

Summarised inspection findings

Carnegie Primary School Nursery

Fife Council

27 August 2024

Key contextual information

Carnegie Nursery is based in Carnegie Primary School in Dunfermline. The nursery operates during the school term and is for children aged three to those not yet attending school. The provision is registered for 80 children to attend at any time.

The headteacher of the school, has overall responsibility for the nursery with delegated management responsibility for the nursery given to a depute headteacher. The headteacher also manages another early learning and childcare setting. Senior leaders are supported by a part-time nursery teacher and a team of early years practitioners. The nursery also receives support from local authority early years officers.

The nursery consists of two spacious indoor playrooms and a shared enclosed outdoor play area. Practitioners and children make use of spaces within the school and access the wider community.

1.3 Leadership of change

very 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 shares the school's vision, values, and aims which are strongly focused on relationships, culture and learning. Practitioners bring these to life through the very positive ethos and the day-to-day experiences they provide within the nursery. They should continue to refer regularly to their vision and values to make them meaningful for all children in a developmentally appropriate way.
- The headteacher, depute headteacher and part-time nursery teacher all play an active role in leadership of learning and childcare within the nursery. They guide and support practitioners who work well as teams in their playrooms. Practitioners take on leadership roles, including improving the use of areas within the setting. Children are encouraged by practitioners to review learning activities through the 'little voices' discussions. Practitioners should develop further children's leadership opportunities by offering an increased range of responsibilities.
- Senior leaders and practitioners continue to place a high priority on improving the early learning and childcare they provide for children and families. They have worked collaboratively to improve the environment used by the children outdoors and have increased children's experiences in the community. Other improvement projects include promoting family engagement. The changes practitioners have made are having a positive impact on children's experiences and learning.
- Senior leaders have developed and use a wide range of relevant activities to evaluate the quality of provision. Senior leaders monitor children's learning profiles and gather the views of children and their families. Practitioners use the information gathered to inform improvements. Practitioners reflect on their practice informally and collaborate effectively during fortnightly

staff meetings. They engage well in self-evaluation activities and should continue, as planned, to extend this to more aspects of provision, using national practice guidance.

- Practitioners have participated in a range of professional learning, for example on nurturing approaches and quality interactions. They share ideas through professional discussion with colleagues and value the importance of learning from visits to other settings. Practitioners value the rich networking within the cluster. This allows practitioners to reflect on their practice beyond their own setting and supports moderation activities well.

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 a nurturing ethos and culture within the setting. Children are engaged fully in rich experiences and activities indoors and in the large outdoor space. The nursery environment is literacy rich and mark making activities are promoted fully in all areas. Children feel safe and secure and are confident to explore all spaces. Practitioners involve children in co-creating risk assessments and encourage them to engage appropriately in risk-taking during play. Regular outings take place, offering a wide range of real-life experiences to extend children's learning.
- Practitioners know the children very well as learners. They demonstrate effective, open-ended questioning skills to support children in their learning. All practitioners are warm and caring and have formed strong relationships with the children. Children are well listened to, and their views are acted upon. Practitioners are sensitive to children's needs and responsive to individuals. All children have time and space to deepen their learning. Children use digital technology effectively. Children are learning how to log on to computers independently and use digital tools to draw and view their local area.
- Practitioners make effective use of observations and interactions to inform planning. These are recorded in individual Personal Learning Journals (PLJs) to show progress across all curricular areas. Practitioners are supported by helpful learning conversations with children and families. Planning is highly responsive to children's interests and practitioners make effective use of provocations to support this. Most children are keen to reflect on their learning and share their achievements. Practitioners should review the number of high-quality observations they make to show significant improvements in learning. This will ensure that approaches to assessment are manageable. Practitioners should continue to use observations to inform future learning for individual children to ensure developmental outcomes for children are met.
- Practitioners are skilled in involving children in planning learning. Children lead their own learning in both classroom and outdoor learning activities each day. Practitioners make effective use of a planning wall to record children's interests. All practitioners effectively record the progress children make through observation. They track learning for groups of children using a key worker approach. Senior leaders monitor carefully and evaluate the progress children make. Support is given in partnership with professionals to improve outcomes for individual children. Practitioners should continue to ensure information gathered is used very effectively for all children to provide support and challenge for targeted interventions.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Most practitioners attend training online to focus on building a quality curriculum to enrich children's learning. Practitioners use Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes and benchmarks to guide children's learning and progress. Practitioners place a strong emphasis on the development of language and communication within the activities they provide. Across the curriculum, children develop their skills well through free play. A few children would benefit from targeted group work, for example children who have English as an additional language or children who are new to the nursery. Practitioners should increase use of developmental milestones for younger children to support tracking and monitoring of progress.
- Children become familiar with their local community through walks to the wooded area and trips to the beach. Practitioners should continue to develop meaningful links to the community. This may include inviting a range of visitors into the setting to speak to the children. This will help to develop children's knowledge and skills in relation to real-life contexts.
- Children's transition into nursery is supported by a weekly toddlers group. Practitioners share information with other settings where children have blended placements. Children moving into school visit P1 classes and personal learning journals are shared with teaching staff. Practitioners and school staff should continue to work collaboratively to ensure progression in children's learning across early level.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have established very positive relationships with parents and families. They keep parents well informed through daily conversations at drop off and pick up times. Parents may stay and play with their child or look through their child's personal learning journal at these times. Children's personal learning journals are sent home termly and most parents add positive comments. Practitioners organise bi-annual parents' evenings. Staff invite parents to join in activities, for example termly family breakfasts and story events.
- Senior leaders engage parents in surveys to gather their views, for example about the nursery improvement plan. They signpost parents to information displayed on a board in the welcome areas and share helpful booklets. Information is also shared within leaflets and on social media.
- Practitioners make effective use of a digital platform to share each child's learning with parents. They also provide ideas for parents to support their child at home. Parents find that this helps them to understand better their child's learning. A few comment and share successes from home for the nursery 'star moments' display.

