

Summarised Inspection Findings

St Mary's Primary School

Midlothian Council

SEED No: 5542324

14 March 2017

1.3 LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE

good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community*
- *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
- *Implementing improvement and change*

- The headteacher has matched the long-standing school vision with the development priorities advised by the local authority and is satisfied the school's vision is relevant. The school community bases a strong emphasis on inclusion through its Gospel values. 'A Midlothian Learner' makes clear the attributes, knowledge and skills all children should develop for life, learning and work. The authority aspirations for children and the impact expected in the impact statement are appropriate and relevant. The headteacher should now as planned, actively promote the school's vision with stakeholders.
- The headteacher has a very good understanding of the school's demographic area and knows the needs of children and their families well. Staff access helpful supports as appropriate. The education authority provides helpful information through its knowledge of the area served by the school. This is helping the staff to develop an understanding of equity and the focus on success for all learners. The headteacher is well respected in the community and has fostered effective links with various groups and services. All staff, partners and parents need to have ownership of the vision and work more collaboratively together in support of the school's continued improvement.
- The school has aligned its improvement priorities with revised national quality indicators. This has resulted in a sharpened focus on raising attainment. The school now needs to establish more rigorous approaches to providing support and challenge through well focused professional dialogue amongst staff. This will strengthen the school's self-evaluation leading to self-improvement and outcomes for learners.
- The school's newly devised learning community plan provides a helpful framework and focus for improvements. The school now needs to ensure it has rigorous monitoring and tracking approaches to measure progress made. Collaborative leadership of change at all levels is at an early stage of development. Staff are committed to improving their work and need to work collegiately to take forward and share the leadership of school priorities.
- The quality of learning and teaching overall is becoming more innovative. Staff are beginning to develop enquiring approaches to professional learning and

should plan how they can evaluate the impact of initiatives such as the recent introduction of 'mi:SPACE'. While there are strengths in the pastoral care and support to reduce barriers to learning for some children, the school should take steps to ensure appropriate challenge for all learners to do as well as they can.

- The school should take forward its improvement priorities as outlined in its self-evaluation document. In particular, the headteacher, principal teacher and staff should make clear their leadership roles and the shared leadership responsibilities across the team.

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
- *Quality of teaching*
- *Effective use of assessment*
- *Planning, tracking and monitoring*

- The school's strengths in this theme have a significantly positive impact on almost all children.
- The positive, inclusive ethos based around the principles of the Catholic Faith supports children to participate in their learning. Almost all children report that they enjoy being at school.
- Overall, the quality of learning and teaching is good. Across the school children are generally engaged in their learning and are attentive during direct teaching. When given the opportunity, most children work well together in pairs and small groups and report that this helps them in their learning.
- In all classes, teachers share learning intentions and success criteria with children in literacy and numeracy. There is scope to further involve children in shaping success criteria and improve their understanding of self and peer assessment. Plenary sessions are used to encourage children to review and evaluate their learning. In almost all classes verbal feedback is used to clarify and develop next steps. Staff should work together to develop an approach for written feedback using formative comments.
- Almost all children benefit from a variety of appropriate learning experiences which are mostly differentiated for their age and stage.
- Within classes teachers use a blend of learning and teaching approaches to successfully engage most pupils in active learning tasks. A 'stations approach' is achieving variable success in the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school. This needs to be kept continually under review to ensure maximum impact on learners.
- Class groupings are appropriate to meet the needs of the majority of learners. Those who require additional help with their learning are offered appropriate support. There is a need to develop pace and challenge at all stages across the curriculum to ensure that lessons and expectations are set at the right level of challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- In almost all classes teachers are enthusiastic and provide clear instructions to support children's learning. In the best examples, higher order questioning is used effectively to develop children's thinking and deepen their learning. During whole class lessons care needs to be taken ensure a better balance between teacher talk

and learner engagement.

