Summarised inspection findings

Eyemouth Primary School and Nursery Class

Scottish Borders Council

4 December 2018
Key contextual information

Eyemouth Primary School Nursery Class provides early learning and childcare to a maximum of forty children, with no more than ten children aged under three at any one time. An Early Years Centre (EYC) re-opened in March 2018. Whilst children do not attend the EYC, it is a community resource that has established a range of useful partnerships, including community learning and development (CLD), to support families in the nursery, school and wider community.

Eyemouth Primary School Nursery Class and EYC are situated in the small coastal town of Eyemouth in the Scottish Borders. The nursery has two main playrooms with a smaller room providing a comfortable space for younger children. There is direct access from the main playroom to the large outdoor space of the nursery, and to woods and open ground beyond. There has been significant change to nursery leadership, staffing and to provision in the last two years. This has included the introduction of 1140 hours.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

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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 nursery, EYC and school share an established vision, values and aims. These have been developed over a number of years and reviewed with practitioners. Senior leaders now need to consult widely to agree an ambitious statement of vision, values and aims reflecting the aspirations of families, the school, nursery, EYC and wider community. When considering this, practitioners should have high expectations of children and families as leaders of learning.

- Practitioners welcome the opportunities resulting from extended hours, and the expansion of provision to include children aged under three years of age. They are keen to continue to improve provision further. We were able to see the positive impact of recent improvements, including partnership work with the EYC to support children aged under three years. Practitioners are appreciative of the support of the principal teacher. However, practitioners and leaders in the school now need to deepen their shared understanding of high quality early learning and childcare.

- Practitioners are developing ways of working together more effectively. Teamwork needs to be strengthened further to make best possible use of available development time, skills and expertise. This should include more effective joint work with the EYC, visiting early years teacher, and early-level teachers in the primary school. This will help ensure children of all ages are supported to make the best possible progress.
Practitioners are beginning to use How good is our early learning and childcare? to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This is at an early stage of development. Senior leaders need to support practitioners to build confidence using this, and similar resources to manage improvement processes more effectively. Senior leaders need to ensure that the EYC, and other relevant stakeholders, are fully involved in self-evaluation and improvement planning. This will ensure that the significant potential of the nursery and EYC is realised as fully as possible.

Leadership at all levels needs to be improved further. Improved strategic leadership, together with more effective support and challenge, will ensure increased pace of change and well-considered development of curriculum and learning and teaching. Senior leaders need to ensure that the impact of change is evaluated effectively, and improvements are built upon in sustainable ways.
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

Children have access to an appropriate range of experiences indoors and out. Younger children enjoy the companionship of their peers in the nurturing space of their playroom. Practitioners help and encourage children to make choices about their play, and children are enthusiastic about expeditions to the nearby forest path. Children aged three to five years enjoy their time in the nursery. They play well together and are developing confidence and independence.

The learning environment has recently been enhanced through the introduction of loose parts for play and learning. This has led to increased opportunities for children to develop their curiosity and enquiry skills. Most children engage well with the relevant experiences and opportunities available. A few children concentrate for extended periods of time as they independently investigate books, build with blocks and play in the home corner. Children should now be more actively involved in shaping their learning environment and experiences. For example, by making informed decisions about what they need to take with them on investigations in the outdoor areas of the nursery. This should be a focus for improvement as practitioners develop their use of floorbooks.

Interactions are positive and supportive. There is scope for practitioners to develop their skills in using comments and questions as they engage with children and support learning. This will develop and extend children's thinking, build on what children already know, and assist them to achieve their full potential. Some adult-led experiences do not yet provide children with appropriate opportunities to develop their own ideas and theories about the world.

Practitioners observe children during free play and adult-supported activities. All children have an individual ‘My Learning Journey’, which includes observations of their personal learning and examples of their work. Children and parents have access to these books. For children aged three to five, there is significant potential to develop these books further, to increase challenge and progress in learning. In doing so, practitioners should provide more opportunities for children to reflect on themselves as learners, and develop vocabulary to talk about their learning. Practitioners should explore ways of involving parents and carers further in recognising achievements and planning next steps.

