

# Summarised inspection findings

**Windyknowe Primary School Nursery Class**

West Lothian Council

18 February 2020

## Key contextual information

Windyknowe Nursery Class is situated within Windyknowe Primary School, Bathgate. The nursery class is registered for 60 children aged from three years to those not yet attending school. Children access a variety of hours and attendance patterns in line with The Scottish Government's expansion plan. The nursery class has experienced a number of changes since August 2019. This includes additional hours for most children, changes in session times and the recruitment of additional practitioners.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Children and parents have established positive relationships with practitioners within a welcoming and friendly environment. The nurturing and caring ethos supports children to feel safe and secure. New children settle quickly into the nursery class, engaging happily in a range of experiences. Most children are developing their confidence and becoming more independent as they move freely within the learning environment both indoors and outdoors.
- Most children are motivated and engaged fully in learning through play. Children engage well in a range of spontaneous and a few planned learning experiences within the well-considered learning environment. Loose parts and open-ended resources are supporting further the development of children's curiosity and creativity. A few children concentrate for extended periods of time in the block area. They use their imagination well, for example, to create a sleigh and a log fire. Outdoor learning in the well-developed garden space is supporting children to develop their resilience and a healthy sense of risk.
- Practitioners know all children very well and have established responsive and nurturing relationships, which support children's confidence and self-esteem. They listen attentively to children and respond in a respectful manner, allowing children to feel valued. Children have time and space to follow their interests. Most practitioners use open-ended questions well to extend children's thinking. Practitioners should continue to develop skilful questioning to support and challenge children further to extend and deepen their learning. Digital technology enhances children's learning as they use tablet computers to research and play numeracy games. Practitioners use the interactive whiteboard appropriately to support children to sing along to nursery rhymes and increasingly view their newly developed online learning journals.
- Practitioners meet weekly to collate and discuss their observations of all children. Children's online learning journals are used to record observations, however significant learning is not yet consistently captured. Practitioners should continue to develop their observation skills to support future learning and well timed interventions. Practitioners use West Lothian trackers to summarise children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing at key points in time. Practitioners should now consider the frequency of completing the trackers, ensuring they clearly demonstrate individual children's progress over time. Practitioners use children's online

journals to share children's progress with parents. They also discuss children's progress through informal daily dialogue and one formal parents meeting per year. Practitioners should continue to explore opportunities for children to engage with their online learning journals, supporting them to talk about and evaluate their learning. Transition into and from the nursery class, is managed sensitively with enhanced transitions in place for children who may require additional support. Practitioners should continue to work with colleagues across the early level to support continuity and progression in learning for all children.

- Practitioners meet weekly to plan for children's learning using a variety of approaches. This includes observing children's interests, the use of medium term plans and daily responsive planning. The introduction of floorbooks has supported practitioners to capture children's engagement in a range of learning experiences. Practitioners now need to work together with senior leaders and local authority support, to develop further their shared understanding of the planning cycle. In doing so, they should ensure all children are fully engaged in planning, leading and identifying their own learning.

## 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.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Most children are making good progress in early language and communication. Most develop and extend their vocabulary well as they share ideas and problem solve. They retell familiar stories using puppets and props. Most children listen well to practitioners and to one another in small groups. Children make good use of materials to mark-make and a few children enjoy writing for a purpose as they write menus. Children access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books as they participate in a bedtime story project. Most children are ready to develop further their understanding of rhyme, letter sounds and the structure of words. A few children are ready for more challenge in order to develop further their progress in language and communication.
- Most children are making good progress in numeracy and early mathematics. Most children can confidently recite numbers up to 20. They count backwards from five with increasing confidence. The majority of children can use one to one correspondence to count within ten. A few children are highly motivated as they use numbers for a purpose to check a food delivery. Most children use mathematical language well as they compare lengths and sizes of objects. Children are ready to extend and develop further their learning in numeracy and mathematics, for example, in real life contexts. This should support children to continue to make the progress they are capable of in numeracy and mathematics.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Almost all children cooperate and play very well together. They share resources and space well. Most children show a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves 'Sally Safe' as they balance outdoors. They risk assess their play as they use the workbench or work together in the construction area to build a boat. Children develop their fine motor skills well as they persevere to cut vegetables as they make soup. They are independent and helpful during a relaxed, healthy snack time. Children are deepening their understanding of their own and others wellbeing as they discuss the wellbeing characters they have created. Children are ready to develop further their emotional literacy. This will support them to express and understand their own and others feelings and emotions.
- Most children are making good progress over time. The majority of children's learning journals do not yet fully illustrate the progress children make across their learning. Useful, focused weekly team meetings enable practitioners to share, evaluate and plan for what children are ready to learn next. To ensure children make the very best progress practitioners should work together to develop more focused next steps in learning.

