

# Summarised inspection findings

**Westpark Primary School Nursery Class**

Aberdeen City Council

12 March 2024

## Key contextual information

Westpark Nursery Class is part of Westpark Primary School and Nursery Class. It is situated within the building of Westpark Park Primary School. The nursery provides early learning and childcare (ELC) placements for children living in the Mastrick community of Aberdeen City. The nursery is registered to provide places for 40 children at any given time. Children attend during term time and all access full-time places. The opening hours of the nursery changed this year from 8-6 pm to 9-3 pm.

There is one playroom and children have direct access to a large outdoor space. Practitioners and children access a room called 'The House'. This is used as a staff resource base and for small group learning experiences. There is a wildlife area adjacent to the school grounds which is used regularly by most children. The headteacher is the designated nursery manager. There are two part-time senior practitioners who are responsible for the day-to-day running of the nursery. They are supported by two early years practitioners, two support workers and one modern apprentice.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

**weak**

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences 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 experience warm and nurturing relationships with practitioners. This helps them to feel safe and secure. Children experience a welcoming ethos in the setting and this helps them to settle and play independently. Most children engage well with a range of spontaneous play opportunities indoors and outdoors. They would benefit from planned learning that extends and develops levels of engagement further.
- The majority of practitioners are developing their use of commentary to scaffold, challenge and encourage children to engage in their learning. In a few examples, this enables children to sustain their interest for longer periods of time. Practitioners need to develop further their use of open-ended questions to extend and deepen children's learning. They should use national practice guidance to increase further their knowledge and understanding of the role of the adult to support children's learning.
- Senior leaders need to improve the availability of digital resources to increase children's digital skills more effectively across the setting.
- Practitioners observe children playing and upload photos to a secure online platform shared with parents and carers. Practitioners need to ensure observations of individual children's learning are linked to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and developmental milestones. This will ensure practitioners and senior leaders can more accurately evidence progress over time. Overall, the quality of observations is not yet of a consistently high quality and does not always capture significant learning for every child. As practitioners develop

further their observation skills, they should monitor and track children's learning more effectively to identify clear, appropriate and meaningful next steps for all children.

- Most parents access the online platform regularly and say they enjoy seeing what their child is experiencing in the nursery class. Practitioners decide upon targets for children and record them in the online platform. These now need to be more clearly linked to observations and include next steps in learning. Children are not yet clear about the skills they are developing as they play. Practitioners should plan time for children to share the online platform posts with adults and discuss what they are learning through their play.
- Practitioners have peer buddies to discuss observations uploaded to the online platform. They need to develop a shared understanding of national standards through more opportunities for moderation within the school and across the local learning community.
- Senior leaders and practitioners recently updated planning approaches. This includes planning across a variety of timescales. Practitioners use weekly intentional plans and daily responsive plans to record children's interests and plan their adult interactions to develop learning. They are beginning to use children's developmental overviews to identify gaps in learning. Senior leaders and practitioners should use local authority progression frameworks to plan children's learning and individual next steps. They should improve approaches to measure and check all children's progress. As planning processes continue to be implemented, it will be important to ensure they meet the learning needs of all children. Practitioners require continued support from senior leaders to help them to develop a clearer understanding of how to plan effectively and record children's learning.

## 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. An area for development has been agreed with the school and the education authority.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

weak

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

- Overall, children are not making expected progress in early language, numeracy and mathematics. The tracking of children's progress over time is not yet sufficiently robust to reflect accurately the progress children are making as a result of their nursery experiences. Senior leaders and practitioners should continue to develop how they gather evidence to improve the accuracy of their professional judgements.
- Senior leaders and practitioners identify individual targets for children who require additional support with their learning. Practitioners should improve how they meet these targets to ensure that children make progress in a timely manner. The use of targeted intervention data should be more consistently used to identify targets and support for individual children. Senior leaders should ensure identified strategies to support all children who require additional support are consistently used by all practitioners.
- Most children listen to stories and regularly seek out adults to read to them. The majority of children communicate effectively with a minority requiring support to verbalise and communicate their needs. A few children create increasingly detailed pictures. Most children need more opportunities to regularly write for a purpose.
- The majority of children are beginning to identify patterns and two-dimensional shapes. Children are beginning to use the language of measurement during play and in real-life contexts. Children explore three-dimensional objects and positional language through block play. They are increasingly aware of the passage of time, routines and seasons. Most children would benefit from opportunities to develop their skills in information handling.
- Most children are making satisfactory progress in health and wellbeing. They develop their gross motor skills as they balance and climb in the nursery outdoor area and local wildlife area. They would benefit from increased 'free flow' between inside and outside throughout the day. The majority of children develop their independence and fine motor skills as they dress themselves for the outdoors and follow hygiene routines including handwashing. The majority of children share and take turns well as they play in pairs or small groups. Most children understand how to keep themselves safe and are developing their responsibility skills by helping to tidy up and prepare snack. Practitioners should continue to develop children's skills in self-regulating their emotions and communicating their needs.

- Practitioners share children’s achievements during their time at nursery with parents using an online platform. They should continue to explore ways of encouraging parents to share achievements from home. Senior leaders need to create an overview of children’s achievements. This will ensure that no child is at risk of missing out and that links are made to skills for learning, life and work.
- Practitioners are aware of children and families’ individual circumstances and know the local community context well. This includes the barriers to learning that children and families experience. Most parents feel comfortable approaching practitioners if they have concerns, queries or need advice. Practitioners should make better use of information and data available, including data related to the setting’s socio-economic context. This should help with decisions about interventions required to support identified groups of children to make the best possible progress. Senior leaders and practitioners need to develop further how work to close the poverty related attainment gap is measured.

## 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.