

Summarised inspection findings

King's Road Primary School Nursery Class

Fife Council

17 September 2019

Key contextual information

The nursery is located within the premises of King's Road Primary School. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 80 children at any one time, aged from two years until they attend primary school. At the time of inspection there were 135 children aged two years to five years on the nursery roll.

The nursery has a large open-plan room and an adjacent classroom for children aged under three years old. The children have exclusive use of the enclosed outdoor area, which is directly accessible from both rooms. Nursery children also use the gym/dining hall, music room, general-purpose rooms, enclosed courtyard, and infant playground, as appropriate.

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

- The whole school values of 'Knowledge, Respect, Pride and Success' are displayed in the entrance area within the nursery class, and shared with families in regular newsletters. As a result of parental feedback, the values are being revisited in consultation with parents and carers, practitioners and children. This is to ensure they are fully understood by all stakeholders and reflect the nursery's commitment to early learning and childcare approaches.
- Support from the local authority peripatetic nursery teachers is based upon observations, self-evaluation and consultation with senior leaders and the nursery team. They are successfully supporting the team to identify and develop key areas for improvement. This is beginning to have an impact on children's experiences through the development of approaches to planning, tracking and monitoring. It will be important to ensure a shared understanding of remits and responsibilities for all staff and practitioners working alongside and within the nursery team. This will clarify the collegiate approach to continuous improvement needed in order to deliver high quality early learning and childcare in line with national guidance.
- Most practitioners have leadership roles linked to action plans and an area of development. These detail actions required, desired outcomes and impact as well as opportunities to evaluate progress. As practitioners continue to make improvements, they should develop these leadership roles further, linking them to ongoing improvement planning priorities. This will support a developing culture of self-evaluation and improvement across the whole school community and increase practitioners' skills in line with improvement priorities. There is considerable scope to develop children's leadership responsibilities. This will support the involvement of children in the ongoing development of their learning environment and learning experiences.
- Practitioners have a shared commitment to improving their skills through professional learning and use this to take forward aspects of the work of the setting. For example, training to deliver a programme to support children and families to learn together. Opportunities to visit other

settings are organised by senior leaders and this is enabling practitioners to extend their curriculum knowledge and understanding. The impact of recent professional learning to meet children's needs should be monitored and evaluated by senior leaders. This will support the identification of future professional learning required, ensuring identified key priorities support ongoing improvements in the nursery class.

- The process of self-evaluation is becoming embedded. Senior leaders have been ensuring a shared understanding with the team of the need to reflect and develop practice as part of the setting's improvement journey. The team should continue to make use of the national self-evaluation framework, 'How good is our early learning childcare?'. This will support the team further to have a shared and robust understanding of areas where practice is stronger and where improvements should be made. Quality assurance is currently undertaken in both informal and formal ways. A more formal quality assurance cycle is now needed to support a more appropriate pace of change for the nursery.

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

- The ethos across the setting is warm, welcoming, calm and relaxed. Relationships between practitioners and children are positive and nurturing. As a result, children are happy, settled and enjoy their time at nursery.
- In the 2-3 year old playroom toddlers engage with the range of play experiences on offer and are supported well by practitioners. The rich learning environment consists of cosy spaces and provides a range of appropriate open-ended resources and materials for toddlers to investigate, experiment and explore. Toddlers benefit greatly from the free flow indoor to outdoor opportunities, enabling them to explore the nursery garden and interact with children from the 3-5 year old playrooms.
- In the 3-5 year old playrooms, young children have access to a range of developmentally appropriate and high quality, natural, real-life resources and materials. These support children's creativity, curiosity and enquiry. The nursery playroom has been partitioned to create two individual playrooms. This limits the opportunities children have to make choices about where they would like to play and their ability to be involved in spontaneous play. Children would benefit from the creation of an all-inclusive learning environment in line with national guidance, which fully supports a child led, natural free flow approach.
- Children interact well with each other and with adults, and have time to follow their own interests. The majority of children engage well in their chosen activities and a few are beginning to sustain interest for more prolonged periods. In a few examples, practitioners make effective use of this time to engage well with children as individuals and in small groups. Practitioners observe children during play and use their observations to plan interesting opportunities and experiences to support children's learning. There is scope for practitioners to intervene more skilfully and provide adult supported activities, particularly in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. Practitioners have an awareness of approaches to promote higher order thinking and should develop their knowledge and skills further to question children effectively. The improved use of questioning techniques will build and extend children's thinking.
- Practitioners use personal learning journals (PLJs) to document children's learning and each child has an individual journal. Each child's journal contains photographs and observations of their learning. Practitioners are supported well by peripatetic nursery teachers and together they have been working to improve the content of journals. There has been a particular focus on showing progress on significant aspects of children's learning and increasing the voice of the child. A few children are able to use their journals to reflect confidently and comment on their learning. As planned, practitioners should continue their work to identify children's next steps in learning with children and their families. There is also scope to increase opportunities

for parents and carers to comment on their child's learning. This could be supported by more regular access to their child's journal within the setting and at home. The setting should continue with plans to reintroduce 'Cuppa Chats' for parents and carers.

