

Summarised inspection findings

Hanover Street Primary School and Nursery Class

Aberdeen City Council

3 September 2019

Key contextual information

Hanover nursery class is situated within the main school building at first floor level. The setting comprises one morning and one afternoon class. It is registered for no more than 40 children at any one time. At the time of the inspection the total roll was 69. Children attending the setting represent 12 different cultures with 48% for whom English is not their first language. The setting is situated in a spacious, open plan room on the first floor of the building. Children have access to a recently developed outdoor area within the school playground.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

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 setting has undergone significant change in the past three years with the arrival of a new senior leadership team (SLT) comprising of a newly appointed headteacher, depute headteacher and senior Early Years Practitioner (SEYP). Working together very well, they take a considered approach to achieving change and improvement. The SLT very effectively guide and manage the pace of change to ensure the team understand the process. As a result, practitioners are fully involved in achieving significant change to practice overall and recognise the positive impact on children and families.
- An initial task to review the vision, values and aims for the school and the setting enables practitioners to work together with parents to create an identity which fully reflects the national indicators of wellbeing. The recently reviewed Early Learners' Aims clearly focus on a child-centred approach, positive relationships, respect, active learning through play, reflective practice and recognising and celebrating success. Practitioners use these aims to evaluate their work and recognise it will take time to ensure they are fully embedded in practice.
- The SLT supports practitioners to access appropriate and necessary training and research. They are clearly visible and provide strong support and motivation. As a result, practitioners are updating their approach to children's learning and development in line with national expectations. They are becoming increasingly confident in embracing change to modify their practice to reflect a more child-centred approach. The SLT provides regular support and supervision to help practitioners to identify what is working well and what needs to improve. As a result, practitioners are increasingly reflective and work together well as a team to improve outcomes for children and their families. A few practitioners are extending their skills by taking leadership roles, for example, in outdoor learning, developing communication skills and working with families. Others are planning how they might lead on future developments. It will be essential to continue to upskill practitioners and share learning as the improvement plan moves forward.
- Improvement planning for the setting is based on whole-school improvement priorities and as a result of self-evaluation. Specific priorities for the setting correctly include literacy, numeracy

and health and wellbeing to support children's progress in learning. These need to remain as priorities to develop high-quality experiences in literacy and numeracy to ensure appropriate progression for all children. As the culture of reflection develops, it will be important to continue to evaluate the impact of change using national guidance. As planned, the SLT should continue to develop the quality assurance calendar to include more rigorous and systematic evaluation to ensure ongoing improvement.

- Practitioners value opportunities to look outward by visiting other settings and sharing ideas. As their confidence develops, there is scope to engage in moderation activity, for example, to support practitioners to have a clearer understanding of children's progress within the early level of Curriculum for Excellence.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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

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

- Practitioners have positive and nurturing relationships with the children and families in the setting. They listen and respond sensitively to the children with care and respect. As a result, children appear safe and secure in the setting and families are included. Children are happy and settled and supported to learn to play together. Practitioners are respectful of children's rights and strongly believe that children have the right to have their views and ideas listened to and acted upon.
- Most children show engagement and sustained interest in their play and make choices and decisions about where they would like to learn. They engage in a variety of learning opportunities indoors and out which promote creativity and curiosity. Practitioners support children to mix powder paints, investigate loose parts and explore a variety of resources in water play. Outdoors, children make cakes and cookies in the mud kitchen and practitioners support children with planting vegetable seeds. Overall, practitioners use questions to help extend children's thinking. There is now scope for practitioners to promote higher -order thinking. This will help ensure that there is a focus on quality questions and discussions which would promote greater depth and challenge in learning. We discussed with practitioners the need to have a balance of child-led and adult-directed learning times. This will help to develop children's listening skills and concentration.
- There has been a focus on developing the core provision in the setting as well as outdoors. Practitioners have engaged with national guidance to reflect on the environment. There is scope to develop further the indoor and outdoor environment to more effectively support children's learning especially in literacy and numeracy. We discussed with practitioners that further opportunities for learning in the community could be developed to enrich children's experiences. During the inspection, children used the interactive whiteboard for number games, drawing and mark making. In order to enrich learning further, practitioners should broaden the use of digital learning to support and extend children's learning.
- A key worker system has been introduced this session and all practitioners know the children well. Observations capture some aspects of learning linked to skills and the curriculum. Practitioners should now build on the positive start which has been made to recording observations. In doing so, there is a need for a sharper focus on learning and identifying clear next steps which will feed into the planning cycle. To be of maximum effect, children's individual folders should contain observations so children can be involved in revisiting their learning and discussing their individual next steps.
- Practitioners have regular planning meetings where they share children's interests. They use a variety of planning approaches to ensure children access developmentally appropriate

experiences. A stronger link between observations and planning will allow practitioners to identify emerging interests and needs and link these to the curriculum. A learning wall and floorbook record children's experiences in the setting. There is scope to develop further the use of floorbooks to involve children more in planning and recording their individual learning to help them review their achievements.

