

Summarised inspection findings

Calside Nursery

Dumfries and Galloway Council

27 August 2024

Key contextual information

Calside Nursery is situated within Calside Primary School, Dumfries. The nursery opened in 2020 and consists of two main indoor spaces and an outdoor space. The nursery is registered for 43 children aged from three years to those not yet attending school. There are currently 45 children on the roll who attend on either a full-time or part-time basis. The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery, with delegated responsibility given to the nursery manager. The nursery team comprises of one manager, seven practitioners, who work a variety of patterns, and two early years assistants.

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 developed positive relationships with children and families, which result in children feeling safe and secure. Children are developing friendships and are kind and caring to their peers. Practitioners have a key worker group, which supports children to settle quickly into the nursery through personalised settling-in procedures. Staff's strong focus on rights is evident throughout the nursery. Practitioners develop and support children's awareness of their wellbeing and their rights. The team link this learning to real-life contexts which are meaningful and relevant to the age and stage of children.
- Children are motivated and highly engaged across their indoor and outdoor learning environment. They benefit from free-flow access to an extensive and attractive outdoor space, which engages them well for extended periods of time. Children enjoy learning through spontaneous play opportunities, adult-initiated learning and child-led experiences. Most children are confident and capable of leading their own learning as they engage with a wide range of loose parts indoors and outside. Practitioners encourage children in their learning, promoting their curiosity and independence. The team should develop further children's independence, for example, by creating leadership roles for children.
- Practitioners know children well and have a good understanding of child development. The team have responsive relationships and have developed a climate where children know their views are listened to and valued. Practitioners should continue to develop approaches to extending and scaffolding children's learning, for example, by using commentary to extend children's knowledge and skills. Children have a few opportunities to engage with digital technology to support their learning through the use of tablet computers, cameras and remote-control toys. The team should continue to promote opportunities to use digital technology.
- Children have opportunities to engage in a broad range of experiences, which are linked to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. Practitioners capture children's engagement in learning effectively and document this in big books, personal learning plans and

on attractive wall displays. Practitioners record their observations of individual children's learning in their personal learning plans. These observations do not yet consistently capture children's significant learning. Parents contribute to their child's personal learning plan by sharing their child's individual needs and helping to create their child's next steps. Personal learning plans are available to parents throughout the year and children enjoy sharing their learning experiences with parents and peers.

- Practitioners review and refresh continually their approaches to planning for children's learning. This includes using a yearly overview calendar, adult-intentional planned learning and child-initiated responsive planning. Practitioners use weekly meetings well to moderate and plan for children's learning, taking account of emerging interests, identified gaps and next steps. All practitioners are aware of children who may require challenge or support with their learning, ensuring that a consistent approach is developed. Effective partnership working with external agencies supports practitioners to plan interventions to support children's development and learning.
- Practitioners use the local authority's progression pathways for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to track children's progress at identified times across the year. This information is shared with P1 teachers to help to ensure continuity and progression in learning. Practitioners should continue to review approaches to tracking children's progress to ensure children's next steps in learning are identified clearly.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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 communication and language. Almost all children communicate how they are feeling and what they need. Children are keen to share their ideas and discoveries with adults and each other. In group discussions, most children take turns to listen and talk. Most children focus and listen with enjoyment to stories and identify characters and settings. The majority of children explore mark making and early writing at their own developmental stage and a few children are exploring letter sounds. Children would benefit from more opportunities to mark make, both indoors and outdoors, to help them develop their early writing skills.
- Most children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Most children recognise number symbols and can count within 10. A few children explore numbers beyond 20. Children are developing their understanding of symmetry through creating symmetrical pictures at the art table. Most children confidently sort and match objects and shapes in a variety of ways. A few children use tally marks correctly to record quantities. Children would benefit from more opportunities to organise and display their findings in different ways, for example pictorial displays.
- Children benefit from very supportive and positive relationships with practitioners. Well established routines support children to be confident and relaxed in the setting. Most children are aware of aspects of healthy lifestyles as they take part in physical activities and learn about different food groups. Most children have well developed social skills. A few children are able to support others to share and take turns. Children enjoy being active outdoors and participate in appropriate risky play. They develop their fine motor skills well as they learn to sew, use cutlery during mealtimes and play with small construction materials. All children would benefit from further opportunities to discuss their learning, strengths and next steps.
- Children enjoy their time at nursery and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of experiences on offer. The information recorded in children's learning journals and floorbooks do not yet demonstrate accurately their progress over time. The nursery manager and practitioners should work together to develop their tracking systems further. This should support them in identifying more robustly children's progress over time to plan accurate next steps for individual children.
- Children are proud of their achievements and seek out practitioners to discuss and share these. Practitioners share children's successes and wider achievements at home and nursery

through displays and learning journals. As a next step, practitioners should identify the skills children are developing through play and record this as part of each child's learning journey.

- Practitioners demonstrate a very good understanding of children's socio-economic backgrounds and promote equity across all aspects of their work. Practitioners provide sensitive and valued support and advice for families. Examples of this practical support includes providing outdoor waterproofs for every child and organising a book lending library. Practitioners identify children who require additional support and support them well through effective personalised planning. Practitioners undertake additional training and work with partners well to plan targeted interventions for children. Practitioners should further develop their skills in using data to evaluate the impact of these interventions. This would support them to ensure all children make the best possible progress in their learning.

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.