

# Summarised inspection findings

## Canonbie Primary School and Nursery Class

Dumfries and Galloway Council

25 September 2018

Canonbie Nursery Class is situated in the grounds of Canonbie Primary School. Children attend mornings only and at the time of inspection the role was 12 children aged three years to those not yet attending school. The setting is based in a small portacabin, however they use their extensive outdoor space on a daily basis.

### 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

- There is a shared vision, values and aims across the school cluster. This was reviewed and refreshed last year taking into account the views of all stakeholders. The nursery have adopted and adapted the vision, values and aims, making it more meaningful and relevant for children and parents. Practitioners and children are aware of these and this is evident within the setting.
- Practitioners demonstrate an enthusiastic and professional approach to their role, both collectively and as individuals. The team are keen to learn and make improvements to their practice. Recent changes in staffing have had a positive impact across the setting, with changes to the indoor and outdoor environment being a focus area of work. The nursery benefit from on-going support from the school depute and the local authority principal teacher early years.
- Practitioners access a range of professional learning opportunities to increase their knowledge and continually improve their practice. The team are working across the cluster with local authority, private and third sector colleagues to moderate and share practice. This is having a positive effect on the work of the setting. Leadership opportunities are available with practitioners leading on projects, for example, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) charter bronze award.
- The lead practitioner has established clear direction and an appropriate pace of change across the setting. The team are reflective about their practice and strive to improve the service they provide for children and families. They engage in daily informal dialogue to identify what they feel is working well and also what could be improved. The lead practitioner and depute meet formally on a weekly basis to discuss improvements, as planned these meetings should also include the wider team.
- There is a cluster improvement plan in place which outlines broad priorities for the nursery, these are clearly evident in practice. We discussed with the senior leadership team the need for this plan to have a clearer focus and specific relevant targets for the nursery.
- There is a self-evaluation system in place which captures a wide range of information across the nursery. As planned they should now create a quality assurance calendar to support the development of a more strategic approach to capturing significant information. Practitioners

should continue to develop their understanding of national guidance, How good is our early learning and childcare? (HGIOELC?) and how this supports self-evaluation.

## 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

- Relationships across the setting are positive and nurturing, as a result children are observed to be safe and secure. Most children are confident and demonstrate independence skills. They are enthusiastic and motivated to learn. Children engage with a wide range of interesting experiences available to them and have daily access to outdoor learning through free-flow play. Children are observed interacting positively with each other, displaying respectful and considerate behaviour to their peers.
- Practitioners know children's individual care and learning needs well and provide opportunities for them to follow their interests, for example, supporting them to create a submarine and periscope.
- Most children can sustain interest for extended periods of time in purposeful play. There is scope to continue the expansion and use of open-ended resources, natural materials and real-life objects. This will support children to develop further their skills in curiosity, inquiry and creativity, both indoors and outdoors.
- Practitioners enthusiastically engage in conversations with children to encourage them to talk about their interests and ideas. They listen carefully to children and respond in an appropriate manner. Most practitioners use open-ended questions well to support children's learning. In the best examples, practitioners' use of higher order questions encourage children to think through solutions for themselves. Children display leadership qualities during play, however there is scope to develop this further. Children have planned experiences to explore digital technologies, for example, at the headphones station, interactive board and making use of the digital camera. As planned the team should now continue to develop and extend how they use digital technologies to support children's learning.
- Practitioners know individual children well as learners and use their observations to inform next steps in learning. The team engage in daily dialogue and the lead practitioner has weekly meetings with the depute head to discuss planning. Information is captured in children's personal learning plans (PLPs). Practitioners are piloting a new approach using a small test of change. Most children are observed to confidently reflect on their learning, occasionally using the "Big Book" as an aid. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the PLPs and share wider achievements from home and community. Parents have daily dialogue with staff and receive two reports and attend one planned parents' evening to discuss their child's progress.
- Planning takes account of a range of approaches, this includes responsive, spontaneous and planned learning. Currently there is a system in place which tracks coverage across the curriculum. The setting have recently developed a new system for tracking and monitoring

individual children's learning. As planned, they should continue to develop and implement their new approach, ensuring this is proportionate and manageable.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Practitioners plan for children's learning taking full account of Curriculum for Excellence. They make appropriate use of experiences and outcomes and guidance from the local authority. Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are seen as everyone's responsibility and are promoted well throughout most of the setting. As planned practitioners should continue to develop their outdoor classroom approach ensuring depth and challenge across all areas.
- The curriculum offered is broad and varied. It takes full account of children's interests, for example, sea life and science experiments with volcanoes. As discussed, practitioners should continue to ensure children's work is fully reflected across the setting. Parents who have particular skills, for example, the vet, visit the setting to share their skills and knowledge and highlight the world of work. The team should continue to maximise real-life opportunities for children to develop and apply their skills.
- The setting's transition programme supports children well as they move on to school. This includes on-going weekly visits to the school, taking part in whole school assemblies, joint singing, games and outdoor play every Friday. Children have transition days during the month of June where they spend time in the P1 classroom and have lunch. As planned the lead practitioner should continue to work closely with the children as they start P1 to ensure continuity and progression in learning for all children. Staff from across the early level should be encouraged to work together more regularly to share expectations and their understanding of early learning pedagogy.

## 2.7 Partnerships : Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Partnership with parents is valued, with relationships between the setting and parents very positive. Parents are involved through initial visits to the setting, regular stay and play sessions and an open door policy. Prior to starting the setting parents and children receive their own individual booklet which provides reassurance for children and contains helpful information for parents about the setting. Engagements with the local toddler group and community Bookbug sessions are leading to a positive transition into nursery for all children.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection were very positive and reported that the setting was well regarded within the local community. As well as regular communications through daily dialogue, social media and newsletters, parents are welcome to attend special events. Parents have daily dialogue about their children's progress, alongside written reports and formal meetings. Plans to develop workshops aimed at building parents knowledge and skills before the transition to school have been discussed and will be developed moving forward.

