

Summarised inspection findings

Maxwellton Park Nursery and Out of School Care

Renfrewshire Council

24 January 2023

Key contextual information

Maxwellton Park Nursery and Out of School Care is situated within West Primary School, Paisley, Renfrewshire. The nursery is a voluntary organisation and is in partnership with Renfrewshire Council to provide funded early learning and childcare. The nursery has two playrooms, an outdoor space and access to the wider school environment. The nursery can accommodate up to 40 children aged from two and a half years to those not yet attending school. At present the nursery has 37 children aged from three years to those not yet attending primary school. At the time of inspection there was 26 children in attendance. Children attend term time during school hours with a few accessing extended hours. The manager and most practitioners have been in post for a significant period.

1.3 Leadership of change

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

- Maxwellton Park Nursery and Out of School Care has evolved over time and is a valuable asset within the community. An established vision, values and aims include a key focus on relationships and children's right to play. The manager consults with parents as part of the annual review process and invites comments on the current vision, values and aims. She values all views, and where appropriate, consults on and makes changes. Practitioners demonstrate the values in their everyday practice. They should continue to share these in a relevant and meaningful way with all children.
- Practitioners are committed to their role and engage fully in professional learning relevant to improving their practice. They have developed their knowledge and skills well to support individual children and families. As a result, all practitioners share a consistent approach to responding and understanding needs. All practitioners engage in additional reading, which they share amongst the team. They have a practitioner e-profile, where they share, discuss and evaluate professional learning. The peripatetic early years teacher effectively supported the team to engage in training on outdoor learning and floorbooks. This resulted in practitioners auditing and reflecting on their current practice before implementing well considered change.
- The well-respected manager knows practitioners well and offers continued support and challenge through ongoing dialogue and personal appraisals. She actively seeks professional learning to expand her knowledge and shares this widely with the team and beyond. The manager should continue to develop strategic leadership at all levels, with most practitioners currently taking responsibility for developing an area of practice. This includes outdoor learning, wellbeing and supporting children who may have an additional support need. Practitioners attend weekly meetings to plan learning and reflect on practice. They should continue to use this time effectively to support improvement and develop further their practice.
- The setting submits their improvement plan, standards and quality report and self-evaluation documents annually to Renfrewshire Council. They receive effective support and visits from the

local authority partner support officer. The improvement priorities have a relevant focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. A quality assurance calendar supports the manager to monitor and review key aspects of the setting. The manager should continue to ensure a robust approach to quality assurance impacts positively on outcomes for children and families.

- Self-evaluation supports the manager and practitioners to reflect on their practice. As planned, they should continue to develop their practice of reflecting and introducing well considered changes. The pace of change needs to continue to be appropriate, as a result, embedding fully identified areas of change. Parents regularly provide feedback to the setting through daily informal chats, formal meetings, and regular questionnaires. Practitioners actively listen to, respect, value and implement the views of parents and children.

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

- Practitioners have created a nurturing and inclusive environment. Relationships between adults and children are positive, which is helping children to feel secure, safe and valued. Children are developing friendships and play well together. A few children require support to engage in play experiences, share resources and take turns.
- Practitioners, with the support of the peripatetic early years teacher, have significantly improved the outdoor space. They consider carefully how to provide all children with daily opportunities to play outdoors. The team have adapted areas for transition to ensure children have time and space to practise self-help skills calmly, such as getting wellies on and off. As a team, they audited the outdoor space to plan experiences that sustain and extend children's learning. Practitioners could develop further this well considered approach to improving the outdoor space to continually reflect on all environments.
- Practitioners use children's interests well to plan a range of engaging experiences. They also provide resources indoors and outdoors, which most children enjoy. Experiences sustain most children's interest with practitioners providing well timed support for children who find it difficult to engage. They interact well with children to support their early language and communication skills during their play. Practitioners should continue to reflect on the balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences. This will support practitioners to think carefully about how to extend children's learning further and provide continued challenge for all children.
- Practitioners use e-profiles and folders to record observations about each child's progress. They include photographs and relevant information about key skills children are developing as well as next steps in learning. Parents engage with and contribute to the e-profiles and receive useful updates on children's progress bi-annually. As identified by the setting, practitioners would benefit from regular planned opportunities to moderate assessment information. This will help to support consistency in professional judgements about children's progress in learning. They would benefit from focusing on a smaller number of children to look at what their learning and progress looks like over time.
- Practitioners track children's learning using a range of tools, including milestones for complex needs and an early level progression tool. This allows practitioners to track progress of individuals according to their developmental stage. They should continue to review these tools to ensure approaches to recording children's progress is manageable and proportionate. Practitioners should reintroduce approaches to monitor children's engagement across playrooms, areas and experiences, both indoors and outdoors, over time. This will help practitioners ensure all children are encouraged to access the full range of experiences provided.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Practitioners provide a curriculum that is play based. In addition, they plan regular opportunities for children to access high quality experiences such as Bookbug and use of the lending library. This is helping to create an environment where stories, songs and rhyme are celebrated. The focus on increasing children's vocabulary, early literacy skills and appropriate use of mathematical language across all areas of the setting is having a positive impact on children's progress.
- Practitioners use helpful planning tools to ensure their plans are in line with national guidance, reflecting the key areas of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The full practitioner team should work together to consider what their curriculum offer is, to capture fully the uniqueness of their setting. Practitioners should continue to use national practice guidance, Realising the Ambition: Being Me, to support in the development of their curriculum rationale.
- Practitioners are responsive to individual needs, providing individualised support when children find transitions challenging. Practitioners manage transitions across the day well and give children verbal, aural and visual prompts to support planned routine changes. Families commented positively about the support children receive when moving to Primary 1. The approaches used are flexible to meet the needs of each child which is supporting children's progress in their learning.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Relationships with parents are a key strength in the setting. Parents value the team and the work of the setting. Partnership with parents starts with the application process, with home to nursery visits actively encouraged prior to children starting. Parents especially value the support offered to all children and families and welcome the flexible settling in process. Parents feel that the setting goes above and beyond to ensure they get it right for all children and families. This effective practice continued throughout the pandemic.
- COVID-19 had an impact on the opportunities for parents to engage in the life of the setting. With restrictions now lifted, parents engage in story telling and music sessions, for example, guitar playing. Regular opportunities for parents to engage in the life of the setting are offered, for example, Stay and Play and Bookbug.
- E-profiles share communication, engagement in learning experiences and children's next steps effectively with parents. These are very well received and most parents regularly engage and comment on their child's posts. Practitioners also collect children's work, which is collated in children's individual folders. Parents value receiving these at the end of term. Parents actively share their child's interests from home and these are acted upon and developed within the playrooms.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The setting 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.

