

Summarised inspection findings

Prestonfield Primary School Nursery Class

The City of Edinburgh Council

10 September 2019

Key contextual information

Prestonfield Nursery Class is situated within Prestonfield Primary School and provides early learning and childcare (ELC) for children aged three until they start primary school. The nursery is registered for 64 children at any one time. The current roll is 40 children who attend on a full day basis. A number of children within the nursery have English as an additional language.

Since August 2018, the nursery class has been through a significant period of change. Expansion and refurbishment of the playrooms has taken place, the numbers of children attending has increased and additional practitioners have recently joined the team. The headteacher of the school has been in post since January 2018.

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

- With support from the headteacher, senior practitioners have led change in a positive and collaborative manner. Together, they have provided effective support and guidance to practitioners on a day-to-day basis. Commendably, the nursery team has worked extremely hard to implement the many changes in a positive and measured way. They have kept children firmly at the centre of this to ensure little disruption to their nursery experience. The headteacher has created clear remits for all practitioners who work in the nursery. As the team develops and grows in confidence, there is scope to review and refresh these remits to reflect the range of skills and expertise within the team. The headteacher recognises his role in providing clear strategic guidance and direction to support practitioners to continually develop and improve the quality of ELC. He is fully aware of the need to monitor learning and teaching and track children's progress as part of the school process.
- An established vision and set of values and aims underpins the work of the nursery. Practitioners demonstrate a commitment to these and strive to ensure Prestonfield Nursery is a happy, fun and welcoming space for the children and families within the community. As identified, it is now time to revisit these with the new nursery team, parents and children. This will support practitioners to reflect fully the context of the nursery based upon the changes that have taken place and the vision for the future.
- The newly-formed team demonstrates good teamwork and positive relationships are emerging within the team. Practitioners recognise the benefits of creating key leadership roles to support the continuous improvement of the nursery using their skills, talents and expertise.
- Practitioners are reflective and engage well in a range of self-evaluation activities using local and national guidance. This has involved consultation with children and parents, audits of the environment and evaluation of specific quality indicators. As a result, practitioners have identified strengths and areas for development and created an improvement plan with relevant priorities. These include an appropriate focus on developing communication and early

language. As a result, practitioners have introduced a targeted approach which supports individual children to develop and acquire these essential skills. Practitioners have made a positive start to reviewing and refreshing systems for planning, observing and assessing children's learning. Further work is required to reduce paperwork and reach a streamlined approach to ensure the greatest impact on children's learning and progress.

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

- Relationships between children and practitioners are positive. This helps children to feel happy, safe and confident within the nursery. The majority of children engage in learning through free play. They make choices from a good range of natural resources and loose parts both indoors and outdoors. Children now need increased challenge and support to help sustain their thinking and engage them fully in the learning experiences available.
- A keyworker system has been introduced this session is allowing practitioners to begin to understand children as individuals. Practitioners should now use this increased knowledge to continue to build more effectively on children's strengths and interests. They understand children's care needs, intervening in a respectful and calm manner when appropriate. Practitioners should now consider how their interventions could support children to learn more effectively. Across the playroom and outdoors, practitioners missed some opportunities for supporting children's learning. Practitioners should take a more consistent approach to responding to children's interests and provide more time to deepen and extend their learning through play and real-life contexts.
- Children have some access to a computer and programmable toys. Children need to have increased access to a wider range of digital technology indoors and outdoors to help support their learning.
- Practitioners' observations of children's learning are beginning to have more of a focus on children's significant learning. Moving forward, practitioners should ensure they capture children's progress and achievements more regularly so that interventions and next steps in learning are well-timed to further learning. Senior practitioners are beginning to use the photographs in these online learning journals more effectively to have learning conversations with children. As this develops, it will be important for all key workers to support children in this way. The majority of parents have accessed, and some have contributed to children's online learning journals. Practitioners need to continue to encourage and support the engagement of parents who have not accessed this information about their child's learning. This will enable parents to be more aware and involved in their child's achievements.
- Practitioners have reviewed recently and improved this session the balance between adult and child-initiated learning. This practice now needs time to embed and become more consistent in practice. Children need to be more involved in leading their own learning.
- A wide range of procedures and tools are used by specific practitioners to assess and gather evidence of children's development and progress. We would encourage all practitioners to review and streamline this process to give a clearer picture of the progress children are

making. This will allow all practitioners to be fully involved in the process, understand children's progress in learning and help them identify clearly the next step for children.

