

# Summarised inspection findings

**Echline Primary School Nursery Class**

The City of Edinburgh Council

19 November 2019

## Key contextual information

Echline Primary School nursery class consists of a large playroom and entrance area, a small parents' room and an outdoor area. At the time of inspection, improvements to the school campus and health and safety issues meant that only one section of the outdoor play area was available for children. There are places for 30 children to attend either morning or afternoon sessions. At the time of inspection, the nursery roll was 49. There have been recent changes to the staff team. The deputy headteacher, ELC teacher, practitioners and support assistants work together with a variety of full and part-time working patterns. Effective arrangements to protect time for regular meetings and professional learning continue to evolve.

### 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 teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- During the nursery session, most children engage well with the range of experiences available. Practitioners make good use of partners to enhance children's learning experiences. Children make choices confidently about where they want to play. This includes moving freely between indoors and outdoors. The majority of children concentrate for extended periods, for example, using building blocks and exploring sensory activities. Increasingly, practitioners are providing open-ended and natural materials to support children's play. Building on this, there is scope to extend this further to develop children's creativity, curiosity and inquiry.
- All practitioners are caring, respectful and responsive in their interactions with children and positive relationships are evident. Practitioners' skills continue to develop in using questions and commentary to support and extend learning. As recognised by the setting, there is not yet a shared understanding of effective pedagogy across the staff team. Practitioners should continue to engage in professional dialogue, to agree the vision and approach for the nursery that will meet the needs of all children. This should include a review of the balance of adult-directed and child-initiated play. Children would benefit from more time and space to influence and lead their own play. Practitioners have identified that there is scope to develop further the use of digital technologies to support learning and teaching.
- The nursery teacher gathers information on aspects of children's learning using a variety of methods. There is scope to develop the skills and confidence of all practitioners to have an active role in assessing, planning and evaluating children's learning. This will enable practitioners to know children well as learners, in order to inform next steps in learning.
- All children have a record of learning containing photographic evidence and observations. The frequency, range and quality of practitioners' observations mean that there is not yet a holistic picture of children's learning. Senior leaders and practitioners have correctly identified this as an area for improvement. Practitioners now need to develop a consistent approach to identifying and recording significant learning. This will support practitioners to identify relevant

next steps for children's learning and ensure children continue to make the progress they are capable of.

- Parents receive information regarding their child's progress on an ongoing basis. In addition, parents have the opportunity to meet with the nursery teacher to discuss their child's development and learning. In addition, practitioners share information with P1 colleagues to support continuity for children.
- Senior leaders and practitioners need to develop further, processes for planning, tracking and monitoring of children's learning. A streamlined and collaborative approach should be adopted. Currently, practitioners use trackers to record aspects of children's learning. This is at an early stage and needs time to develop and embed, to demonstrate effectively children's progress over time. Robust monitoring will be required to identify where children need further support and challenge in their learning.
- Planning for children who require additional support with their learning is effective and consistent strategies are implemented by practitioners to ensure all children continue to develop and learn.

## 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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

### 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

- Most children are making good progress in early literacy and communication. Most children are confident and articulate as they sustain conversations with adults and one another. Children listen attentively to practitioners as they follow instructions well in the school gym hall. A few children access books independently for enjoyment and also to find out information. Almost all children enjoy mark making as they 'sign in' to nursery, write the menu for snack and represent their name. Children add detail to line drawings of themselves and enjoy recalling their experiences. Most children can recognise their name and a few confidently identify initial letter sounds. Children are developing their phonological awareness through favourite traditional stories and rhymes. A few older children write and copy short, familiar words as they make invitations. Most children are now ready for further challenge to extend and develop further their learning.
- Most children are making good progress in numeracy and early mathematics. Children are developing a good understanding of mathematical language, as they identify if they need more or less to complete a task. A few children enjoy exploring the concepts of volume in the water tray. Most children can identify and draw a few 2D shapes such as square and circle. A few older children enjoy playing with the scales as they weigh vegetables. There is scope to extend the breadth and depth of early mathematical experiences. Progressive opportunities for children to deepen their understanding of number, record information in different ways and apply their skills creatively to solve problems should be increased.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. In particular, focused work on emotional literacy means most children talk with understanding about their emotions and feelings. Almost all children cooperate and play well together as they share and take turns in the playroom. Children are developing a good understanding of healthy lifestyles as they talk about how their bodies feel after running and jumping. Children's fine motor skills are developing well as they use a knife to help cut fruit. Almost all children, including those new to the setting, show a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they use tools at the woodwork bench. Children should now be supported to make connections in their learning in a way that is appropriate to their skills and stage of development.
- Information gathered from inspection activities, professional dialogue with practitioners, documentation and feedback from parents, demonstrates that children are making good progress across their learning. Currently, the process for gathering and recording children's learning and progress over time does not fully reflect the progress they are capable of making.

