

# Summarised inspection findings

**St Timothy's Primary School Nursery Class**

Glasgow City Council

9 June 2020

## Key contextual information

St Timothy's nursery is based within St Timothy's Primary School. The overall management of the nursery is the responsibility of the senior management team of the school. A range of staffing issues have had an impact on the quality of leadership in the nursery. The nursery is based within a large playroom with direct access to an outdoor area. A team leader, a lead practitioner attainment and child development officers provide the learning opportunities for the children aged three to five. The nursery runs both morning and afternoon sessions.

### 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

- The nursery's values and aims were reviewed recently. They were developed in partnership with the children, the leadership team and practitioners, taking account of information provided by parents. They are appropriate and are evidenced in practice, for example practitioners and children speak confidently about keeping healthy. In order to foster a shared vision and aims within the whole school these are the same as the school. The vision, values and aims should continue to be reviewed and refreshed on a regular basis, including with all stakeholders. This should allow them to be continually embedded.
- There has been a slowing in the pace of improvement in the nursery due to a lack of leadership support from the senior management of the school. In the interim, the headteacher is leading the nursery. She communicates well with the team leader of the nursery and has begun to carry out quality assurance visits. The headteacher, team leader, lead practitioner attainment and practitioners responded positively to professional dialogue during the inspection. As a team they are reflective and strive to continually improve their practice to make a positive impact on learning outcomes for children. The nursery team will benefit from the planned support from the depute headteacher as roles and remits of the senior management team change.
- A comprehensive improvement plan, includes relevant key actions to continually improve the nursery and lead to improvement in practice. This is particularly evident in the focus on numeracy within the nursery. Professional development has led to an improvement in observations. All practitioners have worked well together to manage the pace of change with regards to specific improvements. However, these improvements are at the early stages and are still to be embedded fully across the nursery. In order to continue to improve the nursery, there now needs to be more of a focus on self-evaluation and increased use of How good is our early learning and childcare? (HGIOELC). This will help practitioners to reflect on what they are doing well and what they could review and improve. The leadership team should now ensure that monitoring approaches take account consistently of all aspects of practice, particularly the structure of the day to continue to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

- Practitioners take on roles of leadership and development within the team according to their interests and strengths, and the needs of the nursery. They undertake a range of training and professional learning to support these leadership roles. As practitioners develop these roles, monitoring to assess their impact in supporting continuous improvement should happen. Practitioners should continue to develop opportunities for children to take on more leadership responsibilities for key aspects of the setting. They should continue to look outwards in the sector to familiarise themselves with current thinking and research in early learning and childcare. This should support continuous improvement. Practitioners are encouraged to attend further training and acquire additional qualifications in order to improve their practice.

## 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 interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The setting has a warm and welcoming ethos. The environment is calm and inviting and practitioners have nurturing and respectful relationships with children. As a result, children are happy and engaged. Almost all children are able to negotiate in their play and share their space with others. Practitioners intervene sensitively in play and support children to resolve social conflict and understand the feelings of others.
- The learning environment inside is well organised and children are able access their own materials. During free flow play, children are able to make choices and are highly engaged in sustained play. Children particularly enjoy small world and home corner play. Practitioners should develop the range of materials in these spaces so that children are challenged and apply their learning in new ways.
- Practitioners have made a positive start on the development of the outside space. They have recently developed a sandpit, mud kitchen and sheltered area. Carefully chosen loose parts enable children to create dens and solve problems. Practitioners should now consider how they could create opportunities for children to free-flow between the two outside spaces and the inside space.
- Practitioners engage enthusiastically with children. They use skilful interactions to ensure that they support children at different stages of learning and development. Interesting new vocabulary is introduced through the weekly sparkle words. The majority of practitioners use carefully chosen questions to extend children's thinking. Practitioners gather children's views through the use of mindmaps and voting. Practitioners should extend these approaches further so that children are more able to take responsibility and make decisions.
- At times the pattern of the day can interrupt the children's play and not all adult initiated experiences are purposeful and exciting. Practitioners should evaluate the different experiences to ensure that children are engaged and learning from all aspects of the session.
- Practitioners know children very well both as individuals and as learners. They use this knowledge to plan appropriate next steps in learning. Responsive planning enables children's interests to be explored on a daily basis. Practitioners should now consider how they might develop children's interests in more depth to sustain and extend children's learning.
- The recently established home visits enable practitioners to establish a relationship with the child and their family before they start nursery. Practitioners are able to capitalise on their knowledge of children's interests as they join the setting. This has helped to improve children's transition experiences. Transitions into primary school is supported by Jump Up days where children are able to join the P1 class. Enhanced transitions are in place for children who need a little more support.

