

Summarised inspection findings

Stanley Primary Early Learning and Childcare

Perth and Kinross Council

4 March 2025

Key contextual information

Stanley Primary Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) is part of Stanley Primary School and is located within the school building. Accommodation includes one spacious playroom, and a large outdoor area accessed directly from the entrance corridor. The nursery is registered for 39 children attending at any one time, from two years old to those not yet attending school. Twenty-seven children currently attend for 1140 hours of funded ELC. The nursery offers a wide variety of attendance patterns including different timings and days, and the choice of either 39 week or 45 week placements. The headteacher is the registered manager and shares the leadership responsibility with the principal teacher. Staffing also includes a senior early years practitioner, five early years practitioners, two part-time play assistants and a modern apprentice. An early years support teacher visits the nursery for one day each week to offer support and guidance.

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 was fully included in the school's recent development of its vision and values. Practitioners bring these concepts to life for children through their positive nurturing ethos, with frequent references to the values throughout the day. This makes them meaningful for children in an age-appropriate way.
- The headteacher and principal teacher share the leadership of the nursery effectively. They guide, motivate and support the practitioners well to undertake leadership roles. These roles are well linked to the nursery's improvement priorities and address key areas such as numeracy, emotional wellbeing and digital learning. As a result of staff's leadership activities, the nursery has achieved a bronze award for its work on emotions, and accreditation for the work on children's rights. Children across the nursery demonstrate their leadership in a few meaningful activities, for example as snack and lunch helpers and by risk assessing the outdoor area. Practitioners should now develop further children's leadership opportunities by identifying an increased range of responsibilities.
- School leaders use a well-planned quality assurance calendar to ensure that all aspects of the nursery are kept under review. Practitioners place a high priority on improving the nursery. They use a worthwhile range of audit materials to evaluate what is working well and what needs to improve. They use their findings to make changes and develop the improvement plan. Whilst there has been some progress in taking forward developments, the plan should be more ambitious, and the pace of development needs to be increased. School leaders need to maximise the impact of practitioners' wide-ranging skills to further improve the nursery. Staff are reflective practitioners and have been rigorous in using self-evaluation materials. However, not all evaluations are accurate nor are they leading consistently to identifiable improvements. School leaders now need to support staff to focus their evaluations on further developing the learning environments. Practitioners require to make use of national guidance to agree what best practice looks like in Stanley ELC.

- Practitioners value the importance of professional learning to develop their knowledge and understanding of child development. All staff share their ideas well with each other and take part in worthwhile moderation activities. Most recently they met with staff from other nurseries to share their judgements on children's milestones. As a result of high-quality training opportunities, practitioners have increased their understanding of children's wellbeing and early language and communication. The work on communication has led to an increased range of experiences to develop children's spoken language. Practitioners should now engage in professional collaborative learning and share effective practice beyond their own setting.

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 two to three years.

- Most children aged two are settled, calm and able to concentrate for short periods of time. The highly skilled practitioners value and respect children and provide them with appropriate time, space and support. Practitioners have a good knowledge of theories of patterns of thinking in younger children. They plan carefully, using developmental milestones and taking account of the importance of sensory play and schemas. School leaders should now consider the appropriateness of the spaces provided. Children need access to a larger inside space to ensure opportunities for more movement and large physical play. They also need quiet, cosy spaces throughout the day for rest and sleep.

Children aged three to five years.

- Most children engage with interest as they choose from the resources available. They play well on their own and with others, negotiating and taking turns. Practitioners ably support children as they move to the outdoor space. Children have access to a good range of learning experiences, including digital technologies, which are well documented and recorded through photographic floor books. Practitioners now need to improve the playroom environment to develop organised, rich play spaces both indoors and outdoors. They should increase the level of challenge for children and ensure access to resources which are motivating and promote curiosity and independence.
- Practitioners have built positive, nurturing relationships, creating a calm and settled atmosphere throughout most of the day. The team supports the children well to share their thoughts and ideas. Practitioners should now review the arrangements for transition to home at the end of the day to ensure a positive, settled and calm experience for all children.
- Practitioners are caring and responsive to children's needs and their ideas. They interact effectively with children demonstrating warmth and patience. Most staff have a good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy and use this skilfully to extend learning. Staff use questioning and commentary well to support thinking and encourage children to talk about their learning. They listen to children and respond appropriately, providing explanations to deepen thinking.
- Practitioners make regular observations of children's significant learning and record these using online learning profiles and floor books. They use this information to respond effectively to children's needs and plan interventions to address any gaps in development. The staff team meets weekly to plan play spaces and experiences which support children's progress and development.