- Digital learning and teaching supports the teaching of mathematics and some aspects of literacy. Innovative approaches to the use of digital technology to support learning are being developed well through the 'mi:SPACE' project. Children talked positively about using digital technology and expressed a desire to have more opportunities to do so.
- Staff commitment to implementing Midlothian Council's 'Visible Learning' approach is developing consistency in children's evaluation skills to improve their learning.
- Teachers use a wide variety of assessment information to identify next steps in learning and report progress of individuals and groups at key milestones. The school should develop its approach to assess the English language acquisition of children for whom English is an additional language. There is a need to streamline approaches to assessment and its use to support assessment judgements and decisions about next steps.
- Standardised assessment and professional judgement are used to track and report on pupils' progress. The headteacher recognises the need to develop the school's approach to tracking children's progress over time.
- The school uses its own Curriculum for Excellence benchmarks to assess progress in literacy and numeracy and should now use the latest national benchmarks to add increased rigour to the process.

2.2 CURRICULUM: theme 2: Learning Pathways

- The school has adopted planning frameworks for each area of the curriculum, including French, which support teachers to plan for progression in core skills and knowledge within and across the levels of Curriculum for Excellence. As planned, the school should align its own progression pathways to national benchmarks.
- The school recognises that an inconsistent approach to the implementation of programmes and approaches in aspects of literacy and numeracy is resulting in there being an interrupted pathway for children at various stages of the school. The school has already taken steps to address this within mathematics. As the school develops approaches to the teaching of writing, there needs to be consistency in the range and types of genres to be taught and revisited within and across the levels of the curriculum.
- Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across learning is delivered mainly through interdisciplinary learning (IDL) contexts. Teachers should ensure that work within the cross-cutting areas of the curriculum is revised regularly with learners within and across stages to strengthen and deepen the progression of these skills. IDL is made relevant to learners at each stage by teachers who select linked experiences and outcomes from across the curriculum. The whole school focus on Scottish history as part of IDL represents a positive attempt by the school to achieve greater cohesion to the teaching of social studies.
- The agreed set of 'attributes for learning' linked to the purposes of the curriculum and specific to the school are being routinely reinforced at each stage of the school through all aspects of learning and teaching.

2.7 PARTNERSHIPS: theme 3 Impact on learners – Parental Engagement

- All parents involved in the inspection and those who responded to the questionnaires report that they are happy with the school and the ways in which they are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. They appreciate participating in school events such as regular assemblies and information sessions.
- Children and families support the community fundraising for overseas communities through the 'Missio' group. Partnership is developing well with the new Parish Priest.
- Opportunities to share learning and information on the school website helps keep parents well informed about ways they can support children's learning.

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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

3.1 ENSURING WELLBEING, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's 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 every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
- *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
- *Inclusion and equality*

- Support for children's wellbeing is a strong feature of the school's provision. In recent times, its focus on developing pupil voice through a range of committees is developing confidence and responsibility for learners. Staff place a high importance on the pastoral care of children and provide a supportive environment where they feel valued. Children are developing a growing awareness and understanding of wellbeing indicators. Most behave very well and are polite and caring towards one another. They would benefit from learning more about rights and respect and understanding the needs of others.
- Children are developing an understanding of fitness and healthy lifestyles and participate in sports tasters and weekly exercise activities. They have regular opportunities to participate in a range of clubs at lunchtime and after school. They are developing leadership skills and contribute to the life of the school through their involvement in committees. Children enjoy their learning outdoors. The recent development to the teaching of outdoor learning skills to older pupils has the potential to complement the school's approach to wellbeing across the curriculum. The school should continue to develop this aspect of learning and the use of the local environment to make learning relevant and linked to wellbeing. Children benefit from two hours quality physical education each week.
- Almost all staff promote positive relationships and know the children and their families well. The individual needs of learners are identified early and support and interventions targeted effectively. Systems to monitor, track and plan for individual learners are managed systematically. The school has effective strategies in place to help children overcome any barriers to their learning. Those who have additional support needs, are supported meaningfully through targeted individualised learning plans. The headteacher should review the range of ways the school gathers and records information about children and consider ways to streamline these to further enhance effectiveness.
- The staff and children have a very clear understanding of fairness and tolerance. They are welcoming and inclusive towards new children and families. A strong emphasis is placed upon inclusion and support for pupils. Children with English as an additional language are included well and most are making good progress. Children are supportive of one another. They could be helped to have a better understanding of the needs of others. The school should now consider how it can promote equalities across the community and widen children's understanding of rights and respect.

