

Summarised inspection findings

Clackmannan Primary School and Nursery Class

Clackmannanshire Council

22 January 2019

Key contextual information

Clackmannan Nursery Class provides early learning and childcare for children aged from two years. At the time of the inspection, there were 58 children aged three to five years and 13 children under three years of age. The service provides morning and afternoon places. It offers a limited number of 'flexible-day' places for children who stay all day. The nursery has two main playrooms with access to an extensive and well-planned outdoor space. This session, changes to the nursery team have included the appointment of an additional graduate to the senior leadership team. A peripatetic teacher provides support for two and a half days per week.

1.3 Leadership of change

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

- A clear statement of vision, values and beliefs has been established through a recent and appropriate consultation process. These encompass the school and nursery and put positive outcomes for children at the centre of their joint work. Everyone is encouraged to look outwards to the wider world. Practitioners and teachers across the early level have a shared vision for the development of high quality early learning based on play. Going forward, practitioners, teachers, and senior leaders should work together to establish key aims for the future development of the early level. This will be particularly relevant in the context of developments within the early level team and setting.
- Practitioners are committed to improvement. They are reflective and value the positive and supportive leadership of the headteacher. Regular meetings provide opportunities for practitioners to discuss what is working well and what they can do to support children better. They have begun to explore how they can manage self-evaluation for improvement more systematically. This has been effective in helping improve learning environments and experiences. Practitioners recognise that this is an area they should develop further.
- There has been significant change in the practitioner staff team over the last year. Leaders within the nursery have made a positive start in developing a strong climate of improvement based on mutual respect, trust and collegiality. They should continue to develop effective teamwork along with school colleagues and partners. This will optimise the use of skills and expertise in the improvement process.
- Practitioners are keen to develop their individual skills and to take on leadership roles. Where it works well, practitioner leadership is effective in improving experiences and outcomes for children and families. The recent enrichment of outdoors experiences through strong community involvement is a good example of this. Practitioners are open to new ideas and

apply their developing knowledge of how children learn when improving their practice. Further development of leadership at all levels is a priority in the current improvement plan.

- Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners to make more effective use of HGIOELC? and national practice guidance. This will support continued improvement and assist in measuring the impact of change. In improving self-evaluation, senior leaders should involve parents, children and partners as fully as possible. This will ensure that improvement work takes full account of the aspirations and needs of children, families and the wider community.

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

- The ethos and culture of the nursery reflects the team's commitment to nurture and learning through play. Practitioners use thoughtful, individualised approaches to support children to engage in the range of learning experiences on offer. As a result, most children are motivated and engaged in their learning. Practitioners working with children aged two to three years are caring, supportive and kind in their interactions. They take good account of children's individual needs when planning care. Most children are happy and settled in their playroom.
- Children enjoy taking on responsible roles in the nursery, for example in helping prepare snack. There is scope for children to be supported to develop early leadership further.
- Most children know how to access materials and are confident when making choices. Practitioners support them well to develop their individual interests in the course of their play. Children aged three to five move freely between indoor and outdoor learning spaces throughout the session. Work to improve the outdoor learning space of the nursery has significantly enhanced children's experiences. Children demonstrate assurance and energy as they explore the possibilities of a range of well-designed learning spaces. The mud kitchen, learning shed, and a wide range of loose parts, enable children to revisit their play over time. As a result, children are developing their creativity, imagination and problem solving skills well.
- Overall, experiences of play provide good opportunities for children to initiate learning experiences across a range of engaging contexts. As the team continue to improve provision, they should develop further their use of questions and comment to support children's thinking. Practitioners working with younger children should extend children's scope to engage in messy and sensory play indoors and provide more natural materials.
- When planning learning, practitioners seek to take account of children's interest and prior learning. Practitioners working with children aged two to three years make appropriate use of observations of children's developing schemas to shape their experiences. As practitioners continue to improve planning, they should work together to develop a consistent approach to making and using high quality observations.
- Practitioners make effective use of wall displays to document episodes of learning with children. They should consider the use of floor books and similar resources as tools to support useful conversations about learning. This will support children to develop language to evaluate experiences and plan how to take their learning forward.

