

Summarised inspection findings

Stockbridge Primary School Nursery Class

The City of Edinburgh Council

19 September 2023

Key contextual information

Stockbridge Primary School Nursery Class is managed by the headteacher in the primary school and led by the early year's officer. In addition to the leadership team there are five practitioners. The nursery class is open from 8:30 am until 3:00 pm Monday to Friday during term time. It is registered for 40 children and has a current roll of 33. Prior to offering parents 1140 hours in 2021, the nursery class was open for morning and afternoon sessions only.

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

- All staff demonstrate a strong commitment to children's rights that is informed by professional learning. Children are nurtured and benefit from the strong sense of community and highly supportive positive relationships. They are happy, motivated and engaged in their learning. Parents and staff work very well together to ensure learning is of a high quality and takes account of children's experiences at home.
- Practitioners value children's views highly. The learning environment promotes purposeful play that sustains children's interests and develops their creativity. Almost all children are highly motivated, lead their own learning and follow their own interests both indoors and outdoors. They make informed choices about their learning. Planned and responsive experiences develop children's independence and resilience very well.
- Practitioners use their knowledge of child development very well to plan learning and support children to grow and develop. They use predictable routines, but also flexibly respond to individual children's care routines and emotional needs. Practitioners encourage children to respect each other's differences and care for the environment. Their recent involvement in the 'Drawing Down the Sun' project is an example of a creative learning opportunity related to the biosphere. Children and their families were highly motivated and developed skills in a real-life context working with a local artist to display their artwork linked to plants that they had nurtured and grown.
- Practitioners' interactions with children are sensitive, supportive and encourage children to develop their curiosity, independence and confidence. Practitioners make time to respond effectively to children's learning. Planned learning ensures that children have the time and space to follow their own learning. A few children use digital devices to capture and describe their learning. Staff are reviewing ways to increase the use of digital technologies more effectively across the curriculum.
- Most children benefit from assessment approaches which lead to accurate judgements about their progress. Ongoing responsive planning is recorded on a weekly basis during dedicated time for meetings. Staff share observations about children's progress with the child's key

worker. These ongoing judgements about children's progress link well to the developmental milestones and inform strategies to extend children's learning.

- Learning journals distinguish between children's involvement in an activity and observations of learning new skills with the identification of next steps. As planned, there is a need to continue to refine approaches to assessment. Practitioners should ensure that the assessment information gathered through the key worker system provides an overview of progress. Practitioners need to ensure evidence of children's progress in relation to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) early level experiences and outcomes and the benchmarks are moderated with staff at P1. Whilst ongoing observations are very effective there is a need to ensure that formal observations evidence children's progress over time.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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.

3.2 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

- Across the setting, most children make good progress in developing their communication skills, early language and numeracy. They make very good progress in their health and wellbeing. There is a need for a minority of children to make better progress over time through planned learning. This should be linked to CfE early level experiences and outcomes and build effectively on children's prior knowledge.
- Most children are making good progress with communication skills and early language. Most children talk confidently and share their ideas and experiences. A majority of children use highly sophisticated language in their play and interactions with their peers. Most children listen very well and retell stories about a diverse range of cultures. The majority of children are not yet building on their early acquisition of early literacy. They are not accessing a variety of texts of increasing complexity in terms of length, structure, vocabulary, ideas and concepts. Most children use a range of media for mark making. The majority of children are not yet representing their thoughts and ideas through more formal symbols, including letter formation.
- In numeracy and mathematics, most children are making good progress. They develop their understanding of number as they count in routines and during their play. Most children explore numbers and know that they represent quantities. They use different quantities in recipes to bake. The majority of children are not yet manipulating numbers or applying mathematical concepts in a range of contexts.
- Almost all children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing. They are aware of each other and show respect to their peers. Most can share, take turns and interact sensitively to the needs and feelings of others. Children can talk about most areas of the wellbeing indicators. They develop their fine and gross motor skills through the range of resources available to them outdoors. Most children are independent in dressing themselves appropriately for accessing the outdoors in the rain. They use kitchen utensils safely to prepare snack and serve themselves during lunch routines. A few children are not able to sustain levels of fitness or demonstrate skills for physical health and wellbeing.
- Almost all children make good progress over time because of their experiences at the nursery. They benefit from an environment that enables them all to make individual choices about what, where and how they learn. They are supported in their play to learn in an unhurried way and can sustain interest for long periods of time. A minority of children with barriers to their learning make very good progress in identified areas of their learning. The majority of children do not yet build sufficiently well on what they already know across the early level.

- Children's achievements at home and in the nursery are valued and celebrated. Practitioners consistently praise and encourage children to be successful and achieve. Children's progress in their relationships, motor skills, thinking skills and communication are captured well and used to identify each child's strengths and next steps. Practitioners should promote children's progress further in their learning with clarity on skills development.
- Practitioners have created an inclusive environment and use their knowledge very well to meet the needs of children and their families. Key workers identify and address most gaps in children progress. In addition, the headteacher has an overview of children's progress based on developmental milestones. This data shows that most children are on track to achieve milestones in line with average expectations and a few are exceeding. The data used by senior leaders in the primary school and the early year's officer does not yet show clearly children's progress from when they started nursery and through the early level of CfE. Managers now need to strengthen their strategic overview of children with identified barriers. This includes the interventions that are in place to close any identified gaps including those caused by socio-economic circumstances.

Other relevant evidence

- The leadership of the early year's officer and her strong values of inclusivity and children's rights is creating a strong staff team who work well together. This is underpinned by a clear focus on professional development. Staff demonstrate high levels of collegiality and share their knowledge consistently well to support children. They developed and implemented a highly supportive learning environment with examples of interactions that are exemplary. Their approaches ensure children lead their own learning and follow their interests.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

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.