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

### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very good

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

- The ethos and culture of the setting is nurturing and respectful. Practitioners are warm and caring, as a result children are enabled to feel settled, safe and secure. Practitioners recognise the importance of relationships in supporting children's social and emotional wellbeing. They respect children as individuals with their own personalities. Children's behaviour is observed as appropriate to their age and stage of development. Where necessary, individuals are supported sensitively to develop the necessary skills to show consideration for their peers.
- The principles of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) and the use of national wellbeing indicators are evident in practice and across children's personal learning plans. A shared understanding of what it means to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included continues to be developed across the setting. As planned there is scope to develop this further with parents.
- Children are happy and confident both indoors and outdoors. Outdoor learning supports children to be healthy and active as they have fun with their peers, taking risks building structures using tyres and planks of wood. This supports them to develop confidence and resilience and impacts positively on their sense of wellbeing. The opportunity to share and take turns with their peers is evident, as they are observed developing a sense of teamwork as they play and learn together.
- Children enjoy healthy snacks which they select and order with their parents on a weekly basis from the local fruit and vegetable supplier. They take responsibility for clearing and washing their own dishes. They are developing their personal hygiene skills and increasingly dress themselves for outdoors. Children are supported to take on leadership roles, for example, star of the week and snack helper.
- Overall, statutory duties are engaged in and complied with. There is a clear understanding of what is required of practitioners and management in their requirement to fulfil statutory duties to secure positive outcomes for children. Individual needs of children are responded to in a sensitive and caring manner. Children who require additional support have a multi-agency plan in place, however as discussed it would be helpful to streamline the paperwork ensuring all relevant information is contained in the plan.
- Inclusion and equality is promoted throughout the work of the setting, with all children and families treated with respect. Practitioners treat children fairly and take account of their individual likes and dislikes. There is a welcoming and inclusive ethos where children are nurtured and encouraged to reach their full potential. The nursery are leading work on LGBT

and have presented at the school assembly. They are working towards their Bronze Charter award.

### 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, children are making good progress with a few making very good progress in communication and language. This is in line with their age and stage of development. Most children confidently engage in conversations with practitioners and peers during free play. During the inspection children confidently approached inspectors and engaged in dialogue about their learning. Opportunities for mark making are available with a few children confidently writing their name, for example as they write letters. Most children enjoy looking at books and having stories read to them, this was evident as they gathered on their hand-made raft to listen to a pirate story.
- Practitioners provide opportunities for children to develop their skills in numeracy and mathematics across the setting. As a result, most children are making good progress in their learning. The development of skills in early numeracy are encouraged through daily routines, for example, as all children engage in counting the number of children attending each day and the number of items for snack. A few children are observed counting to ten and beyond. The use of a trundle wheel was used as a measuring tool as children explored the length of a whale. This was replicated outdoors on the pitch as children lay head to toe taking turns to measure their peers. There is scope to extend the use of open-ended resources to challenge those who need it and encourage counting bigger numbers.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing, with all children appearing happy and settled in their environment. Children are caring and considerate of each other's feelings, displaying positive engagement with their peers. Children are making healthy choices at snack and are encouraged to develop their independence skills as they serve themselves. Daily opportunities are given for children to develop their physical skills. Children are observed outdoors running, throwing and catching a rugby ball. They have planned PE in the school on a weekly basis. Most children play independently across the learning environment and are developing their self-help skills.
- Through inspection observation, big book evidence and dialogue, children in the setting are observed as enthusiastic learners who are making good progress in their learning. We discussed with practitioners that in addition to the good work already in place, there is now scope to enhance progression through providing more challenge and depth across the learning environment. Children's individual achievements from home and nursery are captured and celebrated in a range of ways, for example, in playroom displays and on the achievement tree. Practitioners use praise and encouragement to promote positive attitudes

and effective cooperation and independence, this was evident across the setting. We discussed with practitioners exploring further ways to capture and share all stakeholder achievements.

- Equity is promoted across all aspects of the work of the setting. There is a supportive and inclusive ethos, as a result there is a climate of mutual respect and trust. Practitioners are proactive in identifying and reducing barriers to effective learning for all children.

## Choice of QI : 1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

- Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- Evidence-based improvement
- Ensuring impact of success for children and families

- There is a strong commitment to self-evaluation within the setting. Practitioners regularly discuss what is working well and what needs to be improved in the setting. They work very well as a team and are supported by the depute and local authority. There is evidence of the impact of the approach taken to self-evaluation in all areas of the settings work. We discussed with the setting having regular meetings with all in attendance, in order to review the work of the setting and allow practitioners to bring forward suggestions. Moving forward, the setting needs to continue to develop approaches to gathering the views of children, parents and partners to inform what is working well and what could be further developed.
- As part of Dumfries and Galloway CYPLL School Self Evaluation for Self Improvement Collaborative Reviews process, Canonbie Nursery and Primary and Langholm Primary were visited by a team of colleagues earlier this year to carry out a review. This has been very helpful for senior leaders in identifying key strengths and areas for improvement.
- Continuous improvement and high quality early learning experiences for children inform the setting's direction of improvement. Action plans are focused on improving experiences and outcomes for children and families. Practitioners have developed an understanding of what they do well and what they need to improve. As self-evaluation processes develop, it will be important to clearly evidence the link between self-evaluation and improved approaches to how children learn.

## 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.