

Summarised inspection findings

Stoneyburn Primary School Nursery Class

West Lothian Council

1 April 2025

Key contextual information

Stoneyburn Nursery Class is registered for 24 children to attend at any one time. There are 31 children on the roll. Children attend on a variety of part or full day places across 50 weeks of the year. The nursery is situated within a purpose-built extension to the school that opened in 2021. There is one main playroom, cloakroom and a spacious, fenced, outdoor area.

Practitioners from Our Lady's Nursery Class moved to Stoneyburn Nursery Class in 2023 to form a new, merged team. Whilst the headteacher of Stoneyburn Primary School has overall responsibility for the nursery, this leadership role has been delegated recently to the principal teacher. The early years officer (EYO) has the day-to-day responsibility for the work of the team. In addition, a local authority early learning and childcare area support manager (ELCASM) provides management cover outwith term-time and visits one day per week. The nursery team includes early years practitioners and support workers who work on a variety of shift patterns.

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

- The nursery team use their clear vision, values and aims well to inform all aspects of their approach. Senior leaders use survey information provided by parents and staff effectively to review the nursery's vision, values and aims. Staff promote an aspiration for all children to be happy, active participants and central to the work of the nursery. Children demonstrate the values through their play as they learn to share space and resources. Most children influence regularly the experiences and spaces through focused discussions with practitioners about learning. Parents are not yet fully involved in these focused discussions. Senior leaders should continue to increase ways to involve parents, children and stakeholders to identify, lead and make improvements in the setting.
- The headteacher actively supports families, children and practitioners in the nursery. The EYO and visiting ELCASM officer have specific responsibilities to support high-quality provision for children. All team members have clear leadership roles. Working together, practitioners have improved support for children with additional support needs, parent groups and developed further outdoor learning approaches. The team are in their second year of establishing a shared approach to self-evaluation and improvement. Commendably, practitioners have ensured consistency for children and families as they respond to staffing challenges. The team make effective use of regular planning meetings to reflect on children's interests and skills.
- Senior leaders follow a clear local authority process for planning learning and carry out a purposeful range of formal and informal self-evaluation activities. The team implement relevant activities following a self-evaluation calendar. This helps them and local authority officers to identify strengths and improvement priorities accurately that inform the work of the team. The team share regularly their knowledge and skills with other staff in the local area and at a national level. Senior leaders should now record feedback and individual improvement targets

with staff to support practitioners celebrate the impact of their collaboration and professional learning on improving their practice.

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 highly positive, respectful relationships with children and parents. As a result, all children are settled, joyful and enthusiastic in nursery. The ethos is supportive and inclusive. Practitioners are patient and encouraging as they role model how to share and take turns. The team are consistent in their language and expectations of behaviour as they support children to lead routines with increasing confidence. All practitioners enable children to express their interests and participate effectively as they become more aware of their rights.
- All team members adapt their tone of voice and vocabulary thoughtfully as they implement a wide range of effective, individualised communication strategies. Staff use well-judged interactions to support children to plan and sustain their play. Most practitioners use highly-effective questioning to extend children's thinking. This encourages children to lead their learning and follow their individual interests. Practitioners work well together to plan effectively for children's learning across a wide breadth of motivating experiences and well-resourced learning spaces. The team make highly effective use of the local community to provide motivating opportunities where children enjoy applying their skills in new contexts. Practitioners' confident approach to planning learning ensures a well-judged balance of responsive and intentional learning.
- All practitioners know their children very well as learners. They record regular, focused observations that capture and record each child's voice, strengths and development needs. The team use their observations in weekly planning meetings effectively to inform how they plan learning experiences, and spaces. As a result, almost all children demonstrate curiosity, creativity, and motivation to learn. A few practitioners should now use their observations to identify more of the skills children demonstrate and what they are ready to learn next.
- Practitioners use digital technology very well to enhance and extend children's thinking. Almost all children use tablets confidently to record videos and photographs of their learning. Children work well alongside staff to upload and share experiences with their families using an online learning record.
- All practitioners implement their systematic approach to tracking children's progress across literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing consistently. They use Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and local authority documents to record frequently all children's individual progress. The team share children's progress reports with parents regularly. This supports parents to share insights about their child's learning and achievements from home.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners implement clear planning processes confidently and consistently to deliver a broad, responsive curriculum. The team adapt plans promptly as they respond to children's preferences, interests and stage of development. There is an appropriate balance of responsive and intentional learning.
- Practitioners have a sound understanding of how to make full, effective use of their local community to extend children's learning. Children learn about the natural world. They work together to identify and solve problems and care for the natural environment as they visit the 'Flushie', local farm steading and forest areas. As a result, children develop independence, citizenship skills and apply their skills in real-life contexts very well.
- Senior leaders and practitioners have a comprehensive, managed approach to supporting transitions. The team work very well with parents, colleagues in neighbouring schools, partners and children to deliver high-quality transitions. Practitioners are patient, thoughtful and responsive as they anticipate needs and change routines throughout the nursery day to support children to manage transitions between spaces and experiences.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners provide parents with a wide range of opportunities to observe or find out more about their child's learning. They offer welcoming, flexible and responsive activities for children, parents and practitioners to learn together. These include stay and play sessions, support groups, home learning activities, alongside individual meetings with staff. The team should continue to work with children and families to analyse and celebrate how home learning impacts on children's progress in learning.
- Practitioners offer parents helpful information about their children's experiences and progress across their learning in a variety of ways. Practitioners share comprehensive progress reports with parents annually to discuss their child's learning in detail with parents. They host useful parental consultation sessions twice per year where they share further information about children's progress. Parents are highly positive about their child's progress in nursery and the range of information they can access online and in person about their child's learning.