Practitioners recognise the need to develop further their use of observation and assessment. Practitioners working with children aged under three years, are beginning to use schema to plan relevant learning experiences and opportunities for children. As a team, practitioners
should continue to explore this, and similar approaches to inform improved planning for children of all ages. Practitioners should consider the development of children's personalised learning targets.

- Tracking and monitoring should now be developed further taking account of National Benchmarks. This will enable practitioners to support children to make the best possible progress in their learning.
2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Appropriate use is made of national guidance to support practitioners in planning for children’s learning.

- The curriculum has recently been improved to include more interesting, open-ended learning opportunities. Building on this, practitioners should make more use of the design principles when planning and evaluating experiences, particularly in relation to depth, challenge and progression. Senior leaders should develop a curriculum rationale, reflecting the unique context of the nursery and EYC.

- Across the nursery, there is scope for children to develop further their skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. There now needs to be a more focused and personalised approach when planning for the development of children’s skills in these areas.

- A range of visitors and learning visits in the local area enrich children’s experiences. Practitioners should encourage children to make links between what they are learning in the nursery, and employment and work in the local community. There is scope to develop further the use of digital technology to support children’s learning.

- Leaders need to review and improve how information about children is collected and is used to support children at transition. Practitioners should ensure they have the information they need to support children when they join the nursery. At transition to primary one, there needs to be a clearer focus on children’s progress in key areas of early learning. This will help ensure improved outcomes for all children.
### 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- The nursery has developed positive partnerships within the local community to enrich children’s learning. These include links with the local fire and lifeboat station. Practitioners use resources such as the local forest to provide different learning experiences for children.

- Information about children’s learning is regularly shared with parents and carers through daily contact and informal meetings. Planned, formal meetings should now be offered to all parents and carers, to discuss their child’s progress and achievements. Children’s learning journeys are shared with parents. These now need to be developed further, in partnership with parents, to ensure a clearer understanding of their child’s progress in learning.

- The nursery provides a wide range of opportunities for parents to be involved in children’s learning including Singing Together, a lending library, and swimming sessions in the local pool. The EYC provides a range of imaginative and valued support to families attending the nursery, and those living in the wider community. We discussed with senior leaders the need to make effective use of self-evaluation and improvement planning, to maximise the impact of the significant potential of the nursery and EYC, as an integrated resource for children and families.
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. Areas for development have been agreed with the setting and the education authority that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.
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

Across the nursery, children enjoy warm, caring relationships with practitioners. In the playrooms for children aged under three years, practitioners have created a calm and welcoming environment. Children are happy and settled. They enjoy the company of their friends, and are learning to share their play with each other. Children aged three to five engage well with each other. Many have developed good friendships. They are learning to consider the needs of others and most are able to take turns and share resources. Practitioners model respectful behaviour and use a variety of strategies to resolve conflicts and promote an ethos of kindness and care. Children should now be involved in developing their own nursery rules. A few children, who are new to the nursery, would benefit from some more personalised support to help them settle.

Practitioners are developing their knowledge of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). They would benefit from further support to deepen their understanding. Children are beginning to develop their understanding of how the nursery is helping them to be aware of what it means to be safe and healthy. They are encouraged to develop awareness of healthy choices through experiences of baking and through conversations at snack and lunch times. Children undertake risk assessments of the outdoor area and are beginning to understand how this helps keep them safe in their play. Practitioners should now use the wellbeing indicators more effectively in their daily practice. They should ensure children develop awareness and understanding of what the indicators mean to them in their daily lives.

Practitioners know families well. Since re-opening in March 2018, the EYC provides a wide range of valued support to families. This is having a positive impact on children’s learning and development. Practitioners and senior leaders should build on this to maximise the impact of the significant potential of the nursery and EYC to support children and families.