- The headteacher meets regularly with early years practitioners to discuss children's progress. In addition, he provides verbal feedback about the playroom environment and the learning experiences provided. The monitoring of children's progress now needs to become a regular and consistent feature with minutes of key points recorded. As recognised, systems need to be implemented which allow senior leaders to evaluate the impact of progress being made across the curriculum.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Improvements to the playroom this session have resulted in an attractive learning environment. These are showing early signs of having a positive impact on children's experiences. Practitioners use experiences and outcomes appropriately from a Curriculum for Excellence to plan children's learning. Practitioners have an appropriate focus on developing children's learning in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Opportunities in these areas are beginning to embed across the playroom. Practitioners now need to develop a more consistent approach to the recently introduced responsive planning. This will allow children to deepen their learning through their own interests and contexts for learning. Practitioners will benefit from revisiting the principles of curriculum design. This deepens their understanding and enables them to develop further planning for children's learning and to ensure challenge, depth and progression are integral to the process. Moving forward it will be important to develop a curriculum rationale, which reflects the nursery's refreshed vision, values, aims and context.
- Practitioners support parents and children well as they make the transition into the nursery class. Information sought from parents at transition enables practitioners to get to know aspects of children's preferences. There is scope to develop this process further to gather information on children's previous experiences in order to effectively plan for children's learning. Arrangements for supporting children with their move into primary one are ensuring a smooth transition. Practitioners working across the early level need increased opportunities to work collaboratively to support continuity in learning and progression for children.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- See choice quality indicator below - Partnerships.

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

- The wellbeing of children and families is important to practitioners. They have children's best interests at the heart of their work. The nursery class is a safe, nurturing and respectful environment where everyone is welcomed and included. Parents who engaged with the inspection process report that practitioners are approachable and offer helpful advice for parents to support their child's development and learning at home.
- Practitioners have a good knowledge of the wellbeing indicators and use them to underpin their work with children and families. They have made a positive start to introducing them to children. A few children talk about what being safe, healthy and responsible means to them. There is scope for practitioners to engage children further with all of the indicators through the nursery routines and real-life experiences. The nurturing and supportive approach used by practitioners is enabling children to explore and understand theirs and others' emotions and as a result promoting emotional wellbeing.
- Children's views and ideas are valued. They influence aspects of the nursery such as the snack menu and the development of the garden. There is scope for practitioners to consider ways to support children to be involved at a deeper level, and have their voice heard in matters affecting the whole school community. For example, involvement in the Rights Respecting School Committee.
- Practitioners within the nursery are aware of and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the delivery of early learning and childcare and keeping children safe. Regular opportunities for professional learning supports practitioners to keep their knowledge up to date.
- Practitioners know children well and provide effective support to children who may be experiencing barriers to their learning. They have positive links with a range of partners and as a result, provide good support to children who require additional help with their learning. When required, practitioners create a specific plan for individual children detailing their needs and how practitioners will provide support. We would suggest that the headteacher and practitioners review this process and ensure strategies implemented are clear and measurable.
- Inclusion and equality is promoted well. Practitioners value diversity and promote this through play and the use of appropriate resources. Together, with children and families, they celebrate a range of cultural festivals and celebrations. This also includes involvement with the school's international week, which enables children to learn about other countries and cultures of the world. As a result, children and families are developing an awareness of 21st century society.

