

Summarised inspection findings

Park Primary Family Learning Centre

Argyll and Bute Council

25 June 2024

Key contextual information

Park Primary Family Learning Centre is a small nursery class based within Park Primary School. The nursery provides Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) for a maximum of 20 children. The current roll is 26 and the setting is open between 8.45 am and 2.45 pm on a term time basis. Children attend nursery from the age of three until they start school. There is one large playroom with access to a newly refurbished outdoor space. Regular use is made of facilities such as the school gym hall and local community. The headteacher of Park Primary School is the named manager. The headteacher has delegated responsibility for the operational leadership to one of the acting principal teachers. At the time of inspection, the acting principal teacher had very recently been appointed as temporary depute headteacher, with continued responsibility for the nursery. The small team of practitioners and support staff has experienced ongoing staffing challenges. This has included staff absence, changes to working patterns, new appointments, and significant changes in leadership.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

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 in the nursery class share the recently reviewed vision and values of the school. The team encourages all children to try their very best at all times. Practitioners notice and praise when children are kind to one another. Children, parents and practitioners in the nursery do not yet have full ownership of the school vision and values statement. Rightly, the team plans to now explore and refine this statement with children, parents and all stakeholders. This will ensure the language is accessible and meaningful for children and families in the nursery. The team should develop a vision and values with children and families that reflect and inform their approach across early level.
- The team is hardworking and implements promptly suggestions for improvements. Practitioners have increased the availability and use of open-ended materials. They have improved children's engagement through their work to create learning zones. All staff have worked well with children to improve arrangements for snack and lunch routines. Practitioners are open to new ways of working being implemented following professional learning and engagement with staff from the local authority. The team has made recent changes to how they plan for and record children's learning. Practitioners should now work together to be clear about the rationale and measures of success of improvements they are taking forward. This will support the whole team to lead, implement and evaluate the impact of improvement priorities as they manage the pace of change.
- The nursery improvement plan includes clear and specific priorities. The team reflects regularly on what children are interested in learning more about in daily discussions and useful fortnightly meetings. Practitioners are thoughtful and focused on doing their best for children and families. Parents and children are regularly asked for feedback about the setting through

informal discussions and questionnaires. The team engages in planned quality assurance activity and self-evaluation. Practitioners would benefit from a more robust approach to self-evaluation and quality assurance, including more formal feedback about their practice, linked to improvements they are leading. This will help the team be confident about their strengths, identify improvements and evaluate the impact of changes made on children's learning.

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

- All practitioners have nurturing relationships with children. They understand and respond to children's individual needs well. Practitioners are responsive and patient in their interactions with all children. The positive and inclusive ethos supports children to feel valued, secure and very confident in their environment. Most children are learning to share resources and spaces well, as appropriate to their stage of development. Almost all children have highly positive relationships with one another. Practitioners pay careful attention to ensuring children include others in their play and show understanding and empathy to one another. Children who require additional support benefit from personalised support from practitioners. The team makes good use of visual timetables, gestures, and individualised routines to ensure children with specific needs are supported effectively. This enables children to express their needs and explore their interests.
- All children benefit from being able to move freely between the different zones within the playroom and the newly refurbished outdoor space. A few children challenge themselves to balance and roll on the obstacle course they made with staff. Most children make good use of open-ended materials to design, construct and discuss buildings and towers in the block play area. Most practitioners offer well-judged support that helps children sustain their play. The team listens to, and respects, children's ideas. Practitioners take good account of children's interests to inform learning experiences. Children learn about emergency services, complete science experiments, and look carefully at and research minibeasts. Most practitioners ask open questions that challenge children to recall and build on prior learning. A few practitioners should continue to develop their use of commentary and more complex questions.
- Practitioners have made important changes to how they plan for and document children's learning. There is now an improved balance between responsive child-led learning and adult - directed activities. The team should continue to develop routines and experiences to maximise opportunities for children to be responsible and independent learners. Practitioners should pay particular attention to engagement and challenge at times when children move between activities and during the popular early level session. The team should continue to work together across early level to develop further their use of digital technology to enhance children's learning.
- Practitioners record children's learning experiences and progress in a wide variety of places. Online records shared with parents/carers share daily experiences that children enjoy. Children's 'Blue Books' show learning that is significant for individual children. Children are proud of these accessible books but would benefit from an increased focus on the language of learning to support them to celebrate their learning. Practitioners use staff meetings, termly trackers, developmental milestones and assessments to track children's progress in learning. The team should continue to improve their skills and confidence in recording more specific

