

Summarised inspection findings

Kirkshaws Primary School Nursery Class

North Lanarkshire Council

11 February 2025

Key contextual information

Kirkshaws Nursery Class is based within Kirkshaws Primary School in the Kirkshaws area of Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire. There are two adjoining playrooms with direct access to a large outdoor area. The nursery is open during term time, between 9.00am and 3.00pm. There are currently 33 children on the nursery roll, aged between three years and those not yet attending primary school. The nursery is registered to take 48 children at any one time. 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare is delivered through full day sessions.

The headteacher, who began her post in August 2024, has overall strategic responsibility for the nursery. The principal teacher is involved in the nursery as part of her management remit. There is a lead early learning practitioner, who began in October 2024. There are five key workers and three support workers. Over the past six months, there have been a number of staffing changes which have had an impact on the nursery.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">learning and engagementquality of interactionseffective use of assessmentplanning, tracking and monitoring	

- Practitioners work well together to provide a caring and nurturing atmosphere for all children. They spend time with children to get to know them as individuals. Practitioners offer support to children who ask for it and children are happy and confident to explore their environment. Children are kind and respectful toward each other and enjoy playing together. Children are highly engaged and motivated in their play, both indoors and outdoors.
- Practitioners are developing the indoor environment. They recognise the need for high quality resources and provocations to stimulate children’s creativity and curiosity. Children explore the outdoor area with great confidence and excitement. Children are developing their independence. As planned, practitioners should continue to look at ways to minimise interruptions in children’s play throughout the day. This should include reviewing the pace and flow of how the day feels for children, particularly in the afternoons.
- Practitioners’ interactions with children are nurturing, sensitive and thoughtful. They provide praise to children to build their self-esteem and encourage confidence. On occasions, practitioners miss opportunities to extend and challenge children’s thinking and learning. Practitioners should build on high-quality interactions by asking open-ended questions and providing appropriate commentary. This will support children to learn and develop their knowledge and skills during play experiences. Practitioners provide limited digital technology learning opportunities for children. Practitioners should now plan experiences that support and enrich children’s digital skills.
- Practitioners use learning journals to record observations of children’s learning. The nursery is currently piloting an online learning journal to determine if this approach is more effective in

sharing children's learning with parents. Practitioners detail children's individual learning, however, this could be developed further. This would ensure children's progress and achievements are captured to show progress. Practitioners should deepen their knowledge of child development to be able to fully support children in their learning.

- Practitioners are beginning to become more responsive to children's ideas and interests in their planning of experiences. Practitioners plan intentionally to ensure a broad curriculum is delivered to all children. They are beginning to use floor books to support planning. Practitioners should continue to reflect and develop this process.
- Senior leaders and practitioners have tracking and monitoring processes in place. The current tracking system shows which children are on track and children that require interventions and targeted support. Children who require additional support have plans in place. Senior leaders and practitioners should explore ways to streamline each child's information to make it more manageable.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

3.2 Securing children's progress

satisfactory

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 satisfactory progress in early language and communication. Children confidently talk and listen to each other and other adults in the playroom. The majority of children join in with familiar songs and rhymes during free play and group times. The majority of children mark make throughout the nursery. A minority of children explore and match letters to write their own names. Practitioners should explore further provocations to support and encourage mark making experiences indoors and outdoors.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in early mathematics. A few children are beginning to use loose parts and block play independently. Children weigh, measure and identify patterns and shapes, such as tartan designs. The majority of children count independently up to ten during their play and a few children count in two's. Children confidently recognise colours and problem solve during their play. Children are ready to develop their mathematical vocabulary in a range of real-life contexts to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in health and wellbeing. The majority of children recognise and confidently identify their own emotions and feelings. Almost all children confidently run, climb, balance and ride bikes and scooters in the spacious outdoor environment. The majority of children understand how to keep themselves safe. Children independently access snack and mealtimes and most children follow appropriate hygiene routines. All children would benefit from a calmer lunch time experience, followed by the opportunity to relax afterwards, for example, by having quiet time in cosy areas around the nursery.
- Children's progress over time is tracked to show individual progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Practitioners use the wellbeing indicators to detail each individual child's learning journey. Children's progression in understanding their own emotions is captured well. As planned, practitioners should now ensure children's next steps are identified, reviewed regularly and updated to ensure children continue to make progress in their learning and skills development.
- Overall, the quality of children's achievements are positive. Children's achievements in the nursery are recognised, captured and celebrated. Children display their own choice of work they wish to be shared within the nursery. Children's learning from home is captured in learning journals.

