

Summarised inspection findings

**Dunipace Primary School nursery class
(primary school nursery class)**

Falkirk Council

SEED No: 5741920

02 February 2018

Key contextual information

Dunipace Primary School Nursery Class is set within Dunipace Primary School. It is registered to provide early learning and childcare (ELC) to 30 children and offers morning and afternoon sessions. At the time of inspection 23 children attended the morning session with 8 in the afternoon. The staffing in the nursery includes a senior early years officer and 2 early years officers. A nursery teacher provides curriculum support 2 days each week.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

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.

- The vision values and aims in place for the whole school, and a set of aims for the nursery, are displayed in the entrance. It will be helpful to refresh the aims through consultation with children and families. This will help to ensure they are relevant to the families using the nursery and meaningful to the children. Management and the nursery team are committed to delivering quality early learning and childcare (ELC) and are looking at ways they can involve families more fully in aspects of the nursery.
- The principal teacher in the school has line management responsibility for the nursery class. She meets regularly with the practitioners and visits the nursery daily. The principal teacher also provides ongoing professional learning opportunities for practitioners to ensure they are involved in current developments. This is helping to build positive relationships with practitioners, children and families and is creating links with the rest of the school. The senior early years officer takes responsibility for the day to day running of the nursery class and provides support to the two early years officers. Her leadership skills impact positively on the provision and practitioners appreciate the support they receive.
- The nursery teacher provides support for learning and teaching two days each week. This input is valued by practitioners who take the opportunity to engage in daily dialogue about children's learning. This structure works well and practitioners report that they feel well supported.
- Practitioners evaluate the work of the nursery regularly and discuss improvements they plan to make. They take part in informal discussions with the leadership team leading to positive changes in the provision. A recent example of this is the work they are taking forward to make well considered changes to the children's 'Success Stories'. Their agreed priority is to make them more meaningful for children and to increase the opportunities for parental

involvement. Practitioners now need support from the management team to make regular use of national guidance for self-improvement. This will help them to identify strengths and areas for development leading to well-timed changes which result in improvements to the service they are providing.

- The principal teacher monitors aspects of the ELC provided in the nursery. She gives verbal and written feedback to practitioners and supports them with ongoing improvements. Increased use of recent national self-evaluation guidance would support this work and relate it closely to current thinking in ELC. Practitioners are aware of the school improvement plan and understand how the work in the nursery contributes to achieving the agreed priorities.
- There is a positive ethos in the nursery and a strong sense of teamwork. Practitioners feel their skills and talents are acknowledged and are confident about taking forward opportunities for leadership. Examples of this are leading a Spanish group for children, taking on the role of 'music champion' and being responsible for updating legislation relating to the nursery.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences 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.

- Most children are motivated and engage enthusiastically in learning in the playroom. They appear to feel safe and secure in the nursery and are developing confidence. They enjoy playing together and are developing friendships. Children take part in spontaneous play opportunities and almost all participate in more formal activities organised by practitioners. During the inspection we observed interventions to children's play to allow them to take part in organised group activities. It would be beneficial to evaluate the pattern of the session and the balance of child-led and adult-directed experiences. It is important for practitioners to enable children to follow their interests and become fully engaged in play experiences.
- Practitioners know children well and are caring and supportive in their interactions. They create a nurturing, positive learning environment where children are welcomed and valued. Practitioners are genuinely interested in all children and listen and respond to their needs. They ask children for their opinions and views and record their comments about some aspects of their learning. There is scope to develop this work further and fully involve children in making decisions about their learning. Practitioners are responsive to children and take time to listen to them. There are examples of quality interactions between children and practitioners which encourage children to think about their learning. There is, however, scope for practitioners to develop their use of open-ended questioning which will help children to deepen their learning.
- Children use digital technology well to consolidate what they are learning about numbers and shapes. This learning is made more challenging for children when practitioners are working alongside them.
- Practitioners observe children and record information about their learning in 'success storybooks' this includes written observations, photographs and examples of children's work. Practitioners are currently working on developing how they use the assessment information and are exploring ways to encourage more involvement from children and parents in the success stories. Practitioners should continue to improve how they record assessment information to avoid duplication of observations and gaps in recording learning in specific areas. It will help to have a focus on recording significant learning for each child and consistently identifying next steps where appropriate. These next steps should be shared with the children to help them understand what they need to do to be successful in their learning. There are robust processes in place to track children's progress in literacy and numeracy and this information is shared when they move into P1. Progress is recorded for each child and next steps are identified. Practitioners should talk to children about their learning and help them to understand their targets for learning.

