

Summarised inspection findings

Barassie Primary School and Early Years Centre

South Ayrshire Council

4 December 2018

Key contextual information

Barassie Primary School Early Years Centre is registered for 40 children in the morning and 30 children in the afternoon. The setting is situated within the main primary school building. Most children attend five morning or afternoon sessions per week. The centre recently changed its provision to accommodate children attending full days. There are plans to extend this provision further through increased use of the outdoor space. A new staff team is in place since August 2018 which includes teacher contact time with a teacher changing from 1.0 (FTE) to 0.5 (FTE).

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

- Children benefit from a caring and nurturing ethos that develops them as individuals. Relationships with parents are very strong. Practitioners work closely with parents to ensure that children feel welcome and supported in their learning. They encourage children to treat each other with respect. As a result, children settle well to their play and they enjoy learning in an overall calm and happy environment. The setting plans to continue to build on the whole school approach to Rights education.
- Most children engage in their learning well and concentrate for long periods. This is most evident during activities and interactions that take account of children's interests. For example, children use the digital boards enthusiastically to mark make and interact with games. There is a need to share the many examples of good practice that are in place across the setting. At times, the learning of a few children is interrupted as children develop skills of sharing and turn taking. We asked practitioners to develop further children's resilience and strategies to resolve conflicts in a positive way.
- Practitioners encourage children's independence and self-help through the well-established daily routines. Most children are responsible with resources and access them independently. Magnets, Storm Ali and dinosaurs are a few examples of child-led experiences that motivate children to learn. They move confidently and freely around the setting. The outdoor learning environment is enhanced by regular visits to a local allotment and the planned learning in the 'concoction kitchen'. These experiences increase children's skills of curiosity and enquiry. They use their imaginations and observation skills in block play very well to replicate the skills of construction workers and build castle walls.
- Consultations with children about the environment and aspects of their learning are displayed throughout the setting. Children talk well about their learning with their key workers. They are at the early stages of using the e-portfolios to share their learning with other adults and their parents. As a result, there are opportunities for children to increase their role in leading and discussing their own learning.

- Planning takes good account of Curriculum for Excellence with a focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Long term and short term planning is supported well through a responsive approach. Regular planning meetings enable the new team to learn from each other. Practitioners work well together and target particular interventions to remove barriers to learning. For example, targeted programmes in place to involve parents learning with their children are evaluated very positively. The key worker system is well established with positive interactions that help children to feel cared for and included. Children's thinking is challenged when good questioning techniques are applied by practitioners. The mentoring approach provides opportunities for new members of the team to continue with the routines and expectations that are well understood by the experienced practitioners. The team is refining the judgements made about children's progress and how to respond more effectively to the needs of individual children.

- All practitioners use the local authority developmental milestones to monitor children's progress. Ongoing observations show that there is a clear understanding of expected standards for each milestone. Of note is the understanding of each key worker about the progress of the children within their group. Previously the milestones were used holistically across children's early level learning. However, recent changes to capturing and recording learning using children's voice, floor books and from online journals are at the early stages of implementation. As a result, although information shows the progress of groups of children, it does not show well enough individual children and groups of children's ongoing progress across time. Evidence of learning through care plans, learning walls and e-portfolios lack coherence. Progression, challenge and breadth of experience for individual children across the early level lacks clarity. There is a need for increased coherence of planning, tracking and monitoring of children's progress as part of the whole school quality assurance processes. This will ensure that advice given to practitioners can be followed through and supported by evidence informed evaluations.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant practitioners 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

- Practitioners know children well. They engage in warm and nurturing relationships with children and families. Parents are encouraged to agree jointly, with practitioners, a small number of children's learning goals and these are recorded in children's personal plans on a termly basis. Parents are encouraged to make additional contributions to identify children's current interests by adding suggestions to the learning tree and through the jigsaw piece display. Practitioners celebrate and share children's achievements outwith the setting through a display in the entrance foyer.
- Overall, children are making good progress in communication and language. Several approaches support early language and vocabulary acquisition, for example, Word Aware, Concept Cat and Three Read. Most children engage in conversations with practitioners and peers during free play and planned opportunities. Children independently access a range of books in the story corner and enjoy small and large group story times. A few children can re-tell stories using their own words with all children having opportunity to review books and share their views of what they have listened to. Parents have independent access to a home lending library, which supports access to a wide range of books at home. Evidence is beginning to emerge of children's writing skills. Practitioners should continue to provide opportunities for children to experiment with using writing for a purpose, for example, signing in or making labels for the bulbs they are planting outdoors.
- Children have an awareness of simple mathematical concepts. Number songs and rhymes support an early awareness of the purpose of number. Some children can count on and back using touch. Most children are confident in recognising and naming some simple shapes and colours. Some children are beginning to explore pattern in their play. Through play and real-life experiences, most children enjoy counting, sorting and matching. Through water and block play, some children are beginning to experiment with weight, volume and measure. The introduction of a new digital screen is supporting children to explore mathematics within a different context. Practitioners now need to evidence the impact of the value added to children's mathematical understanding from the opportunities and experiences provided in the setting.
- Children demonstrate a good progress in developing their health and wellbeing. They are encouraged to make healthy choices at snack and are consulted on which types of food they

like to eat. Practitioners provide opportunities for children to sample different types of food and will include these foods in the snack menu when requested by the children. The majority of children are happy to participate in physical activities with opportunities to engage in different types of exercise provided across the week, including Mile a Day, Workout Wednesday and digitally supported programmes such as Jumpstart Johnny and Cosmic Yoga. Practitioners should now extend opportunities for risky play and exploration, and make more frequent use of the nearby beach and local woods.

- Some children now access extended day sessions. Practitioners have formed the Rainbow Group to bring this group together. The Rainbow Group talk confidently and positively about staying for lunch, what they like to eat and the friends they have made. Practitioners recognise the need to vary the routine of the day for the extended day children and are beginning to provide opportunities to access different areas of the school or the local beach throughout the day. Development has been taking place in the indoor environment. Practitioners should continue this development taking further consideration of the needs of children accessing longer hours. Provision of soft furnishings and lighting along with cosy spaces will provide opportunity for children to take time to rest and relax.
- Children show confidence in the outdoors environment. They are encouraged to explore, experiment and be creative with open-ended resources and real food in the 'concoction kitchen'. Practitioners have been looking outwards to other settings to help further develop the outdoor space to provide more opportunities for creativity, curiosity and enquiry. There is significant scope to develop the outdoor area further to offer further opportunities for children to continue to develop emerging literacy and numeracy skills, for example, development of the outdoor café.
- Through planting and growing experiences, children are encouraged to care for living things. The opportunity to extend this to a local allotment should provide opportunity for children to deepen this learning and engage families and the community in children's learning experiences. Plans are also in place to make links with the local care home for elderly residents. Practitioners should continue to explore this possibility to provide children with the opportunity to engage in intergenerational learning. In the setting, children are encouraged to follow the Golden Rules. To further support peer interactions, practitioners should now support children with conflict resolution strategies.
- Staff promote equity well across the setting. Practitioners provide children and families with English as an additional language with support and guidance. Children are encouraged to engage on non-gender stereotypical activities. Parents share information on their chosen careers with the children, providing insight into the world of work.

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.

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