- Practitioners have created a supportive and inclusive ethos in the nursery. Senior leaders and practitioners have established strong relationships with families. They are aware of barriers to learning and work effectively to address these. For example, they provide a range of outdoor clothing for all children to access the outdoor environment and making referrals to outside agencies where support is required.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, settled and confident. Staff used kind and caring interactions and knew children and families well. Staff had reviewed the morning routine and this was working well. Children were greeted warmly by staff, helping them feel safe and secure. Staff should continue to monitor routines across the day, to ensure children experience positive transitions.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through information gathered in personal plans. Staff worked closely with external agencies to provide additional support for some children. Staff used a consistent approach to implement strategies to meet individual children's needs. Staff were piloting the use of online learning profiles. We agreed that there was scope for information recorded about children to be more streamlined and meaningful. This would help demonstrate how children's learning and development is being supported.

Children enjoyed eating snack together and were developing independence skills as they participated in preparation of snack and pouring their own drinks. Staff were aware of allergies and dietary requirements, helping ensure children were kept safe. However, although staff had made some changes to the lunchtime routine, further improvements were needed. For example, consideration should be given to creating a more relaxed and sociable atmosphere for children (see area for improvement 1).

Staff knew children's health needs well, which were reviewed with families to reflect any changes. However, we discussed where further improvements could be made to ensure safe administration of medication. For example, plans could be further developed to reflect children's medical needs in more detail and the storage of rescue medicines should be more accessible (see area for improvement 2).

The service identified the need for more cosy spaces throughout the nursery, to support children's wellbeing. We agreed these could be developed further. Children benefited from access to suitable clothing, supporting them to access outdoors in all weathers. However, we asked the service to monitor the temperature of indoors, as this felt cold. The manager took steps to address this, which will help maintain comfortable temperatures for children.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: adequate

1.3 Play and learning

Children benefited from a relaxed and nurturing start to their day, which supported them to engage quickly in play experiences of their choice. Children explored a wide variety of play opportunities. Favourites included, the home area, outdoors, and art and craft areas. The provision of some real and natural materials supported their curiosity. For example, tea pots, tyres and utensils in the mud kitchen.

Staff played with children, which helped generate fun and extended their engagement. For example, we observed children playing for extended periods of time at chosen experiences, persevering with tasks and developing their problem-solving skills. There were a few occasions where tasks took staff away from their engagement with children, which interrupted their play. The leaders were aware of this and were considering how to make improvements.

Children were able to make choices and lead their own play both indoors and outdoors, which met their interests. For example, transporting play materials to other areas. This helped children practice new skills and developed their imagination. Children had fun making a pretend ice cream shop and role playing being pilots. We discussed where further improvements were needed to the variety and quality of resources across the setting. This would help enrich the quality of play experiences to stimulate children's natural curiosity, investigation and challenge their thinking.

There were a mix of skills and abilities within the staff team and some used effective questioning, which helped extend children's learning. Leaders recognised where more learning opportunities would support staff in their role and develop their knowledge of child development. This was now implemented with more experienced staff supporting new staff and all were involved in planning cycles.

Approaches to planning had been reviewed, helping ensure this was responsive to children's interests. Staff introduced floor books to help capture children's learning and identify next steps. Staff should continue to review this process to ensure it is relevant and helps extend children's learning.

During the inspection children had the opportunity to visit areas in the local community for festive events. This helped them build positive connections to their wider community.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The service had experienced significant changes to the staff and senior leadership team. They were excited about making improvements and worked well together, creating a positive environment for children. Staff took time to get to know families and leaders were visible at key points during the day, which promoted positive partnerships.

Leaders had a clear vision for the service and knew where improvements were needed to enhance outcomes for children. For example, mealtimes and daily routines. Systems were in place to identify improvements, which included using a vision board to record ideas and plans. However, the management team had not yet had time to complete identified actions. Opportunities were now needed to reflect on successes, evaluate changes, and implement improvements. The manager should continue to strengthen quality assurance approaches across the setting as planned.

Leaders and staff engaged well with inspectors, welcomed suggestions and took actions immediately, where possible. We asked the service to improve infection prevention and control measures, as some areas needed attention. For example, improving nappy changing facilities, hand hygiene and general cleanliness in some areas of the playrooms (see area for improvement 3).

Regular communication with families took place through a variety of ways. For example, stay and play sessions, newsletters and daily chats. The service considered where this could be strengthened further and began exploring the use of online learning journals and digital platforms to share and gather information. This would encourage families to share their views, which could be used to inform the development of the service.

Managers recognised the importance of involving staff driving forward improvements. Staff were eager to develop their skills and had responsibility to lead on aspects of practice. The

management team were keen to strengthen this approach, to empower and develop leadership at all levels.

Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. For example, all staff had participated in child protection training and knew who to report concerns to. We reminded the manager of the need to notify the Care Inspectorate of specific events and signposted to them to guidance in relating to this.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: good

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.