

Summarised inspection findings

Parsons Green Primary School Nursery Class

The City of Edinburgh Council

19 March 2024

Key contextual information

Parson's Green Nursery Class is based in a separate building within the grounds of Parson's Green Primary School. The nursery comprises of one large playroom and an outdoor space. Children also access a large park located next to the nursery. Children attend from the age of three until starting primary school, currently, the roll is 29. The nursery is open from 8.30am until 3.15pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am until 11.50am on a Friday. The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery and is the named manager. The depute headteacher has delegated responsibility for the day-to-day management of the nursery. Last session, staffing challenges in the school reduced the time available for the senior leadership team to be involved within the nursery. The nursery team has experienced changes to staffing structures. The team currently includes a full-time early years officer, four early years practitioners (2 full-time and 2 part-time), a part-time early years assistant, a part-time domestic assistant and a modern apprentice.

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

- Practitioners in the nursery class share the vision and values of the school. The team encourages children to 'dream, believe and achieve' through their interactions and vocabulary. Practitioners support children to share what they are proud of as they select, discuss, and share with parents the drawings and models they have created. Rightly, the team plan to review their vision, values and aims with current parents. This will ensure their approach is meaningful and reflects the needs of all new families. Practitioners should work with children, parents, and partners to reflect on, and celebrate, how they put their values into practice. This will help evaluate the progress children make in becoming successful and responsible learners.
- The team is hardworking and responds positively to suggestions for improvements. Practitioners have implemented important changes to ways of working since the start of the academic year. This improvement work was informed by positive engagement with staff from the local authority and visits to other settings to observe good practice. The team have made well-informed changes to children's routines, lunchtimes and play spaces. Practitioners have used professional learning and self-evaluation to make appropriate adaptations to how adults plan for, and involve children in, planning learning. Children now choose resources to support their play and work with staff to set up and adapt spaces to reflect their interests. Overall, initial changes to both the layout, and use of, learning spaces are at an early stage of implementation. The team recognises that most children are ready for increased opportunities to lead their learning and improvements. The team now need time to embed their changes. The senior leadership should continue to use robust self-evaluation to increase the pace of change as they evaluate the impact of their improvements.
- The leadership team has worked with practitioners to create a detailed nursery improvement plan. Practitioners are enthusiastic and clear about their specific areas of responsibility such as outdoor learning, digital skills, and transition. The team reflects on its practice daily and in

useful weekly meetings. Practitioners have made important contributions to establish and develop further a good range of transition activities with their colleagues in the school and for children new to the setting. Senior leaders and practitioners regularly ask parents and children for feedback using questionnaires. This supports the team to know what is working well. The team now need to involve children, parents, and partners in how they measure the impact of improvements.

