

# Summarised inspection findings

**Carradale Primary School Nursery Class**

Argyll and Bute Council

19 September 2023

## Key contextual information

Carradale Pre Five Unit is based within the small rural school of Carradale Primary in the Kintyre Peninsula. The nursery provides early learning and childcare (ELC) for children aged three until they begin primary school. There is one playroom, with direct access to an interesting outdoor space. The current roll is five children although ten children can attend at any one time. Since April 2023, the nursery offers full day, term time, places from 9am to 3pm. The headteacher is supported by an acting depute headteacher. They are also the leadership team for Castlehill Primary School and Drumlemble Primary School. The acting depute headteacher has delegated responsibility for the leadership of the nursery. The management team has responsibility for a total of three schools and two ELC settings. The small staff team includes early years workers and additional support needs assistants who work on a variety of patterns across the nursery and school. A visiting ELC cluster lead practitioner provides valuable support to the team. The nursery is situated in a rural location. Children frequently learn outdoors in the local forest, beach areas and in other areas of their local 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

- Practitioners, children, and families have respectful, trusting, and caring relationships. Children know staff are interested in, and respond promptly to, their views and preferences. Children are secure and confident. They have a strong attachment to staff and to one another. Children understand the school values and show kindness and co-operation as they play.
- Children are enthusiastic, resourceful learners who enjoy taking part in a breadth of interesting, developmentally appropriate activities. Staff have improved the balance of free-flow play with increased periods of time where children follow their own interests. Practitioners should build on this to develop further how children can explore their interests in more depth. Children make connections in their learning as they move freely between spaces. They are curious and creative as they explore open-ended materials. Practitioners should continue to reflect on the routines of the day to minimise interruptions to children's play.
- Practitioners collaborate well to share and improve their knowledge and understanding of early learning pedagogy. Staff use ideas from research and professional learning to improve approaches to planning. Practitioners have worked effectively alongside the cluster lead practitioner, children, parents and community partners to transform the outdoor space. Staff support children's language and communication skills particularly well. They adapt their vocabulary to extend children's expressive and receptive language. Practitioners use gesture, songs, rhyme, and sign language skilfully to engage and sustain children's interest.
- Practitioners use displays and profiles to document, celebrate and reflect on children's learning. Children are beginning to develop an early awareness of their next steps. Children and parents enjoy sharing photographs in their online and paper profiles. Practitioners should

develop further their work to ensure their observations of children's learning focus on individual children's skills.

- Practitioners have a good understanding of how to plan, track and monitor the progress children make. Their planning is now more responsive to children's interests. Practitioners make use of local authority developmental milestones and track children's progress in different areas of literacy and numeracy over time. Practitioners discuss and agree children's progress at weekly staff meetings, and in professional dialogue with school staff. They are clear about children's strengths and next steps. Practitioners should continue to work together to be clear about the purpose and use of the different tools used to document their planning and children's progress. This will ensure these are sustainable and manageable for the small team.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Children's progress in early language and communication is very good. Children are confident communicators who use sounds, signs, and their improving vocabulary to express their needs and preferences. Children listen well to instructions. They participate in extended dialogue where they share and develop their thinking further. Children enjoy writing for a purpose as they write a postcard or mark make outside. They apply their knowledge of story, characters and rhyming words during sensory activities and imaginative play. As planned, children would benefit from continued opportunities to create and retell their own stories.
- Children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children recognise numerals and count beyond 10 with understanding in their play. They notice and explore numbers in their local environment as they visit the local harbour and record boat registrations. Children frequently estimate and explore measure, time, and volume in their outdoor play. They enjoy using tally marks to record and categorise information about, for example, the birds who visit their garden. Practitioners should continue to challenge children to apply their skills in play-based activities and real-life contexts.
- Children make good progress in health and wellbeing. Children climb, roll, run and transport heavy resources with help from staff. They develop their gross and fine motor skills well. Children develop an early understanding of how to keep their body healthy as they help prepare a healthy snack and talk about the benefits of exercise and rest. They are responsible and independent as they clear up spills, wash their hands and care for sunflowers they have planted. Children would benefit from opportunities to assess and record risk assessments alongside practitioners.
- Practitioners use children's individual plans, online and paper profiles, displays and trackers to demonstrate that since starting nursery, children have made good progress over time in their learning and development.
- Practitioners frequently notice, praise, and celebrate children's achievements in nursery and from home. Staff should build on this positive start to track and monitor the skills evident from children's achievements, in partnership with parents. This will support staff to use these to inform their planning of experiences and use of spaces.
- All staff demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of their local rural community and the needs of individual children and families. Staff focus on the individual strengths and potential of each child. They make effective use of sign language, which was initiated in the nursery

and is now in place throughout the school. Practitioners value and include all children equally. The team have effective partnerships with families and other agencies. Through these, they set and review additional targets and plans for children sensitively. Practitioners should continue to build their skills and confidence in using data to evaluate the impact of strategies on children's progress.

## 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.