

Summarised inspection findings

St Ronan's Primary School

Scottish Borders Council

27 March 2018

Key contextual information

At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was also leading the partner school, Walkerburn Primary and Nursery Class.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The headteacher (HT) has shared his vision and values for the school and recently used the school's 60th anniversary to share this successfully with the community. The school is proud of its reputation as a welcoming hub of activities for its community and works well with a wide range of partners. The HT is well established in his role and is respected by staff, parents and the wider community. He is approachable in his leadership and successful in encouraging parents and partners to be involved in the life of the school.
- The senior leadership team has been augmented with the recent appointment of a second deputy headteacher. The education authority has undertaken a school review in which it recommended the remits of promoted staff, including the two principal teachers (PTs), be clearly defined. The headteacher and promoted staff should now develop strategic leadership through remits outlining the responsibilities of each in leading and evaluating the school's priority developments.
- During the current school session the senior leadership team and PTs have begun to implement the school's identified priorities for improvement. The education authority appropriately expects the school to ensure it has a strong focus on improving learning and raising attainment. The school has recently introduced a range of new initiatives and approaches. These have included electronic learning journals, progression in writing skills, reading partners and numeracy. Moving forward, the leadership team needs to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's planned improvements to ensure positive outcomes for all learners. At this stage, it is too early for the school to evidence improvements.
- Systems to track and monitor the school's successes for its learners are also recently implemented. Moderation opportunities with cluster schools have been initiated. Staff need to engage in moderation processes more regularly so that, over time, this supports accurate teacher judgements about attainment. Staff are now using the benchmarks in literacy and numeracy to support assessment and how well children are making progress in Curriculum for Excellence.
- There is a positive ethos and growing opportunities for shared leadership. Staff are willing to develop their skills and professional knowledge and would like opportunities to take greater roles in leading whole school developments. They have made a promising start to identifying relevant professional research topics. This is an aspect of teachers' professional development

that will help improve pedagogy and inform the school's self-evaluation of its developments. Senior leaders should now view distributed leadership as an important driver of change and involve all staff in addressing the school priorities.

- Children are developing skills in communication, organisation and as role models when taking lead responsibilities as house captains and pupil council representatives. The school should consider ways in which all children can be more involved in school improvement and in evaluating the work of the school.
- The school improvement plan is appropriately focused on improving outcomes in health and wellbeing, improving learning, teaching and assessment and improving equity of success for all. The HT has consulted with education officers and staff to agree the school's current priorities. Staff recognise the importance of these priorities in delivering excellence and equity for all their learners. In planning these approaches, it is key from the outset that the impact of change is measured and evaluated. Senior leaders have procedures in place to monitor and evaluate change through the quality assurance calendar. It is important that senior leaders track and monitor the progress towards these identified goals. Overall, there is a need for more systematic and rigorous self-evaluation to make robust judgements about the standards and quality of provision and outcomes for learners. The development of a clear framework for assessment, as well as focused monitoring of learning and teaching at more regular intervals will support this.
- Senior leaders have identified the need to use data about children's progress more strategically in order to raise attainment. There should now be a greater focus at a whole school level on analysing information to identify areas for improvement and to monitor the impact of the school's work on outcomes for children. The Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) is targeting a gap identified by the school in reading and numeracy. This includes the development of family learning at the early stages. New resources and additional staffing is to focus on provision for numeracy, reading and learning together. Assessment resources will be used to measure the progress children are making. The appropriate emphasis on parental engagement at the early stages is in response to increased numbers of nursery children presenting with speech and language development needs.
- There is a well-established process of professional review and development for teachers within the school. It is clearly linked to the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards. The school would benefit from examining how staff development is shared more consistently and how it impacts on teaching and learning and outcomes for children. Staff should have more opportunities to share good practice with one another on a regular and formal basis.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- There is a strong focus on developing positive relationships across the school. The school has a very caring and calm ethos. Across the school, children are polite and courteous. Almost all come to school ready and eager to learn. They demonstrate the school's values through their interactions with staff and partners and with each other.
- Most children are confident and motivated to engage in learning. They interact well in most lessons. Staff should ensure that lessons are more focused on children having the opportunity to learn independently and lead their own learning.
- In the most effective lessons, children are active learners, they are provided with effective interventions and support. Skilful questioning is used to build on prior learning. Most children work well together in pairs and groups and are enthusiastic in their learning. This effective practice needs to be modelled across the school to improve consistency in the quality of children's learning experiences and promote higher order thinking skills.
- Across the school, the pace of learning is too variable and could be improved in most lessons. Increased pace and challenge for all children will increase motivation and lead to improved attainment. There is scope for children's learning to be differentiated further, with learning activities being matched more carefully to the needs and interests of individual children.
- A few children contribute to the wider life of the school as members of a group such as the eco group, pupil council and as junior road safety officers. Older children act as reading buddies to P1 children and take part in an intergenerational reading group. The school should now track and monitor these experiences to ensure that all children have the opportunity to broaden their experiences and skills for learning, life and work. The school should increase opportunities for children to make effective use of digital technologies to support and enhance their learning.
- Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. A few examples of good lessons were observed. Consistency in the quality of learning and teaching is variable across the school. Teachers need to increase the opportunities for children to collaborate and develop independence in their learning. Effective feedback in a few lessons helps children to know what they need to do next in their learning. Staff should work together to share good practice and ensure they provide consistent high-quality feedback so children are clear about their strengths and next steps.