- Practitioners plan for learning across all areas using their knowledge of children's needs and interests. They are at an early stage of involving children meaningfully in the planning process. Practitioners should explore ways to enable children to be fully involved in this process. They should use observations of children's learning and information on achievements from home to build on what children already know and involve them in planning next steps in learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The curriculum in the nursery is based on play and offers opportunities for learning indoors and outdoors. It is responsive to children's interests and takes account of events taking place in their lives. Children's health and wellbeing is given high priority in the nursery and practitioners provide a variety of experiences to help children's development in this area.
- There are positive examples of the surrounding area and local community being used to enhance children's learning experiences. These include visits to the nearby woodland, the local park and the library. Practitioners also organise visits to nearby shops to purchase healthy foods for snack. A visit to the local veterinary practice was very successful and enjoyed by the children. Practitioners should continue to build on this practice and help children to develop an understanding of skills for learning, life and work.
- Practitioners focus on developing children's skills in communication, early language and early mathematics in the nursery. The teacher provides specific experiences to meet the needs of all children in these areas. Children also access a variety of play based experiences throughout all areas of the nursery.
- Practitioners will benefit from working with the management team to create an appropriate rationale for the curriculum in the nursery. This will ensure that all experiences provided for children are appropriate and meaningful.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families - parental engagement

- Practitioners utilise the natural environment, such as woodland and local community, including the local supermarket, to enrich learning experiences. Where possible and relevant, community members and parents share their skills and professions. Fundraising events, such as the Race for Life, engage the wider community in their support of the nursery.
- Practitioners are evaluating different strategies and activities to establish stronger links with parents and families in order to improve outcomes for all children. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the life of the nursery through a range of opportunities including stay and play sessions and parent helpers. Parents have the opportunity to receive feedback about their child's learning both through informal daily conversations and planned meetings. They also have access to their child's "My Success Storybook". However, a few parents would like more information on what their children are learning. Practitioners should look at ways to improve this to encourage parents to share in their children's learning. They encourage parents to benefit from helpful supports such as parenting programmes.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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 are very caring relationships in the nursery which creates a nurturing ethos and culture. The warm, caring and professional interactions of practitioners are enabling children to feel settled, safe and secure. Positive relationships are promoted through the nursery's 'golden rules'. Children know the 'rules' and understand their meaning. The principles of Getting it right for every child are embedded throughout practice. There is scope to further develop their understanding and use of the indicators in a meaningful way with children and families. As discussed, the nursery could be more fully involved in the work carried out in the school around the Rights Respecting School accreditation. This would also encourage the children to be aware of their rights by promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Practitioners value the views and opinions of children. They now need to continue to encourage children to express their choices and opinions. At times, children's interests are used as a basis for planning experiences and opportunities in their learning. However, practitioners need to consider building on children's interests further instead of following their own activities and plans. Children are taking on leadership roles such as snack helpers. Ways to increase further their leadership skills should be sought.
- Practitioners are proactive in seeking appropriate help from other agencies for children with additional support needs at an early stage. They have built up strong links with local health visitors in their role as named person to ensure good communication in order to meet the needs of the children and their families. There is robust planning using the local authority staged intervention process for children identified with additional support needs. Practitioners consult well with parents and other agencies to ensure that appropriate interventions, which are regularly reviewed, are put in place. Parents of children with additional support needs spoke very positively of the support they received from the setting. Practitioners are very aware of the need to challenge the more able children and have separate planning to ensure this takes place. Plans to introduce a named speech and language therapist to work directly with practitioners on the "Closing the Spoken Language Gap" programme will help build capacity in the nursery. Practitioners engage and comply well with statutory duties.
- Inclusion and equality are promoted throughout the work of the nursery. As discussed, practitioners should continue to consider challenging stereotypes, such as gender, wherever possible. Practitioners value and celebrate the backgrounds, faiths and interests of all children and families. There is a positive and respectful ethos where everyone is valued. Practitioners support children to develop an understanding of others less fortunate than themselves through fundraising events. Practitioners know the children and their

