

Summarised inspection findings

Urafirth Primary School Early Years

Shetland Islands Council

10 December 2024

Key contextual information

Urafirth Primary School Early Years provision is located in the primary school building and serves the rural area of Northmavine, between Urafirth and Hillswick, Shetland. It is close to the shore and is surrounded by sea and croft land. The Early Years has direct access to an outdoor area and shelter that facilitates outdoor learning in poor weather. Children also have daily access to the school play park and grass pitch. The nursery is registered for 22 children at any one time and caters for children aged three years to those not yet attending school. There are currently seven children on the roll. Children attend 38 weeks per year, Monday to Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery and is the named manager. She has one and a half days teaching commitment in the nursery each week. She is supported by a full time senior early years practitioner, one part time permanent practitioner, one part time permanent early year's worker, one temporary part time early years worker and one temporary part time practitioner.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

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

- Practitioners' relationships with children are positive and inclusive throughout the nursery. All practitioners provide a warm and nurturing environment. As a result, all children are happy, settled and feel safe and secure. Practitioners view the children as 'their family, their community'. They encourage children to think about and share their feelings and consider the feelings of others. Practitioners interact sensitively with children and provide space and support for them to regulate their emotions when needed. This is helping children to be ready to learn.
- The headteacher and practitioners demonstrate a supportive welcome to all. They provide regular opportunities for children and their families to be involved purposefully in the nursery, and their local community. Practitioners provide well balanced learning environments outdoors and indoors that children are curious about and motivated by. They create an ethos that promotes children to learn through spontaneous quality play opportunities, linked to relevant real-life experiences. Practitioners are very respectful of children's choice and their right to play. However, they could provide children with a greater range of challenge to extend and sustain children's interests and learning.
- All practitioners know children, their interests, and how they learn very well. They provide suitable routines that do not intrude in children's play. Practitioners are supportive and encourage children to be confident and creative in their thinking. Most practitioners use carefully considered questions and offer ideas to develop further children's skills. They provide a range of interesting resources and learning contexts. This includes practitioners use of stimulating senses hunt cards on the beach. They understand how young children learn and

develop and make increasing use of various current national guidance documents. Practitioners are motivated to engage in regular high-quality training and professional learning. This ensures children benefit from current and high-quality pedagogy.

- The headteacher and practitioners consider as a team any changes required to the environment, based on children's increasing needs and interests. They carefully listen to and observe children to enhance learning experiences. All practitioners input into children's online learning journals to record photographs and observations of children's learning. Parents access and contribute to the journals; this ensures they are kept well informed about their child's learning. Children access their learning journals on the interactive board and enjoy sharing their learning. Practitioners should now increase opportunities for children to talk about their learning with adults and peers.
- Practitioners plan effectively for children's learning using clear formats that improve outcomes for children. They provide a suitable balance of intentional and responsive planning in all curricular areas. They recognise children who require additional support with their learning and plan appropriate activities to help them make steady progress. The headteacher and practitioners have regular meetings to discuss and accurately track and monitor the progress children are making. They recognise the need to include more often children's voice when planning 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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

- In line with their age and stage of development, children are making good progress in early language and communication. Practitioners model purposeful language well as they talk with children in an unhurried manner. Children use extended language and new vocabulary well during extensive and detailed role play opportunities. Practitioners should continue to explore ways to further develop mark making, writing, and drawing skills with children. All children enjoy being read to at mealtimes which is developing further their love of books. Practitioners should ensure storytelling, singing and rhymes continue as a development priority for the nursery.
- Children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They count forwards and backwards through real life contexts and use regular and meaningful mathematical language of size. Children make simple calculations and comparisons at snack time as they discuss the food, amounts and crockery being used. They apply mathematical skills during colour mixing while painting and through water play. Children have a basic knowledge of shape, position and movement. Almost all children are developing a broad understanding of time through nursery routines. Practitioners should extend opportunities for more meaningful learning of shape.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Practitioners appropriately supervise children and encourage them to independently and safely collect what they need for mealtimes from the kitchen. Children help choose and prepare snack including vegetables grown and picked from their own garden, and clear away afterwards. This is providing children with a sense of achievement and transferable real life independence skills. Children are encouraged and supported to take turns and share and interact with one another safely. They are confident and share their feelings verbally and on the 'what matters to me board', that is regularly updated. This is helping children to recognise their feelings and talk about emotions with support. Children have very good physical skills and can climb, balance and slide on challenging and open-ended resources.
- Practitioners use tracking formats well to record the progress being made by children in the nursery. For example, practitioners' evidence well the progress children who require additional support are making over the year. All children have personal targets, appropriate for their age and stage of development. These help practitioners to plan inviting play experiences to extend children's interests and learning. Practitioners monitor and track communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing using various progressive pathways. This reflects accurately the good progress children are making.

- Children celebrate their achievements through 'Wir Leaning Tagidder', a visual display for parents. Practitioners support children to share their electronic learning journals with one another. This makes children feel proud of their achievements. As planned, the headteacher should continue to explore ways to develop this further to include all early level learners in the school.
- The headteacher and practitioners have a sound understanding of the socio-economic backgrounds of children and families and the impact this has on opportunities for children. This includes the rural and remote island context and the barriers this creates for equity of experience for all children. The headteacher and practitioners successfully broaden children's experiences through a significant commitment to source and secure fundings. They put in place interventions and experiences to ensure all children make good progress in their learning.

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.