- Practitioners know children well as learners. Effective use of social media platforms keeps parents informed about children's learning in the nursery. We have asked practitioners to review their use of electronic learning journals. This will develop further partnership between children, parents and practitioners in recognising children's achievement and considering next steps.
- The tracking of children's progress is a focus for continuing improvement in the current session. In partnership with colleagues in the primary school, practitioners have begun to make use of learning pathways with the National Benchmarks. This is helping them to make accurate evaluations of children's progress. Teachers in primary one report that this is helping them to manage progression in learning more effectively at transition. Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners as they develop skill and confidence in making effective use of tracking and monitoring. This will help secure improved outcomes for all children.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The curriculum framework takes good account of the importance of play in early learning. Children of all ages benefit from daily access to high quality outdoor learning experiences.
- Practitioners working with children aged three to five, use the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence to plan a range of learning across the curriculum. They should continue to monitor the use of group time as a useful approach to learning and teaching in the nursery.
- Practitioners and senior leaders should now build on their use of national practice guidance, 'Building the Ambition', to continue to develop provision for children aged two to three years.
- Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are a focus of the planning process in the nursery. Children will benefit from increased opportunities to apply and extend their skills in challenging, real life experiences and contexts.
- Practitioners make good use of the community to enhance children experiences. During the refurbishment of the school, practitioners have made good use of opportunities to develop their technology skills. This has included opportunities for builders to join children in appropriate play contexts. Practitioners should support children to make links between the skills they are developing in nursery and the world of work.
- Transitions in to the nursery are flexible and support children and families well. Transition to primary one are well planned. A focus on developing playful pedagogy in primary classes supports continuity of learning for children. The improving use of information about children's progress is helping ensure better progression in learning at transition.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Parents value the service they receive. They report finding practitioners caring, approachable and very helpful. Social media platforms, notices and daily informal communication keep parents informed about children's learning and the life of the nursery. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns about their children and to share their achievements.
- Practitioners should continue to develop their use of learning journals to ensure parents are able to play a stronger role in planning and supporting learning. This will ensure parents are fully aware of the impact of their contribution to children's learning and development.
- Effective partnerships with a range of agencies provides support to families and helps children overcome barriers to their wellbeing and learning. Practitioners encourage parents to become involved in activities such as parent groups, community walks and work to improve the nursery. They should continue to develop a wider range of family learning programmes.

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

- Practitioners recognise that relationships lie at the heart of children's development and lay the foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing. They work together very effectively to create a warm and nurturing environment for children and families. There is a strong sense of community in the nursery. This is based on mutual respect, honesty and trust. Parents are valued and feel welcomed. They are appreciative of the advice and practical support practitioners readily provide. Social media tools are used very effectively to keep parents informed about the life and work of the nursery. This also enables parents to share news and useful information about children's care.
- Practitioners know children very well. Each child is considered as an individual with their own distinctive needs and rights. Children feel cared for and at ease in the company of trusted adults. This is making a positive difference to children's wellbeing, enabling them to participate in learning experiences as fully as possible. Practitioners are very good role models. They promote positive interactions very well. This supports children to resolve any small disagreements that might arise. As a result, children show care and consideration for each other in age appropriate ways. Children aged three to five years, have developed good friendships and support each other very well in their play.
- Most children under three years of age are happy and relaxed. Home visits prior to children starting in the setting, ensure key relationships with children and families are formed early. Practitioners make effective use of information to settle children and to meet their needs. They work very closely with parents to ensure that arrangements for transition are flexible and tailored to individual children. Children are becoming more independent in their play and at snack. They are developing their confidence through interactions with peers and older children throughout the session.
- The strong promotion of wellbeing for children and their families underpins the work of the nursery. Practitioners have a sound understanding of the wellbeing indicators. They work together very well in creating a supportive environment for children to grow and develop. As a result, children are supported to feel safe, healthy, active, nurtured, respected, responsible and included.
- Children are helped to be active participants in their own learning and to make choices. Daily access to high-quality outdoor experiences encourages children to be active and energetic in

their play. This is highly effective in promoting children's self-regulation, independence and cooperation. Practitioners help children talk about keeping safe during risky, outdoor play. They should extend this approach to enable children to develop relevant language for talking about all aspects of their wellbeing.