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

- There is a welcoming and nurturing ethos across the nursery. Most children settle quickly with friends to draw detailed pictures or play outside. All practitioners involve children to select and arrange resources as they start the session. Children benefit from being able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor spaces. They frequently challenge themselves to climb, balance and swing on trees. Children are confident as they try out their own ideas and talk to practitioners about what they would like to try to do next. Most practitioners offer well-judged support that encourages children to take risks and try out their own ideas. A small group of children work well together to create a large dinosaur skeleton using open-ended materials. Children are highly motivated as they learn to identify birds using their markings and different calls. The team is aware that a few children move frequently between spaces and activities. Practitioners should now develop further inspiring experiences that challenge children to apply their well-developed skills and engage in activities for extended periods.
- Practitioners are attentive and interested in all children. The team sensitively joins in or observes children in play. Practitioners should now be more consistent in their use of visuals and prompts with a few children. This will enable children with additional support needs to communicate their ideas and preferences more effectively. Most practitioners ask open questions that challenge children to build on prior learning. A few practitioners need to improve how they monitor other learning spaces while engaged in activities with children. This will ensure practitioners do not miss opportunities to challenge all children.
- Practitioners have made important changes to how they plan for children's learning. There are positive signs of a better balance between intentional adult-directed and responsive child-led learning. Practitioners record diligently children's learning experiences in a wide range of useful planners, trackers and in online profiles. Practitioners share weekly 'round ups' of learning experiences with all families. Last term, senior leaders introduced new helpful meetings with keyworkers to discuss children's individual progress. These support practitioners to talk about and reflect on what children can do and need to learn next in more depth. The team used these meetings to create new overviews of individual children's progress. These overviews have started to focus improvements in specific areas of the playroom and increase experiences in specific curricular areas. The team should continue to improve their skills and confidence in recording more specific observations and more focused next steps. A few children are aware of, and very interested in, the online profiles shared with families. Most children could be more meaningfully involved in celebrating their progress and identifying their own next steps. This will support more children to use the language of learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners are developing their shared understanding of the curriculum rationale developed in partnership with the school. The team plans a wide range of experiences over the year including exploring topics such as 'people who help us'. The team has changed recently how they plan for children's learning to make the curriculum more responsive for children. The team should continue to develop their shared understanding of national practice guidance to support and inform this new approach.
- The team use the local community to provide motivating experiences where children can develop further their skills. Children benefit from outdoor learning and enjoy sensory activities in 'Dr Neil's' garden. Practitioners should continue their work to build on the visits from a wide range of partners and parents to link to children's skills and interests.
- A well-established transition programme is in place. Practitioners, children, and parents participate in a range of helpful activities throughout the year. The team has good relationships and regular communication with other nurseries, childminders, and school staff. This ensures the team is well-informed about children's learning needs before children start nursery. Weekly shared playtimes, visits to the Mini Oaks playroom and shared learning projects with P1, ensure children are familiar and confident in the school environment. Practitioners and teaching staff work well together to share information about their skills and progress across learning. The team should continue this positive work to develop further a shared approach to learning and teaching across the early level.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners engage in daily conversations with parents and carers. This regular contact ensures important information is shared between parents about children's needs, interests and events at home. The team values and acts on this information effectively. Practitioners engage parents in a range of ways. These include visits to the setting to share their skills, weekly opportunities to join learning with their child and formal meetings to discuss children's progress. Practitioners' close relationships and honest dialogue with parents informs plans and strategies implemented by the team.
- The team shares information effectively about what children have enjoyed and their progress. Practitioners do this using displays, an online platform and floorbooks. They provide parents with a weekly summary of children's experiences. Staff encourage parents to use the online platform to share children's learning and achievements from home. Families complete questionnaires regularly to share their views. Practitioners inform parents about children's learning. The team should now build on their positive relationships to offer a wider range of opportunities for parents to engage in and influence learning within the nursery and at home.

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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

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

- Children benefit from caring, warm relationships with practitioners who know them well and listen carefully to their views. Children are beginning to understand their own rights and the rights of others. Staff support children's understanding well through stories and activities linked to articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Almost all children discuss with practitioners what makes them feel sad. They talk though what might help them to feel differently, in their morning routine. The team offers reassurance, comfort, or distraction skilfully to children when needed. A few children continue to need support to take turns and include others in their play. The majority of children would benefit from exploring how to look after their belongings and playroom. This will support children to be responsible as they show care for their resources and one another.
- Children are active and curious in their outdoor play and weekly sessions in the school gym hall. Practitioners support children to assess risk as they climb independently. Most children have a good understanding of the benefits of exercise and healthy eating. Practitioners recently improved arrangements for lunch and snack routines. Children enjoy the new responsibility of cleaning their own dishes after lunch. All children are ready for an increased focus on using the language of wellbeing to talk about their learning and skills.
- Senior leaders and practitioners are improving their knowledge and confidence about a range of statutory duties. They have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. The team record and share information with senior leaders when they have a concern about individual children's wellbeing or development. Each child has a personal plan, which outlines individual care and welfare needs. Practitioners work in partnership with parents to review and update these plans regularly.
- Practitioners have worked well with parents and other agencies to develop appropriate plans to support children who require specific additional support. The team review individual children's plans regularly to discuss strategies and progress children make in their learning and development.
- Children explore what they know about their own, and others, culture by learning about a few festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Practitioners' value diversity, children and adults treat one another with respect. The team should continue to explore a range of intentional and responsive opportunities to develop further children's understanding of inclusion and equality. This will ensure learning about diversity is relevant to all children and responds to their individual needs and local community.

