

Summarised inspection findings

Mountfleurie Nursery

Fife Council

29 January 2019

Key contextual information

Mountfleurie Nursery is housed within the building of the primary school. The school was opened in 1957. There is a large indoor space, which is very well resourced. The adjacent outdoor space mirrors many of the resources indoors. The nursery offers provision for full day places, four day compressed hour placements and three hour ten minute sessions. The nursery has 43 children on the roll for both morning and afternoon. The playroom can cater for up to ten two year old 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

Children aged from two to three years.

- Children under three years engage in a range of experiences to support their learning. They have daily access to the outdoor area. This reflects the indoor provision and provides experiences to develop physical skills such as running, climbing and balancing. Children benefit from nurturing, caring relationships that enable them to feel secure. Interactions are sensitive and supportive. Practitioners should consider ways to maximise opportunities to develop children's vocabulary to support language development further. Practitioners know the children well. Planning is responsive to children's needs and interests. Children's learning is helpfully recorded in personal learning journals (PLJ) using local authority formats and staff should continue to develop how these are used to support learning.

Children aged over three years.

- The setting promotes children's rights and staff should continue to support these in appropriate ways. Children and families are warmly welcomed as they arrive at the setting. Relationships between practitioners and children are positive and nurturing. As a result, children feel valued and secure and clearly enjoy their time in the setting.
- Children engage enthusiastically with the wide range of experiences available to support learning across the curriculum. The learning environment both indoors and out is well organised to provide a variety of different play spaces and resources. These are clearly labelled to enable children to have ready access. Children demonstrate high levels of independence in their chosen activities and they know the routines very well. For example, children follow pictorial instructions independently to mix their own paint and to make their own playdough. Children are aware of safety rules when using real tools at the workbench and at snack. Real life learning experiences are provided. Examples include baking, planting and growing and through the use of the local community such as shopping trips to buy resources.

- Practitioners frequently interact with children during play activities throughout the day. Conversations are relaxed and natural with practitioners valuing what children have to say. They listen effectively to children and encourage them to talk about their interests and ideas. Practitioners use open-ended questions to challenge children's thinking and to encourage them to solve problems. They should continue to develop children's understanding of what and how they learn.
- Practitioners record children's learning using local authority formats. High quality observations take place naturally during everyday activities and there is a shared understanding across the team of tracking and monitoring children's progress. Observations are detailed and describe children's learning. This is clearly linked to tracking information which outlines children's learning journey. Children are proud of their individual PLJ and use them confidently to talk about their previous learning with others.
- Practitioners make good use of observations to support the planning of provision in response to children's interests and needs. Planning walls are used to create a visual record for children to show how their interests have been extended and developed. This has been linked to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. Planning should now be reviewed to ensure a stronger focus on learning across all stages. The planning should link closely to assessment and moderation. There should also be clearer evaluative activity in order to demonstrate impact.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

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 in Mountfleurie Nursery have regular opportunities to contribute to the life of the whole school community. The headteacher and the team of practitioners work well together. Relationships of mutual respect and trust are developing to improve outcomes for children and families. The recently appointed depute headteacher works closely with the team. She provides strategic leadership to ensure the setting is effectively supported to deliver high quality early learning and childcare. As a result, the team are well supported to take forward improvements including for example, the introduction of tracking linked with observations and collated data. The depute headteacher has correctly identified the need to continue to develop such processes to support sound professional judgments about children's progress.
- The information gathered from children's learning journals demonstrates that almost all children are making good progress across all areas of the curriculum. The staff are developing quality learning experiences which enable children to apply their skills in different contexts. Children are eager and confident learners who persevere in their play. They are inquisitive, imaginative and take risks in their learning. Building on the positive examples evidenced, children would benefit from having a greater leadership role in the setting.
- Practitioners working with children under three years carefully consider the needs of each child. Their interactions are caring and sensitive to support children to develop. They provide appropriate experiences for children to explore and investigate. Children are curious and keen to explore the different resources on offer. They show enjoyment in their play are learning to share and to take turns. Children communicate well with each other and practitioners. Most are building their vocabulary and learning to talk in short sentences. They learn about number, colour and shape through their play experiences.
- Across the setting, the clear focus on health and wellbeing is supporting children to develop a good range of skills. Children are confident in their interactions with trusted adults and with each other. In all playrooms children are learning to be independent appropriate to their developmental stage. They are developing a good range of physical skills through regular gym time sessions and outdoor play. Older children show a developing understanding of their own and other children's feelings. They risk assess their play and understand how to keep safe when using, for example, candle burners at a

baking activity and while playing outdoors. Children recognise the importance of exercise and healthy eating.