- Additional support needs are identified promptly and effective strategies put in place to ensure children are supported to progress in their learning and development. When required, practitioners liaise effectively with other agencies and professionals to ensure they meet the needs of children. This is having a positive impact on children's learning and development.
- Practitioners know their community very well. They have a sound understanding of the individual circumstances of children and families and are alert to factors, which may present barriers to wellbeing. They use this information well to provide sensitive, highly effective, targeted interventions to support children and families.
- We have asked practitioners to continue to build on existing strong practice in valuing diversity and challenging discrimination. This will enable children to develop further their understanding of equality and inclusion through play in a range of contexts and environments.

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

- The strong focus on relationships and wellbeing across the nursery has a positive impact on children's learning and development. Children are supported to develop their social and emotional skills well. Practitioners make effective use of praise to encourage children to persevere in their play. Achievements at home and in the nursery are recognised and celebrated well. As a result, children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes and motivation in their learning. Children of all ages have opportunities to learn across the playrooms and outdoors.
- Most children aged two to three years are making good progress in their learning. The majority of children use their developing communication skills to make their needs known and to make choices with increasing confidence. Children are encouraged to explore books and express themselves through simple drawings. Experiences outdoors and in the three to five playroom are helping children develop curiosity and imagination. As a result, children are becoming aware of shape, colour and some counting words. There is scope to extend the range and quality of experiences available in the two to three playroom.
- There is an increasing focus on communication and early language across the nursery. Most children are making appropriate progress in this important area of development. Practitioners model good listening skills. As a result, children are learning to listen and take turns. A recent focus on extending and modelling vocabulary should now be developed further. The majority of children are interested in books and enjoy sharing stories and non-fiction texts in the book area. Children are encouraged to explore mark making and early writing in a range of interesting contexts. Children can find their own names when self-registering and labelling pictures. A few older children are starting to write their names independently. Other children are beginning to form letters that are important to them.
- Most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They are learning to count for a purpose. The majority of children can count to five and a few can count and recognise numerals to ten. Most children can recognise and name simple shapes and are learning to use mathematical language appropriately during play. Children can compare size

and amount and are developing their problem-solving skills while using building blocks at the construction site. They sort jewels and leaves and compare lengths of sticks as they develop mathematical vocabulary. Children should be supported to develop their skills further through a range of real-life and imaginary contexts.

- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They have a developing awareness of healthy eating and demonstrate independence during snack routines and lunch times. Children greatly enjoy outdoor physical activity. They are developing confidence and skill through risky-play and play with balance bikes.
- Practitioners are aware of their responsibility to promote equity for children throughout their work with children and families. The team are actively developing a range of strategies to improve progress for all, with a clear focus on supporting children facing particular challenges. They are doing this in partnership with colleagues in the school and local authority. Senior leaders should take forward work to improve the tracking of children's progress. This will enable increasingly effective evaluation of the impact of interventions.

Setting choice of QI: 1.2 Leadership of learning

- Professional engagement and collegiate working
- Impact of career long learning
- Children leading learning

- The nursery team share a reflective approach to their work with children and families. They recognise that they can strengthen this through more robust use of self-evaluation and tracking. An improving culture of teamwork and collegiate working is evident within the nursery and across the early level team. There is a clear, shared commitment to continuing improvement based on professional learning and partnership work. As teamwork continues to develop, it will be important to ensure a more focused approach to measuring the impact of professional learning on outcomes for children and families.
- This session, changes to the nursery team have included the appointment of an additional graduate to the senior leadership team. A peripatetic teacher provides support for two and a half days per week. Leaders in the nursery and school now need to continue with plans to develop leadership at all levels. This will ensure key improvement aims build on the full range of skills and expertise across nursery and school.
- Practitioners use thoughtful, individualised approaches to support children to engage in the range of learning experiences on offer. They make good use of children's ideas in planning. Children have time and space to explore their interests and ideas. As a result, most children are motivated and engaged in their learning.
- Most children know how to access materials and are confident when making choices. Overall, experiences of play provide good opportunities for children to initiate learning experiences across a range of engaging contexts. This is particularly evident during outdoor play. Practitioners should now develop further approaches to support children to discuss and plan their learning. In doing so, they should make use of pictures, objects, mind maps and technology to support children's participation as far as possible.

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.