

# Summarised inspection findings

**Kinross Primary School Nursery Class**

Perth and Kinross Council

22 January 2019

## Key contextual information

Kinross Primary School and nursery class moved to new accommodation in December 2017. The nursery provides early learning and childcare for children from two years of age. It has one large playroom with access to two adjoining, attractive, outdoor spaces. Younger children have access to an enclosed space within the large playroom. The nursery provides morning and afternoon sessions. A smaller number of children attend for full day sessions.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

very 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

- Senior leaders provide very effective leadership of change in the nursery. Practitioners are challenged, encouraged and supported to strive for continuous improvement. The team share a very clear set of improvement aims. They demonstrate strong commitment to improving outcomes for children in close partnership with families and a range of professionals. Practitioners have begun to consult with families to refresh the vision and values of the nursery in the context of the move to the new school building. As planned, senior leaders should continue with this process to include practitioners, children, and partners as fully as possible.
- There is clear evidence across the nursery of a strong commitment to shared professional learning. In planning for improvement, senior leaders and practitioners make very good use of research and evolving knowledge about children's wellbeing and learning. A range of high-quality professional learning supports improvement very well. As a result, there is a strong learning culture in the nursery.
- Leadership across the nursery team is strong. Individual practitioners lead a range of well-considered improvements with increasing confidence. Team work is based on respect and trust. Practitioners collaborate to take forward shared initiatives very effectively. They play an active part in school improvement, including the development of play-based approaches to learning and teaching throughout the primary.
- Senior leaders contribute very effectively to quality review and improvement processes in the nursery. Practitioners are involved in a broad range of self-evaluation activities throughout the session. This is effective in embedding improvements and managing the pace of change. The views of parents and carers are sought and acted on. There is a strong focus on evaluating the

impact of change using increasingly robust measures of outcomes for learners. This includes tracking using milestones, and a range tracking tools aligning with practice in the school.

- We discussed with practitioners how they could make more effective use of challenge questions and video recording to improve aspects of practice further. Senior leaders should continue to develop their use of self-evaluation to promote increasing challenge and depth in learning.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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 are happy, secure and developing confidence within the nursery. Almost all children are engaged and enjoy learning through child-initiated play. They are developing their independence well and beginning to take responsibility for aspects of their learning. Children make choices and select materials to develop their creativity and play from a very good range of quality resources.
- Relationships between practitioners and children are positive throughout the nursery. Children aged two to three years are supported to explore and investigate indoor and outdoor environments. As a result, they are developing self-assurance in making choices and seeking out new experiences. They are well supported in this by the kindness and care of older peers.
- Across the nursery, most learning experiences extend and sustain children's interests very well. The development of children's creativity is a key priority. During the inspection we were able to observe children's enjoyment of a range of stimulating sensory play. Children's views are listened to and used to support the development of environments and experiences. We have asked practitioners to continue to develop further their approaches to engage children in conversations about their learning. This will support children to develop their skills in planning and evaluating their learning.
- Practitioners are developing a very good understanding of how children learn and develop. There is a clear focus on supporting children to develop their social and emotional skills. This helps promote a positive climate for learning and play for all children. Practitioners are supported to develop more effective interaction skills through professional learning and constructive feedback from senior leaders. As a result, interactions are effective in providing useful structure and direction to children's learning. A few adult-supported experiences need to be reviewed. This will ensure that all children engage really well.
- Practitioners assess children's learning through play. They observe children, interact with them and record information using individual learning journals. Key observations help to capture children's learning journeys and identify some next steps in learning. Individual learning journals include useful observations of significant learning, photographic evidence and samples of children's work. Learning journals have an important place in the tracking conversations practitioners have with senior leaders and support sound decision making about children's progress.

