experience simple data handling as they collate information about the weather and vote for their favourite story. A few children explore simple fractions and symmetry. Practitioners should continue to support children to develop understanding of all aspects of mathematics.
- The ethos of the EYC and approaches used by practitioners results in children making very good progress in health and wellbeing. Children are very confident in the setting and are familiar with routines and expectations. They are developing a range of gross motor skills as they balance, climb, and run outdoors and challenge themselves during visits to local woodland. They persevere where they are challenged and are increasingly developing resilience. Almost all children are developing fine motor control at their individual stage of development.
- Children make very good progress over time and are developing the skills and attributes to be successful life-long learners. Practitioners skilfully use their understanding of children as individuals to ensure children's learning is consistently built upon. They do this very effectively using a very personalised approach to best meet the needs of all children, including those with barriers to their learning.
- Children's wider achievements, within and beyond the EYC, are recognised and celebrated. There is a culture of achievement and pride in what children can do in the EYC and the learning they bring from home. Children enjoy opportunities to perform for their families at special events where they demonstrate confidence. They contribute to the wider local community where they gain increasing knowledge and understanding of global citizenship.

They have a wide range of knowledge about the natural world and demonstrate respect for living things. Practitioners could track the skills children are developing beyond the setting to ensure they are consistently built upon.

- Practitioners ensure equity for all children. They collect a range of information and data to check the progress children make in their learning. This helps them identify where children may benefit from support or challenge. They should continue to explore all available data and the effectiveness of their support and challenge to inform decisions about any future interventions.

## 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.