families extremely well and are knowledgeable about overcoming barriers to participation of children. Practitioners should continue with their plans to explore how they can engage parents more in their children's learning.

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 developing good literacy and language skills and communicate well with practitioners, visitors and each other. They listen attentively during group activities, can follow instructions and are able to use a good range of vocabulary when talking about their experiences. Most children can recognise their name at snack time and older children are beginning to recognise other letters and the sounds they make. Most children are attempting to write their name on drawings and during play. They enjoy opportunities to experiment with writing in meaningful play situations such as writing shopping lists in the house corner. Children read books to each other in the book corner and can chose books from the lending library to take home.
- In numeracy and mathematics children are making good progress. Most children can match, sort, count and recognise numbers through nursery routines and play. A few children are very interested in number and can recognise and use numbers greater than ten. Most children can recognise and name shapes and are able to use mathematical language appropriately during play. There is scope to provide meaningful experiences to help children to develop understanding of other mathematical concepts such as weight, volume and time.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They are caring towards each other and are developing friendships. They are confident about following the snack routine and are developing independence through pouring milk and washing their dishes. They are developing a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and participate in tooth brushing and healthy cooking. Almost all children take part in regular yoga sessions and can talk about which part they like best. Children are developing their fine motor control through using tools, threading numbers and using dough. They enjoy participating in a variety of physical opportunities such as football and golf and recently took part in an organised Race for Life.
- Most children are making good progress across almost all areas of learning. They participate enthusiastically in music and dance and enjoy role play in the house corner and while using small wooden toys. They are learning about properties of water through simple science experiments including freezing 'gloop'. As noted it would be beneficial to continue to develop the provision in the outdoor area. This will provide children with opportunities to follow their interests and deepen their learning through meaningful investigation, problem solving and taking risks.

- Practitioners have identified the importance of recognising children’s wider achievements and are exploring ways to encourage parents to share information from home. As discussed they should continue to work on this.

Setting choice of QI: 2.6 Transitions

- Quality of support for children and their families
- Collaborative planning and delivery
- Continuity and progression in learning

- A range of individualised and flexible approaches support effective transition arrangements. Transitions are handled sensitively and are a positive experience for children and families. Practitioners link well with the local playgroup and if required other playgroups outwith the area. They take very good account of the different needs and circumstances of each child and family so that they can organise the transition flexibly into the nursery and then into school. Children who require additional support have enhanced transition arrangements planned in consultation with families and other relevant professionals both for the transition into the nursery and school. Practitioners support children who attend more than one setting well, by establishing communication to share relevant information.
- A range of planned events and activities are organised each month from August to June to support children who are moving on to primary school. The children use the school facilities and visit classrooms and the school offices to allow children to become familiar with the environment. P6 children work together with children in the nursery on different activities which again improves the transition process. Links with the range of schools that children may attend have been established. Teachers and buddies from those schools regularly visit the setting to ensure smooth transitions for the children.
- There is robust and effective documentation used to pass on information regarding children's learning. The transition record which is developed with the children and families throughout the transition process is an extremely useful aid to ensure effective transition. Practitioners in consultation with the cluster agree on an activity such as an agreed story book that all early years settings will use as part of the transition process. Practitioners have also created a transition tool using "parrots" as a device. Different "parrots" are used in the nursery, depending on the language that the children's new school is teaching. There are "cousin parrots" in the nursery learning different languages, such as French or Spanish, with the children. This good practice should continue be built on in order to continue to increase the effectiveness of continuity and progression in learning.

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.

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