

Summarised inspection findings

Fettercairn Primary School Nursery Class

Aberdeenshire Council

12 September 2023

Key contextual information

Fettercairn Primary School Nursery Class is located within Fettercairn Primary School. The nursery provides 1140 hours of early learning and childcare, during term time, between the hours of 9.00 am and 3.00 pm. Children attend from three years until school starting age. The nursery is registered for 24 children attending at any one time. The current role is 25 children, three of whom attend part-time in line with parental choice.

The Early Years Senior Practitioner provides day-to-day management of the nursery and is part of the school senior leadership team. The nursery consists of a playroom, with direct access to an outdoor play space. There is also an activity space which is shared with the school's early years classes. Practitioners and children also use other areas of the school, such as the gym hall.

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

- Children benefit from a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the nursery. They are well-supported by practitioners who know them as individuals and recognise their emotional and developmental needs. As a result, children are happy, safe, and most are confident. Most children are engaged and enjoy learning through child-led play.
- Children are developing their independence and take responsibility readily for aspects of learning. Practitioners recognise the need to offer further opportunities for children to develop their independence skills. This will enhance children's learning and provide increasing challenge. Children make positive choices and select materials from a range of high-quality resources available indoors and outside. This develops their creativity and play. Practitioners regularly conduct playroom audits to positively review the layout and use of space.
- Practitioners offer children high-quality outdoor learning successfully. Practitioners prioritised appropriately the development of stimulating outdoor learning experiences for children. All children access the outdoor area confidently and engage actively in learning activities. The area allows children to develop curiosity as they explore the environment.
- Practitioners make effective use of tablets and early technology toys to support learning. Children photograph skilfully their constructions to evidence learning. They enjoy using metal detectors and simple mobile phones to enhance their play.
- Most practitioners engage well with children. They use effective questioning skills and ensure learning builds on children's prior knowledge. Children share their knowledge and experiences well and talk confidently to practitioners and each other. Practitioners support them well to find out more about topics that interest them and to develop their ideas. Most experiences meet the learning needs of children well. A few children would benefit from

learning opportunities that provide greater challenge. This will support them to progress further in their learning and achieve their potential.

- Practitioners have changed how they record children's progress recently. Practitioners are beginning to use children's 'learning journals' to record children's engagement in learning, and share photographic evidence and samples of children's work. Children enjoy looking at their journal and are invited to make comments. Practitioners are well placed to continue to develop this approach. They should ensure it reflects more closely children's progress and links consistently to planning appropriate next steps in learning. Parents also contribute positively to 'learning journals'.
- Practitioners use a variety of planning formats well, including floor books, to plan and record children's learning. Children and parents enjoy reviewing the learning recorded in these books. Practitioners should build on this approach, focusing on developing children's voice further. Practitioners have identified correctly that they should develop how they plan responsively to take forward children's interests as they play. Practitioners engage in regular professional dialogue to discuss children's progress in learning. They track children's progress appropriately through their 'learning journals'. Practitioners should continue to develop this useful approach.

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.

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 early literacy. Practitioners interact well with children during free play to extend children's communication and early language skills. Most children can talk using a suitably wide range of vocabulary and communicate their thoughts clearly. They listen with interest to stories in small groups and the majority can recount the events. Children show a keen interest in mark making and enjoy sharing their writing with adults and each other as they play. They mark make on floor books and enjoy using chalks outdoors to write. A few children worked well together to create and follow plans to build a pirate ship from loose parts. Most children can recognise their name in print and attempt to write it.
- Children are progressing well in early numeracy and can count when playing with increasing confidence. Children are developing good early mathematical skills through the range of toys and resources available. They are learning about shapes as they play with construction toys and loose parts and developing their problem solving. Children use natural materials successfully to sort, match and group. A few children use appropriate mathematical language when comparing the capacity of containers during water play. They are developing their use of comparative language. Practitioners should continue to support children to develop early numeracy and mathematical skills through real-life contexts.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Practitioners establish a supportive ethos and encourage children to be caring, kind and respectful to others. Children work well together to solve problems and share ideas. Older children can concentrate on tasks for extended periods of time. Children engage enthusiastically in energetic play outdoors, but this can lack sufficient challenge at times. Children learn about healthy food choices when helping prepare and eat snacks and lunch. Children are aware of basic hygiene routines and are developing self-help skills well.
- Children are making good progress across all areas of the curriculum as a result of their nursery experience. Their progress is demonstrated well through children's 'learning journals'. Practitioners capture and celebrate children's achievements well within nursery. They use praise effectively to support and encourage children. Children's achievements from home are shared through 'learning journals' and the nursery 'wow' wall. Practitioners should continue to explore ways to encourage parents to share children's achievements regularly as they are welcomed into nursery each day.

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.