- Learning walls based on children's interests are used to gather information on and document children's learning. The nursery team have been working with the peripatetic nursery teachers to review and update this approach. Practitioners have recently started to use the principles of curriculum design to evaluate child led projects displayed through the learning walls. Further development of this approach will help to ensure depth of learning and increase challenge for children.
- The setting has recently reviewed and revised procedures to track and monitor the progress children make in their learning. Trackers focusing on key aspects of children's learning have been updated to include National Benchmarks. Practitioners are beginning to engage in moderation activities within the setting and to use data to improve outcomes for children. Senior leaders should continue to engage with practitioners at tracking meetings and support them to use data to improve outcomes for children.
- Children have access to digital technologies, including an interactive board, laptops and remote controlled toys. There is scope for practitioners to develop further how digital technologies are used to support children's learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- The headteacher and practitioners need to work together with the whole school to develop a curriculum rationale, which reflects their unique context. This should incorporate the vision, values and aims of the setting, and the needs of all children. This will ensure a shared understanding of the curriculum across the whole school community.
- Across the setting, the curriculum is responsive and based on the interests of children. In the playroom for the youngest children, national guidance 'Pre-Birth to Three' is used to plan for the learning needs of toddlers. In the 3-5 year old playrooms, the curriculum follows Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) national guidance. The setting is at an early stage of using the seven principles of curriculum design. Practitioners should develop further their approaches to provide progression, depth and challenge in children's learning and higher aspirations for all children.
- As discussed, practitioners should consider ways to offer more opportunities for children to be independent in their learning. This should include children making their own decisions about how and what they learn. This will provide opportunities for children to experience success, and build resilience and confidence in themselves as learners.
- Whilst there are opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across their learning, there is considerable scope to develop this further. Practitioners need to ensure all children, and in particular more able children, are provided with appropriate challenge in learning.
- Practitioners pay attention to national practice guidance, 'Building the Ambition'. As a result, the setting supports the development of children's skills in creativity, curiosity and enquiry well.
- A transition programme is in place for children as they move to primary one. Transition reports based on CfE highlighting children's progress across all curricular areas are prepared for children as they transition from nursery to school. There is scope for the practitioners and primary one teachers to work more closely to support continuity and progression across the early level.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners are clearly committed to working with parents to assist them in supporting their child's learning. A few practitioners have undertaken professional learning in approaches to engage families in supporting the development of their children at home. Parents and carers report that they have found these strategies to be helpful and useful.
- Practitioners organise 'Stay and Play' sessions for parents and carers. These are very valuable in supporting parents and families in having an active role in their child's early learning experiences. Parents and carers attending these sessions enjoy the experience.
- Practitioners engage with local and national programmes for parents and families including those with a focus on developing early literacy. Planned approaches, including the lending library, 'parent postcards', newsletters and learning walls encourage children, parents and carers to share learning at home.
- Meetings and end of year summative reports give parents and carers an overview of their child's learning in areas such as literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. As planned, it will be a positive next step to develop other ways to share current learning experiences and contexts with parents and carers. This will enable them to support their children's learning at home.
- Parents and carers spoke positively about how the setting engages with them. To help support the improvement of the setting, the nursery should consider the benefit of establishing a parents and carers group.

2.1 Safeguarding

- 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.

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

- There is a caring atmosphere within the setting and children are welcomed personally when they arrive at the start of each session. Overall, there are warm interactions in the setting and practitioners have fostered positive relationships with children and their families. Most children appear to be happy and settled in the setting.
- Practitioners are supporting children to develop a greater understanding of the national wellbeing indicators and what they mean in their everyday lives. Children have spent time exploring what being safe means within and outside the setting. A practitioner working group with a specific focus on the wellbeing indicators is in place. This is supporting families and children to understand how they know if they feel safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. As discussed, practitioners should continue to provide relevant experiences and resources to support children to develop their early understanding and use of the wellbeing indicators. The recent introduction of puppets representing the different wellbeing indicators is a positive start to establishing a deeper understanding. The working group could consider reviewing how the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child link to the wellbeing indicators.
- Practitioners work hard to promote positive behaviour and encourage children to care for each other and respect resources. A minority of children are, at times, unsettled and require more support and planned interventions to help them manage their behaviour in a positive manner. Practitioners and senior leaders should explore strategies to embed positive behaviour and restorative approaches in a meaningful and consistent way. It will benefit children to be fully involved in this process.
- There is a developing understanding amongst senior leaders and practitioners of statutory duties in relation to early learning and childcare. Together, they should ensure essential information for individual children is accessible at the point of need. Information should be shared with parents and carers and an ethos of shared responsibility in the nursery team embedded in line with national and local guidance.
- Senior leaders and practitioners work closely with external agencies to access additional support for children with an identified need. They use individualised support plans to plan learning and take account of additional guidance and advice from partner agencies. The majority of practitioners are aware of children who require specific support and interventions. As discussed, an essential next step is to share information more widely with practitioners. This will ensure all practitioners can support children as required and detailed in plans.
- Children and families are treated fairly and with respect in the setting. Practitioners value the diverse backgrounds, faiths and interests of children and families. Children are also learning