- Across the nursery, planning is highly responsive and takes very good account of children's interests. Practitioners carefully observe how children prefer to learn. They use this information well to shape developmentally appropriate learning experiences around the needs and interests of individuals. In doing so, practitioners make good use of information from home in planning care and learning experiences.
- Practitioners and senior leaders carefully monitor and track children's progress across key aspects of their learning. This includes those children facing additional challenges. The nursery team make increasingly effective use of this information to plan, implement and measure the impact of evidence-based interventions to support learners.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The curriculum is based on play and offers stimulating and engaging opportunities for learning. It is responsive to children's interests and needs. The development of loose parts play offers children good opportunities to play with natural and creative resources. This supports children to develop their imagination, creativity and inquiry skills very well.
- Practitioners working with children aged under three years of age make appropriate use of national guidance Pre Birth to Three. Practitioners working with older children use the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence to plan a range of engaging learning across the curriculum. Practitioners and senior leaders should now take forward plans to refresh the curriculum rationale. In doing so, they should take full account of the design principles of Curriculum for Excellence to ensure increased challenge and depth in learning for all children.
- Children benefit from a strong, progressive focus on the development of quality literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing experiences across the curriculum. Practitioners make effective use of the local community and visitors to enrich learning and extend children's awareness of the world around them. As outdoor learning continues to improve, practitioners should develop further opportunities for children explore learning for sustainability in greater depth.
- Transitions in to the setting are well supported. They are flexible and tailored to the needs of children and families. Transitions to primary are well planned and supported by buddies. Practitioners in nursery help to develop playful pedagogy in the primary school. This supports improved continuity in learning for children at transition. Practitioners should continue to develop approaches to support children who attend on a split placement with another setting.

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

- Parents and carers are made to feel welcome in the nursery. Practitioners have established positive relationships and effective communication. Parents and carers are encouraged to become involved in the life of the nursery in a variety of ways. They provide support on trips, help with resources and provide regular feedback about a range of matters. The nursery parent committee and focus group sessions help ensure parents and carers are involved in decisions about the direction of improvement.
- Effective communication helps to keep parents and carers informed about their child's learning. This includes opportunities for daily informal chats and more formal opportunities to discuss children's learning, progress and care. 'Bite and Blether' sessions, and other opportunities to spend time in the nursery, allow parents to find out how children learn in the setting. Parents have regular access to children's learning journals and are encouraged to share children's achievement from home. The nursery provides parents and carers with very helpful information about how young children learn and ideas about how they can support this at home.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

- The setting 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

very 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

- Across the nursery, practitioners understand the importance of positive relationships as central to each child's wellbeing and learning. Practitioners work very well to establish strong links with families to support wellbeing. They value each child as an individual with unique needs and interests. Relationships between practitioners and children are based on respect from the earliest stage. Practitioners apply consistent approaches across the team. They provide very good role models and support children to develop self-regulation skills very well. A shared understanding of wellbeing is successfully applied in practice.
- There is a strong sense of community and shared expectations for children's experiences. Practitioners have a sound understanding of the wellbeing indicators of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC). They use this to ensure that children are supported to feel safe, healthy, active, nurtured, respected, responsible and included. As a team, practitioners have begun to introduce these concepts to children in a developmentally appropriate way, using character puppets, and home learning challenges. As this develops, it will help children to explore and articulate their own feelings and experiences.
- Practitioners encourage children to be considerate of others and to develop positive relationships with their peers. As a result, most children are able to play cooperatively and to negotiate during their learning. Practitioners use praise very effectively to recognise children's positive behaviour and promote their self-esteem. When necessary, practitioners intervene to support children's relationships. This encourages children to show respect and kindness to others. A particular focus on the process of self-regulation is supporting children to manage their emotions in a constructive manner. As planned, this positive work should be continued and complemented by wider learning across the health and wellbeing curriculum.
- Children are helped to be active participants in their own learning and to make choices. They show high levels of independence in the learning environment and are becoming confident individuals. Children are developing an understanding of risk as they challenge themselves in the outdoor play area, riding bikes and balancing on loose parts equipment. Practitioners value children's ideas and seek their opinions on matters affecting them. We have asked practitioners to continue to develop children's early leadership skills to increase their capacity as effective contributors.
- Practitioners are very reflective about their practice. They keep informed about important developments in early learning and childcare to fulfil their statutory duties. They plan children's

care in close consultation with families in way that takes account of individual needs and preferences. Practitioners are skilled in identifying when a child may require support with their learning and ensure interventions are carefully planned and evaluated. We have asked practitioners to ensure that communications and signs around the nursery reflect the diversity of family structures in the community.