- The setting tracks developmental skills of all children and recently, a literacy and numeracy tracker has been introduced. Practitioners recognise that this system needs time to develop fully to allow them to have evidence and make more confident judgements about children's progress and what their next steps are.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- A rationale for the curriculum is being developed for the school and the setting. It will be important to ensure the rationale reflects the unique context of the setting. Practitioners take children on visits within the local community. There is considerable scope for this to be extended further. For example, regular visits to the nearby beach or local parkland would provide a wealth of relevant learning opportunities and experiences whilst encouraging children's interests in the natural world.
- The setting is planning to adopt Aberdeen City Council progression pathways. These should be used to support planning, assessment and tracking to ensure children's progress across the curriculum. The curriculum offers a good breath of enjoyable learning experiences which encourage children to be curious and creative in their play. Building on this positive practice, there now needs to be more focus on learning in depth particularly in early language and communication and numeracy and mathematics.
- The curriculum is planned around the early level of Curriculum for Excellence. Learning throughout the session is primarily based on children's choice and play. As discussed, practitioners need to review the structure of the sessions to encourage children's independence and creativity alongside thoughtfully planned adult interventions.
- Communication and early language and numeracy and mathematics are a focus for improvement in the setting. Children need rich, varied opportunities to help them to develop their skills. We discussed with practitioners how this might be achieved across the indoor and outdoor learning environments. The curriculum could be enhanced further by making better use of parents and local community resources to broaden children's learning experiences.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Partnership with parents is strong. Practitioners take time to develop positive relationships with parents and carers and welcome them into the setting. Parents are invited to take part in stay and play sessions and can help out with outings and visits to the local community. The SLT and practitioners are committed to involving parents in the life of the setting. The depute leads sessions that encourage parents and children to play and learn together. An additional benefit is that this is helping parents to meet and get to know each other which helps to build the community.
- Practitioners share information on children's progress informally with parents on a daily basis and invite them to attend parents' evenings. They liaise closely with parents prior to children starting in the setting and complete information on children's wellbeing needs. Practitioners complete detailed care plans which helps them to get to know children and families. This helps to identify how they can be best supported to take account of their varying cultures and backgrounds. This supports practitioners to ensure children have an effective transition into the setting and enables them to meet their needs effectively.

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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

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

- Ensuring children's health and wellbeing is a key feature of the setting's work. Practitioners model positive, respectful interactions with parents and carers, children and each other. Relationships between practitioners and children are warm, caring and empathetic. Most children are settled in the nurturing environment. Most confidently engage in a range of play experiences by themselves or with friends. A few children appear more sensitive and require support to develop resilience.
- Practitioners know children very well, value them as individuals and are sensitive in their interactions with them. Practitioners listen carefully to children and engage with them as they play. This helps children to feel valued and included. Overall, most children behave well as they play together. They are learning to share and take turns and most support each other well during play. Children who are new to the setting are supported to settle and parents are encouraged to stay as long as necessary until they feel comfortable.
- Practitioners take time to get to know children and families well as they enter the setting. As a result, they have a good knowledge of each child and are alert to any circumstances that may affect a child's well-being. They have developed a range of strategies to sensitively identify any particular challenges a child may be facing and work closely with parents and external agencies to provide appropriate levels of intervention. Children's wellbeing is closely monitored and regularly reviewed using a range of planning tools. This ensures all children who may experience barriers to their learning and development are supported to make appropriate progress.
- Practitioners work with the wellbeing indicators which they very naturally embed within their practice. There is evidence throughout the setting of children being supported to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included. Practitioners should now continue to develop children's understanding of their own wellbeing and the language with which to express their experiences. Practitioners could consider using stories, role play and real-life experiences to achieve this.
- Children demonstrate independence as they help to prepare, serve and clear up after snack. A few children are working on developing child-friendly risk assessments. There is scope for children to be given opportunities to develop their responsibility further, for example, by looking after resources, continuing to help to risk assess the environment or by meaningfully representing the setting in whole school activities.
- Practitioners are fully aware of and implement statutory duties. There is a full range of relevant policies and procedures which clearly outline the expectations of the setting and inform practitioners' practice. The focus on keeping children safe and healthy is strong.

