

# Summarised inspection findings

**Craighead Primary School and Nursery Class**

East Dunbartonshire Council

12 March 2019

## Key contextual information

Craighead Primary School Nursery Class is registered to provide early learning and childcare for children from two years of age. At the time of inspection all children were aged from three years of age. There have been a number of changes to the practitioner and leadership team over the last two years. The nursery class teacher had taken up her appointment in the school less than a month before the inspection.

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

- Children are happy, safe and secure in the nursery. Practitioners have a sound understanding of the role of positive relationships in early learning and childcare. They are successful in creating a calm, nurturing and caring space for children to grow and learn. As a result, children are forming good friendships and are learning to share their play well. Children are encouraged to become more independent. They are supported in this through the use of some useful visual prompts, for example, at snack time and handwashing.
- Practitioners are reflective and committed to continuing improvement. They use national practice guidance and observations to help shape the learning environment indoors and out. Children are confident in making choices from available resources. They show good levels of motivation and engagement in their spontaneous play. Overall, experiences of play now provide positive opportunities for children to initiate their learning across a wide range of engaging contexts.
- Practitioners value children's play. They are careful to ensure children have time and space to develop their play well. Practitioners interact in sensitive and supportive ways to promote curiosity and encourage children to try new experiences. As a team, practitioners now need to develop further their use of interactions, to extend and deepen children's thinking and learning.
- When planning learning experiences, practitioners seek to be responsive and to take account of children's needs and interests. They recognise that they now need to develop further their use of observation as part of effective assessment. In doing so, they should focus on recognising and capturing what is significant in each child's progress in learning and development. This will enable practitioners to build on what children have already learned and achieved more consistently. By talking together, teachers and practitioners should develop their shared understanding play based learning, and expectations of children's progress.
- Floorbooks provide opportunities for children to talk about their ideas and contribute to shaping experiences. Practitioners recognise that there is scope to develop their use of floorbooks, and similar approaches, to ensure that children have a stronger voice in planning. They should now support children to develop their use of language to talk about, and evaluate their

learning. This will enhance children's sense of themselves as successful, informed leaders of their own learning.

- Practitioners know children as individuals and work closely with families to support their care at transitions. Parents are involved in helping to set some simple targets for children. As planned, practitioners should now develop individual learning journals to enable children, practitioners and parents to reflect on learning and plan next steps. This will help ensure parents are supported to engage in their children's learning at home, and in the nursery, as fully as possible.
- Improving planning, tracking and monitoring are priorities in the current improvement plan. This will ensure children are able to make best possible progress in their learning. Practitioners are at an early stage in implementing planned changes. Going forward, it will be important to build further on existing strengths, while supporting practitioners to develop confidence in new approaches.

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

### 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

- From the information gathered from all inspection activities, it is evident that children are making satisfactory progress as a result of their experiences in the nursery. Senior leaders have correctly identified planning, tracking and monitoring children's progress as priorities for improvement. In recent weeks, practitioners have begun to implement a new approach to planning. This will support them to ensure all children experience more progressive learning across the curriculum.
- Most children readily engage in conversations with adults and their peers during play. They communicate their needs and share their experiences with increasing confidence. A few children choose to mark make and are making positive attempts to write their name. Most children are learning to recognise their name written down, for example, at self-registration and snack. Some enjoyable experiences help children to become confident in exploring and retelling familiar tales. Children use signs and information within their environment, such as visual prompts and recipes to follow instructions. Children would benefit from increased opportunities to make and use a range of non-fiction texts. There is scope to further support children's emerging literacy skills, such as phonological awareness, during play experiences indoors and out.
- The majority of children recite numbers, count and recognise symbols within ten in the course of their play or as part of their daily routines. A few children confidently count beyond ten. Opportunities to use number should be maximised through interactions with adults and the development of further opportunities for children to use their numeracy skills in play. Most children can recognise and name colours and are able to sort and match basic shapes. Children are beginning to use everyday language to talk about measure and time. As planned, practitioners should now provide more challenging, real-life opportunities to extend and deepen children's numeracy and mathematical thinking skills.
- Children are forming good friendships and show care and consideration for their peers. They play together well and are learning to share resources. The majority of children demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others and of their own feelings. Most children play and work independently across the learning environment. They are developing self-help skills as they get ready for outdoors and help themselves to snack. Children have an understanding of how to support their own wellbeing through daily routines such as handwashing, being active and making healthy food choices. Families are encouraged to cook healthy meals together using the home link initiative 'Ramsay the chef bear'. A recent visit from the Fire Service supported children's understanding of ways to keep themselves safe from harm. Children are developing

