

Summarised inspection findings

Broomhill Primary School Nursery Class

Aberdeen City Council

7 March 2023

Key contextual information

Broomhill Primary School Nursery Class is a setting for children aged from three years until they start primary school. The setting is open from 8.00 a.m. until 6.00 p.m. and offers morning, afternoon or full day sessions. The nursery is open for 46 weeks of the year including school holiday periods. Prior to expansion of the service, the nursery offered shorter morning or afternoon sessions on a term time basis. Previously, the nursery worked as two separate independent teams of staff in two separate buildings. Now, both teams joined with new staff to work together in their new building within the school grounds. This new building opened in August 2021. There is one main playroom with a very large kitchen area in the playroom. There is direct access from the playroom to two outdoor spaces. New facilities also include a family room for parents and children and staff areas. The nursery team includes two senior early years practitioners (EYPs), five EYPs and three support workers. Supply EYPs regularly cover for absent practitioners. The deputy headteacher has line management responsibility for the staff in the nursery. Currently, 85 children attend the nursery on a variety of attendance patterns. This is due to increase over the current term.

Prior to opening a new building and transforming their offer to children and families, members of the team provided support to children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The team facilitated online learning, contacted families by phone and email and provided childcare hubs for keyworkers. The team made frequent changes to their practice to comply with guidance to keep children and staff safe. Practitioners found this an extremely stressful and uncertain time. Last year, practitioners were pleased to reintroduce opportunities for parents to attend events and groups within the nursery.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

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

- The nursery class share the same vision and values as the primary school. Practitioners are supporting children to learn the 'Broomhill song'. This is helping children to become familiar with the vision and values in a fun and engaging way. Senior leaders and the staff team have made a start to gather the views of stakeholders to refresh the vision and values. This is to ensure they are relevant and meaningful to everyone in the new building.
- Over the last few years, senior leaders and the staff team have had to deal with significant change including the expansion to 1140 hours, the impact of COVID-19 and the move to a new building. This has impacted on the pace of change. Senior leaders are supporting practitioners to work together as one team. Overall, the team are receptive to guidance and make positive attempts to improve aspects of the nursery provision. It will be important for senior staff to ensure that new developments are implemented fully by practitioners and sustained. The team have improved the provision for loose parts play and imaginative play. Helpfully, they consulted children to develop these areas. The team should continue to involve children in developing the spaces and experiences in the setting.

- Senior leaders are beginning to have a clearer understanding of the setting's strengths and areas requiring development. There is a need for senior staff to establish a more formal approach to self evaluation. In doing so, they need to support the team to evaluate the work of the setting. It will be important that practitioners gain a greater understanding of national guidance, *Realising the Ambition: Being Me and How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare?*, self evaluation tool to enable them to identify key improvement priorities. It would also be beneficial for practitioners to visit other settings to observe good practice.
- The staff team are keen to engage with parents. They have welcomed parents to a few nursery events following COVID-19 mitigations. A few practitioners have undertaken professional learning in a parenting programme which they have now rolled out to a group of parents. Due to the success of the programme, they plan to provide more parents with the opportunity to benefit from this work.
- Practitioners are keen to improve their practice. When given opportunities to do so, practitioners engage well in professional learning. They undertake professional activities with colleagues in the primary school, for example, they recently engaged in professional learning about trauma-informed practice. A few practitioners are undertaking additional qualifications in their own time and share their learning with colleagues.
- The nursery class is included in the whole-school improvement plan. In addition to this, there is a separate action plan which addresses priorities specific to the nursery. There is a need to ensure that priorities identified will help bring about prompt and necessary improvements. There is also a need for the whole staff team to be fully involved in improving the nursery provision. In addition, robust self-evaluation will be necessary to ensure new developments are securing the best possible outcomes for children.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

weak

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, content and increasingly confident as they choose to play independently in the construction, playdough or home corner areas. A few children are absorbed with their own ideas for extended periods as they manipulate playdough or paint and draw. Most children enjoy playing alongside their friends. Almost all children move frequently between areas and repeat experiences across their time in nursery. Most children are engaged in activities that they enjoy. The team have worked well with children to include more resources that respond to children's interests. Children enjoy using their imagination as they play in the home corner or make lunch in the mud kitchen. The team have rightly increased the availability and use of loose parts. Increasingly, a few children use these materials to develop their own ideas in play. Practitioners are not yet consistently providing spaces, interactions, and experiences which take account of children's stage of development and prior learning.
- The team have recently focused on improving the quality of their interactions. In the best examples, practitioners are attentive, patient, and caring. All practitioners should continue to improve their skills in observation. At times, they do not always notice when children or colleagues need help or support. Practitioners have rightly identified that children find transitions throughout the day challenging. The majority of children find it difficult to concentrate on their play in the indoor area later in the session. The team should review how routines support a quality learning experience for all children.
- Practitioners have changed the ways they plan for children's learning several times over the last year. Every morning senior practitioners lead a short planning discussion with practitioners. Approaches to planning learning show positive signs of responding to children's interests. Practitioners' entries to systems to track, monitor and assess children's progress do not yet provide a valid and reliable record of children's progress. The team need to continue to improve the frequency, quality and focus of next steps recorded for individual children. Practitioners need to develop a shared understanding of the purpose and use of records of progress. Children and parents should be more effectively involved in creating and reviewing next steps. The team need continued support in how to use assessment to inform planning of spaces, experiences and interactions. This will support the team to ensure they better match learning to children's stage of development taking account of their existing skills, knowledge and understanding.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners use Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes to inform the planning of learning. The team plan free play and small group experiences for children. Practitioners offer an improving balance between free play, child initiated and adult led opportunities for children. They would benefit from further support from the local authority and senior leaders to develop further their curriculum. The staff team should explore national guidance such as 'Realising the Ambition' and good practice in other settings to develop a shared understanding of a high quality curriculum.
- The nursery team support children and parents effectively as they visit the setting for the first time. Keyworkers work flexibly with parents to plan how to increase children's time in the setting. Children settle into their time in nursery well. Nursery children enjoy planned transition activities including visits to the primary one class, gym or lunch hall. This supports children to become familiar with new learning environments and build relationships with teachers. The depute headteacher is enthusiastic about future plans for shared learning and enhanced transition. The team should work together to develop further a shared understanding of early years pedagogy across the early level. This will support improved continuity and progression for children.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners build friendly relationships with children and families. There is a welcoming atmosphere. Parents are positive about recent small group sessions and stay and play sessions. Practitioner and parent evaluations demonstrate how these sessions improve relationships. An increasing number of parents use online diaries to share their child's achievements, experiences, and learning at home. Parents do not yet feel they have enough information about their child's time in nursery or about their progress in learning. The team should work together with senior leaders to improve the quality of information shared with parents about their child's progress. Children, parents, and staff should work together to identify and reflect on children's next steps.
- Children are open and comfortable as they share their opinions and ideas with practitioners. This includes sharing what they like about areas of the nursery. The team plan to increase the ways children can influence the work of the setting and share their views. Parents offer suggestions and feedback as they meet with keyworkers, comment in diaries or complete questionnaires. Practitioners should continue to share with parents and children how their ideas and suggestions are used to improve the work of the setting.