- Teachers would benefit from clear guidance and a shared understanding of whole school approaches to pedagogy and assessment. This would support them to be more consistent in their practice and ensure high quality learning and teaching across the school. The school is at the early stage of developing professional enquiry in identified aspects of learning and teaching to support improved outcomes for children.
- In a few good lessons, assessment for learning strategies are used effectively to support children in their learning. Teachers now need to ensure that these strategies are used consistently across the school to further support children to make progress.
- Staff do not yet use assessment information effectively enough to guide decisions about learning and teaching. The senior leadership team needs to take a stronger lead in managing data to support planning for learning and teaching. The school needs to develop an assessment framework. Teachers would now benefit from making greater use of the national benchmarks to support their professional judgements and regular opportunities to moderate the school's work in numeracy, literacy and health and well-being. Attainment meetings need to have a clear focus on outcomes for learners.
- Assessment needs to be established as an integral part of planning for learning and data used more effectively to inform how well children are progressing. Pace and challenge needs to be increased and lead to raising attainment for all children.
- Learning journals are beginning to provide a helpful opportunity for most parents to understand what their children are learning. Parents are beginning to contribute to the overall picture of learning by recording achievements outside of school. The school is beginning to involve children in assessing their own learning and identifying their next steps.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Staff have begun to revise learning pathways for reading, writing and numeracy and mathematics. They welcomed the discussion around the importance of curricular progression, coherence and continuity. The HT and staff recognise there is further development work needed to ensure these learning pathways better reflect the design principles of Curriculum for Excellence.
- The school's rationale for Curriculum for Excellence should provide a more strategic overview of learning pathways, establishing a shared understanding of the purpose and design of the curriculum. This development should take account of the uniqueness of the school's setting and organise the many opportunities children have to contribute and learn in the local community in a planned and coherent framework.
- The HT has identified the need to further develop the health and wellbeing curriculum. This should include planned opportunities to develop knowledge around relationships and sexual health in a coherent, progressive and flexible pathway reflecting the maturity and development of learners.
- The school recognises that learning pathways for all curricular areas, including listening and talking, need to be developed and implemented with consistency. It would be helpful for learners and staff to be more specific about the skills that children are expected to develop as they progress through the curriculum. This would contribute to the development of a shared understanding of standards across the school and assist in strengthening the moderation cycle.
- The school aims to develop and implement learning pathways for digital literacy, employability skills and creativity. In the majority of classes, interactive white boards are used regularly. Staff should build on this aspect and ensure all are confident and skilled in the use of digital technologies to extend and support learning.
- The modern language learning pathway now needs to be implemented with greater consistency across the curriculum to ensure a clear and consistent approach to the implementation of the 1 + 2 modern language provision.
- The school recognises that their local outdoor environment and extensive grounds offer a rich context for learning. As an improvement priority, the school aims to refresh and develop their approach to outdoor learning to ensure these learning opportunities are well planned, progressive and enhance children's learning.
- Children have opportunities to engage with local businesses. The school should take greater account of the drivers of education at national level such as 'Developing the Young Workforce' and plan this more progressively with partners.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The school is regarded very highly within the local community and engages with parents and partners to bring about positive impacts for the children. Overall, most parents engage positively with the school and are happy with the range of opportunities provided. They are satisfied with many aspects of the school's work and the recent developments. The head teacher is respected by parents and members of the local community. There is a wide range of partners regularly contributing to learners' experiences, including opportunities to participate and work in partnership with local businesses, intergenerational learning and contributing to local celebratory events.
- Parents are very positive about communication with the school and appreciate the open door policy. They feel that staff are approachable, friendly and care about their children. Parents strongly believe that the school and local community of the town work closely in partnership as part of a shared commitment to ensure the best outcomes for children and families within the community.
- Most parents have engaged well with the electronic learning journals recently introduced in school. However, parents would like to be more involved in supporting their child's learning, as well as receiving more feedback about the progress their child is making in school. A few parents also felt that their children needed more challenge. The school should ensure that parents are well informed as it develops a framework of assessment and moderation of standards.
- Highly effective practice of children sharing learning with parents and their families at primary. P1 should now be built upon across the school.

