

# Summarised inspection findings

**Stratherrick Primary School Nursery Class**

The Highland Council

26 March 2024

## Key contextual information

Stratherrick Nursery Class is part of Stratherrick Primary School in the village of Gorthleck. Children attend from the Stratherrick area. The setting consists of a playroom in the main school building. The school has extensive grounds that children access daily. Children attend Monday to Thursday between 8.50 am to 3.25 pm, and 8.55 am to 12.35 pm on a Friday, termtime. The setting is registered for 10 children aged from three to those not yet attending school. At the time of inspection, the setting had eight children on the roll.

Two early years practitioners work with children and are responsible for the day-to-day running of the playroom. The new team was established very recently in mid-January 2024. Prior to this, there have been a number of changes in the early years team. The headteacher has leadership responsibility 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

- Practitioners provide a very welcoming and nurturing ethos that helps children to feel valued, safe, and secure. In their very short time as a team, practitioners are quickly developing positive relationships and a shared understanding of the needs of children. Children enjoy their time at nursery and are kind, respectful and caring towards each other as they play together. This has created a strong sense of family and belonging.
- Almost all children are highly engaged and motivated and make choices about their play. Recently, children have had improved access to resources. They enjoy this independence and are respectful of the responsibility they have. Practitioners are calm and caring in their interactions as they support children in their learning. They continue to develop the use of open-ended questions and commentary to support, extend and challenge children's learning. Overall, while experiences meet the needs of the majority of children, the minority of children would benefit from more challenge in their learning.
- Practitioners are very responsive to children's wishes to learn outdoors in the extensive school grounds. Children benefit from opportunities to explore the natural world, practise a range of physical skills and develop curiosity, stamina and resilience. Children select from a range of digital technology. Practitioners should further develop the use of digital technologies to support and enhance children's learning, for example, researching areas of interest and access exciting resources.
- Most practitioners have extensive knowledge of children as individuals, such as their unique interests and developmental stage. They make observations of children as they play and collate them with examples of children's creativity and photographs in individual learning journey folders and floor books. Working together, practitioners should use this information to

plan learning that builds effectively on children's skills, prior knowledge, and experiences. This should complement existing approaches to being responsive to children's interests, to create a better balance between child-led and adult-initiated learning. Practitioners' use of local authority tools, such as progression pathways, would help to support this.

- Staff's approaches to tracking and monitoring children's learning and the progress they make is at an early stage of development. Practitioners use local authority tools to record some of the progress children make. Working with the headteacher, they should develop more robust processes to support them to make confident judgements about children's progress. This will help identify what children need to learn next and promote challenge and depth of learning for individual children. Practitioners should develop ways for children and their families to reflect on, and to contribute to, discussions about learning. This could include contributing to learning journey folders and families being more involved in their child's nursery experiences.

## 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

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

- Children are making satisfactory progress in early language and communication as a result of their nursery experiences. Most children talk confidently with adults and other children. They readily question things they do not understand. Almost all children listen well to instructions and each other. Children are enthusiastic about mark making, using a variety of materials indoors and outside. The majority of children are developing good pencil control and add increasing detail to their drawings. Almost all children enjoy stories and can talk about their likes and dislikes in different texts. Children would benefit from a wider range of experiences to help them make increased progress in literacy and early language development. This could include exploring the sounds and patterns of language, exploring texts in more depth, developing interesting vocabulary and writing for different purposes.
- In numeracy and mathematics, children are making satisfactory progress. Almost all children are developing an awareness of number as they use numbers in rhymes and apply early numeracy skills as they count in routines and play. They use comparative language correctly when ordering by size and identifying pattern. Practitioners should develop the breadth of children's mathematical experiences across all areas of the setting. This will support children to make the progress they are capable of in all aspects of mathematics.
- Almost all children are making satisfactory progress in health and wellbeing. They are developing friendships and play cooperatively, showing respect for each other. A few children benefit from careful explanations and support to help them manage their emotions. Practitioners could support children to develop strategies to help them self-regulate their emotions. All children benefit from eating socially at snack time and lunchtime. They are ready to develop increased independence during routines and their learning. Children understand the importance of personal hygiene. Almost all children have well developed balance and coordination demonstrated as they climb trees, run, swing and jump. Children enjoy responsibilities such as assessing safety outdoors. They should have greater experience in managing their own risk.
- Almost all children, including those who have potential barriers to their learning, are making satisfactory progress for their age and stage of development. However, the majority of children could make better progress. Practitioners should use local authority tools more effectively to improve planning for, and measuring, the progress children make in their learning over time. This will help staff to ensure all children make the best possible progress and achieve their potential.

- Practitioners celebrate children's achievements using appropriate use of praise and displaying photographs shared from home. Practitioners should consider developing an overview of children's skills for learning and life linked to their achievements. This should help identify where they need to plan for the development of skills for all children.
- Practitioners know the local community context very well. This includes the barriers to learning that children and families may experience. As the information available about children's progress develops, practitioners should make full use of this with other data available. This should help make decisions about any planned strategies that may help maximise children's learning and help them make the very best progress.

## 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.