

# Summarised inspection findings

**St Margaret's Primary Early Learning and Childcare Class**

Renfrewshire Council

28 November 2023

## Key contextual information

St Margaret's Early Learning and Childcare Class (ELCC) is part of St Margaret's Primary School in Johnstone. The building has one large playroom and outdoor space for children aged three to five and a smaller playroom for children aged two to three years. There are also offices, a parent's room and multi-purpose room used for children's lunches and to host various family learning programmes. The setting is registered for 87 children aged from two to those not yet attending school. Children attend from Johnstone and the neighbouring village of Kilbarchan. At the time of inspection, the setting had 69 children on the roll. This includes 47 children who are now in their second year of learning at St Margaret's. The setting provides placements during term time and across the extended year and between the hours of 8.15 am and 5.45 pm. Children have different patterns of attendance. These include morning or afternoon sessions, full days, and school hours to receive their entitlement to 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (ELC). The deputy headteacher has overall responsibility for the class and is supported by the ELC team of two deputies, a senior early learning and childcare officer (ELCO), a graduate ELCO, 12 ELCOs and four early learning support workers.

### 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

- Across the ELC class, almost all children are settled and enjoy their time in nursery. Practitioners demonstrate a commitment to children's rights and have very positive relationships with children who they know very well. They work very effectively as a cohesive team and are enthusiastic about how they have developed spaces in the playrooms. These spaces allow children to make choices about what and where they will play. The majority of children are beginning to lead their own learning with support from adults. Most children engage well with learning experiences. A few children would benefit from additional support to ensure they consistently sustain engagement over time and appropriate to their developmental stage. Practitioners provide a range of opportunities for children to learn in interesting contexts, for example regular visits to the library, local woodland, a local care home and with their carer in nursery. These experiences enrich children's learning.
- Most practitioners use questioning and commentary well to support children in thinking about their learning and talking about their experiences. Practitioners interact with children in a calm and nurturing way. They listen attentively to children to be responsive to their needs and interests. Children have time and space to develop their interests. Practitioners should continue to develop how they extend children's learning, for example through exploring what children already know and what they could learn next. They are at the early stages of using digital technology as a tool to support and extend learning. Outdoors, children have access to interesting spaces that support a range of learning experiences. The allotment provides opportunities for growing and harvesting vegetables and trips to local woodland supports the development of an appreciation of nature.

- Practitioners observe children and record information about their learning in floorbooks and individual 'learning journey' folders. This detailed narrative documents episodes of learning with children's comments. The information recorded now needs to be more focused on children's significant learning and inform what children need to learn next. This will help practitioners plan for learning that helps children make the best progress possible. Parents and carers appreciate the photographs and learning stories in their children's learning journals.
  
- Practitioners plan for learning in response to children's interests and with a focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They need to ensure that they recognise all potential learning opportunities and build on these. Practitioners plan for the individual needs of children who have barriers to their learning. This helps ensure appropriate experiences are provided for, and accessible to, all children. They use their knowledge of children to monitor the progress they make in their learning using a range of approaches. Senior leaders and practitioners should now continue to develop and embed these approaches, linking more closely with assessment information for individual children. This will provide a clearer overview of how children's knowledge and skills are developed to ensure they make the best possible progress. It will also be useful for senior leaders and practitioners to link with other early years settings to compare approaches to monitoring children's progress.

## 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 aged two to three years are making appropriate progress in their learning and development. They are growing in confidence as they explore the environment and make choices from the activities on offer. Nurturing interactions from practitioners, including the use of songs and stories, are supporting children's early communication skills well. The range of outdoor equipment and toys is helping to improve children's physical development.
- Children aged three to five years are making good progress in early language and communication. Most children talk using a developing range of vocabulary and communicate their thoughts clearly. They listen with interest to stories in small groups and can recall the events. Children show a keen interest in mark making and enjoy sharing their 'writing' as they take orders at the 'café'. They mark make in floor books and a few children enjoy creating stories at the writing table. Children are developing their understanding that their marks have meaning as they draw and write. They should continue to develop early literacy skills when playing at a wider range of contexts in the playroom and outdoors.
- Children are progressing well in early numeracy and can count when playing with increasing confidence. They are developing good early mathematical skills through the range of resources available. Children learn about shapes as they play with construction toys and develop problem solving skills. A few children develop skills in using money when they serve nursery visitors at the 'café'. Children use appropriate mathematical language as they compare the capacity of containers when playing with water and are developing their use of comparative language. Practitioners should continue to support children to develop early numeracy and mathematical skills through real-life contexts.
- In health and wellbeing children are making very good progress. Practitioners provide a supportive ethos in the setting and encourage children to be caring, kind and respectful to others. Children work well together to solve problems and share ideas. A few older children can concentrate on tasks for extended periods of time and are keen to share their learning with adults and each other. They are learning about healthy food choices when helping prepare and serving snacks and lunch. Children are aware of basic hygiene routines and are developing self-help skills well.
- As a result of their nursery experience and from information gathered from 'learning journeys', children are making good progress across all areas of the curriculum. Children with additional

support needs are making appropriate progress in relation to their individual developmental stage.

- Praise is used effectively to support and encourage children and to celebrate their success. Parents share learning from home through 'Travelling Ted' and parent group sessions. Practitioners should continue to explore ways to encourage parents to celebrate and share children's achievements, for example through learning journey folders.
- Practitioners work hard to develop a supportive and inclusive ethos that promotes equity. They are proactive in identifying potential barriers to learning, including any gaps in learning, and support parents to take part in a wide range of family learning opportunities. Senior leaders should now make more effective use of all data and information, including that relating to socioeconomic backgrounds. This will help to plan interventions to meet the needs of children who require additional support with 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.