Practitioners comply and engage with a range of statutory requirements and codes of practice. They understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. They now need support to make more confident, effective use of plans to support children’s care and wellbeing further. Practitioners should ensure they have the information they need to support children fully when they join the nursery.

Children have opportunities to influence decisions. There is scope to develop this further. Children are keen to take responsibility for tasks within the nursery. Practitioners should build on this by increasing opportunities for children to develop their early leadership skills. This will
better realise children’s potential and allow them to take a more active role in the life of the nursery and wider school.

- Practitioners treat children and their families with respect. Parents report that they feel welcome and included. Senior leaders and practitioners should continue to monitor the strategies used to promote inclusion and equality.
### 3.2 Securing children's progress

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 satisfactory progress in communication, early language, and health and wellbeing. As assessment, tracking and monitoring improve, leaders should support practitioners to plan experiences that are more challenging for individuals. Focused, continuing professional development and strengthened leadership of learning will be important to securing further improvement to experiences and outcomes for children. This will ensure practitioners support children to develop further their skills, knowledge and attitudes to become highly motivated and effective learners.

Practitioners support children aged two years well to develop their communication and early language skills. They use simple words and phrases to communicate. Practitioners act as effective role models in supporting language skills, and children enjoy simple stories and rhymes during their time in the nursery. Children demonstrate increasing confidence as they explore and investigate both indoors and out. They enjoy visits to the hall and are developing their large physical skills well as they run, and throw and kick balls. The provision of open-ended materials is helping to develop children’s awareness of simple mathematical concepts. Children enjoy regular mark-making opportunities and are learning to use their fingers well. They are becoming more independent as they learn to feed themselves.

Children aged three to five years are making satisfactory progress in communication and early language. They are developing their early communication skills as they learn across the curriculum. Children enjoy looking at books, listening to stories and singing nursery rhymes both independently, and with practitioners. They follow instructions as they play and they readily engage in conversations with practitioners and each other. Children are learning to identify their name at snack time. They make good use of mark-making opportunities across the learning environment, for example, using jotters and pens in the home corner and mark-making opportunities outdoors. There is scope for children to apply their early literacy skills further, across a range of meaningful contexts including role-play and real-life situations.

Children aged three to five years are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. Most children can count to ten. A few can count beyond ten, and should be
encouraged to explore larger numbers in their play. Children are learning about shape, colour, matching and sorting through interesting life experiences, for example, when preparing and grading carrots from the nursery garden. Children are beginning to develop their understanding of measure through regular baking activities. This is helping them to develop some appropriate language of measure. Practitioners should continue to support children to develop and apply early numeracy and mathematical skills through a range of contexts.

- Children aged three to five years are making satisfactory progress in their health and wellbeing. Across the nursery, children play together well, and show age appropriate consideration for the feelings of others. Children are aware of the established playroom rules. Practitioners should now involve them more fully in shaping playroom rules and practices. This will develop children’s awareness of themselves as capable and responsible members of the nursery community. Children benefit from access to outdoor play, regular trips to the gym hall and swimming sessions in the local pool. They are learning about healthy food choices and the importance of taking good care of their teeth.

- Practitioners should explore ways to celebrate and build on children’s wider achievements more effectively in the nursery. We discussed how practitioners might usefully explore ways to encourage parents to be more active partners. This will support parents to recognise their children’s achievements and involve them in planning their children’s learning. Practitioners should consider a range of creative approaches to celebrate children’s successes and achievements more fully within the nursery.

- Practitioners work in partnership with the EYC, to take steps to identify potential barriers to progress, and provide valued support to children and families. They should continue to develop the potential of this partnership, and maximise the impact of this aspect of the work of the nursery.
Practitioners in the nursery and EYC work to foster positive and trusting relationships with families. As a result, they are developing a deeper understanding of the needs of children and families. To build on these positive relationships, the nursery would benefit from the development of a shared understanding, rationale, and vision for family learning. This should include further consultation with parents and families, to determine what they would find useful, and to ensure the engagement of the greatest number of families. Consideration should also be given to how practitioners across the nursery, school and EYC can work together most effectively, to ensure the maximum impact of their joint work.

