

Summarised inspection findings

Saltoun Primary School Nursery Class

East Lothian Council

12 September 2023

Key contextual information

Saltoun Nursery Class is situated within Saltoun Primary, a rural school in the village of East Saltoun, East Lothian. The nursery operates term time, from 8.45 am to 3.15 pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30 am to 12.30 pm each Friday. The nursery class is registered for 15 children at any one time and, at the time of the inspection was at capacity. Children attend from the age of three until starting primary school. The nursery has a recently refurbished playroom and natural outdoor space. They also have access to spaces across the school, such as the playground and lunch hall. The headteacher has responsibility for two schools and nursery classes. She delegates the management responsibility for Saltoun Nursery Class to the principal teacher. The senior early years practitioner (SEYP) takes on the day-to-day running of the nursery. In addition, there is a full-time early years practitioner to support the SEYP.

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 calm and welcoming environment where all children feel safe, valued and secure. They have very positive relationships with children, families and each other. Children are kind and helpful to their peers. Practitioners respect the views of children and involve them in making decisions about their experiences. For example, practitioners involve children in ordering food items for snack time.
- Practitioners know children very well and are responsive to their interests and needs. They promote children's confidence and self-esteem through sensitive and well-timed interactions when required. Practitioners use questioning well to extend children's learning in early literacy and numeracy. They encourage children to read familiar letters and sounds and count items relevant to their play.
- The recently upgraded and well-considered environment supports children to explore a wide range of resources, indoors and outdoors. Children enjoy their time outdoors and use a range of loose parts and natural and man-made resources to support their play. Most children show independence in their play, navigating the spaces confidently and selecting resources to support their learning. They enjoy helping the adults with tasks relevant to their daily routines. Practitioners should continue to review the balance between child-led and adult-directed experiences. They should review the flow and routines of the day so that children can engage in experiences for extended periods of time without interruption. This should also support children who require it, to increase their independence and resilience.
- Children access and navigate games confidently using the interactive board to develop early numeracy and literacy skills. As planned, practitioners should consider how to extend children's learning in digital technologies further.

- Practitioners observe children at play and record significant learning through children's learning journals. They gather important information about the skills children develop as a result of their experiences for each curricular area, including developmental milestones. They capture children's voice well through learning journals and floorbooks. Practitioners identify appropriate next steps for children linked to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and capture evidence when children achieve these targets. Children have ownership of their learning journals and enjoy sharing them with visitors to the nursery. Practitioners should consider how to capture observations across the wide range of skills children demonstrate as a result of their experiences.
- Practitioners use a clear system for planning, tracking and monitoring children's learning. The recently introduced planning wall supports practitioners to identify any gaps in children's learning and to plan a broad range of experiences. Practitioners use a newly introduced local authority tracking process effectively to record children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They have established a positive partnership with P1 staff. This is helping practitioners to develop approaches to support children who are ready for more challenge. Practitioners should continue to ensure these approaches are developmentally appropriate and enhance the experiences of all children.

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.

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 in early communication and language. They are keen to engage in conversations with their peers and familiar adults and respond well to questioning. All children enjoy listening to stories and singing songs and rhymes. They are developing their phonological awareness well, identifying, and at times generating, rhyming words. Most children can recognise their name when self-registering. A few children recognise the names of others by reading the initial sound. Children are developing their early writing skills well. They understand that print carries meaning and enjoy making signs and menus for the snack area. Children benefit from the regular and relevant opportunities to write and show confidence in this area.
- Children are making good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. They count confidently beyond ten and recognise a few numerals. Children use relevant mathematical language as they weigh and measure during play. Children recognise two-dimensional shapes during their play, using items from their environment. Children are now ready to explore and investigate the properties of two-dimensional shapes. They know the days of the week and can link key events to different days. Children would benefit from developing their skills further in sorting, gathering and displaying information.
- In health and wellbeing, children are making good progress. Overall, they share, take turns and are kind to each other. At times, children require support to listen to their peers and persevere with tasks. Children's fine motor skills are developing well as they use tools to print, manipulate playdough and chop fruit. They practise physical skills such as balancing and pedalling during outdoor play. Children enjoy the responsibility of preparing snack and understand why it is important to have good hygiene. They learn to serve themselves and socialise during this time. Senior leaders and practitioners should consider how to extend this practice to children's lunch experiences.
- Practitioners recognise and celebrate children's achievements well across the setting. Children's paintings and drawings are valued and displayed attractively around the nursery. Children contribute to displays by writing signs and sharing their ideas. Practitioners use this information effectively to build on children's skills.
- Across the setting, most children are making good progress in their learning. Practitioners identify clearly the progress children are making in communication, early language, numeracy and mathematics, and health and wellbeing. Longer term, this information will support

practitioners to demonstrate more fully children's progress over time and make sound professional judgements about how well children are developing.

- Senior leaders and practitioners know children and families very well. They take appropriate action to address inequity, supporting families affected by the cost-of-living crisis. They work effectively with professional partners to support children who may require additional support with their learning. Children with barriers to communication have access to visual prompts. As a next step, practitioners should consider using these symbols across all spaces to support children's communication further.

Other relevant evidence

- The headteacher provides highly-effective strategic leadership to the nursery class. She is experienced and knowledgeable and supports the staff team very well to make key improvements to the setting. She worked closely with practitioners to finance, refurbish and renew the indoor playroom and resources. This has provided children with an engaging and well-considered environment within which to play and learn. She supports practitioners to engage with professional learning and national practice guidance. This enables practitioners to reflect on and improve their practice continuously. They do this increasingly well using self-evaluation and professional partnerships to make improvements.

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.