- Practitioners, parents and children are beginning to share information about children's achievements outwith nursery. The 'I Can' tree provides a focus to celebrate learning and achievements. Children require support from practitioners to increasingly identify their talents, skills and achievements. The team need to ensure this information helps to inform the early learning and childcare provision, including addressing any gaps in children's experiences.
- Practitioners are mindful and respectful of the individual circumstances of children and families. There is a sensitive and respectful approach to ensuring all children access the full range of experiences within the nursery. The team have an inclusive approach and work well with parents and other agencies to reduce potential barriers to learning. As tracking and monitoring approaches improve, a fuller picture of the impact of interventions will be able to influence the work of the team and partners.

### 1. Quality of care and support

There was a welcoming atmosphere in the nursery and staff were nurturing and respectful in their interactions with children. Children were confident and relaxed in their environment and were able to approach staff when they needed further support. Through a variety of experiences, staff supported children to develop the necessary skills for self-regulation, to be independent and to play cooperatively with their peers.

Staff knew the children in their care well. A variety of processes were used to gather children's personal plan information in consultation with parents/carers. This meant that staff were knowledgeable about how to support children's individual needs including any additional support, medication or dietary needs. Progress was now needed to consolidate children's personal plan information to clearly demonstrate that reviews have been carried out a minimum of once every six months or sooner if changes were needed. This would help ensure that all information was accurate and clearly outlined the stepped approach/strategies to support children's individual care needs.

Staff had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children in their care and were knowledgeable of the procedures to follow in the event of having any concerns. Children's wellbeing was further supported by staff acknowledging and helping them to recognise their own emotions and feelings. Children's achievements were routinely recognised by staff through praise and encouragement as well as using the 'I can' tree and 'learning wall' to share key information. Such approaches helped support children's self-esteem and confidence.

Snack routines promoted healthy eating and provided children with opportunities to learn new skills. For example, children were involved in the preparation of snack and this included learning how to chop fruit safely and about the importance of hand washing. Children could choose when to have their snack and their independence was supported by serving their own drinks and choosing from the daily snack menu. To support children's hydration, facilities for them to be able to independently access drinking water throughout the session was to be progressed.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

### 2. Quality of environment

Children were kept safe as the entrance to the building was secure and the indoor environment was clean and well maintained. Staff also carried out daily assessments of the indoor and outdoor environments to help identify and address any potential hazards. To further assist with the ongoing monitoring and assessment of the environment, the development of further prompts for staff and risk assessment information would be beneficial. For example, to consider the layout of the environment and any changes made, the resources and equipment.

Staff were reflective of their practice and described the changes they had made to the environment to support positive outcomes for children. This had included developing further creative opportunities, the expansion of the block play area and the provision of different types of play including loose parts. These experiences had helped develop children's curiosity and imagination.

Children had access to a variety of activities which took account of their interests and learning needs. Through discussions and support from staff, children had the opportunity to learn about keeping themselves safe and to manage risks and challenges. For example, through using the outdoor play equipment, preparing snack and using the woodwork bench.

Children's health and wellbeing was enhanced as staff understood the importance of fresh air and active play. Children had daily access to outdoor play where they enjoyed opportunities including climbing, using wheeled equipment, painting and imaginative play. At times, children did not have access to the grassed area or the experiences available there. In addition, to ensure child safety, part of this area was also closed as maintenance of equipment was needed. Therefore, a review of the available outdoor space would help ensure that children's choice and their outdoor experiences were not limited.

There was a commitment to continue with the improvement of the nursery environment to promote positive outcomes for children. This was to be progressed through further use of best practice publications and the ongoing review of the space used, presentation of resources and the provision of more natural resources.

### Care Inspectorate grade: good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no recommendations.



## 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.