- The senior leadership team works closely with practitioners to ensure that robust tracking systems are in place to make sure all children are making strong progress. They use tracking effectively, to identify children who require additional support with their learning. Practitioners provide appropriate targeted interventions such as numeracy and vocabulary programmes, to support all children to be on track in their learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners provide a play-based curriculum that is linked to seasonal changes, and festivals at key points in the year. The curriculum takes good account of children's ideas and interests which staff develop through interesting experiences. Practitioners have a sound understanding of Curriculum for Excellence and ensure that children benefit from a broad range of learning experiences. The staff team carefully balance adult-initiated and child-led learning. They should review group time activities, particularly at the end of the day. There is scope to develop the curriculum more fully outdoors.
- Practitioners use the local community and a range of visitors to enrich the curriculum. Visits to the local shop have helped children's understanding of money, and how to use the postal system. Fire service officers visited as part of a focus on people who help us.
- Parents feel well supported as their children transition into nursery and from nursery into school. Nursery children visit the primary one class regularly and primary one children come back to nursery to share their school stories with the children. Nursery and school staff now need to work more closely together to implement a shared approach to curriculum and learning across the early level. They should ensure that the primary one experience builds successfully on children's achievements in the nursery.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- School leaders and practitioners have strong partnerships with families. Parents and carers are invited to be part of their child's nursery experience in a range of ways including stay and play sessions, engagement in learning activities and shared story times. Practitioners have developed home-link bags to encourage parents to share learning activities at home. Families welcome the regular information about learning which the nursery provides using an online platform. Practitioners could strengthen partnerships by taking full opportunity of the skill set of the parent body to support the ongoing development of the nursery.
- Practitioners have developed a worthwhile range of partnerships that support and enhance children's experiences. They make good use of the local area to support learning, for example, visits into the local streets to look at numbers in the environment. Practitioners provide support and guidance to families by proactively signposting and referring parents to other professionals and agencies. The nursery benefits from strong and productive links with health visitors and speech and language therapists.

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. 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

- Practitioners have developed positive relationships with children and their families, and they deliver high standards of care. The learning in the nursery is underpinned by the promotion of wellbeing and a culture of trust and respect. Practitioners' interactions with children and each other are calm, cheerful, nurturing and responsive. Families have strong and often long-lasting connections with the nursery, and it is held in high regard by the local community. This adds to the sense of wellbeing for children and families.
- Practitioners offer positive role models for children and demonstrate good manners and kindness in their interactions. They support children well to develop their skills in dealing with disagreement or conflict calmly. Children are encouraged to reflect on how their behaviour impacts other children. As a result, most children show empathy for their friends and support each other well.
- Children are developing their understanding of the national wellbeing indicators and can talk confidently about how to be safe, healthy and responsible. Stories and pictures promote the indicators in a developmentally appropriate way. Children have a good awareness of their rights. They know that every child has rights and that they have a right to play. They understand that their health and wellbeing is linked to taking care of our environment and our wider world. Their work on sustainability has enabled them to contribute effectively to the achievement of a green flag eco schools award.
- Practitioners are trained in all aspects of safeguarding and are fully aware of and comply with statutory requirements in relation to ELC. They are clear about their responsibilities for keeping children safe. Children have detailed personal care plans which outline their care and health needs. These support practitioners to identify strategies to support individual needs. Staff are highly responsive and work effectively with families to offer flexible arrangements which ensure that children are happy and settled at nursery. A few children who need more targeted support or who have barriers to learning have appropriate individual plans. These are reviewed regularly in consultation with parents. The staff team works effectively with a range of other professional and support agencies to plan specific interventions which help children make the best possible progress. Children recently took part successfully in a cycle initiative to improve their balance and coordination.
- Practitioners have developed an inclusive, open and welcoming atmosphere. They actively promote inclusion and equity, and everyone is treated fairly and in a just manner. They respect all children and value diversity. They could now do more to celebrate diversity and challenge discrimination through a wider range of stories and resources. They should support children to learn more about global citizenship and the wider world.

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 aged two to three years.

- Two-year-old children are making good progress in all areas of their development. They are learning how to relate to other children, and they have formed strong relationships with their key practitioner. They enjoy investigating sensory materials, looking at picture books and exploring in the outdoor area. More space and a wider range of age-appropriate materials would support their progress and wellbeing further.

Children aged three to five years.

- Most children are making good progress in communication and early language. Almost all children listen well to adults and follow instructions. Most talk confidently posing questions and engaging in short conversations. Children enthusiastically engage with the story of the week and ask for stories to be read throughout the day. They make their own information books and refer to them, for example, 'night and day' and 'pirates' books. A few children can write their name and simple words. Children would benefit from a wider range of information books in play spaces and more exemplars for early writing.
- Most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. A majority count to 10 and beyond and use a range of equipment to measure their height. Most understand the purpose of money through visits to the local shops and post office area. Most children are beginning to identify and name two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They use positional language of direction appropriately when programming digital toys. Practitioners should work to develop a richer numeracy environment both indoors and outside to further support and challenge children.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They form friendships and are respectful. They make healthy choices at snack and lunch. Children are developing independence as they set the table in the hall, pour their own water and milk and clear away their dishes. Most children are developing awareness and understanding of emotions, supported by a range of books, pictures and puppets. As a result, most children can regulate their emotions and behaviour. Children would benefit from a wider range of opportunities in the outdoor spaces to climb, balance and engage safely in risky play to develop their physical skills.
- Children use digital technologies well to support their learning. This includes choosing lunch using visuals on devices and using bar matrix codes to access stories. They use interactive

photo albums to record their next steps in learning. They need more opportunities to be creative with a range of art materials.

- Children's achievements are recorded and celebrated. Practitioners use certificates to celebrate children achieving their next steps in learning. They encourage parents to share their child's achievements from home. These are recorded on the achievements wall in the corridor. Practitioners should now consider how to identify and track the skills being developed through these achievements.
- The nursery team provide a supportive and inclusive ethos that promotes equity for children. They know families well and are aware of children's socio-economic circumstances. Practitioners are proactive in reducing potential barriers to learning and work closely with a range of partners within the community to provide support.

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.