observations and more focused next steps for individual children. This will ensure all information recorded across these methods reflects the progress children make. Practitioners have rightly identified the need to pause and review how their records and assessment inform their new approach to planning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners plan and offer a wide range of enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, learning experiences across learning. The senior leadership team has rightly identified the need to work together with children, parents/carers, and the community to develop a curriculum rationale. This will ensure the rationale reflects and informs their approach across the early level.
- The team makes good use of visitors and the local community to provide motivating real-life contexts. Children benefit from and recall in detail skills sharing sessions by parents. This motivates children in real-life contexts where they can apply and develop further their skills.
- The team works very well with colleagues to facilitate early level learning sessions for children. A weekly shared session between the nursery and school is popular with children and parents/carers. Children are curious and cooperative as they move with confidence across the ELC, P1 and outdoor areas. Parents report that these sessions, in addition to effective transition programmes, support continuity for their child. Practitioners should continue to work together across the early level to ensure the curriculum provides progressive challenging opportunities for all children.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners engage in daily conversations with parents. Parents and staff regularly share important information about children's specific needs, interests and circumstances at home. Family members regularly spend time within the setting to share learning in popular, frequent, stay and play sessions. Children and parents initiate and suggest learning experiences using online platforms and discussions with the team. Practitioners make good use of story sacks and home learning materials to develop further children's interests and skills at home. Practitioners' close, trusting relationships with parents inform the work of the whole team.
- The team shares information effectively with parents about children's progress in a range of formal and informal ways. Practitioners use displays, an online platform, photographs and daily conversations to ensure parents are kept up to date with what children enjoy learning. Stakeholders complete questionnaires regularly to share their views. The team should now build on their positive relationships to offer a wider range of opportunities for parents to engage in, lead and celebrate the work of the nursery.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter for urgency.

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

- Children benefit from caring warm relationships with practitioners who know them well and listen carefully to their views. Children are beginning to understand their own rights, and the rights of others, through discussions. The team rightly plans to develop further children's understanding of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. A few children discuss with practitioners what makes them feel happy and sad, using props and books. This supports children to explore, understand and manage their emotions and feelings. The team offers swift reassurance and comfort to children when needed. A few children continue to need support to take turns and share resources appropriate to their stage of development. Children are polite, helpful and co-operate well together throughout almost all their day.
- Children are active and curious as they climb, jump, and roll confidently in outdoor play, the school gym hall and their 'Muddy Monday' sessions. Most children have a good understanding of how to look after their bodies as they discuss confidently the benefits of exercise and healthy eating. Practitioners support children to explore the wellbeing indicators through characters and stories created by the children. Most children would benefit from a continued focus on the language of wellbeing to ensure they link these characters to their own experiences. Almost all children develop their resilience and self-esteem very well through positive reinforcement by practitioners. Children enjoy the responsibility of setting the table for snack and lunch times. They confidently pour their own drinks, pass plates to their friends, and serve themselves. Most children are now ready for additional responsibility across more aspects of their play, learning and environment.
- Most practitioners have a good understanding about statutory duties. All practitioners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. The team promptly record and share information with senior leaders if they have a concern about individual children's wellbeing. The team has a good, shared understanding of strategies and targets for children who need additional short or long-term support. A wide range of records collate important information about children and their needs. Senior leaders should now develop a consistent approach to how they record, store and review children's personal plans. This will ensure all plans fully reflect children's circumstances.
- Practitioners value and respect children as unique individuals and include and respond to all children fairly. The team are responsive to opportunities to discuss the importance of fairness and respect with children. The team should continue to explore a range of intentional and responsive opportunities to develop further children's understanding of, for example, diversity and gender.

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

- Overall, almost all children are making good progress in communication, early language, numeracy, mathematics and health and wellbeing.
- Most children make good progress as they develop their knowledge of, and interest in, books and stories. Children increase their vocabulary well as they talk in detail about their interests in dinosaurs, science, and ferries. Children join in enthusiastically to recall, predict, and retell familiar stories and rhymes. Most children can recognise and begin to write familiar letters, and a few can write their name and other familiar words. Children enjoy mark making on the interactive board, in their 'Blue Books' and when they create displays and signs. Most children would benefit from more frequent and motivating opportunities to create and record their own stories. Children should apply their well-developed literacy skills in real-life contexts.
- Children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They enjoy using the language of measure as they make soup in the mud kitchen using herbs from their garden. Most children enjoy making patterns, exploring the language of measure and problem-solving as they explore the interesting sand, mud and water areas. A few children confidently create their own number lines and have fun as they count forward and backwards. A few children would benefit from opportunities to apply their well-developed skills in new and unfamiliar contexts as well as in everyday routines.
- Almost all children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Children understand and are beginning to describe what is important for their own, and others' emotional wellbeing. They relax, take turns and are creative as they make music and sing songs outside. Most children make good progress in understanding and describing their feelings. Children are developing well their ability to work together as they persevere to complete a task.
- Children are confident and proud as they share their achievements from home, gymnastics, dance clubs and activities they enjoy in their community. Practitioners recognise and celebrate when children try something new or develop further their skills. Children, parents/carers, and practitioners celebrate children's successes in online records and 'More About Me' books. The team should now support children to recognise the skills they develop through their wide range of achievements. Practitioners need to now support children to connect what they enjoy doing with what they are learning and the progress they make.

- All practitioners have a good understanding of the local community, children's individual socio-economic needs and home circumstances. Practitioners respond sensitively to life events and short or long-term changes at home for children. Families appreciate the sensitive support for individuals. Staff share information about groups or specialist agencies who offer support. The team should now develop further their understanding of how this individual support enables children to make the very best progress and achieves equity for all children.

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.