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- *Attainment in literacy and numeracy*
- *Attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Equity for all learners*

Attainment in Literacy and English:

- Curriculum for Excellence attainment data provided by the school for literacy in session 2015/16 shows that almost all children attained early level by the end of P1 and the majority attained appropriate levels by the end of P4 and P7. Teacher professional judgement predicts that most children are on track to attain nationally expected levels in all aspects of literacy by the end of session 2016/17.
- Participation in moderation activities to share and discuss standards in writing and reading at both school and within the St. David's High School learning community is beginning to improve teacher's confidence in standards.
- Standardised assessment data shows attainment over time for individual pupils in reading and spelling at stages P2 – P7. Data shows that reading attainment of most children is average or better and in spelling data the majority are spelling at levels appropriate to their chronological age.

Listening and talking:

- Most children listen well to information from adults. At the early stages most children demonstrate effective listening skills and engage well in simple conversations. When in small group discussions or one-to-one situations, most children articulate very well their personal views and opinions. Children would benefit from developing a range of strategies and techniques to help them sustain and lead conversations more formally.
- Children have a well-developed vocabulary and can talk about subjects of interest to them. A more specific focus at the upper stages on the development of specific vocabulary to persuade and influence will help.
- Most children are becoming increasingly confident in planning and delivering presentations.

Reading:

- By P3, most children use their phonics skills well to decode common words in texts. As they progress through the school children read aloud with increasing confidence and fluency. Most children use their knowledge of punctuation, grammar and vocabulary well to add expression when reading.
- Children across the school are developing reading comprehension skills appropriate to their stage of learning.

- Across the school, children are becoming increasingly aware of their own reading ability and almost all select texts appropriate to their reading level and give reasons for their choice. Children read regularly a good range of fiction and non-fiction texts for enjoyment. As a result of the focus on independent reading each day and regular use of school and class libraries children are developing an awareness reading genre and author styles.

Writing:

- Across the school, children are writing across a range of genre, including poetry. Most children write well in the style of a famous author and poet. Children should write more routinely for a real purpose and for a real audience. There is scope at all stages for children to write more frequently and for pieces of writing to be revisited and developed over time.
- By P3, children are developing important tools for writing. However, as children progress through the school more focus needs to be placed on the development of the skills to write increasingly complex pieces. Too much time is spent planning writing resulting in unfinished pieces of work.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics:

- Curriculum for Excellence attainment data provided by the school for numeracy in session 2015/16 shows that almost all children attained early level by the end of P1 and the majority attained appropriate levels by the end of P4 and P7. Teacher professional judgement predicts that most children are on track to attain nationally expected levels in numeracy by the end of session 2016/17.

Number, money and measurement:

- Across the school, a variety of approaches to support the development of mental maths are evident and most pupils are making good progress in this area. Most children have a good understanding of the number system and place value and are able to estimate and round numbers appropriately.

Shape, position and movement:

- Children at all stages, were able to identify and classify 2D shapes and 3D objects and at the upper stages understood and applied geometry skills relating to angles and symmetry.

Information handling:

- Across all stages, most children were able to collect, sort, organise and display data using tables, graphs, charts and diagrams. They can interpret and draw conclusions from information displayed in a variety of forms.
- Across the school and within the wider community, pupils get a number of opportunities to achieve and develop leadership roles. Support from the Active-Schools initiative supports pupils well and the school is involved in a great deal of charity work which is appreciated and recognised by the community.
- P6 and P7 pupils are proud of their leadership roles and read simple texts with accuracy, expression and fluency to younger children as 'reading buddies'.
- Pupils at P4 are developing their understanding of Gaelic culture by learning songs showing accurate Gaelic pronunciation.