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 **satisfactory**

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's 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 every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Positive relationships between staff, children and their families are a strong feature of the school. Children, parents and partners highlight the welcoming ethos and positive relationships between children and staff. Staff know the children and their families well, with almost all children stating that they are happy and feel safe coming to school. Their views are listened to, acknowledged and respected.
- The school has made a start in using 'Getting it Right for Every Child' wellbeing indicators. The children and staff are developing a common language of wellbeing through focused school assemblies and the pupil council. The school should now consider how this could be embedded as an integral feature of school life, allowing children, parents and staff to further reflect on children's progress in being safe, healthy, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.
- The school recognises that there is a need to develop a clear overview for health and wellbeing. They should now develop and deliver an approach which will ensure improvements in the wellbeing of children are achieved and sustained in a consistent and cohesive manner. There is scope to further develop the school's use of available information to inform and guide the school's priorities for improvement in aspects of health and wellbeing which are of particular relevance to the needs of the school's community.
- Staff should develop and implement a progressive health and wellbeing curriculum that takes account of the needs of the school and the context of the school. Children would benefit from more help and advice in areas of health and wellbeing including sex education, drug and alcohol misuse and internet safety.
- Staff demonstrate a commitment to engaging with professional learning opportunities to support their understanding of health and wellbeing. There are early signs that training in the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing, currently being undertaken by staff, is leading to a helpful understanding of children's development. The school needs to consider how this can be put to best use to maximise its impact across the work of the school in bringing about improvements in wellbeing of children and staff.