- Practitioners have a good understanding of child development as well as individual needs and interests. Continuous professional learning and the use of local trackers is supporting practitioners to make sound judgements about children's progress and development. The nursery team leader meets with keyworkers to review and track children's learning and plan strategies to meet children's needs. The setting are now exploring how this approach might be extended to younger children. Newly established systems are in place to track individual progress in literacy and numeracy and ensure continuity of learning across the early level.
- Most observations in children's learning journals show learning over time and appropriate next steps are identified. A few next steps are revisited and the follow up observations show children's progression in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Extending the focus of the observations to include wider aspects of learning should allow practitioners to capture the breadth of the child's understanding. A few learning journals include the child's voice and perspective. Practitioners would benefit from time to moderate the consistency of observations and next steps across learning journals to ensure that these are of a similar standard.
- Weekly planning is focused on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills. Practitioners plan adult led experiences and also provide additional materials to extend children's learning in these aspects. Floorbooks illustrate the range of experiences that children engage with in different areas of the nursery. These could be developed so that they become planning tools. Making better use of the principles curriculum design would support practitioners to provide increased breadth, depth and challenge in curriculum planning. This will help to sustain children's learning and promote children's curiosity, inquiry and creativity. Children would also benefit from increased opportunities to be involved in planning and leading their own learning.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners use Curriculum for Excellence and local authority guidance when planning children's learning. Literacy and numeracy learning underpins planning in the setting. Taking full account of the design principles should ensure that learning experiences provide depth, challenge and enjoyment across the breadth of the curriculum. Providing more opportunities to develop and consolidate learning through play should enable children to apply their skills and knowledge in new situations.
- Children are able to access a range of materials to support scientific exploration, including magnifying glasses and magnets. Sensory and natural materials enable the children to explore textures, different attributes and schema. Children would benefit from a greater number of interesting opportunities to investigate the natural environment and develop their curiosity and inquiry skills.
- Groups of children visit the local supermarket each week. Parents and other community members visit the nursery to share their work role with the children. Children also visit shops and businesses in their local area. This provides a context for children to explore their local community and gain an understanding of the world of work. Practitioners have plans to make better use of the nearby park and this should enable the development of forest school type experiences.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- The team leader and practitioners have strong, positive relationships with parents. They work well with families and encourage a partnership approach to developing children's progress. The strong relationships also encourage parents to discuss any concerns about their children as early as possible. Effective partnership working with other professionals allows support to both children and their families to have a positive impact. For children attending other provisions, there are good partnership links between the provision and the nursery.
- Practitioners try a variety of ways to increase parental involvement and communication in the life and work of the nursery such as 'Stay and Play' sessions. Practitioners ask parents regularly for their views to improve the nursery including the use of a suggestion box. The nursery team has increased home activities at the request of parents. The nursery communicates well with parents, using a variety of mediums including emails and regular newsletters.