- The headteacher and staff, together with pupils and parents, should consider how to extend opportunities for participation in team sports.
- Staff have a very good understanding of children's barriers to learning. Those children who require additional interventions and support are making good progress overall. The school is monitoring children who have additional support needs and focussed on achieving equity of success.

SCHOOL'S CHOICE OF QI: 2.4 PERSONALISED SUPPORT

- **Universal support**
- **Targeted support**
- **Removal of barriers to learning**

- Children across the school are confident and staff encourage them to do their best. In most lessons, teachers plan tasks and activities that meet the needs of children well. In a few cases, learning activities need to offer greater challenge to enable children to routinely engage in higher-order thinking and where possible support children to apply their learning in a range of situations. At times, staff could set higher expectations for individuals and groups in aspects of their learning. There is scope to increase opportunities for children across the school to be more actively involved in their learning.
- The provision of targeted support is of a high importance in the school. Targeted intervention is well planned and delivered within a staged intervention framework. Across the various stages of intervention, concerns raised by class teachers are shared and acted upon timeously. Targets within individualised plans are well crafted to address children's main barrier to learning. Targets are reviewed regularly with input from parents, pupils and partners. The school works well with a range of partners to deliver effectively targeted support. Class teachers seek out and follow advice provided by specialist support staff in respect of individual children. The school should consider building on this collaborative approach by providing regular opportunities for staff to work collaboratively in the classroom environment.
- Learning assistants work alongside class teachers to support individuals and groups. The school should consider how best to ensure that learning assistants maximise their impact on learning.

PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- The experienced headteacher who has gained a high level of respect for the school within its community.
- Children who are confident, enjoy learning and are motivated to do their best.
- All children in the primary stages are involved in committees and have ideas about how to make further improvements to their school. They feel valued and are well cared for by staff. Across the nursery class and primary stages, staff work well with parents and other professional partners to support children.
- Children are making good progress in literacy and in particular, are developing effective talking and listening skills.
- The school provides well-targeted support for children who have additional support needs and strives to ensure they make the best progress possible.

AGREED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL

- Further develop the shared leadership of change across the school and in particular of the nursery class.
- Continue to improve consistency in the quality of learning, teaching and the use of assessment.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INSPECTION?

The inspection team is confident that with continued support from the education authority the school has the capacity to continually improve. The Care Inspectorate will make a return visit to the nursery class within 12 months to monitor the progress made in taking forward the requirement and recommendations identified during this inspection.

Section two

Summarised Inspection Findings

St Mary's Primary School Nursery Class

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*
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- Within recent months a number of changes to develop the work of the early learning and childcare (ELC) setting have taken place. Practitioners have benefited from the support provided by the peripatetic principal teacher. She has led the team effectively to improve the indoor learning environment and planning for children's learning. To ensure continuous improvement it will be important for practitioners to be clear about their role in leading learning. Practitioners demonstrate full commitment to improving the provision and are motivated to make the changes required to achieve high quality ELC provision. Practitioners will benefit from continued strategic guidance and direction from the headteacher to support them through this period of change and to continue to develop their knowledge, skills and practice. Clearly identified leadership roles will help support the delivery of the curriculum.
 - Practitioners are not yet fully involved in the school improvement planning process. An action plan has been created that outlines key priorities for improvement within the ELC setting. Practitioners are beginning to reach a shared understanding of areas of strengths and where improvements are required.
 - Practitioners access a range of courses to support their professional learning. As a team, they will benefit from opportunities to engage in professional dialogue to ensure decisions are based on sound judgments and a shared understanding of pedagogy. We discussed with practitioners the importance of ensuring the setting's vision, values and aims reflect the context of the setting within the school, the wider community and the aspirations of practitioners.
 - Practitioners have made a recent start to self-evaluating the work of the setting. Increasingly, they are becoming reflective practitioners. As this develops, it will be important to use national guidance to support this process. Self-evaluation processes now needs to lead to self-improvement.