- Commendably, the school's community and partners provide a range of support in relation to the wellbeing of children and their families. Parents lead Bikeability skills, an active community group successfully leads the 'You Can Cook' project in food and health and Peeblesshire Youth Trust develops resilience for a small number of children through mentoring.
- There is a wide range of committed partners supporting the work of the school. Through these partnership experiences, children are developing skills of confidence and teamwork, to become responsible citizens and effective contributors within the wider community. There is scope to further enhance these experiences in a progressive and cohesive way through strategic curricular planning.
- The evidence provided in support of the nutritional analysis of school lunches shows that some further work is required to fully meet the national regulations.
- The provision for religious observance meets statutory requirements.
- The school should develop an equalities policy where the school is aligned to the local authority's recent guidance in order to promote equalities more actively.
- The school has an inclusive environment and strong sense of community. Children have opportunities to be included and involved in the life of the school through a variety of identified pupil groups. These include, house and vice captains, class councils, eco committee, junior road safety officers and buddies. Children are demonstrating caring and responsible attitudes through these roles, which is particularly evident during buddy sessions. The headteacher and staff monitor participation to promote equality of opportunity. The school should review the roles and responsibilities of these groups to ensure there is clarity and cohesion to their purpose.
- Children have opportunities to attend a range of after school clubs. Staff are beginning to gather attendance information at these clubs, as well as those in the community, and encourage all children to participate. The school has identified potential barriers, as part of their inclusive approach to pupil participation.
- Through the school's recent 60th anniversary celebration, children are becoming aware of the changes in their rights, responsibilities and the contribution they can make as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors in today's society.
- Children are developing an appreciation for cultural differences and diversity through the school's partnership with Malawi. There is a pupil group with representation from all classes, who regularly exchange information to develop their understanding of the similarities and differences within cultures. Children are also developing their understanding of wider global issues, including drought. The school should consider planning for further opportunities of global citizenships, cultural differences and diversity within the whole school curriculum.
- To ensure that all children with additional support needs and barriers to learning experience a fully inclusive and personalised approach to their learning, the school is aware of the need to develop a more strategic approach to planning, recording and tracking the impact of interventions. Staff are too reliant on informal exchanges of information, and more formal processes and systems should be developed to ensure rigour and impact on outcomes for children.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory.
- The overall school data states most children at P1, P4 and P7 are attaining appropriately. However, across the school progress through Curriculum for Excellence levels is too variable. Information and data supporting teacher judgements lacks rigour as a result of inconsistencies in moderation, assessment and monitoring and tracking. The school now needs to develop a framework for assessment, a systematic moderation process and improve monitoring and tracking leading to confident teacher professional judgements.
- There is headroom for significant improvement in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy and for the school to demonstrate the value being added.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall attainment in literacy and English language is satisfactory.

Listening and talking.

- Most children are making appropriate progress in listening and talking. Across the school, most children talk confidently to adults and to each other. In P1, most children take turns listening and talking in a range of contexts and can follow simple instructions about their learning. At P4, most children can discuss characters within texts and share their own ideas about the author's use of language. By P7, most children interact well with each other, build on the ideas of their peers and explain preferences of texts they have selected to read.

Reading

- Overall most children are making appropriate progress in reading. They engage with a range of texts across learning and regularly select books from the school library, during their timetabled visits, for personal reading. Children in P1 are using their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words with growing confidence. They blend sounds using a variety of active and engaging phonic approaches. At P4, children are using texts to find and use key information. By P7, the majority of children talk about character, make predictions, scan and select relevant information. They identify vocabulary the author has used to engage the reader.

Writing

- Overall, most children are making appropriate progress in writing. Children write for a range of purposes across the curriculum. In P1, most children are growing in confidence with pencil control and formation of letters. They write for enjoyment exploring patterns and sounds in imaginative and real contexts. Most children are developing their skills in forming letters legibly

and leaving a space between words. The majority use a capital letter and full stop within simple sentences. At P4, the majority of children are beginning to select appropriate structure and style for specific genre including recounts, poems and letters. The majority of P4 children are regularly using common conjunctions to link sentences and use simple punctuation appropriately within their writing. By P7, the majority of children use a range of vocabulary to convey thoughts and feelings within written texts. They write with increasing awareness of audience, accurately use a range of punctuation and organise ideas logically in paragraphs. The school should consider greater use of digital technology to extend, support and motivate learners within writing.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Across the school, most children are making appropriate progress in numeracy and mathematics. Teachers recognise the need to further develop children's understanding of numeracy. They have introduced approaches to support all children in mental calculations. There is a need to consolidate learning across the school.

Number, money and measurement:

- At P1, the majority of children count with confidence and order numbers within 20. They recognise coins to £2 and are beginning to add and subtract coins up to £1. They tell the time at hourly intervals. At P4, the majority of children are confident in multiplication tables and apply a few strategies such as repeated subtraction when making calculations. They estimate the length of everyday objects in centimetres. By P7, children add and subtract decimal fractions to two decimal places, tell the time accurately using digital and analogue clocks and calculate the perimeter of shapes and plans.