Since taking up her post in March 2018, the EYC manager has been effective in developing a wide range of partnerships with relevant local agencies and professionals to agree and implement strategies to support learning. There are indications that this approach has already begun to be effective in the delivery of preventative and targeted support to families. Practitioners should now continue to develop these partnerships and programmes, to build capacity across the nursery and to respond to the needs of families in an increasingly individualised manner. Over time, it will be important for leaders and practitioners to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to evidence the impact of family learning activities. Evidence on children’s learning should be gathered, in order to measure and celebrate successes and achievements.

Parents and carers feel welcome in the nursery. Practitioners provide a range of opportunities for parents to play a more active role in the life of the nursery. There is scope to develop further parental involvement and partnerships with home. This could include, for example, ‘stay and play’ sessions that are more regular, where families develop a shared understanding of the learning in the nursery. It will also be important for practitioners to collect and make more effective use of information about children’s achievements at home. These should be celebrated in the nursery. Evidence on children’s learning should be gathered more effectively and consistently, in order to measure and celebrate successes and achievements.
1. Quality of care and support

The service provided children and their families with a welcoming and caring environment. The good work carried out in the EYC had been used effectively to strengthen further links with parents. This joint work was at an early stage but was being used effectively to support parents to learn strategies and skills which could be used within their wider family.

The staff team were caring and respectful towards children. Staff showed a good understanding of the need to help children build secure attachments and to do this they provided a safe, settled and consistent environment. On the whole, children were confident and chatty and some had formed good friendships in the group.

Staff knew children very well but much of this information was not recorded or used effectively to form coherent personal plans. The system in place to develop personal plans needed to be significantly improved. This was needed to ensure that information gathered on individual children was pertinent to developing an overview of that child’s individual needs. Information should be as complete as possible at the point a child starts in the nursery, and must be reviewed at least every six months. (See recommendation one).

Since our last visit, staff had developed an improved pace of the day for children who attended for the full session. Staff were developing the process of being more responsive to children’s ideas and interest, to inform the planning of activities. To complement this responsiveness, staff should consider the use of carpet time to ensure that it contributes to children’s learning. Activities for children under three were well thought out and recorded by staff.

There were opportunities for children to learn about their health and wellbeing. Children told us about tooth brushing and why this was important. The procedure for tooth brushing was well embedded which helped children form good habits. Children had access to outdoor play and physical activity for most of the day. The outdoor area was being further developed but, as it stood, provided children with an interesting and varied environment. Children had opportunities to grow and make food from their produce. The EYC carried out work around healthy lifestyles, and this work was reflected in the nursery.

Procedures for the administration of medication needed to be improved. A procedure was needed which reflected good practice and current guidance. Where children had long term medications, procedures were needed to ensure that these medications were available in nursery at all times. (See recommendation two).

Care Inspectorate grade: adequate

2. Quality of environment

The accommodation used by children was safe and secure, and on the whole provided a comfortable environment for children. Good systems were in place to minimise risk within the building, whilst encouraging children to assess some risks in their play for themselves.
Staff had made improvements to the facilities for the youngest children to sleep, and a designated sleep area had been provided. Children accessed this area independently, and knew where to get their bedding and sleep mat.

Main areas of the nursery were clean to maintain a pleasant childcare environment. Improvements were needed to the organisation of potty/toilet training for the youngest children, and clothes and resources stored in nappy changing areas should be kept in boxes or cupboards to limit contamination.

The routine for lunch was more organised, providing children with a better meal time experience. Changes to the menu were being planned across the local authority. Changes would promote children’s choice rather than parent choice and provide meals which were more in line with current good nutritional practice. Children under three ate in the nursery, and were well supported by staff who assisted with eating and drinking where necessary, and ensured that this was a social and reflective time.