physical skills, including fine motor skills, through a range of experiences indoors and outside. There is scope for increased risk and challenge. This will enable children to begin assess and manage risk, and take increasing responsibility for their personal safety.

- Children's successes and achievements from home are celebrated and displayed on the achievement wall in the cloakroom and playroom. Practitioners should consider ways of using this information to ensure a holistic view of learning is captured. This will ensure that children's achievements are built upon through nursery experiences more consistently. Children would benefit from improved opportunities to develop their leadership skills and to take responsibility within the nursery.
- There is a supportive and nurturing ethos within the nursery. Practitioners know children and families well and value the individual circumstances and family lives of children. Where appropriate, they work with other partners to provide support to children and families.

### 1. Quality of care and support

Warm, friendly relationships were evident between staff, children and their families. Staff were keen to practice a child centred nurturing approach and took time to talk to children at their level about their wishes and worries. Staff recognised the importance of effective transitions in helping children cope with changes in their life and develop resilience. They tailored the settling in process for children to their individual needs, which helped children feel confident and happy about attending nursery. Parents spoke positively about how nursery children were buddied-up with primary school children to support their transition onward to primary one. This contributed to children feeling safe and secure.

There were good examples of where staff worked collaboratively with other agencies to support any additional needs children might have. Staff could speak confidently about children's individual needs and we observed them informally sharing information with parents about their child and changes to their care. Although staff shared strategies with parents to support children's wellbeing and development, this information was not always recorded in the relevant section of the child's personal plan. Doing so would ensure that all staff were appropriately informed and meaningful evaluations of children's individual needs made. The nursery were in the process of introducing online learning journals for children and staff were optimistic that this would enable them to track children's learning and development in a systematic way. Staff should ensure that they review all elements of children's personal plans every six months or as their needs change, as legislation requires. (See recommendation one)

Throughout our inspection we observed children making decisions about what they wanted to play with and approaching staff for help when needed. Staff use floorbooks to talk to children about their play interests and plan some next steps in their learning. Success and achievement is celebrated by staff thus cultivating children's self-esteem. Staff promoted home links that respected the primary role of parents in supporting children's learning and development. Examples included children taking home Ramsey chef bear to share healthy recipes and bedtime reading books with book reviews for families to consider. In this way everyone was working together to support positive outcomes for children.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

### 2. Quality of environment

The nursery was bright and airy with plenty of space for children to move around between the different play areas. Good use was made of picture prompts and labelling to help children learn nursery routines, such as snack time. Staff had introduced good quality resources, loose parts and some natural materials that stimulated children's curiosity and offered challenge. We observed children independently select resources in the playroom, choosing whether to play alone or in small groups. Staff were respectful of giving children space and time to work through their play intentions. However, we noted that children did not always tidy up behind themselves and staff explained they had discussed this in their team meetings. They agreed that encouraging children to take responsibility for their environment would help them learn consideration for their peers, including removing trip hazards to keep them safe. Staff could also involve children more in risk

assessments, thus developing their analytical skills and a sense of achievement from their findings.

The nursery had worked with families and local businesses to develop their outdoor play area. Children had regular access to this area to extend their play projects and be active in the fresh air. Staff asked us for advice on how they could keep abreast of good practice by enabling children to have free flow access from their playroom to outdoors. We shared approaches that they could adapt for their context and present to their local fire officer. Their plans should include an outdoor play risk assessment that demonstrates how they are keeping children safe.