Shape, position and movement:

- At P1, most children describe common 2D shapes and identify 3D objects in the environment. At P4, most children identified lines of symmetry within a range of shapes. By P7, children recognise regular and irregular shapes and confidently plot and record the location of a point using coordinates.

Information handling:

- At P1, most children interpret a simple bar graph of everyday objects. At P4, children record data in a tally chart and use simple Venn diagrams to represent information. By P7, children organise, display and interpret data using charts and graphs.

Attainment over time

- In recent years attainment over time is too variable. The school recognises the need to develop a framework for assessment, moderation and, tracking and monitoring leading to raised attainment.
- The school should develop robust tracking systems, increase rigour to the analysis of data and develop assessment to support teachers' professional judgements. While teachers have participated in cluster group moderation of reading, they are not yet confident in making sound, robust judgements about children's progress, across literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- The school has an established culture of recognising, celebrating and sharing the successes and achievements of children. There are recent developments in the use of electronic learning journals to record achievements, within and outwith school. Parents and staff are the main

contributors at present and children are beginning to take greater responsibility for adding to their own journals.

- The school works very well with a range of partners to support the development of children's interests through inter-generational projects and community based events such as St Ronan's Games, operatic society, silver band, and with local businesses.
- The school is at the very early stages of tracking and monitoring children's participation and achievements in a range of settings. Further work is required to collate and interrogate this information with the purpose of identifying children who may be at risk of missing out. This should also inform areas that need further development to ensure all children have access to opportunities. There is scope for the school to incorporate accreditation opportunities into wider achievements.

Equity for all learners.

- The school has made a start to monitoring the progress of various groups of children. This now needs to be extended further to improve attainment and ensure all children are making appropriate and well-paced progress. The school has in place interventions and support for children, through the use of its PEF, who may have potential barriers to learning. Staff are aware of the range of challenges faced by families in the community.

School choice of QI: 2.5 Family Learning

- Engaging families in learning
- Early intervention and prevention
- Quality of family learning programmes

- The school has identified family learning as a focus for the use of part of its PEF allocation. This is led by the PT at the early level who has contributed to the proposal for the spending of funding.
- The school has well established partners who work closely with staff, parents and children. This should be built upon with those who can contribute to the planning and evaluation of family learning.
- The inspection process provided the opportunity for staff to share their initial thoughts and ideas and participate in professional dialogue with a view to developing this aspect of the school's work. Going forward, staff should take steps to detail their plans and develop their strategic vision through planning improvements and identifying evaluation approaches.
- The school should look outwards to learn from effective practices in a wider range of schools and from a range of local authorities. This professional learning will help inform decision making and support identification of what is relevant and unique to the Innerleithen context.
- Parents engage well with the school and are provided many opportunities to visit and participate in events. This is most successful for children and families at the early level of Curriculum for Excellence.
- The economic context of the town is well understood by the headteacher who promotes the school as a hub of activity for local residents. The confidence of parents to participate is a positive start to supporting children and families to be aspirational about skills for life and work. The school's rationale for its approaches to family learning can be augmented through professional enquiry and research. Various resources on the Education Scotland Improvement Hub will support this work. The headteacher has established strong links within the community which should enable effective planning of programmes to deliver a bespoke approach to family learning and ensuring learning is relevant.
- Improvements to the school's formal mechanisms for identification, support and intervention and tracking of progress for its learners is a priority. Once these are well established and understood by staff, parents and partners, the focus on family learning will evolve as a next step in the school's quest to further improve its already well-established place as a school at the heart of its community.