- Children and families are treated fairly and with respect. Practitioners are aware of the wide variety of cultures and religions within the setting and take account of parents' preferences regarding their children's involvement in celebrations and festivals as they occur throughout the year. During care plan meetings they take steps to involve children and families to identify religious and cultural activities that are important to them. There is scope to promote further the richness and diversity of cultures within the setting to enhance children's experiences overall. The setting is planning a multi-cultural event in September 2019 to celebrate the diversity within the setting and encourage further a sense of community between children and families.

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

- Practitioners know children very well as individuals and are aware of their social and emotional wellbeing needs. As a result, children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Children are making positive friendships and are kind and caring towards each other. The majority of children are able to communicate their needs and feelings, according to their stage of development. The majority of children show a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy including knowing how to wash their hands, preparing a healthy snack and tooth brushing. Most children play independently across the learning environment and are developing their self-help skills. Children have daily access to outdoors for fresh air and exercise and develop physical skills by jumping, climbing and running around the space. They demonstrate developing fine motor control, for example, through the use of tools at the tinker table and across the setting, such as using scissors and threading.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in early communication and language at their own developmental stage. The majority of children show an interest in stories and enjoy books being read to them. Practitioners support children who have English as an additional language (EAL) to develop key vocabulary. There is a focus on early writing and practitioners encourage children to make marks and patterns using different materials, including painting with water outdoors and making patterns in sand. Most older children can mark make independently with a few children able to produce detailed drawings. Most children are able to self-register at snack time. As planned, practitioners should continue to plan progressive opportunities for children to develop and apply their skills in early communication and language.
- In numeracy and mathematics, children are making satisfactory progress. A minority of children are beginning to count and recognise numerals important to them. A minority of children explore mathematical concepts such as measuring through exploring different containers during water play and in the mud kitchen. Real-life experiences should be provided to allow children to learn in meaningful contexts, for example, recognising shape in the environment. As planned, early numeracy and mathematical experiences should be extended across the setting to build more depth, challenge and progression to children's learning.
- During the inspection, children were observed developing a range of skills across the curriculum. However, there is not yet enough robust evidence to clearly show the progress children are making in early communication and language and numeracy and mathematics. Practitioners should ensure that they use their observations to demonstrate the progress children are making over time. We discussed with practitioners, the need to focus on learning

and promote challenge and progression for all. Practitioners should have high aspirations for all children to support them to make the best possible progress as they move through the early level.

- Children's achievements are recognised through effective use of praise and verbal feedback to the children and families. Wider achievements should have a clearer focus on how children are contributing to the setting, the wider and global community. As planned, practitioners should consider how to recognise and celebrate successes in the setting.
- There is a supportive and inclusive ethos in the setting where potential barriers to children's progress are identified. Practitioners have a good understanding of individual circumstances of children and families and identify strategies to support children. Practitioners work with a range of agencies to plan and deliver appropriate support to ensure children's needs are met.

Choice of QI : 1.2 Leadership of learning

- Professional engagement and collegiate working
- Impact of career long professional learning
- Children leading learning

- Aply led by the SLT, practitioners in recent years have developed their professionalism and been encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. The SLT and practitioners work collegiately as they strive to improve their practice. Through regular meetings and positive teamwork they are motivated to try out new ideas and evaluate impact. As a result, approaches to early learning and childcare are continuously refreshed and improved. A few practitioners take lead roles in developing aspects of practice and others are planning to extend this positive approach. As planned, more sharing of learning and peer observations will enhance practice further.
- The SLT have empowered practitioners to improve their knowledge of current early learning and childcare pedagogy. They facilitate attendance at training events, encourage independent research and provide opportunities for practitioners to visit other settings. There is an expectation that new knowledge is shared with colleagues to encourage a consistency of approach and to build capacity across the team. Moving forward it will be important to continue to ensure professional learning is linked to priorities for improvement within the setting and in addition to practitioner's individual learning needs.
- Practitioners take account of children's interests to plan experiences. Children make choices and lead their own learning both indoors and out. For example, there was great interest in finding mini beasts in the garden and much excitement when two slugs were found. There is scope for practitioners to extend this interest further by encouraging children to find out more through books and the internet. We discussed that in addition to children following their interests, practitioners should carefully plan interactions and experiences to ensure depth and progression in learning.

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.