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences 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 majority of children are engaged in a range of activities available both indoors and outdoors. Recently they have been able to move freely between the playroom and the outdoor area. As a result, most children are choosing to spend considerable amounts of time in the outdoor area. Practitioners now need to take this into account when planning for children's learning to ensure children access a broad range of experiences both indoors and outdoors. The majority of children sustain interest in their chosen activity for a length of time appropriate to their stage of development. Changes to the playroom are enabling children to be independent and make choices and decisions about their play. Increasingly, natural materials and open-ended resources are being used to encourage children's creativity and curiosity. Real-life objects are supporting children's imaginative play. This should be extended to the outdoor area. It will be important for practitioners to evaluate the quality of children's experiences to ensure they reflect the range of developmental stages of children attending and are having a positive impact on children's learning.
- Practitioners are caring in their interactions with children and readily engage in conversations to talk about children's experiences. The use of effective questioning techniques to support and extend children's learning should continue to be developed.
- Practitioners are developing their skills in observation. Overall, observations recorded within individual learning journals reflect children's involvement in learning experiences. Practitioners continue to develop their skills in identifying and recording significant learning. As a result, next steps identified for individual children are beginning to focus on learning. The system for tracking and monitoring children's progress is under review. It will be important for the headteacher and practitioners to agree on a system that will be manageable and demonstrate the progress children are making over time.
- Increasingly, planning is becoming more responsive to children's interests. Through the use of floor books and a 'learning tree' children are becoming more involved in the planning process. As this develops, it will be important for practitioners to use children's individual 'learning journals' to demonstrate the progress they are making across learning.

2.2 CURRICULUM: theme 2: Learning and Development Pathways

- Practitioners plan using the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence. They identify specific learning intentions and provide a range of learning experiences to support children's learning across the curriculum. The 'learning tree' and floor books are providing opportunities for children to talk about their involvement in experiences. As planning for children's learning develops, it will be important for practitioners to ensure children experience appropriate depth and challenge in their learning. Practitioners should ensure that both the indoor and outdoor environments promote children's skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Self-evaluation should be used to ensure new initiatives and strategies being used continue to be effective.
- As identified, the outdoor learning is an area for improvement. Practitioners should make use of guidance documents to help them plan rich and exciting experiences that support children's curiosity, creativity and inquiry and enable children to learn about and from the environment. Children will benefit from the whole space being available so that they can engage in a range of outdoor experiences.
- Practitioners should continue to work with colleagues within the primary school to plan for progression so that children continue to develop and learn across the early level of Curriculum for Excellence.

2.7 PARTNERSHIPS: theme 3 Impact on children and families – Parental Engagement

- Parents are welcomed into the setting and encouraged to be involved through a variety of activities and events. 'Playdate' sessions are enabling parents to view their child's learning journal and to talk to practitioners about their child's experiences. Practitioners recognise the value in using these opportunities to talk to parents about the progress their child is making.
- We discussed with practitioners ways to increase the involvement of parents within the setting to enrich children's learning experiences. It will be important for practitioners to share with parents the impact that parental engagement has on children's learning.
- Practitioners are currently planning to implement the 'Big bedtime Read' initiative. The Early Years Collaborative improvement model will be used to measure the impact of this initiative.

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 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*

- Positive relationships are evident between practitioners and children. They know children well as individuals. The wellbeing of children is central to the work of the setting. Practitioners are aware of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators. They are beginning to support children's awareness of what it means to be safe and how to keep healthy. We have discussed ways to develop children's early awareness of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The caring and respectful ethos is enabling children to develop confidence and the skills to enable them to play cooperatively with their peers. Practitioners promote positive behaviour and use restorative practices to help children resolve minor conflict situations and show consideration for others.
- Children are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas. This could be developed further to give children a greater level of involvement in making decisions about activities and events within the setting. There is scope to develop children's leadership skills by giving children appropriate responsibilities in and around the setting.
- The headteacher and practitioners are aware of the statutory duties in relation to providing ELC. Practitioners have accessed a range of professional learning opportunities and use this knowledge to guide their practice in supporting inclusion and children's wellbeing. The increased hours of ELC are offered to parents using a flexible start and finish to each session. We have asked practitioners to consider ways to encourage parents to make use of their full entitlement of 600 hours of ELC. This will give children more time to engage with the range of learning experiences.
- Diversity is valued and celebrated. Children and families who attend the setting are treated with respect. There is an inclusive ethos where all children are encouraged to take a full and active part in all aspects of the setting. Children who may experience potential barriers to their learning are supported to ensure they are able to fully participate in the range of learning experiences.