Summarised inspection findings

St Ronan's Primary School Nursery Class

Scottish Borders Council

27 March 2018

Key contextual information

St Ronan's nursery class is registered for 40 children, aged three to five years, to attend at any one time. At the time of inspection there were 67 children on the roll. A flexible provision is offered to families with children able to attend for AM or PM sessions as well as more extended days. There have been significant changes to staffing over the last year with a permanent team in place since the beginning of term, January 2018.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

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

- Practitioners within the nursery class strive to do their best for children. The setting's vision, values and aims are clearly displayed for parents and families to refer to. They illustrate the strong commitment and aspiration practitioners have for all children to achieve their full potential. This is in line with the whole school vision. The principal teacher and all practitioners are committed to delivering a quality service that meets the needs of children and families. Following recent recruitment, the new team are beginning to work effectively together and provide positive role models for children. As planned, the vision, values and aims should be regularly reviewed to ensure a shared understanding amongst all stakeholders. Practitioners should ensure that the detailed vision is understood by the children in their everyday learning environment.
- Practitioners are well supported by the principal teacher and visiting early years teacher. The team work collaboratively to develop their understanding of child development and pedagogy. They are enthusiastic and committed to continued improvement and professional learning. A willingness to further develop skills and knowledge through taking on leadership roles has been expressed. Opportunities for all practitioners to take forward improvement should now be provided. The principal teacher plays a key role in driving forward improvement. She has developed a strategic direction which is outlined in a clearly articulated vision. Her passion and commitment to the leadership of change has considerable potential to secure and improve outcomes for children. Increased and targeted support and resources will be required to continue the successful development of approaches across the early level. A period of time is now necessary to ensure the planned vision for the nursery class is realised, evaluated and evidenced.
- Self-evaluation activity includes daily evaluative meetings of planned learning and experiences observed by the whole team. They are at the early stages of using the national self-evaluation framework to evaluate the quality of provision. The commitment to continuous improvement now needs to be fully supported by a deeper working knowledge and understanding to support the identification of what is working well and what needs to improve. All practitioners should be fully involved in this process.

- Monitoring of aspects of the setting, including the quality of learning and teaching, is currently carried out on an informal basis. To ensure this is effective, monitoring and evaluation needs to now be carried out in a systematic and more formalised way.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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 setting supports positive and nurturing relationships. Children are observed to feel safe, secure and confident. They engage well and are motivated during free play and when involved in adult-led activities such as shared story time. Children are encouraged to manage risk and this is facilitated during their play experiences outside in the woodland area, as well as the outside area in the nursery.
- The setting is committed to delivering an approach based on the Froebelian philosophy. This approach underpins the vision for continuing development and improvement. As a result of discussion and evaluation, there have been considerable positive changes to the learning environments across the early level over time. Changes contribute to the warm and caring atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Practitioners are increasingly able to articulate the value and impact of the approach.
- Practitioner interactions with children are warm and caring. Children are valued. Practitioners respond appropriately to children's feelings by offering praise and encouragement. Children are encouraged to share their views and thoughts. Practitioners promote independence, curiosity and creativity through their interactions with children. Children are given time and space to explore and extend their learning with most practitioners considering their timely interactions and contributions to support learning. Most practitioners engage appropriately in conversation with children during play and are developing questioning techniques to support and extend children's thinking. The consistent quality of interactions now needs to be embedded.
- During the inspection digital technology was not used regularly enough. The setting should now look at how the use of digital technology can support learning in a range of ways.
- Practitioners know children well as individuals, but not yet well enough as learners. Observations are carried out on a regular basis. These now need to have a focus on the significant learning of individuals. This will inform future planning decisions and ensure that observations have the sharpest focus on what children need to learn next. As planned, a more consistent approach to evaluating progress and achievements needs to be established.
- Planning for children's learning is at the early stages of implementation. An annual plan has recently been created to create a continuum across the early level. This incorporates whole school events as well as a range of experiences and outcomes across the curriculum. A period of time to implement and review the new planning overview is now needed in order to evaluate the impact on children's learning. Overall, experiences meet the learning needs of the majority of children. Too many children require increased levels of challenge to ensure they make the progress they are capable of.

