

Summarised inspection findings

St Mary's Primary School Nursery Class

North Lanarkshire Council

11 March 2025

Key contextual information

St Mary's Primary School Nursery Class is situated within St Mary's Primary School (Cleland), North Lanarkshire. The accommodation has been adapted for nursery provision. There are two playrooms, a quiet, relaxing space next to the cloakroom area, a small sensory room and a secure outdoor play space. The nursery has its own entry door for parents.

The nursery is registered for 52 children at any one time. Children attending the service are aged from three until they start primary school. At the time of inspection there were 41 children accessing early learning and childcare. Parents have a choice of attendance patterns. They can choose either term time provision from 8.55am to 2.55pm each day or extended provision across 46 weeks. The extended provision attendance pattern is either 8am to 12.45pm or 1pm to 5.45pm.

The manager of the setting is the headteacher of the primary school. He is supported in the management of the nursery by the principal teacher, two principal leads and one lead practitioner. In addition to the management team the nursery is staffed by two full time practitioners, one part time practitioner, one full time support worker and two part time support workers. The principal teacher leads on nursery improvement and curriculum. The principal leads provide management cover when the nursery is open outwith school hours.

There have been significant changes to the staff team over the past few years. The newly established team work very well together. They have built trusting, respectful relationships and recognise individual strengths within the team.

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

- Practitioners have thoughtfully reviewed the environment to create a calm, welcoming and homely environment. As a result, children are happy, settled and confident in the nursery setting. The well-defined learning areas, both indoors and out, contain a range of stimulating real life and natural resources. Children use the learning areas well and confidently select resources to support their play. Almost all children demonstrate high levels of engagement in their play and learning.
- All practitioners have a sound understanding of children's rights and this underpins the ethos of the setting. They build positive and warm relationships with children and their families as they welcome them into the setting and at daily pick up and drop off times. This supports almost all children to feel safe and secure, to form friendships and show care and support for others.
- Practitioners operate a key worker system, and they know children very well. They interact sensitively with children and skilfully use a range of strategies to support children's language development. They model conversations, adapt the level of language to meet individual needs

and use singing and repetition very well. Practitioners use open ended questions effectively to extend children's thinking and allow appropriate thinking time for children to respond. This supports children to be excited and curious about their learning.

- Children are beginning to develop digital skills as they use tablet devices to take photographs and use the interactive board to play games. They work well with digital leaders from the primary school to develop mouse control skills. Children would benefit from further experiences to enrich their learning through the creative use of digital technologies.
- Practitioners record detailed observations of learning in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing in children's personal learning stories folders. Practitioners should build on this to ensure observations consistently capture children's progress across all curricular areas. Practitioners support children to make connections between their learning and real-life experiences through supportive dialogue. Children's folders are shared regularly with parents, and this enables parents to know about and comment on their child's progress in learning.
- Practitioners plan effectively for children's learning in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing. They should now develop this to plan effectively across all curricular areas. Practitioners ensure there is a balance of responsive and intentional planning, and they respond well to children's interests. They track children's learning effectively across literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing. They use this information well to identify children who require support and challenge. Practitioners implement effective strategies for children who require additional support in learning. As planned, practitioners should continue to review tracking in line with Curriculum for Excellence national Benchmarks. This should help to capture children's progress in learning across all curricular areas and strengthen the continuity of learning through to the end of early level.

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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

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 making good progress in communication and early language. They express their thoughts and ideas confidently. They enjoy listening to stories. Children recall correctly the sequence of events and describe features of the main characters. Most children draw increasingly detailed pictures and write or copy their name. A minority of children would benefit from provocations to support their imaginative emergent writing during free flow play.
- Most children are making good progress in mathematics. The majority know the number sequence forwards and backwards within 10. They count objects accurately and recognise numerals to 10. Most children are developing well the language of measure and weight, and an awareness of capacity through play experiences. Most children name basic two-dimensional shapes confidently. They are beginning to recognise coins and develop their understanding of how to use money through role play experiences. Most children are ready to develop skills in information handling.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They are developing well their understanding of emotions and talk confidently about their feelings. Most children demonstrate high levels of independence in their self-help skills as they dress for going outside and serve drinks and food at lunch time. They are developing an understanding of healthy food and how this helps their bodies to grow. They know and follow daily nursery routines confidently. Most children are developing well their fine motor skills through a variety of experiences including craft and messy play. They are developing good control of their bodies as they run, jump, climb and balance in the outdoor area. They have an appropriate awareness of risk and understand how to keep safe within the setting.
- Most children are making good progress across the curriculum. They are learning about the world of work as they visit places in the local community. They are learning about science as they explore the life cycle of butterflies, combine substances in messy play, grow plants and experiment with movement and forces.
- Across the nursery, most children are making good progress over time. Practitioners should now develop systems to allow them to capture more clearly the progress children make. This should support them to identify further where individual children could benefit from specific support and challenge.

- Children contribute effectively to the life of the setting. For example, children adopt lunch time and risk assessor leadership roles. Their achievements from within the setting are celebrated and recorded on 'Wow Walls' and they understand what they have done well. Practitioners encourage parents to share children's wider achievements from home. Practitioners should now introduce systems to track children's achievements. This should help capture the development of skills and ensure all children have the opportunity to experience success.
- Practitioners create an inclusive ethos where all children and families feel valued. They understand the social and economic context in which their families live. They ensure children have equal access to all learning opportunities sensitively and are proactive in implementing strategies to reduce potential barriers to learning.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

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|-------------------------|---------------|
| 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.