- Almost all children are making good progress in in early communication and language, with a few making very good progress. They listen well for information and can follow simple and more complex instructions. Children talk confidently about things they have been learning about and most engage in extended conversations with adults and their friends. They share books and enjoy listening to stories being read by adult. Almost all children recognise their name when self-registering and choosing their snack card. Activities to promote mark-making allow children to have a developing understanding that print has a purpose. As part of this, children follow visual instructions to make bird feeders. Most children show a keen interest in early writing with a few children writing their names. Children benefit from rich real-life experiences which enable them to develop their early literacy skills within very interesting contexts across all areas of learning.
- Practitioners provide good opportunities for children to develop their skills in numeracy and mathematics across the setting. As a result, almost all children are making good progress in their learning. Most children count within ten and are developing an awareness that numbers represent quantities and can recognise numerals. Children are developing confidence in aspects of mathematics through their play. Most use appropriate mathematical language as they compare the size and shape of different objects, for example when using construction materials, blocks and loose parts outdoors. Children are developing an awareness of money through real-life contexts such as shopping and enterprise projects. They are learning to record information and display their findings in a variety of ways including bar graphs. Practitioners provide good opportunities for children to develop and apply their skills in numeracy and mathematics across the curriculum. Through this, children benefit from being able to develop further their skills in meaningful contexts.
- Children are enthusiastic and engage well with early science, art, music activities and technologies. They can explain their thinking and make connections across learning experiences.
- The outdoor play areas have undergone development to provide all children with opportunities to explore and learn in interesting environments .All children have free access to their outdoor area on a daily basis. This is helping children to develop and apply investigative and problem solving skills.
- Practitioners offer praise and encouragement to build children’s confidence. Children are enthusiastic to talk about and share their nursery experiences recorded in their PLJ. Children’s achievements are celebrated well through wall displays and attractive floor books. A positive start has been made to gathering children’s achievements from outwith the setting on an achievement tree. Practitioners need to ensure achievements recorded contribute to the overall picture of each child’s progress.
- All practitioners are respectful of children and their families with all children observed to be treated equally and included. Practitioners correctly identify children who may experience barriers to their learning. To ensure that these are addressed as fully as possible, working relationships with other agencies such as health professionals have been developed.

1. Quality of care and support

Children are welcomed warmly by staff who know them well. This helps them to feel a sense of belonging within the nursery. Positive relationships are fostered through timely and responsive staff interactions. This ensures children feel safe and secure. Effective questioning is used to support deeper thinking and learning. Scaffolding learning in this way helps children to achieve and promotes independent decision making.

Staff involve children in the routines of the day, such as collecting resources for play and setting up for lunch. This inclusion enhances their life skills and gives them a sense of responsibility.

Parents are invited into the nursery to participate in play and learning sessions. For example, baby massage sessions which help to share the importance of bonding, confidence building and early communication skills. In addition to this 'Buggy Blether' and 'PEEP' (Parents Early Education Partnership) programmes support families with their children's early learning in an enjoyable and relaxed way. This enables parents to see how staff work with their children. Parents and children are involved in setting the agenda for some play sessions. This ensures ownership and encourages the sessions to meet the needs of parents.

The general practice in the areas of managing medication and recording accidents and incidents is effective and managed well. Staff speak confidently and have knowledge and understanding of individual health needs and the systems in place to keep themselves and the children safe and free from any hazards.

Although we are happy that children are engaged and happy within the setting, there are inconsistencies in positive behaviour management. Consistent approaches and language used would ensure children are being supported to identify how to resolve small conflicts independently. This would help them to be better equipped to manage more complex social and emotional behaviours in the future.