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

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

- All staff build strong, nurturing relationships with children and their families. The team know children and their families very well through well-judged, skilful interactions. Practitioners make prompt changes to respond to children's changing wellbeing targets or how children say they feel as they begin their time at nursery. Most children learn how to recognise, name and cope with a range of emotions through highly effective use of social stories and consistent language that reinforces their nursery values. Almost all children understand the impact of their actions on others appropriate to their stage of development. Children are relaxed, secure and behave well as they play with, or alongside, their friends
- Almost all children build their self-esteem very well as they experience frequent opportunities to be successful, independent and responsible learners. Children develop skills for life, learning and work as they use knives and cutting tools skilfully to prepare food and serve it to their friends as 'snack chefs'. All children follow instructions carefully to keep themselves and others safe when working with tools in sewing and woodwork. Children help staff frequently to count and record how many children are inside or join the woodland walks.
- All children benefit from calm and relaxed lunchtimes. They share interesting conversations with their friends and attentive staff. Children learn about healthy eating, practise their table manners and begin to use cutlery with improving skill.
- Almost all children demonstrate high levels of confidence, joy and excitement as they run freely outside. They are attentive to changes in the natural world as they discuss insects or observe the impact of the seasons on their strawberry plants. Children are highly motivated to spend extended periods of time outdoors. They challenge themselves to balance, climb, run and jump during popular 'welly walks'. All children enjoy celebrating their success and creativity. They proudly share their "be the star you are" awards with parents and visitors. Children describe in detail their woodwork masterpieces and a few develop further their skills at home. Children are absorbed as they explore playdough and produce clay models. Children would benefit from increased opportunities to discuss with staff the skills they have developed through their health and wellbeing experiences. This will help children continue to influence how and what they want to learn.
- All practitioners uphold statutory duties and are confident and clear in their role to keep children safe. They work in partnership with parents and carers to create detailed individual plans identifying personalised, achievable learning targets for all children. All staff support children with additional support for learning needs sensitively and recognise and delight in their strengths and achievements. Practitioners increase their own understanding of specific needs through professional learning and enquiry. The team apply this learning to develop responsive, creative approaches which ensures children benefit from communication strategies and

frequent sensory experiences. They identify diligently when children require additional support from specialist agencies to secure progress in learning.

- All children benefit from effective partnerships between parents, staff and visiting professionals. Staff collaborate effectively with home visitors and speech and language therapists to create and consistently use visual prompts and social stories. This supports children to follow routines, communicate their needs and develop their understanding of others. The team adapt experiences very well to increase the ways that children can learn using all of their senses. Practitioners develop creative strategies to support all children to develop their self-care skills very well. Children develop a positive sense of self as they are treated with respect in a welcoming and inclusive culture.

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

- Most children are making good progress in communication and early language. Most older children predict and produce rhyme with confidence. All children develop their communication skills, vocabulary and awareness of sounds well as they participate in increased rhyme, song and early literacy activities. They enjoy listening to a range of appropriate texts and retell familiar stories using props. Most children recognise familiar environmental print. Children would benefit from developing their skills in mark-making and representing their ideas further, for example, through real life and imaginary contexts.
- In mathematics and early numeracy, most children are making good progress. They recognise numerals and count within ten, a few can count beyond twenty. Most children use accurate mathematical language to explain weight, size and length. They make detailed comparisons as they estimate the height and length of dinosaurs, bones and footprints. Children should continue to explore and develop their understanding of numbers and number processes.
- In health and wellbeing, almost all children are making very good progress. Children demonstrate their well-developed gross motor skills and manage their bodies safely as they climb and ride scooters and bikes. Almost all children develop their fine manipulative skills very well as they thread carefully, use scissors and knives and make intricate models. Most risk assess the garden successfully and discuss how risks can be removed to make spaces safe. All children are developing friendships. They care for their friends and offer comfort when others are upset, or work well together to build large, complex models.
- Most children are making good progress over time because of their experience at nursery. Children are highly motivated to share, celebrate and display their achievements through their star awards. They discuss with practitioners and parents how they have looked after their friends or learned a new skill. Senior leaders should now support practitioners to analyse and use the information they have about children's achievements in order to identify gaps in children's progress.
- Overall, children benefit from staff identifying quickly any barriers they have to learning. This helps children develop strong attachments and settle quickly into nursery due to personalised routines that reflect and adapt to their current care and support needs. Children receive well-planned personalised and effective support when they need it. As a result, most children make increased progress in their learning. The team should continue to develop further their use of

targeted and universal supports for children. They should consider what approaches to ensuring equity are having the greatest impact on children and families.

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.