

Summarised inspection findings

St Bride's Primary School Nursery Class

The Highland Council

13 June 2023

Key contextual information

St Bride's Nursery Class is situated within St Bride's Primary School. The headteacher has overall management responsibility for the nursery class. There is one full time early years practitioner and two part time early years practitioners who share the one post. The nursery class is registered for 18 children at any one time. There are currently 14 children on the roll, aged 3 years to those not yet attending school. Children are able to attend from 9.00 am till 3.00pm during term time. A few children attend for shorter hours.

Children have access to one indoor playroom and a large outdoor area. They are also able to use the school grounds, including the muga pitch. Children enjoy lunches within the school's dining hall.

Over the last few years, there have been significant staff changes within the nursery class. Two new early years practitioners have recently taken up post.

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

- The staff team have fostered strong, positive relationships with children and their families. As a result, a warm welcoming ethos is evident across the setting. Almost all children are happy and very settled. A few children are benefitting from sensitive support which is helping them become familiar with nursery routines. Children play well with each other in pairs and small groups. They show consideration and kindness to younger children and those new to the setting. A few children are developing firm friendships with their peers.
- The staff team have developed interesting and stimulating learning environments both inside and in the outdoor area. Children engage very well in these areas. In particular, they make effective use of the wide range of open ended and natural materials which develop their creativity skills effectively. Most children sustain their play well. A few children spend extended periods of time constructing their own models using wooden blocks and making their own sea life aquariums. Most children can make their own choices about their play and to lead their own learning. Most children do this effectively. They enjoy and benefit from regular access to the outdoor area and interesting local area.
- Practitioners are kind and interact with children in a nurturing way. They know children well and have a sound understanding of each child's strengths and individual needs. They play alongside children, asking questions and using commentary very well to deepen and extend learning. Practitioners use children's interests to prompt new learning. For example, they take good account of children's own experiences to develop further children's understanding about animals and farming.

- Practitioners are developing their approaches for observing and recording children's learning. They make good use of electronic learning journals to record significant learning. Staff absences have had an impact on the quantity and quality of observations. Practitioners need to identify clear next steps in learning for all children. They will benefit from taking part in relevant professional learning to support them to improve this aspect of their work. This will help them to plan appropriate interventions for children who may require additional support with their learning.
- Practitioners are beginning to develop a more responsive approach to planning children's learning. They are implementing new approaches which are taking better account of children's interests and particular stages of development. Practitioners would benefit from support from senior leaders and local authority officers to improve approaches in the way they plan for and record children's learning.
- While practitioners have a good understanding of the progress children are making in their learning, this is not yet fully documented. Senior leaders should now develop a robust approach to tracking and monitoring the progress children make in their learning.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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

- Overall, most children are making good progress in communication and early language. Most children speak confidently to each other and familiar adults. They enjoy sharing information about their personal interests and experiences. Children are increasing their use of subject specific vocabulary during their play, for example, as they play in the farm shop. They enjoy looking at books to find out information about their particular interests such as, sea life and vegetables. They would benefit from having more opportunities to listen to stories and sing songs and rhymes throughout the session. A few children show a keen interest in mark making as part of their play. There is scope to develop more ways for children to mark make as part of nursery routines. It would also be helpful to have more examples of children's work on display.
- Overall, children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Most children are developing a good understanding of numbers through real-life contexts. A few children will need more support from staff to develop and extend their skills in counting and number recognition numbers during play. Children recognise and name common shapes and are learning about the passage of time. They are exploring measure as they use rulers and measuring tapes as part of their play. A few children can identify heavier and lighter through weighing different objects on pan scales. They are beginning to the understand purpose of money during imaginative play.
- Practitioners prioritise children's health and wellbeing. As a result, children are able to make good progress in learning and enjoy their time at nursery. They are learning to express their feelings well and can describe how to stay safe and healthy. Children are kind and caring towards each other. They demonstrate good independent skills as they eat lunch and get ready to play outdoors. Most children are developing their physical skills well as part of their rich outdoor learning experiences.
- Children are making good progress in developing their skills in literacy numeracy and health and wellbeing over time. However, due to constraints in staffing this is not well documented. Senior leaders should support staff in documenting children's progress over time. this would help prepare for changes in staff and provide clarity to maximise children's progress over time.
- Practitioners recognise children's achievements in the nursery and use praise and encouragement to support learning. They share children's learning and achievements with parents through the use of electronic learning journals and on a digital app. A few parents contribute to the journals and share children's achievements from home. As planned,

practitioners should consider how they can develop further the use of learning journals to increase children and parental involvement.

- Practitioners are proactive in ensuring equity for all children. They have made effective use of additional funding to purchase outdoor clothing which all children can use. Practitioners know their families well and the challenges they may be experiencing with the current cost of living crisis. They provide sensitive support through signposting families to appropriate resources.

Other relevant evidence

- There are a number of children who require intensive adult support and direction throughout the session. There is a need for more adults in the setting to ensure all children's needs are met. It will also be important that practitioners have access to appropriate breaks during their working day.

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.