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

- The majority of children are making satisfactory progress with early language and communication skills. Most children are confident when talking to adults and each other and are able to talk about play experiences. A few children should continue to be supported to develop their emerging communication skills. The majority of children show an interest in mark making and a few write their name. Most children listen to stories and take part in songs and rhymes. As the nursery moves forward, it will be important for children to have increased opportunities to develop literacy skills through meaningful contexts indoors and outdoors.
- In numeracy, the majority of children are making satisfactory progress. They count items for snack and join in with counting rhymes. At group times, most are beginning to recognise numerals and order numbers to ten. Children have experienced measuring heights using a wall display. They use some mathematical language as they compare the size of bricks when building in the block area. Practitioners should continue to support children to develop numeracy and mathematical skills through a wider range of real-life contexts across the playrooms and outdoors.
- In health and wellbeing, most children are progressing well. Children are kind, caring and respectful to each other. Most children talk about different emotions and relate them to different situations. All children take part in regular energetic play and confidently climb on the outdoor climbing frame. A few older children are skilled at kicking, throwing and catching a ball. The planned extension to the outdoor area will allow children to take part in more challenging physical activities. Most children talk about healthy food choices when eating snack and are aware of the benefits of basic hygiene routines such as handwashing and tooth brushing.
- Most children over time are showing increasing confidence, resilience and independence as they progress in learning. A more consistent and frequent approach should be taken to recording children's progress. As the identification of children's significant learning develops, practitioners will support the effective building on of prior learning and demonstrate progress over time more effectively.
- Practitioners use praise and encouragement well to recognise achievements and to provide appropriate positive feedback to children during play. A few parents add helpful comments and achievements from home to children's electronic learning journals. This should now be extended to include involvement of children and parents when deciding next steps in learning to ensure all parents are aware of the progress their child is making.

- Practitioners are aware of potential barriers to learning and work with parents and partners to ensure equity. They share information and support parents to access a range of local services. These include groups to support their child's development and learning at home, financial advice, and the Multi-Cultural Family Base. Parents benefit greatly from these services which support them to work in partnership with practitioners to support their child's learning. As a result of these partnerships, communication and language intervention groups have been introduced. Practitioners report that this approach is supporting children to develop their skills. It is important that all practitioners monitor the impact of these interventions to demonstrate the progress children are making.

Choice of QI : Partnerships

- Engagement of parents and carers in the life of the centre
- The promotion of partnerships
- Impact on children and families

- Positive relationships are evident between practitioners and parents. There is a friendly welcoming ethos, which helps parents to feel comfortable within the nursery. Parents are involved in a range of ways such as 'stay and play sessions', supporting with outings and occasionally coming into the nursery to share their skills and talents. There is scope for practitioners to develop this further in order to engage parents fully in the life of the nursery.
- Practitioners share information with parents in a range of ways, for example, through helpful newsletters, online journals and social media. This includes information on children's experiences, nursery and community events. Meetings twice per year enable practitioners to share information with parents on their child's progress in learning helping parents to be informed fully of their child's achievements.
- Practitioners work well with a range of partners which supports children who require additional support with their learning. These partnerships are enabling practitioners to get to know families well and provide effective support as required. Practitioners have benefitted from the support and guidance of a speech and language therapist. As a result, practitioners have developed their knowledge and skills and introduced a targeted approach to support individual children. Practitioners report that children are making progress in this area of development.
- Children within the nursery engage well in a range of relevant school events provided by partners. This includes visits from the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) and the University of Edinburgh. These visits are enriching children's experiences and extending their learning in key areas of science. The nursery has a few links within the local community. We would encourage practitioners to establish a wider range of partnerships to enrich the curriculum and develop children's awareness of the world of work.

1. Quality of care and support

Staff were on duty to ensure that families received a warm welcome into the nursery. It was apparent from the quality of these conversations that staff knew families well and had worked hard to establish positive relationships with them. Parents told us they felt respected by staff. They confirmed that the nursery newsletter together with daily feedback kept them well informed about their children's progress and development and events in the nursery. Some parents told us they had turned to staff for advice on childcare concerns which had been supportive and reassuring.