- Each child has a personalised learning journey book that is shared with parents and carers. As planned, parents need to be more involved in the learning journey books. A robust system to track children's progress now needs to be developed.
- An increased awareness of the learning experiences of children attending full day sessions is necessary to ensure their learning is varied and sufficiently engaging. The development of a curriculum framework should help facilitate personalisation and choice, depth, breadth and challenge for all children.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The development of a curriculum framework is in the early stages. This should be prioritised in order to build on changes to the environment and implementation of the Froebelian approach. All practitioners need to be involved in this to ensure a shared pedagogy that best meets the needs of children in St Ronan's nursery class.
- Practitioners' understanding and appreciation of prior learning needs to be developed to ensure that this consistently informs future planning. There needs to be a deeper knowledge and understanding of the difference between being responsive to children's interests and the extension of learning.
- As planned, there is scope for literacy and numeracy skills to be developed across the curriculum in a more coherent and focused way.
- The woodland area in the school grounds is a valuable resource which provides rich learning opportunities. Children take 'safe' risks as they explore the area. The mature trees, tree trunks and uneven slopes and surfaces provide ideal opportunities for climbing, exploring and developing gross motor skills and confidence. As a result, children are confident and comfortable in this natural outdoor environment.
- Children have a few opportunities for developing skills in real life contexts. For example, in making bread daily and visiting a local fruit and vegetable shop to order snacks. There is scope for children to be developing and applying skills in more real life contexts.

2.7 Partnerships : Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Building on the embedded open door policy there are a range of ways parents can engage in their child's learning. These include stay and play sessions, helping with outings and contributing to learning journey books. Children's learning journey books are accessible at all times. Practitioners could offer more support to parents to encourage a more consistent contribution from families. A few parents who responded to inspection questionnaires indicated that they would like even more information about their child's learning and how this can be supported at home. The development of family learning will be key in developing these partnerships further.
- A few partnerships in the local community support and extend learning. These include the local greengrocers where children visit to explore fruit and vegetables and make choices for snack. Opportunities should be sought to widen the partnerships to support learning further and develop an awareness of the world of work.

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 **satisfactory**

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

- There is a clear focus on the promotion of children's wellbeing and this is a key feature of the setting. Wellbeing is viewed as the foundation of the approach being developed and embedded by the team. Relationships between practitioners and children are consistently warm, encouraging and positive. Recently recruited practitioners have quickly established their roles as key workers, known as key carers, and are forming positive attachments to children. From observations almost all children appear to feel safe, relaxed and confident as they play. There is value placed upon children's views and opinions. In the best examples practitioners are responsive to these.
- Positive behaviour is promoted with practitioners modelling respectful and kind interactions. There is sensitive acknowledgement of when children exhibit particular traits such as respect and kindness. At their own developmental stage, almost all children are developing the skills required to play together including sharing and taking turns. Positive behaviour is well supported by the calm and purposeful learning environments.
- Where facilitated, children are able to express their views and influence decisions that affect them such as selecting snack foods. Children could take on more responsibilities such as leading snack preparation and delivery. There is scope for children to be consulted and more significantly involved in day to day decisions in the setting alongside increased leadership roles that reflect their abilities. This could be consolidated by the introduction of a rights based approach with reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Practitioners continue to develop their understanding of the national wellbeing indicators. This understanding now needs to be deepened and shared in a meaningful and focused way with children and families. A minority of children can describe what it means to be safe and healthy. There is scope to increase developmentally appropriate experiences to enable children to develop an awareness of how the wellbeing indicators relate to them as individuals.
- Overall statutory duties are met. Practitioners recognise the key role they play in keeping children safe. A range of information is collated to support practitioners in meeting the care and learning needs of children in the form of care plans. Better and consistent use needs to be made of this information to secure positive outcomes for children. Management need to develop and consolidate their understanding of the full range of statutory duties relevant to early learning and childcare. Roles and responsibilities within the management team should also be clearly established.
- All practitioners are respectful of children and their families with all children observed to be treated equally and included. In order to value diversity and challenge any discrimination children should be introduced to a wider range of cultures and backgrounds than is represented in the immediate community. To support this, practitioners should develop their knowledge and

understanding of equalities and use this to review and inform their curriculum and daily practices.

- There are strategies in place to support the progress of children who experience short or long term barriers to learning. These are developed in partnership with other agencies such as, health professionals. It is now necessary to have clear and understood processes that ensure the implementation of interventions are recorded and successes measured more robustly over time.