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.

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

- Children's understanding of wellbeing is developing well within the nurturing environment. Practitioners have a strong focus on supporting children and families' wellbeing. Children benefit from the strong relationships they have with practitioners. Most children co-operate well, share resources and are kind and caring towards one another. Practitioners know approaches to use and this is leading to children to relating better with others.
- Children feel confident to engage with adults and share their views. For example, they contribute to risk benefit assessments and suggest improvements to areas within the nursery. Most children are beginning to develop language of wellbeing. They use puppets to help them to describe their feelings and emotions. Children have yet to develop an understanding of their rights. Practitioners should continue to regularly reinforce aspects of wellbeing and rights in an age-appropriate way.
- The nursery team are fully aware of all statutory duties appropriate to early learning and childcare.
- Practitioners are sensitive in their identification of concerns around children's development. They seek support and receive professional learning from partner agencies where appropriate to create a partnership approach to removing barriers to learning. They provide appropriate individual plans for children who require additional support with learning, depending on specific need. Senior leaders and key workers ensure individual care plans are reviewed with parents.
- Children are developing a sensitive and appropriate awareness of diversity within the nursery. They participate in activities that avoid stereotypes or gender bias. Practitioners recognise and celebrate a variety of festivals in the calendar year with children. This supports children's understanding of a wider range of cultures.

3.2 Securing children's progress

very 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's progress in early language and communication is very good. Almost all children are developing their listening skills well, for example through the listening centre and joining in with songs and rhymes. Children are highly engaged in reading story books to each other, particularly in the outdoor story corner. Most children explore mark-making independently. They are confident in asking questions to support their learning.
- Children's progress in early mathematics is good. Most children count confidently to ten in real-life contexts and in their play. Children show understanding of number and shape as they use digital technology. Most children explore language of mathematics while using loose parts. Children gather information and display their findings, using tally marks on a chalk board. Practitioners should continue to develop a numeracy-rich environment to support and challenge children.
- Children's progress in health and wellbeing is very good. Children form friendships and are respectful to one another. Most children display strong co-operation skills and confidence. Most children can climb, balance and ride bikes safely. Children are very independent, for example dressing to go outside. They make decisions for themselves in choosing when to attend snack and lunch. Most children serve themselves food and water and brush their teeth after lunch. Children are developing their use of wellbeing vocabulary. A focus on wellbeing indicators using age-appropriate resources would support this.
- Practitioners show the very good progress children are making through personal learning journals. Children with additional support needs make appropriate progress towards their planned targets. A few children would benefit from having more clearly defined targeted interventions. This will support practitioners have clearly expressed targeted interventions to better track the progress children make over time.
- Children engage in a wide range of opportunities out with the setting. Practitioners recognise and display children's achievements well on a 'star moments' wall. Children and families value successes being celebrated in this way. Practitioners capture achievements within the setting and this is supporting all children to be successful, responsible and confident.
- The nursery team provide a supportive and inclusive ethos that promotes equity for children. Practitioners form strong partnerships with a range of services and professionals to improve children's progress for example, speech and language professionals. They are pro-active in

identifying barriers to learning. Practitioners should continue to use this information to make informed decisions about interventions. Senior leaders and practitioners support families in a number of ways. They need to ensure that there is no additional cost to families for nursery activities, including voluntary contributions.

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.