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*
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- Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in their learning. The current system for tracking children's progress is not reliable and does not demonstrate clearly enough the progress children are making over time. This needs to be developed further to ensure a clearer overview of the progress children are making. This will enable practitioners to ensure children are given the right level of support and challenge in their learning.
 - In health and wellbeing children are becoming aware of feelings and emotions and the importance of sharing and playing cooperatively with their peers. The majority of children are confident with hygiene routines and can talk about the importance of hand washing and tooth brushing. A few children can identify healthy foods when having their snack. As part of outdoor play children develop a range of physical skills as they use wheeled toys and climb and balance on various apparatus.
 - The majority of children listen well to stories and can follow simple instructions. A few children confidently engage in conversations with visitors and will ask relevant questions to support their learning. Practitioners now need to ensure that children's communication and early language skills are consistently supported through play. The majority of children recognise their name and show an interest in mark making. There is scope to develop further children's early literacy skills across all areas of learning and through real-life contexts.
 - Children are developing an understanding of mathematical concepts through the setting's routines and play experiences. The majority of children can demonstrate one-to-one correspondence and recognise some numerals. They identify 2D shapes from pictures and examples of their work. A few children use appropriate mathematical language when using blocks. It will be important for practitioners to encourage children's use of mathematical and positional language through play situations. Children will benefit from opportunities to use money in meaningful and real-life contexts.
 - Practitioners use praise and encouragement to recognise children's achievements. Wall displays show the range of children's skills in using a variety of art and craft techniques to create pictures, paintings and 3D models. An early start has been made to gather children's achievements from outwith the setting. As this develops it will be important for practitioners to build upon children's learning from outwith the

setting to ensure children continue to make the progress they are capable of. There is scope to develop further children's citizenship and enterprise skills within the setting, and the wider community.

- The setting has a supportive and inclusive ethos. Practitioners are aware of the cultural and socio-economic context of their families. They are proactive in identifying potential barriers to learning for individual children. This now needs to be formally recorded to ensure appropriate strategies are in place to provide equity and support children to make the best possible progress in their learning.

NURSERY CHOICE OF QI: 2.6 TRANSITIONS

- **Quality of support for children and their families**
 - **Collaborative planning and delivery**
 - **Continuity and progression in learning**
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- Transitions from home into the setting are managed well. The 'settling in' visits help children and their parents to become familiar with the setting at a pace that meets their needs. Information on children is gathered through 'all about me' sheets. Practitioners recognise this could be developed further by using GIRFEC wellbeing indicators to enable parents to discuss their child's individual care and learning needs.
 - A range of transition activities are provided for children and their families to enable a smooth transition from nursery into primary school. The P1 teacher visits the ELC setting regularly to get to know the children. To support continuity and progression in learning, it will be important for practitioners to ensure information relating to children's progress is exchanged with the P1 teacher.

