

Summarised inspection findings

Arngask Primary School and Nursery Class

Perth and Kinross Council

11 September 2018

Arngask Primary School nursery class is situated in Arngask Primary school and serves the village of Glenfarg, Perth and Kinross. There is one large playroom which joins directly onto the primary 1/2 classroom. Children have access to the outdoor area throughout the sessions. Flexible early learning and childcare options are provided by Perth and Kinross council.

1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

good

This indicator underlines that rigorous self-evaluation is the responsibility of all practitioners and stakeholders. It highlights the importance of partnership approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. It emphasises the need for strong leadership and a shared understanding of strengths and areas for development. A key factor is how to demonstrate the impact of self-evaluation and how evidence is used to improve outcomes for children. The themes are:

- collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- evidence-based improvement
- ensuring impact of successes for children and families

- Self-evaluation is important to the work of the nursery team who are actively engaged in evaluating and continuously improving children's experiences. They understand the importance of working in partnership with families to support this process and secure positive outcomes for all children. Effective leadership and team working has led to a shared understanding of the nursery's strengths and areas for development. A culture of honesty and openness allows practitioners to make well-judged changes to the routines, learning environment and delivery of the sessions and to evaluate accordingly. For example, recent improvements to opportunities for children to develop early writing skills have resulted in children showing increasing interest and engagement in this area of their learning.
- Gathering the feedback of children and families is a key part of self-evaluation and improvement work within the nursery. Parents are involved in the process and kept well informed about the journey of improvement and how they can help. For example, recent work to develop the use of loose parts and natural play materials has included families contributing resources from home. This has helped children to feel a sense of ownership over changes to the learning environment. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the nursery in a variety of ways and are consulted about their experiences. Tailored support for children is then planned in a way that meets their needs both individually and as a group.
- Practitioners engage well with national practice guidance to support their self-evaluation activities. This includes using challenge questions from How good is our early learning and childcare? as a starting point for discussion and evaluation. As a result, the staff team is becoming more confident in assessing their practice and provision. They understand what is working well within the nursery and also identify action points which will help them to improve further children's experiences and learning. As planned, the team should continue to use these documents with increased depth and focus as they move forward with improvement priorities and evaluate their progress. It will also be useful for practitioners to continue with their focus on the learning environment across all aspects of the curriculum as part of this work.
- Children's progress and experiences over time are documented in their learning journey jotters. These contain a range of useful information that includes relevant examples of children's work and observations of what they can do. Practitioners know children well and are becoming increasingly focused on children's learning when documenting observations in

their jotters. Children are enthusiastic about these records of learning. They talk confidently about the range of experiences they have been involved in over time. They are encouraged to add their own drawings and contributions, with practitioners ensuring children's comments and thoughts are captured effectively. Recently, the nursery has begun to trial an online version of these learning journal jotters. The team plan to evaluate their effectiveness at the next stage in the process and gather feedback from children and parents. Learning conversations with the headteacher are supporting children to begin to understand themselves more as learners and to identify their own successes. As planned, practitioners should continue their work to develop children's language of learning as they reflect on their own progress and identify next steps.

- Practitioners are reflective about their practice and make time for valuable professional discussion on a regular basis. There is a clear ethos of improvement through sharing good practice and peer support. The local authority early years' team supports development within the nursery and helps guide improvement planning and self-evaluation activities effectively. Practitioners actively seek out good practice in other settings to help support the nursery's development and benefit from a range of professional learning opportunities. These opportunities are carefully selected based on the needs of children and the nursery's priorities for improvement.
- Practitioners are well supported by the headteacher to engage in effective self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. Together, they ensure that high quality learning through play is the main focus for continuous improvement. Priorities are regularly revisited and to ensure that progress is being achieved and to identify any further points of action. As a result, practitioners have a good understanding of how self-evaluation is leading to improved approaches in how children learn at nursery. The team recognise that they now need time to continue to embed their priorities to support further improvement in children's progress, learning and development.

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. 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

- Across the nursery, most children are making good progress through experiences that promote holistic learning. They are developing their social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills well through play. Most children are making good progress in communication and early language. They converse confidently while playing and the majority of children demonstrate a wide use of vocabulary. The minority of children show an interest in learning new words as they discuss the skills they are acquiring in their learning. Most children are developing good talking and listening skills through play and small group times. They demonstrate an enjoyment of books and independently access these throughout the session. A focus on developing literacy skills throughout children's play has led to children showing a keen interest in early writing. They apply these developing skills in real-life and imaginary contexts throughout their play. Children are developing their awareness of the sounds and patterns of language through rhymes, songs and games.
- Most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They count for a purpose during play and nursery routines such as setting up for snack. Most children demonstrate good number recognition skills and a developing understanding of shape as they complete jigsaw puzzles and create in the modelling and construction areas. Children use mathematical and directional language when experimenting in the mud kitchen and using digital technology resources. We have asked practitioners to continue to build opportunities for children to apply these developing skills throughout their play and routines. This will support increased challenge in this area of learning.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing across the curriculum. They are becoming confident individuals with a growing sense of responsibility. Children understand how they can support their own wellbeing through making healthy food choices and keeping active. Most children are developing good physical skills as they negotiate large loose parts play equipment and challenge themselves during outdoor play. Children show an awareness of the needs of others and co-operate well as they learn. They understand the importance of being respectful to each other and inclusive in their play. Roles involving responsibility such as the 'nursery kind friend' are helping children to articulate how they can support their peers. There is potential to develop this work further with children to nurture their growing responsibility and leadership skills throughout the nursery.

- Children show an interest in learning about the world around them and explore the different properties of the herbs and other plants they care for in the nursery garden. Children are also learning about other cultures and language as they participate in Portuguese lessons with a nursery parent. They recall familiar words such as greetings and numbers and are keen to practise what they know.
- Overall, children are becoming confident, successful learners and making progress over time. Children's achievements are recognised well through praise and parents are encouraged to share special moments from home. Practitioners take good account of the individual circumstances of children and families and work in partnership with other professionals to provide tailored support and promote equity. They carefully monitor the impact of any strategies and use this evidence to make decisions about future support and interventions.

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.