- Practitioners, parents and children increasingly share information about children's achievements. Children are confident and successful learners as they proudly share their achievements in small groups. Children require support from practitioners to identify the skills they are developing through their achievements at nursery and at home. Practitioners should use their knowledge of children's skills and wider achievements to influence their planning.
- The respectful, inclusive ethos and practitioners' detailed knowledge of individual children's circumstances supports most children to make good progress. The team promptly identify children who need swift changes to routines, resources or learning environments. Parents, practitioners and visiting professionals work well together to agree appropriate targets. Projects to support children's communication skills are available to all families. As planned, the team need to restart interventions with targeted groups. Practitioners need to monitor and evaluate interventions to evidence the impact of specific strategies on children's progress.

### 1. Quality of care and support

We found that the staff team fully embraced the values and ethos of the service which meant that children were cared for in a warm, inclusive and nurturing environment. Children's emotional well-being was well supported as they had positive relationships with staff and other children. Comfort and cuddles ensured children felt secure which enabled them to enjoy their nursery experience.

Appropriate information was gathered and used to plan children's care. Personal plans were in place which outlined the areas children needed support with. Through discussion and observation, we concluded that staff knew children very well and were responsive to their care and support needs. They talked knowledgeably about the strategies and techniques used to promote positive outcomes for children. They now need to ensure this information is recorded within personal plans so the effectiveness of the interventions can be monitored to ensure they are meeting the needs of children.

As children's individuality was valued, it meant there was a child centred approach where children felt respected and supported. The staff team worked very effectively together, sharing information so that there was a consistent approach to each child's care. If children required additional support, staff worked with other agencies to agree and implement appropriate strategies to help children achieve their potential. At present, staff had key children for activities such as tooth brushing. Consideration now needs to be given to introducing a keyworker system so that all children have a named person to oversee their care and support.

Children had various opportunities to develop their self-help skills. As they had confidence in their abilities, children confidently helped prepare snack and dress themselves appropriately for going outdoors.

Due to the expansion of the service, some children stayed for lunch. This experience could be further developed for children so that it is more reflective of the well-established and positive snack routine. For example, using cutlery and crockery instead of eating directly out of their lunch boxes.

Regular training meant staff had a sound knowledge of child protection and related issues. They understood their responsibilities about safeguarding children and the process to be followed if they had any concerns.

**Care Inspectorate grade: very good**

### 2. Quality of environment

A secure door entry system was in place, so staff knew who was in the building. Children's attendance was recorded, and visitors were asked to sign in and out of the service. The deployment of staff throughout the day helped promote children's safety.

Children benefited from a well-maintained environment that was bright, spacious and well organised. Best practice guidance had helped staff to develop and improve the areas used by children. Space had been thoughtfully used to create a stimulating environment that offered children a very good range of quality resources and experiences that promoted their learning and development. Children could independently access all areas of the nursery and choose what they

wanted to. There were also opportunities for them to participate in organised activities with staff. On arrival, children settled quickly and were soon busy and engaged in the activities they chose to do. The pace of the day ensured that children had time and space to develop and extend their activities as they wanted to. A favourite activity was the construction area where children spent long periods of time building structures with the blocks.

Children's well-being and physical skills were promoted as they had direct access to the enclosed outdoor area for fresh air and exercise every day. The organisation and resources available outdoors was used well to support children's play as they could safely explore the area. Open ended resources encouraged children to experiment, problem solve and use their imagination. Children were actively engaged in activities such as splashing in puddles, playing on wheeled toys and organising games with their friends. They were learning about taking positive risk and being safe in the outdoor environment. Children's play was well supported by staff as they enabled children to try out their ideas and extend their play experiences.

There was an area available if children needed to sleep or rest. Staff should consider developing other dedicated cosy areas that could be accessed independently.

### Care Inspectorate grade: very good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and one recommendation. The recommendation in relation to medication has been met. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no recommendations.



## 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.