CARE INSPECTORATE EVIDENCE

1 Quality of Care and Support

CARE INSPECTORATE GRADE: Good

- Overall, children were observed to be settled and familiar with nursery routines. Practitioners were responsive to the children and relationships were mutually warm and affectionate.
- Practitioners had worked hard to meet children's needs. We saw children approaching practitioners for help and reassurance throughout the session which meant positive relationships had been developed. Parents we spoke with were very happy with the way practitioners supported their children and how well they had settled into nursery.
- Parents told us they felt practitioners valued them and kept them well informed about their children's time in nursery through daily chats. In particular, we could see that 'Playdate' sessions had recently taken place. These useful sessions allowed parents to discuss their child's wellbeing and see what activities their child enjoyed whilst at nursery. We suggested ways in which these sessions could be more effective to allow parents an update on their progress. Practitioners were keen to listen to our ideas and took this on board.
- Children were encouraged to develop their independence skills through a variety of opportunities. These included helping to set up and prepare snack, display the snack board for others, self-registration and time given to put their own coats on before playing outside. These opportunities further promoted independence and a sense of achievement.
- Practitioners told us about the new initiative, the 'Big Bedtime Read' which was being introduced shortly. This meaningful reading challenge will introduce children to a number of books and encourage them to share their reading with their parents at home.
- The headteacher did not have up-to-date child protection guidelines. This had the potential for practitioners in the service not to have up-to-date knowledge in child protection to ensure children's health and wellbeing needs were being met.

2 Quality of environment

Care Inspectorate grade: Good

- Informative information boards were displayed which informed parents about the life and work of the nursery and its inclusion and involvement within the primary school. A display had been created to inform parents about the different ways they were using the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators and the ways this supported their child's learning and development.
- We found the environment had been maintained to be safe, clean and organised. Practitioners had recently reviewed the room and introduced more natural toys and resources. Children were able to decide where they wanted to play and could choose

- what activities to participate in. This contributed to a pleasant environment for children.
- Systems had very recently been put in place to ensure children were offered freedom of choice to move between the indoor and outdoor environment throughout the session and were encouraged to develop physical skills through energetic play. Members of practitioners were always on duty outdoors which meant that there were no restrictions on where children chose to play and ensured they were given opportunities to explore their environment. This helped support their growing independence and decision making skills.
 - The environment recognised and valued the different cultures within the centre through displays and information available. This supported a feeling of inclusion and celebrated the diversity of the service.
 - Risks to children's safety and wellbeing were addressed through the completion of a range of risk assessments. In addition, practitioners completed daily risk checks to ensure the safety of the premises prior to children's arrival. This helped to provide a safe environment. We discussed how involving the children in recognising risks would benefit them to extend their knowledge in this area.
 - The nursery had identified that the garden was in need of further development and this was an area for improvement at the last inspection. We agreed that work needed to be done to improve this area. We signposted them to documents and websites they could use to improve the resources in the garden area. In addition we discussed the new 'My World Outdoors' document which practitioners told us they were aware of. This good practice resource shares stories from services showing how much children are benefitting from outdoor play. More information on this can be found at: www.hub.careinspectorate.com. (See recommendation one.)

3 Quality of Practitioners

Care Inspectorate grade: Good

- We found that although there had been a change to the practitioners team, they were highly motivated, enthusiastic and committed to meeting the needs of the children they cared for. They worked very well as a team and were highly skilled at interacting with children and parents.
- Practitioners respected the children's views and interacted with them appropriately. Their kind, caring and supportive interactions meant children were listened to and ensured they felt secure in the nursery. Parents told us that they found practitioners to be very approachable, friendly and felt they knew their child well.
- An early years peripatetic principal teacher had recently been employed to support practitioners and give advice on making improvements within the nursery. We found that practitioners welcomed this new development and embraced the opportunity to enhance positive outcomes for the children and the experiences which impacted on their learning.
- Practitioners allowed children to take the lead in planning activities and they responded to children's requests for extra resources to develop skills and confidence in a

challenging and fun environment. This approach helped build confidence and self-esteem which led to positive outcomes.

- Annual appraisals were carried out for practitioners, and this helped identify their training and development needs.
- All practitioners were qualified and registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Practitioners confirmed they were aware of how this affected their practice regarding keeping their knowledge and training up-to-date and working within the code of conduct to support respect towards children, parents and other practitioners. Practitioners should be given time to ensure they can discuss planning for children and work as a team to review and create a relevant vision for the nursery.
- The senior member of staff should be supported to develop her capacity to lead and take responsibility. She would benefit from appropriate support to help her develop these skills. We shared information about the 'step into leadership' pathway resource with the team. This should be promoted with practitioners to support confidence and develop appropriate skills.