## 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.



### 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

- The nursery has very strong, caring relationships between practitioners and children, and the wellbeing of children is paramount. Practitioners know each child extremely well and are highly attuned to their needs. Practitioners and children are at the early stages of using the wellbeing indicators. Practitioners now need to continue to build on their practice to support children and parents to develop an awareness of the wellbeing indicators in a more meaningful way. Practitioners value the views and opinions of children. The leadership team and practitioners need to continue to encourage children to be aware of their rights by promoting the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These could be implemented in conjunction with the development of the understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Parents speak very positively of their relationship with practitioners. Children talk well about how they can keep themselves healthy, and are well aware of healthy food choices. Practitioners use praise and language effectively to reinforce their expectations of behaviour. A social emotional programme helps children develop their social and emotional skills.
- Practitioners know each child and their personal circumstances well. This allows them to provide appropriate and sensitive support for children and their families. They are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to legislative requirements for keeping children safe, and meeting their care and learning needs. They support children well with additional support needs within the nursery. A Child Development Officer ensures the transition between the family and the nursery works well. Planning using the local authority staged intervention process is detailed and robust for children with additional support needs. Practitioners monitor and review individual plans effectively to ensure each child makes appropriate progress. Practitioners are proactive in seeking relevant help at an early stage from other professionals for children with additional support needs. This positive partnership working helps ensure the needs of all children are well met.
- Practitioners promote inclusion and equality well throughout the work of the nursery. The nursery setting has a strong sense of community where everyone is valued and included. They work hard to develop positive connections with all families. Practitioners know their community very well and understand the socio-economic context of the nursery which influences the work they do. The team leader and lead practitioner make good use of data to ensure that they understand each child and promote equity for all. Children are developing an awareness of diversity through recognising and celebrating a range of events in the calendar year.

### 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 language and literacy. The majority of children listen well to adults and to each other and they talk confidently about things that interest them. Children enjoy listening to stories and are particularly engaged when they retell familiar stories using actions.
- Children have opportunities to 'sign in' at the start of the day and at snack and almost all older children can recognise their name. Children have been exploring initial sounds through games and by using a tablet computer. A few children are able to recognise the initial letter of their name. The children would benefit from increased engagement with a range of environmental print, which should provide further creative ways of exploring text.
- The well-resourced writing area enables children to explore mark-making. Some children use letter like shapes in their mark-making and a few children are able to write their name. Practitioners should increase the range of opportunities for children to write in real and meaningful contexts, including in play and by recording useful information. This should help to develop children's understanding of the purpose of writing.
- The lead practitioner has provided training to the staff team to support their understanding of mathematical development. The majority of practitioners ask thoughtful questions to challenge children's thinking and engage children in solving problems. As a result, children are making good progress in mathematical development. Practitioners have introduced trackers to record progress and plan for next steps in learning. Children enjoy counting in sequence and the majority of older children can count with one to one correspondence. Children are increasingly confident in recognising numerals and walks to the local supermarket provide opportunities to spot numbers in the environment. Most children can match two-dimensional shapes by type and the majority can identify common shapes.
- Free and found materials and loose parts outside provide some opportunities for children to apply their mathematical learning in real life contexts, for example working out how to span a gap between pallets with planks to create a path across the play space. This involved using measuring and estimation skills to test different sized planks. Children need to apply their developing maths skills in context, including in real life situations and play.
- There is a strong focus on health and wellbeing in the nursery and as a result, children are making good progress. Children move confidently around the nursery and are busy and very settled. Practitioners sensitively support children who need a little longer to engage. Children

are kind and respectful towards each other and enjoy sharing their play with others. They talk about which foods are good for them and enjoy chopping vegetables as they play in the home corner. Children are developing their independence by getting themselves dressed for outside and by tidying up after themselves. They are able to make some choices within the session, for example deciding when to have snack. Most children are ready to take on more responsibility. They would benefit from taking on different roles and responsibilities across the nursery to develop their independence skills. Practitioners should involve children in making more decisions about where to play, for example, choosing when to free-flow into the outside area.

- Evidence from trackers and Learning Journals is starting to show that children are making good progress in most areas of their learning and development. Planned experiences enable children to develop literacy and mathematics skills. Broadening the range of materials and experiences on offer should support children to apply these skills through play and real life situations. This should deepen children's interests and challenge their learning, enabling children to make the best possible progress.
- The setting is now planning to explore ways to capture children's wider achievement and celebrate children's progress, both in nursery and at home.

## 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.