

Summarised inspection findings

Timmergreens Primary School Nursery Class

Angus Council

19 June 2018

Key contextual information

The nursery class is situated within a purpose built space within the school building. There is one main playroom with direct access to a large, secure self-contained outdoor area. At the time of inspection, the roll of the nursery was 42 children aged three to five years. Children attend for either morning or afternoon sessions.

1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

very 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

- The skilled senior early years practitioner and experienced, actively involved depute provide strong supportive leadership and clear direction to the team. Practitioners are enthusiastic, reflective and highly responsive to ideas from parents, children and other partners. They regularly seek feedback on initiatives such as new family learning opportunities or well-attended stay and play sessions. They routinely use feedback to evaluate and improve how they work. All practitioners work very well together to share ideas, reflect on what is working well and identify how they could improve their practice. There is a clear commitment to continuous improvement and a drive to improve outcomes for children across the work of the team. Recent focused work to enhance approaches to supporting children's literacy skills has had a positive impact on the learning environment and improved children's progress. All practitioners fully participate in work to progress shared improvement priorities.
- Children regularly share their experiences and views about the work of the setting, for example when reflecting on the improved transition programme. The team recognise that there are still opportunities for children and parents to lead improvements and shape future priorities. Plans to establish a parents' group to involve them more directly in leading improvement across the setting are at an early stage. The team should continue to work with relevant stakeholders to share how increased engagement in the setting impacts on children's individual progress in their learning.
- A wide range of effective self-evaluation activities including monitoring, planning meetings, audits, direct observations of practice and learning visits ensures improvement priorities are promptly identified and progressed. This well-planned and focused work could now be part of a more strategic overview of the impact of self-evaluation over time. A good range of data and evidence is now being gathered to support the identification of improvement priorities that best meet the needs of the nursery children. Data and other evidence is monitored and analysed well by the leadership team to identify relevant key priorities such as improvements to children's learning profiles. The whole team should now continue to develop their skills and confidence in gathering, analysing and using data to evidence the impact of improvements.

- Self-evaluation in the nursery class is rightly linked to key whole school priorities and the team use 'How good is our early learning and childcare?' and national guidance documents such as Building the Ambition to reflect on their work. The senior practitioner has led work since August 2017 to gather evidence using a small test of change model. This is supporting the team to begin to measure the impact of their improvement work. As children move into P1, there is an opportunity to gather evidence on, for example, the impact of the improved transition programme on children's progress across the early level.
- The senior practitioner regularly participates in cluster quality assurance and moderation activities. The team keep up to date with current thinking, research and ideas about best practice and use these to inform their work. The team increasingly look outwards to agree their own standards and have shared high expectations of children.
- There is a clear and in-depth knowledge of the needs, community and learning styles of individual children. All staff make very good use of this knowledge of children as individuals to adapt and refine their approaches to suit individual children's learning styles.
- All practitioners learn from and with one another through professional dialogue and regularly participating in a good range of professional development. This has included professional learning supported by, for example, the speech and language therapist. As a result, the team has begun to implement a wider range of strategies to support the communication needs of specific children. Visits to other settings as part of their planned focus on numeracy will continue to be helpful to support professional learning.
- Improvement is well-planned and managed to ensure improvements are progressed at an appropriate pace. There are regular opportunities for reflection and evaluation of progress. Parents appreciate regular updates about actions that have been taken as a result of their feedback. As the work develops, sharing some of the data with stakeholders to show how improvement priorities are progressing would be useful.

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

very 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 emotional, social and physical development is embedded within the work of the nursery. Practitioners know children very well as individuals and are very aware of their emotional needs and learning styles. As a result, almost all children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing. They work together very well and most older children are making important friendships. Almost all are kind and caring towards each other. They demonstrate empathy and enjoy respectful relationships with adults and their peers. Through a focus on healthy eating, children are aware of what foods are good for them. They are developing important life skills as they help to prepare snack, make choices and clear away their dishes. All children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise when they play in the extensive nursery garden. They are developing their physical skills outside and during their weekly sessions in the school gym. We discussed with practitioners the need to continue to plan for progression in children's physical skills.
- A strong focus on early literacy has impacted positively on children's experience and involvement in books, stories and the early stages of reading and writing. As a result, almost all children are making very good progress. They are excited and motivated to play with words demonstrating a growing awareness of rhythm, rhyme, syllables and alliteration. Children's interest in stories is evident in the playroom and also from their book reviews from home. All children talk about favourite stories and are developing their understanding about the language and layout of books. Almost all children are making marks to express themselves in writing and most older children can form letters and write words that are important to them. Almost all children listen well and most engage in conversation with others.
- There are opportunities throughout the learning environment for children to explore aspects of early mathematics and numeracy. As a result, almost all are making good progress. Most children are developing mathematical language. They can make comparisons as they learn about measurement. They are developing an understanding of money as they play in the shop. The majority can count within ten and a few can recognise numerals beyond five. A few older children are exploring number sequence and simple addition. Practitioners plan to take a stronger focus on how they can support and challenge children as they develop their skills to enhance children's progress in this area.
- Over time, children are making very good progress in their learning. Opportunities for children to develop their skills and knowledge across the curriculum are appropriate to their age and

stage of development. Progress is recorded in learning journey folios. Approaches to tracking evidence of children’s progress and next steps in learning are consistently followed through. We discussed with practitioners how they should continue to refine this approach ensuring a clear overview of progress. Practitioners, children and parents are enthusiastic about the electronic app that facilitates two-way communication between home and the setting. Children’s achievements at home and in the setting are regularly shared through the app. As a result of these regular, positive interactions, parents are more fully involved and able to support their children’s learning and celebrate their achievements.

- Children who experience barriers to their learning are identified and are well supported to make the best possible progress in their learning. Practitioners work with a range of agencies to plan and deliver appropriate support to ensure children’s needs are met. This inclusive approach, together with practitioners’ very good understanding of children as individuals, ensures equity for all.

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.