Staff had developed kind and nurturing relationships with children. They understood the importance of helping children to identify and manage their feelings and had developed a range of resources to help them do this. When children were hurt or upset, staff were consistent in getting down to their level to listen to them. Children were encouraged to think about their impact on others, we saw many examples of children supporting one another, taking responsibility for their behaviour and apologising if they had hurt their friends. The outcome of this was that children were happy and confident learning life skills which would support them continue to develop relationships outwith their nursery family.

Staff had started to develop project work around the wellbeing indicators which helped children begin to understand how they applied these to their daily lives and to keeping themselves safe and healthy. Examples of this included hand washing, toothbrushing, healthy eating and respecting one another. Being involved in choosing and preparing some of their snack foods gave children the experience of contributing to their peers' wellbeing. A child told us 'I made us all scones but first I washed my germs away'.

Staff had taken part in child protection training. It was apparent from discussions that they were confident in using the service's policy and procedures and understood their responsibilities to protect children and to support their wellbeing and safety.

The information held in children's records was reviewed with their families at least once every six months in order to ensure that it remained relevant to their care and support needs. We looked at the systems in place for the storage and administration of short and long term medication. This was stored and recorded in line with best practice guidance. Information about children's allergies was known to all staff responsible for the preparation and serving of food.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The nursery was well resourced and children were busy. However, we found that at times staff missed opportunities to extend children's learning by providing challenge through activities and in their conversations with children. Staff should focus on supporting children's development by providing them with consistent opportunities to develop curiosity, creativity and problem solving skills.

Children's lunch was served in two sittings and took approximately two hours from start to finish. Children not eating lunch were encouraged to take part in small group activities. They were not able to access the full range of indoor playrooms or resources and were not able to play outdoors. While some children enjoyed small group activities, the outcomes were not positive for all children and limited their ability to make their own independent choices. The headteacher agreed to take these areas for development forward.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

2. Quality of environment

The nursery had recently been refurbished and extended. Children were cared for in a beautiful, bright, welcoming and spacious environment. High quality wooden equipment purpose built for use by young children was laid out so that it was easy for them to see and access their chosen activity without adult help. The impact of this on children's confidence was evident in the relaxed way they moved around the playrooms.

Staff constantly observed and reviewed how children used the playroom and made adjustments to take account of this. Most recently, they swapped the home area and the block play area. They noted that both areas were now used more consistently and for longer periods of time.

Overall, toys were of a high quality and resources were plentiful. Staff had made a conscious effort to reduce the use of plastic and where possible toys were made of natural materials. They found this led to children being engaged in more imaginative play for longer periods of time.

Children had daily access to outdoor active play in the nursery garden which they accessed through the playrooms and in the wider school grounds. Because the nursery supplies all weather suits and wellington boots children were able to enjoy being outdoors throughout the year.

The outdoor space gave children very good opportunities to challenge themselves and manage the level of risk they felt comfortable with. They developed their skills in running, climbing and balancing on a range of surfaces. Loose parts allowed children to work together to build and create structures which they integrated into their play. They used consulting and negotiating skills as they decided on rules and worked out what felt safe. Some children were interested in the natural world and spent time watering plants and looking for mini beasts.

Work to extend the nursery's outdoor space will take place during the summer break. This will add significant outdoor space and further extend children's outdoor experience. Children were eager to tell us about their involvement in these plans. It was apparent from the way they spoke that they felt their ideas had been valued and felt proud of their input.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The area currently used for children to ride their bikes created several bumps, accidents and disputes about turn taking. Staff should review the use of this area considering whether this is the most effective use of the space in relation to children's needs.

Staff should continue with their plans to increase children's opportunities to get involved in the local community. The head teacher has agreed to take this forward

Care Inspectorate grade: very good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations. 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.