about the needs of others in the community and how they can help. For example, supporting the local community hub collection of food and toiletries to encourage children's awareness about sharing with those in need. It would be useful for practitioners to have training on equality and inclusion to ensure a robust understanding of the legislative framework surrounding this. This will ensure that senior leaders and practitioners are aware and monitor issues relating to equality and diversity to ensure best practice. As discussed, practitioners should continue to explore gender in more depth, ensuring potential stereotypes are consistently recognised and challenged.

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

- Across the setting children are making satisfactory progress in their learning. Children confidently explore the indoor and outdoor learning environments. There is scope for practitioners to develop further their knowledge and understanding of early learning pedagogy. This will support all learners from two to five years old to make better progress.
- In communication and early language, children are making satisfactory progress. Most children are developing their listening and attention skills well and engage in conversations with peers and practitioners. There is scope to develop further reciprocal conversations between practitioners and children, and the use of effective running commentary by practitioners. This would enhance children's communication and early language development. Children enjoy spending time drawing and mark making. A few children include more detail in their drawings and are beginning to write their name. A range of books are available across playrooms and outdoors for children to investigate and explore. In the best examples, children enjoyed sharing books with an adult on an individual basis and in small cosy groups. This approach should be developed further across the setting.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in early numeracy and mathematics. With support from practitioners, a few children are beginning to spend more prolonged periods of time problem solving with loose parts and with more challenging jigsaws. The majority of children count confidently to ten and a few children are able to recognise numerals from zero to ten. Children have opportunities to learn about measurement in a number of meaningful contexts. For example on a trip to the forest, children measured how much string needed to be tied to buckets in order for them to collect water from the burn for their mudslide. Practitioners should continue to develop further their interactions with children in real-life and imaginary situations to build and extend children's skills and development in early numeracy and mathematics.
- Overall, children across the setting are making satisfactory progress in health and wellbeing. Across the setting children cooperate well with each other in their play. In the 3-5 year old playrooms, children have opportunities to develop their independence skills. Children confidently and independently help to prepare and self-select their snack and wash their dishes. At lunch times, children are becoming increasingly independent as they self-select their lunch and take responsibility for clearing away their plates and cutlery. Children benefit from access to the nursery garden and a challenging climbing frame, regular trips to the forest kindergarten and physical experiences provided in the gym hall.

- Practitioners know children well as individuals and are at the early stages of identifying and focusing on aspects of significant learning for each individual child. Continued work in this area will ensure that they effectively identify and build upon children’s learning. As a result, they will have a better understanding of progress over time.
- In the 3-5 year old playrooms, children’s achievements are celebrated regularly through the use of the ‘Achieving Archie’ wellbeing indicator puppet. Children receive ‘Achieving Archie’ certificates to celebrate personal success and achievement within the nursery, and these are displayed within the playroom. There is scope for children’s achievements to be shared more widely and added to their PLJs. We discussed with practitioners in the 3-5 year old playrooms how to develop leadership roles for children. These could include children’s committees, snack helpers and children being more meaningfully involved in risk assessment activities.
- Practitioners know children and families well and have a shared understanding of the need to promote equity within the setting. All children have access to a range of learning experiences and a caring ethos is evident throughout the setting. Positive relationships exist between parents, carers and practitioners. The newly created parents’ room provides good opportunities for parents and carers to be more involved in the life and work of the setting.

Choice of QI : 2.5 Family Learning

- Engaging families in learning
- Early intervention and prevention
- Quality of family learning programmes

- The setting has established very positive relationships with parents. Engaging with families is identified as a priority and is a key strength of the nursery. A working group, with an associated action plan to deliver a number of family learning programmes, supports this work. Consultation with parents to get feedback and inform future ideas is carried out regularly by the nursery. Families value this and practitioners are committed to extend and embed family learning programmes for parents and carers of P1 pupils.
- The setting provides a variety of opportunities for parents to attend sessions with a focus on helping their children to learn at home. This is enabling parents to support their children in early communication, numeracy and loose parts play. Books from the lending library are available for parents to borrow to support learning at home. Use is made of a nearby community garden and woodland area, and parents are encouraged to attend with their child to learn together about the natural environment.
- Parent postcards support families of children under three years old to create and share learning experiences at home. They explain the benefits of strategies and approaches, for example numeracy songs, reading with your child and walks in the outdoors. A positive next step would be to extend this approach for the 3-5 year old children and families. This could support the further development of children's learning in literacy, numeracy and an understanding of the benefits of outdoor 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.