Further work could be carried out as a staff team, to fully integrate children under three into the wider group. This would enable younger children to experience a full range of core activities, and improve the procedures for toilet training and the development of independence and confidence.

Positive changes had been made to the environment since our last visit. Children’s art work and achievements were celebrated, and an improved range of resources were available. We asked staff to look further at the implementation of loose parts. Staff needed to further extend this to all children, and use more of these resources indoors. Outdoors, thought needed to be given to the appropriateness of some of the items used.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

### 3. Quality of staffing

Staff were committed to their role and capable of promoting positive outcomes for children. They used their knowledge of child development to provide a good level of nurturing care. To compliment this, staff could take more ownership of their own learning, to refresh and extend their professional knowledge.

A system for staff appraisal was in place. This enabled the senior team to monitor staff performance and discuss professional development. We have suggested that this could include more ambitious development targets for staff, and be used to encourage staff to have ownership and responsibility of the improvements necessary in the nursery.

We have commented on the need to fully integrate the youngest children fully into the nursery class. To help with this transition, work could be carried out on team building and roles and responsibilities.

Through the way staff behaved, they provided good role models for children and their parents. They were relaxed, fun and friendly which helped to promote confidence, and a feeling of security for children.
Regular staff meetings were held to share information and develop plans for the nursery. Minutes of these meetings were available, but these needed to be clearer and include responsibility for actions.

Staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Staff were aware of their responsibility under the codes of conduct, and were keeping a log of training to ensure that they met the training requirements to maintain their registration.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

### 4. Quality of management and leadership

The process of self-evaluation, monitoring and auditing had begun and needed further developed, to provide the written evidence necessary to make informed assessments. The use of tools such as How Good is our Early Education and Childcare? would enable staff to identify the key priorities for improvement. (See recommendation three).

More formal procedures for auditing and monitoring the work of the nursery needed to be developed and implemented, to promote consistency and good practice across the whole staff team. (See recommendation four).

Staff had started to ask parents for their views on the quality of outcomes for their children. Staff needed to develop a range of different methods to gain the views of parents, and most importantly children, to enable them to accurately assess areas of the service, and develop a prioritised action plan.

More guidance from the senior team was needed to develop and implement key procedures and documents used in the nursery. Where local authority procedures existed, these should be used. Areas for specific development included: care planning, co-ordination of wellbeing concerns, key procedures such as medication administration, and procedures needed to reflect personal care aspects for younger children.

The senior team had identified that aspects of the nursery required some additional support, and had provided consistent guidance and support from a principal teacher. Staff spoke positively about this support, and work needed to continue to enable staff to take responsibility for aspects of the nursery.

**Care Inspectorate grade: adequate**

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and two recommendations. From these, two recommendations have been met. As a result of this inspection, there are four recommendations.

**Recommendations:**

- To help ensure that there is good quality information available about each child, which, can be used by staff to meet care and support needs, the management team should further
develop the information gathered about children, to meet care and support needs. This information should be reviewed at least once every six months.

Health and Social Care Standards. Standard 1.15 – My personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met.

- To ensure that the administration of medication is carried out in a safe way, a medication procedure should be developed and followed by staff. This procedure should take account of local authority guidance and good practice information.

Health and Social Care Standards. Standard 4.11 – I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.

- To assess how well the service is meeting positive outcomes for children, the service should develop self-assessment procedures, using good practice and current guidance. This evidence-based assessment should then be used to identify priorities for improvement.

Health and Social Care Standards. Standard 4.19 – I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement.

- To promote consistency and good practice across the staff team, the service should develop a system for auditing and monitoring the work of the nursery.

Health and Social Care Standards. Standard 4.23 – I use a service which is well led and managed.
Explanation of terms of quality

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

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<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>All</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost all</td>
<td>91%-99%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most</td>
<td>75%-90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>50%-74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minority/less than half</td>
<td>15%-49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A few</td>
<td>less than 15%</td>
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Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.