3.1 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

- Wellbeing of all is a key feature in the setting. Practitioners develop strong relationships with children and parents, resulting in a welcoming and inclusive ethos. The majority of children demonstrate confidence as they enter the playroom to self-register. Practitioners nurture children and support them well to be kind and respectful to their peers.
- Getting it right for all children is at the heart of the effective practice in the nursery. Practitioners use the wellbeing indicators to seek children's views on what it means, for example, to feel safe and nurtured. Practitioners encourage children to share how they are feeling when they enter the playroom. The majority of children engage in this process and are able to articulate why they are sad or happy. Practitioners, in consultation with children are beginning to explore children's rights through a planned approach.
- Children choose to bring in a pack lunch or have a hot meal provided from the local school. Practitioners continue to develop the lunchtime routine following COVID-19 restrictions. They should continually review this process to ensure it is a positive social experience for all children. Practitioners meet children's individual needs well during snack and lunchtime.
- Opportunities for active play include visits to the dance studio, gym hall or outdoor learning. The recently developed outdoor space allows children to develop their curiosity and engage in risky play. Practitioners should apply consistently the measures identified within risk assessments, for example, wearing a helmet while riding a bike. Children demonstrate confidence, independence, and resilience as they navigate the extensive outdoor space.
- All practitioners are aware of the expectations in terms of fulfilling their statutory duties. They all engage in regular updates to the mandatory child protection training. The management team regularly audit, monitor, and review policies and procedures. All children have a care plan in place, which helpfully captures valuable information from home. Following disruption due to COVID-19, the management team should revise their procedures for reviewing and updating all care plans. Comprehensive wellbeing plans are in place for children who may require additional support with their learning. The manager seeks to establish relationships and support from outside agencies actively, to ensure they effectively meet children's individual needs.
- Practitioners actively support inclusion and equality throughout the nursery environment, with an ethos of respect and trust evident. They use their professional knowledge of children's social and emotional wellbeing well to secure positive outcomes for children and their families. This ensures that children are engaged and ready to participate in learning experiences. Practitioners engage readily in training which supports them to introduce well-considered interventions. They use effective strategies to ensure no child misses out and all children continue to make progress in their learning.

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

- Children are making good progress with early language and communication skills. The majority of children listen well to each other and engage in conversations with adults and peers. They enjoy listening to stories and taking part in rhymes and songs. Most children recognise their name when self-registering or sorting their trays for lunch. Practitioners encourage children to use mark-making to self-register. There is scope to develop this further. The approach to providing a literacy rich experience for all children is ensuring almost all children make appropriate progress for their age and stage of development.
- Children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They are becoming aware of numbers and early counting routines with a minority of children observed using numbers accurately in their play. A minority of children are observed making good use of positional language as part of their play when using the remote-control cars. Children use mathematical language correctly when discussing and comparing size, length, and height in their block play.
- Most children are increasing their understanding of their own feelings and that of others. The well-planned outdoor environment is helping children to develop their gross motor skills and coordination as they navigate different terrains and gradients. Children are increasing their awareness of healthy snack and lunch options, and this should be a continued focus for children's learning.
- As a result of planned experiences, children are making good progress from their prior learning. Almost all children demonstrate increasing confidence, resilience and independence in their learning and play. A few children could cope with more challenge in their learning. As planned, practitioners should continue to embed approaches to tracking and monitoring, ensuring these clearly demonstrate the progress children make over time.
- Practitioners celebrate children's achievements on the WOW wall and in e-profiles. They capture achievements such as tidying up and milestones linked to children's health and wellbeing. Children enjoy having their achievements celebrated in this way. Practitioners should continue to encourage parents to share children's achievements from home. This would promote further children's progress in learning.
- All practitioners have a good understanding and knowledge of the needs of children and families within their local community. They are aware of the socio-economic context and work well with outside agencies to address any identified gaps in learning and wellbeing needs.

Practitioners use individualised plans to target interventions for individuals and groups. The use of visual cues and symbols is helping to meet the needs of children who require support to communicate. The manager actively engages in partnership working to support children who may experience barriers to their learning.

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.