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

- Almost all children are making satisfactory progress in communication and early language as a result of their nursery experiences. They have well developed listening skills which are demonstrated during story times. Most are able to identify the title, author, blurb and illustrator. They enjoy a focus on a chosen story which allows revisiting texts and more in-depth exploration, for example, of characters. Children could be exploring a range of texts related to the chosen story to promote challenge and sustain interest. Most children use a range of vocabulary in their play and in conversation. This is modelled well by practitioners. A few children show well developed skills in early writing and enjoy the challenge of writing initial letters of familiar words such as their name and those of their friends. A minority of children show an active interest in mark making in their play, for example in pretend play, outdoors and at the writing table. Children could be developing and applying skills more across their learning, both indoors and out.
- In mathematics and numeracy children are making satisfactory progress. Most children use mathematical language to describe and compare measurement, direction and quantity. During visits to the shops children experience handling money as they pay for their purchases. More real-life experiences would support the development of skills, particularly in money, data handling and time. Most children can sort and match and readily identify basic colours and shapes. They show an awareness of number in their play with a few confidently counting and recognising numerals beyond ten.
- Almost all children are making appropriate progress in health and wellbeing. They demonstrate their enjoyment in physical play. Regular opportunities to access woodland within the school grounds allow children considerable scope for energetic activity. As a result, children are developing independence, resilience, problem solving abilities and the ability to assess risk in their own play. The positive image of the child, which is integral to the underpinning values of the setting, is particularly evident during these sessions. Gross and fine motor control is being well developed across learning experiences through the use of rich and varied resources. Indoors, children are independent and sustain their engagement in their independent play. Independence is promoted across routines and play. Children are capable of even more independence in snack routines. There is also potential to maximise the learning potential of lunch routines, for example, to support transition and foster even more independence. Overall, children are very caring and supportive of each other with numerous examples observed. Children are encouraged to be aware of their feelings and those of others.

- From the assessment information available and inspection activity evidence suggests that children are making appropriate progress over time. Practitioners now need to build consistently on what children already know to ensure that nursery experiences support individuals to make the progress that they are capable of. There are too many occasions where children are not sufficiently challenged in their learning. It will be important, going forward, to measure and monitor the impact of approaches to learning and teaching on the quality of children's progress over time.
- Children's achievements are captured on 'smile tiles'. This approach needs to be extended, to include learning journals, and building on the positive partnerships with families, to ensure a consistent approach. This will allow learning beyond the setting to be built upon. Children could contribute to the wider community and as global citizens in a broader range of ways.
- The supportive and inclusive ethos promotes equity. Potential barriers to learning are readily identified and addressed. Knowledge of the context of the setting could now be further supported through the use of a wider range of information and data. Strategies utilised to promote and ensure equity need to be carefully monitored.

Setting choice of QI: 2.5 Family Learning

- Engaging families in learning
- Early intervention and prevention
- Quality of family learning programmes

- Although it is at the early stages of development, practitioners show a commitment to the promotion and delivery of family learning. They value the contribution families make to the life and work of the setting and recognise the potential positive impact family learning could have. There is a real opportunity to develop family learning at St Ronan's nursery class that builds on the trusting and respectful relationships already established.
- Initially, it would be useful for an audit to be undertaken of current involvement with families and related successes. This should determine what parents and families would find helpful and therefore safeguard success. It would be useful for the team to explore materials relating to family learning available on the National Improvement Hub to provide ideas of already existing projects across Scotland. Consideration could be made to capitalising on the potential of the local environment, such as the extensive grounds of the school, to facilitate family learning. Building on positive relationships already established with visiting professionals consideration could be made to their potential role in the delivery of programmes and projects. This could also support families to gain appropriate help and advice to overcome any potential barriers to participation.
- Working in partnership with partners and families there is scope for the setting to reach a shared understanding of many aspects of early learning. This would build on the sharing of the Frobelian based approach that has already taken place. Areas for potential focus include literacy and language development, loose parts play and outdoor learning.

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.