4 Quality of management and leadership

Care Inspectorate grade: Adequate

- Practitioners gained parents views through daily chat and the by using the 'Playdates' session. Parents confirmed that they were involved in being part of the parents' committee for the school. They were currently being consulted about the garden development to improve outdoor play. This was in the very early stages, therefore, no evidence to show how this would improve outcomes for children. This will be followed up at the next inspection.
- Evaluations of the 'Playdate' experience were in the process of being completed. Feedback from these were being used to further develop the programme for the next session. We discussed ways in which the service could provide parents with a more meaningful opportunity to gain information on their child's learning and development. This would ensure they continue to meet children's needs and keep parents informed of their progress. The progress of this will be followed up at the next inspection.
- Regular visits from the peripatetic principal teacher were welcomed as an opportunity to have professional dialogue on the service strengths and areas for improvement. This was in the very early stages which the practitioners recognised would take time to embed into everyday practice to improve outcomes for children. This was in its infancy and practitioners acknowledgment of this gave us confidence that over time it would become standard practice for practitioners.
- The nursery team and the peripatetic principal teacher had started to quality assure the nursery by introducing 'Our Nursery Journey' and a 'Wheel of Success'. These showed the very early stages of making improvements within the nursery. We suggested that they refer to key documents to gain ideas on how to extend children's learning. Practitioners were keen to do this. The progress of this will be followed up at the next inspection.

- The leadership for the nursery was not clearly defined. We observed this to impact on the overall direction of the nursery, and result in a less focused approach. Supporting the nursery and giving them a clearer vision would drive a more rigorous improvement agenda to improve outcomes for children.
- Whilst we acknowledge that the nursery action plan set out targets for improvement for over the next few months, from speaking with practitioners we found that the nursery were not carrying out formal auditing or monitoring. Quality assurance systems should be put in place to address this.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the school had no requirements and six recommendations. From these, two recommendations have been met and four recommendations have been partially met. Outstanding issues relating to quality assurance are carried forward in this inspection. As a result of this inspection, there is one requirement and six recommendations.

Requirement:

- The provider must demonstrate that practitioners understand and know how to implement the child protection policy and procedures in order to keep children safe. This is in order to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 4(1)(a) welfare of users. A provider must make provision for health, welfare and safety of service users.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 3: Health and wellbeing and Standard 14: Well-managed service
Timescale: 3 Months

Recommendations:

- In order for practitioners to support children with specific medical needs, we recommend that the nursery should include the following to a personal care plan:
 - Details of the child's allergy or medical condition and how information about this should be shared and managed.
 - What measures need to be put in place to prevent an allergic reaction or address a medical need.
 - What action practitioners should take in the event of a reaction or the child becoming unwell.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 3: Health and wellbeing.

- The provider should ensure that personal care plans for children are further developed to ensure that all information relevant to children's wellbeing is recorded. This is especially relevant where children have barriers to their learning or additional support needs. This information should make clear the possible next steps, different opportunities presented or alternative approaches/strategies being used along with regular evaluation of progress made.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 3: Health and wellbeing, Standard 4: Engaging with children and Standard 5: Quality of experience.

- The provider should improve children's quality of experience outdoors to allow them to engage in a balanced range of activities. This includes review of current

resources and use of space. This would support children to achieve, have fun and exercise choice.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 4: Engaging with children and Standard 5: Quality of experience.

- The provider should promote with practitioners, the SSSC pathway resource known as 'steps into leadership'. This would allow practitioners to develop skills of leadership which would improve their own professional practice and outcomes for children.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 12: Confidence in staff.

- The headteacher should provide clear leadership and direction to ensure practitioners are fully supported to carry out their roles as practitioners to improve outcomes for children.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 11: Improving the service and Standard 14: Well-managed service.

- To ensure the service is rigorous in reviewing all areas within the nursery, we recommend formal auditing and monitoring systems should be put in place and all practitioners are involved to ensure a shared approach. Actions should be recorded and the results should show how this has impacted on the service. This would ensure that any issues are addressed quickly and support continuous improvement.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16.
Standard 14: Well-managed service and Standard 11: Improving the service.