

# Summarised inspection findings

**St Peter's Primary School Nursery Class**

Scottish Borders Council

27 May 2025

## Key contextual information

St Peter's Primary School Nursery Class is part of St Peter's Primary School and provides early learning and childcare (ELC) in the Galashiels area. The nursery is registered for 54 children at any one time. It caters for children aged three to those not yet attending school. There are currently 38 children on the roll. Children attend during term time between 8.40am and 3pm Monday to Thursday and between 8.40am and 12.40pm on a Friday. The headteacher of the school has overall responsibility for the nursery, supported by a 0.1 full time equivalent principal teacher. Further staffing includes one early years officer, two full-time and five part-time practitioners. A peripatetic teacher supports the setting one day per week.

The building consists of a playroom with direct access to an outdoor area. A separate room leading from the main nursery corridor is used for snack and lunch. There is a further outdoor space that is accessed from the nursery garden. Children in the nursery also use outdoor spaces within the school playground.

### 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

- All practitioners have developed caring and respectful relationships across the setting helping children to feel happy and settled at nursery. They give children time, space and support that is appropriate to their stage of development. Almost all children are kind to each other and are learning to share resources and take turns. They are motivated and most children engaged fully in their play activities.
- All practitioners are nurturing and patient in their interactions with children. They support children skilfully to regulate their emotions and, as a result, children feel valued and confident in their environment. Most practitioners use questioning well to help them understand the progress children are making. In the best practice, they use their questioning skills and commentary very well to extend the children's thinking.
- Practitioners take a responsive approach to promote personalisation and choice. They provide an appropriate balance of adult-initiated and child-led activities. Children share resources and spaces confidently whilst displaying sustained levels of engagement in their play. Practitioners should support children further to regularly reflect on their learning and be meaningfully involved in planning future learning.
- Children have access to a wide range of open-ended materials and natural resources. This is supporting children's imaginative and physical play well. Practitioners make good use of the outdoor spaces both within the setting and beyond. They have created learning areas across the setting which offer a wide range of literacy and numeracy opportunities. Children access a

range of digital technology to enhance their learning. Practitioners should now consider how wall displays, accessible to children, could further support the learning journey.

- Practitioners record observations of children's learning regularly to assess their progress and plan next steps. This is documented in online journals which are shared with parents and can be accessed by children. As a result, a few children are beginning to talk about their next steps in learning. Practitioners should now explore ways to support parents to comment on progress in journals and provide further opportunities to discuss their child's progress.
- Practitioners make good use of a range of documentation to support their planning. Practitioners respond to children's interests in the moment to ensure the right knowledge and resources are available to extend play. They plan intentionally over a fortnightly cycle to ensure breadth across the curriculum. This is meeting the individual learning and care needs of all children effectively.
- Practitioners monitor children's learning closely in literacy and numeracy using the local authority tracking format. Aspects of health and wellbeing are tracked using a developmental milestones overview. These provide valuable information about how children are progressing in their learning and identifies any potential gaps and interventions required. As planned, this should now be extended to track all other curricular areas.

## 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

- Most children are making good progress in communication and early language. They are keen communicators and engage regularly in conversations with adults and their friends. Most children take part enthusiastically in spontaneous singing and in focused rhymes. They access a range of books independently and listen well to familiar stories. A majority of children make predictions and sequence stories they know well. Most older children recognise their name. They are enthusiastic about mark making, forming letters and writing familiar words.
- Most children make good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. They count to 10, with a few children counting beyond. Most children measure ingredients during regular baking experiences and show an understanding of 'more than' and 'less than'. Almost all children have a simple understanding of money through role play in their nursery shop and a few children can name different coins. Most children recognise two-dimensional shape and are ready to explore three-dimensional objects. They operate programmable toys using the language of direction correctly. Further opportunities to explore information handling, volume and time would support them to progress further.
- Almost all children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They are happy and confident in their environment. Most children share, take turns and negotiate with their friends. Most children manage risk well as they run, climb and balance in the outdoor play areas. They are aware of how to keep themselves safe, for example, when completing their garden risk assessments. Most children show independence as they self-select snack and lunch, get ready for the outdoors and choose their lunch using an online tool.
- As a result of their nursery experiences, most children are making good progress over time. Practitioners identify potential barriers or gaps in children's learning. They use a range of approaches to support all children to make the best possible progress in literacy and numeracy. This is helping to limit any potential gaps in outcomes for children. Senior leaders should work with practitioners to develop further the tracking system to include all areas of the curriculum. This will enable practitioners to demonstrate more clearly the progress children make over time.
- Practitioners have created a strong sense of community where children and families are valued and respected. All practitioners understand their roles in promoting equity. They provide sensitive support to families, for example, through the use of health and wellbeing home link bags. Where appropriate, practitioners seek advice and work collaboratively with other professionals to ensure children get the support they need to help them learn.

## 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.