

Summarised inspection findings

St Peter's RC Nursery Class

Moray Council

21 February 2023

Key contextual information

St Peter's RC Nursery Class is situated within St Peter's RC Primary School, however it is no longer under the management of the school. The nursery use two adjoining playrooms and have access to a sensory room. The nursery children share the toilets with the school and are accompanied by a practitioner. They also use a large garden area which is owned by the church. They are unable to have free-flow access to this area. Children attend from the age of three until starting school. The setting is registered for 40 children at any one time. Currently, the roll is 40 with six children having a deferred year. Children can access 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (ELC) during term time. They can attend the setting between the hours of 8.30 am till 2.30 pm.

A nursery manager has overall responsibility for the nursery. She also manages another nearby local authority nursery. There are two senior practitioners, who oversee the nursery when the manager is not present. Three practitioners, two support assistants and two pupil support assistants are also employed in the nursery. The nursery has experienced a high level of change over the last two years.

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
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- The manager and practitioners work together well to create a nurturing and respectful environment. Positive relationships are evident between children and between children and adults. The manager is supportive and consultative in her approach. Recently, Practitioners have started to work together to develop their agreed vision, values and aims. They now need to ensure they involve children and families in this process. Working collaboratively will help to make the vision, values and aims more meaningful and should lead to better outcomes for all children.
 - The manager leads fortnightly 'Team Meets' which provide opportunities for professional dialogue. She also facilitates regular professional reviews and one to one sessions. Practitioners value this support and their confidence in current early years practice has increased in recent years. Senior leaders and practitioners are starting to reflect on their practice and work together to identify areas of improvement. They now need to focus on developing their practice to provide more challenging learning experiences for children. The manager needs more support to develop robust approaches to self-evaluation and quality assurance. This will help her to manage a range of planned activity across the nursery year and accelerate the pace of change. It will be helpful to use national practice frameworks to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
 - Practitioners take part in useful professional learning which develops their knowledge and understanding in areas such as nurture, child protection, online journals and early literacy. The

developments in early mark-making are having a positive impact on children's learning and progress. Practitioners should build on this productive work and develop further their knowledge of current early years pedagogy. This will support them to provide an interesting environment where children are motivated to develop their physical, imaginative and creative skills through open-ended experiences.

- The nursery manager shares helpful information with parents and families through newsletters and social media. She seeks the views of parents annually and uses this information to make improvements to the children's experiences. Senior leaders should increase opportunities for children and parents to become more involved in the improvement process.

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

- Children are settled, well behaved and confident. They enjoy their time in nursery. Children participate enthusiastically in a range of adult directed experiences. They also take part in spontaneous play and use the good range of resources in the playroom well. Practitioners should review the balance of child led and adult initiated experiences. They should ensure children are given the time and freedom to follow their interests and lead their own learning. Children access the outdoor area in organised groups and engage in energetic play. Practitioners need more support to develop the outdoor area to ensure children have opportunities to explore, develop creativity and take part in appropriately challenging experiences.
- Practitioners know children well and interact sensitively to support them to take part in activities and complete tasks. They listen attentively to children and use conversations well to interact, encourage and build relationships.
- Practitioners observe children and identify some of the skills they need to develop, for example completing jigsaws and using scissors. All children have online learning journals which contain relevant information and photographs of their progress and achievements in nursery. The journals show limited detail of children's learning and progress. Parents are encouraged to contribute and comment on their child's online learning journal. Practitioners should continue to develop this process and ensure that all recorded observations focus on significant learning. This will help them to plan more effectively to meet the developmental needs of children. They should also explore how they can share journals with children and support them to reflect on their learning.
- Practitioners plan adult directed activities related to key calendar events and create opportunities for children to take part in related free play. Moving forward, the staff team need to develop further their approaches to planning. There needs to be a clear focus on progression and challenge for each child across all areas of the curriculum. This will ensure children experience a greater range of more challenging experiences to help extend and sustain their interests more effectively
- Practitioners use a useful tracking system which links to the information recorded in children's learning journals. This system is helping practitioners to understand the progress children make in some parts of their learning and identifies gaps. Practitioners should build on these approaches to help demonstrate more clearly each child's progress across the curriculum.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Practitioners provide a curriculum that is play based and has a focus on developing children's skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The current seasonal focus is engaging children well. Practitioners should continue to develop their curriculum planning in line with Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and take account of children's interests. This will help to ensure children are accessing broad, balanced and relevant experiences.
- Practitioners use local contexts including the harbour, beach and local farms to provide meaningful contexts for learning. They access support from a local charity shop to enhance the curriculum by providing useful resources. They should continue to build on this work and develop further links with the local community.
- Practitioners identify challenges around internet connectivity within the playrooms. This impacts on opportunities for children to access digital technology. They should continue to explore other ways to develop further children's technological skills. For example, using tablets to take photographs and working with programmable toys.
- Children spend time in large groups and participate in planned adult led activities. Practitioners should review the pace and balance of the day to ensure children have appropriate time for free play.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners share children's experiences with parents in online journals and encourage them to comment and contribute. Parents value this information and feel well informed about their children's time in nursery. They are also involved in updating children's personal plans and their comments are valued and acted upon by practitioners.
- The manager communicates effectively with parents through newsletters and social media. She encourages parents to take part in trips as volunteers and has involved them in fundraising events.
- The manager should continue with plans for 'stay and play' sessions and explore how she can involve parents more fully in children's learning and in the life of the nursery.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The setting 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 setting 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