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

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

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 team consider the wellbeing of children to inform their work. Practitioners take time to get to know children as individuals. They complete wellbeing assessments that capture information about children in detail. Keyworkers use this to inform how they meet each child's needs. Practitioners support children well to make new friends. Children are friendly and most children demonstrate care and kindness to each other. Older children enjoy supporting their friends to complete tasks and look after their toys. Children can talk about how to keep safe and healthy. Most children are proud and independent as they help set up snack or put their plates in the dishwasher after lunch. A few children demonstrate an early understanding of their own and other children's rights. Practitioners should now increase leadership opportunities for children. Children are ready to explore a fuller range of wellbeing indicators as they play and learn. Practitioners should support children to make connections between activities in nursery and home to the wellbeing indicators.
- All children have their lunch in the playroom together. Practitioners have tried different ways of organising lunch. Children confidently choose their lunch using visual prompts and enjoy the role of snack helper. Practitioners inform the catering team when lunch options are less popular with the youngest children. They do not always notice opportunities when a few children need support to use cutlery. The team should continue to collaborate with children and parents to improve the quality of the lunchtime experience.
- Practitioners have a developing awareness of their statutory requirements in relation to ELC. The team are clear about their duty to keep children safe. For example, practitioners undertake checks to ensure the storage and records of medication children may need are up to date. The team have improved the quality of personal plans taking fuller account of children's care and health needs.
- The depute headteacher, seniors and team work well with other visiting professionals such as speech and language therapists. This means parents and practitioners are able to share important information and strategies that support children to learn. Practitioners use visual prompts to support a few children to communicate their needs and follow routines. They value all children as individuals and include them in all aspects of the setting. Commendably, the team have started to include activities and experiences to explore equality with children. Practitioners should develop further their understanding of approaches to challenge discrimination and celebrate inclusion and diversity.

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

- Children are making satisfactory progress in early language and communication. Most children show a keen interest in mark-making. They enjoy sharing their drawing and writing with adults as they draw and discuss pictures. The majority of children enjoy creating or re-telling stories for adults to scribe. A few older children confidently write their name and read familiar words. Most children visit the book corner independently to enjoy books on their own or with adults. Most children do not yet apply and extend their prior learning and skills as they explore the experiences on offer. Children need more opportunities and interactions to explore, investigate and document their thinking and learning in more depth. Children need to apply their skills across a wider range of learning.
- The majority of children recognise numbers and count with increasing confidence as they play. A group of children join in enthusiastically with games on the interactive whiteboard as they recognise numerals and count to ten. Children are beginning to use appropriate mathematical language as they fill and empty containers. Most children sort, order and categorise objects and toys as they play. A few children accurately measure and record the height of seeds they have planted in the garden. Most children would benefit from increased opportunities to develop further their numeracy and mathematical skills. This will support children to make progress and apply their prior learning.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in health and wellbeing. Most children develop a positive sense of self as they persevere to build a ramp. Children are developing positive relationships as they cooperate to build a house using bricks or work together as a group. Most children develop their gross motor skills well as they pedal bikes, walk to the local library or dance and move around images projected on the floor. All children enjoy celebrating their achievements with staff and one another in their 'wow' moments. Children need support to link experiences and achievements to the skills they are developing. They could be involved with practitioners in participation groups to share ideas and lead improvements. Children could be involved in adapting spaces to create more cosy areas for rest and relaxation.
- Records of children's experiences and skills do not yet evidence the progress children make over time. The team should continue to work with children, parents and other staff to build a personalised, reliable record of the progress children make across learning.
- The team have a developing interest in work to support equity for all children. A few activities were planned with a focus on race and diversity. The team are at early stages of exploring their

approaches to support equity. At present there are no targeted interventions on offer in the nursery. Practitioners and senior leaders should work together to develop further improved understanding of approaches to achieve equity for all learners.

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.