- The team successfully promote equity. They have developed effective strategies to improve progress for all children, including those facing challenges or barriers to learning. Focused work to enhance children's language skills, is a good example of their considered approach.
- Children are learning about wider issues of equality through their link with the local children's hospice. There is potential to expand this learning to include other relevant issues such as gender equality.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

very 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

- Children age two years are making very good progress across their learning. They show increasing confidence in their routines and in exploring the learning environment. Children demonstrate curiosity as they explore natural materials. They are developing their physical skills well as they negotiate climbing frames and use large loose parts to balance. Practitioners and children regularly share stories, songs and rhymes. This is helping to develop their love of books and encouraging strong language development. Children are developing their early counting and mathematical skills through songs, puzzles and small block play. We have asked practitioners to continue to develop sensory play experiences for children.
- Most children age three to five years are making very good progress in communication and early language. Children talk naturally as they play and are keen to share their ideas and thoughts with practitioners. They are developing their vocabulary through planned interventions, which encourage children to learn new words. Most children are developing their early writing skills very well as they make marks during imaginative play, creative art activities and when labelling their artwork. Children access books independently throughout the session and enjoy exploring narratives with puppets and props. Practitioners should continue to develop opportunities for children to write for a purpose as part of their daily routines and learning activities.
- Most children are making very good progress in mathematics and numeracy. They count with increasing confidence as they play playground games and recognise numbers in the environment. Children confidently match numbers as they return their bikes to the correct parking spaces after use. They demonstrate an understanding of shape, size and positional language as they construct using blocks, complete puzzles and explore sensory experiences. Children apply their understanding of direction as they use digital technology to control programmable toys. We have asked practitioners to continue to build opportunities for children to explore information handling as part of their learning in this area.
- Most children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing. They demonstrate well-developed fine motor skills as they experiment with sewing activities and make bracelets

by threading beads. Regular physical education sessions and outdoor play is developing children's physical skills and enjoyment of exercise very well. Children show very well developed balance while riding different kinds of cycles. They enjoy setting themselves challenges in this aspect of their play. Children are familiar with nursery routines and understand the importance of making healthy choices. The majority of children play cooperatively with little support and can negotiate taking turns independently. A few children who require ongoing support with this are sensitively provided for. Children are learning about caring for babies with the support of a parent who is a midwife.

- Overall, children are developing the skills and positive attitudes needed to support them very well as they progress in their learning. Practitioners make sound judgements about how well children are learning and developing. They take very good account of the individual circumstances of children and families and work in partnership with other professionals to provide tailored support to promote equity.

### Setting choice of QI : 3.3 Developing creativity and skills for life and learning

- Developing creativity
- Developing skills for learning and life
- Developing digital skills

- There is a clear focus on developing creativity in the improvement work of the nursery. Practitioners are effective in developing a range of well-resourced learning environments, which provide scope for children to become immersed in their play. As a result, children of all ages are becoming more inquisitive and are learning to use their imaginations well. Children demonstrate increasing skill and confidence as they explore the possibilities of a range of materials. Practitioners support children to develop vocabulary to talk about their experiences. They should now continue to develop strategies to encourage children to plan, design and evaluate solutions as they apply their skills across learning.
- Children are developing skills for learning and life well. Most children are forming good friendships and are learning to cooperate with others in their play. Practitioners understand the role of wellbeing in children's learning. They work effectively to ensure that children's emotional, social and physical needs are well supported. Children aged two to three years are happy and beginning to play well together. Children aged three to five years are becoming increasingly confident in interactions. They are inquisitive and keen to participate in new experiences. Practitioners should build on children's skills to engage them in more extended projects, including improvement to the nursery and community. This will provide further opportunities for children to use the ideas and suggestions of others to extend their thinking and play.
- Children are becoming familiar with a range of useful digital technologies and are beginning to use this to enhance aspects of their learning. Practitioners have shared their approach to using digital technology in learning with parents and carers. They should continue to develop a clear rationale for supporting children's skills in using and exploring digital technologies to enhance, deepen and personalise children's learning across the curriculum.

## 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.