- Positive relationships are important across the setting and the wellbeing of children and families is a priority. Practitioners have a calm, caring and considered approach towards families. As a result, there is an ethos of trust and support. Practitioners know most children, families and their local community well. Parents speak positively of their relationship with practitioners. Practitioners care for each other and feel supported by their colleagues.
- Practitioners are starting to talk about the wellbeing indicators in their conversations with children. As a result, children's knowledge of them, is beginning to develop. Practitioners and children are starting to use wellbeing characters in day-to-day discussions. More recently, practitioners have been helping children to talk about feelings using a variety of approaches and resources including books and puppets. This is having a positive impact on children's ability to talk about their emotions. Practitioners should continue to build on this positive work and explore how they can start to support children to learn about their rights.
- The nursery manager and practitioners work with parents and partners to identify small changes that can impact on children's progress and wellbeing. They act on these to try to reduce barriers to learning. There are a few children who would benefit from more targeted support to fully access all aspects of the nursery. The nursery manager should continue to work with partners to ensure that support from other agencies fully addresses and supports the needs of all children.
- Children with additional support needs benefit from the universal approaches used to support all children, such as the use of visuals and Makaton signs. As a result, the majority of children are accessing most areas of nursery life. All children have a personal learning plan which is updated regularly in conjunction with parents. Staff work hard to identify any potential barriers to learning. This ensures that most children have equal access to the necessary resources to allow them to fully access the curriculum.
- The nursery manager uses the local authority staged intervention process to plan for targeted support. Practitioners review the children's progress using Individual Educational Plans (IEPs)s and where appropriate, a child's plan. They identify long term targets to support children's development. These targets need to be broken down into more short term manageable and meaningful steps to help children make progress.
- The nursery manager and team need to develop their knowledge and understanding of how to make diversity meaningful for young children. They should seek support from the local authority. Children need to be supported to start to increase their awareness of protected characteristics and appreciating individuality.

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

- Children in the nursery are making appropriate progress in health and wellbeing. They are starting to develop confidence and can follow routines in the nursery. They demonstrate independence as they pour milk at snack time, however they need more opportunity to develop further these skills. A few children are developing fine motor control well and can use tools, for example hammers, appropriately. Children need more opportunities to develop further their understanding about keeping themselves healthy and developing physical skills.
- A minority of children are making good progress in communication and language with the majority making satisfactory progress. Children listen well to stories and enjoy looking at books. A few children can re-tell stories and take part in conversations. Other children need more support to carry out conversations and would benefit from interventions to develop their language skills. Most children are enthusiastic about mark-making and emergent writing is a strength in the nursery. The majority of children can recognise and attempt to write their names and copy other known words. Practitioners should continue to embed this positive practice and ensure that they identify the individual needs of all children.
- In numeracy and early mathematics children are making satisfactory progress with a few making good progress. Most children can recite numbers to five, with a few able to count beyond this. They have not yet developed one to one correspondence. Children are starting to learn about measurement and experiment with tape measures. They can identify and sort shapes. Practitioners should ensure that they are providing a wide range of real-life experiences across other areas of numeracy and maths. This will help to give children an understanding of time, money and information handling.
- Children demonstrate problem-solving skills as they complete jigsaws and other puzzles. Children are not developing their skills in curiosity and creativity sufficiently well. Practitioners should address this to help children make progress across all areas of the curriculum. They also need to involve children more fully in planning their own learning.
- Practitioners recognise and celebrate children's achievements from home and nursery on a 'WOW' wall. Children are motivated by this recognition and are keen to share information and talk about their home lives. Children in the nursery are very capable and need to have more opportunities to contribute to the life of the nursery and the wider community.

- Practitioners are aware of children who have barriers to learning and try to include them in all experiences. They are aware of the socio-economic context of the setting and adapt routines to ensure equity for most children. It will be helpful for all practitioners to develop a greater awareness of alternative strategies to support children who need specific planned interventions to support their development.

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.