Care Inspectorate grade: very good

2. Quality of environment

The play rooms are clean, bright and have a calm and relaxing feel. The layout of the indoor play space allows children to move freely from area to area and work at different levels. For example, learning activities take place on the floor, table tops and wall spaces. This promotes choice and encourages participation. Children's work such as, paintings and model making, are displayed respectfully and evidence child led learning opportunities.

Uncluttered play spaces and a variety of exciting and challenging play resources enhance learning and development. The flow and pace of the day supports uninterrupted child led play experiences. This helps children to join in with role play games which enhances friendship building and communication skills. We note that the nursery makes good use of the school spaces such as the gym hall, to promote an active and healthy lifestyle. Staff should be mindful of following active play

risk assessment policies and procedures when using the gym hall space. Imaginative, child led and exciting play activities are provided in a well-planned and resourced outdoor area.

Early science concepts are enhanced through an 'explore, discover, create' mud area and well-resourced water and digging area. These experiences ensure children experiment and explore through trial and error which helps them to make sense of the world around them. The setting has worked hard to enhance the visual environment to support children's understanding and participation in daily routines and play choices.

Children in the under three playroom have access to a safe and well planned and resourced outdoor area. This offers them opportunities to be active and explore interesting materials such as sand and water. Staff have a good knowledge of children's likes and dislikes and use this to settle and comfort children when needed. We suggest that staff should further develop the nurture area to support the emotional wellbeing of very young children. For example a sofa or rocking chair could be added to provide a comfortable and nurturing place to settle children that may need additional reassurance

Care Inspectorate grade: very good

3. Quality of staffing

Children's care and learning is enhanced because of skilled and inclusive staff interactions. The staff team are motivated and through effective communication they support each other in daily tasks. Their knowledge and understanding of child development results in effectively assessing additional support requirements of children. The importance of early intervention is recognised, and children experience care and support that reflects their needs.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow in the event of an incident. Staff refresh their training in child protection each year and this ensures their knowledge and understanding was up to date. We are confident that the staff team are aware of how to keep children safe.

Parents are positive about the quality of staff and their practice within the nursery.

Staff maintain detailed personal learning journals for each child and use self-evaluation systems to continually reflect on practice to make improvements where possible. Children collect their own journals when asked by us and it was apparent that they had pride and ownership of their learning stories. For instance children told us, 'That's when I was learning to catch the ball' and 'I was cutting grapes so you don't get them stuck in your throat'. Children's achievements from home were captured in a 'star moments sheet' and displayed in the welcome area. Staff were mindful of including all children in this to support a sense of pride and wellbeing.

Team meetings, one to one meetings and appraisals provide focused time for staff to identify their training needs and discuss their work. Shared leadership opportunities are identified and staff are supported to develop areas of practice to enhance learning outcomes for children.

Care Inspectorate grade: very good

4. Quality of management and leadership

The senior management team is at the early stages of supporting staff to reflect on practice through team meetings, training and professional dialogue. As there have been recent changes to the management and nursery staff team they should continue to develop a collegiate staff team approach to support best practice.

The staff team have worked hard to develop their skills in observing children's learning to effectively identify areas for development. We could see from our last inspection report that improvements in this area have been made. Effective observations ensure planning for play and learning is responsive to the needs of children and supports them to achieve.

Induction systems are in place to support new staff, students and modern apprentices. A nursery class folder with general information supports new staff to feel familiar with the overall routines and systems of the nursery day. Ongoing monitoring by more experienced staff supports the development of best practice and promotes the aims of the setting.

A range of formal and informal self-evaluation systems are used to assess the work of the staff. Outcomes from questionnaires or feedback is collated and shared so that everyone knows how their views or suggestions are used within the setting.

An important next step is to continue to ensure that the nursery staff team have information, support, learning opportunities and autonomy to contribute to an evolving service. This will better meet children's individual learning and care needs and help them meet their full potential

Care Inspectorate grade: good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations. As a result of this inspection, there no requirements and no recommendations

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.