The nursery had its own secure access separate from the school as well as secure access from within the school to ensure children's safety. The whole school building was maintained by the service provider East Dunbartonshire Council. The council had already started to make adaptations to the environment to meet the needs of two year old children as we had asked. For example they had installed nappy changing facilities. Staff had been looking at Building the Ambition to reflect on additional resources or changes to the playroom that would make sure they provided positive caring and learning experiences for toddlers. They should continue with these plans.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

### 3. Quality of staffing

Staff were reflective practitioners who were aware of their professional and organisational codes. They were registered with the General Teaching Council (GTC) or the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) as well as being vetted through the Protection of Vulnerable Group (PVG) scheme. We could see that management made use of Care Inspectorate guidance - Safer recruitment through better recruitment to assist with this task. This contributed to children being cared for by staff who were suitably qualified and fit for the role in which they were working. We discussed the benefits of the setting having a clearer induction programme, which not only enabled new staff to familiarise themselves with their assigned role and responsibilities but also the refreshed vision and ethos for the whole service. This would help people to feel included and valued.

Staff were motivated to engage in professional reading so that they could improve outcomes for children. Staff used best practice guidance to underpin their work with children and shared their learning with each other. Despite the significant staff turnover, we found the nursery team had gelled and shared common values such as an enabling attitude toward children. People who work well together are more likely to provide consistent and stable care and support for children. Parents we spoke to during the inspection believed staff had the necessary skills and experience to care for their children and support their development. On a personal level they also felt supported, included and respected by staff.

Individual professional appraisals took place annually for staff and provided an opportunity for them to plan their professional development with management. The training plans for the nursery team reflected the school improvement plan and the nursery priority areas for development. Management should ensure that future training plans also take account of the individual needs of children joining the nursery. For example as the nursery was about to register two year old children, staff should therefore refresh their knowledge and understanding of the national guidance Pre Birth to Three: positive outcomes for Scotland's children and families.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**



## 4. Quality of management and leadership

The new headteacher, who was also the registered manager of the nursery was fully committed to improving the quality of provision and had shared her vision with staff and families.

The nursery was included in the whole school improvement plan. Priority areas for the nursery to develop had been set out in a separate action plan extracted from this. At feedback we discussed the nursery having more autonomy for setting their own priorities for improvement to ensure that these were relevant to children's needs and the nursery's stage of development.

We found nursery staff were confident about using the national benchmarking tool How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare and Building the Ambition to evaluate and improve their practice. This included encouraging children and their parents to have a voice in developing the service. For example children were leaders of their own learning; staff promoted this through sharing ideas in the floorbooks and using voting systems to share their views. Parents had contributed to the nursery's improvement journey through making plans for the outdoor environment and giving suggestions for the new format of children's plans. In this way everyone in the nursery community felt their views were valued and respected.

Staff told us they felt supported by the senior management team. They had regular team meetings together so that they could reflect and discuss individual children and plans for the nursery as a whole. Members of the staff team had each taken on champion roles to lead nursery priority areas for development. The team had a good working relationship with their council's quality improvement officer, who provided professional advice including assisting with the implementation of East Dunbartonshire Council's preferred planning approach.

Staff engaged enthusiastically with the inspection process and were open to advice for how they could further support good outcomes for children. We signposted them to the new Health and Social Care Standards My support, my life. These standards are used by the Care Inspectorate when assessing the quality of care and support offered by registered services.

### Care Inspectorate grade: good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements or recommendations. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and one recommendation.

#### Recommendation:

- The service should continue to develop personal plans for children. These plans should detail the individual needs of children and show how staff monitor, plan, track and assess children's health and well-being needs as well as their learning and development.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that as a child: 'my future care and support needs are anticipated as part of my assessment' (HSCS 1.14) and that 'my care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

## 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.