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

- Most children make good progress as they develop their extensive vocabulary and knowledge of and interest in books and stories. Children increase their vocabulary as they talk in detail about their interest in dinosaurs, birds, and buildings. A few children use gesture, eye contact and props to communicate as they role play in the home corner. Children join in enthusiastically with familiar songs and rhymes. A few children enjoy retelling stories with puppets they have made. Most children recognise and write their own name, when making cards or labelling areas and displays. A majority of children would now benefit from more frequent and motivating opportunities to write for a purpose, create, and share their own stories and make their own books.
- Most children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children enjoy using the language of measure as they play with tools in the construction area. Most children develop their knowledge about volume, positional language, and data collection as they explore the garden. A few children would benefit from opportunities to apply their well-developed skills in new and unfamiliar contexts in the community or everyday routines.
- Almost all children make good progress in health and wellbeing. Most children make good progress with their fine and gross motor skills through their outdoor play, weekly gym sessions and interesting experiences where they make and manipulate materials such as playdough. Children understand and are increasingly confident using appropriate language to describe what is important for their own, and others' emotional wellbeing. They laugh, relax and have fun as they make music and respond to a beat using musical instruments.
- Most children share confidently their achievements from home and nursery with support from practitioners. Children, parents, and practitioners celebrate children's successes in online journals and 'All About Me' books. Practitioners should continue to evaluate and record the impact of these achievements on children's progress. The team should also use these reflections to inform changes they make to the playroom and adult-initiated experiences.
- All practitioners have a good understanding of the local community, children's individual socio-economic needs and home circumstances. Practitioners respond sensitively to important life events and short- or long-term changes at home for children. The team should now develop further their understanding of achieving equity for all children. Senior leaders and practitioners should continue to develop the new overviews of children's progress to monitor closely the impact of targeted interventions. This will ensure all children make the very best progress.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm and nurturing approaches that supported their overall wellbeing. Staff interactions were caring and supportive. Staff used language that promoted children's confidence and helped them to feel valued. As a result, children were settled and secure within the setting.

Mealtimes were safe and relaxed. Staff sat with children creating a positive, social experience. Children participated in tasks such as washing dishes and pouring their drinks. These routines helped them to develop independence and a sense of responsibility. Recent changes to a 'rolling lunch' approach enabled children to choose when they wanted to eat. This promoted their individual choices and minimised long interruptions to play.

Personal plans held key information that helped staff to plan for children's care needs. Information was used particularly well for children transitioning into the setting. This helped to provide continuity of care. Reviews had taken place with parents meaning they could provide up to date information and discuss their children's needs with staff. There were opportunities to further enhance the use of personal planning approaches by ensuring staff used the information provided to plan care and support strategies for children over time.

The setting understood the importance of partnership working with parents and other agencies in promoting positive outcomes for children and families. Individual children's additional support plans outlined the agreed strategies to be used within the setting. Staff knew children well and could discuss the strategies within these plans. While some individual strategies were implemented; this was not always consistent. This meant there were missed opportunities for children to experience the tailored support identified within the plan. To maximise the support children received, further work was needed to ensure individualised strategies were consistently used within staff practice and across the environment.

The quality assurance of children's medication and health care needs was not effective in identifying gaps in staff knowledge or ensuring the information held was robust and clear. For example, some staff were unsure of all children's allergies and for some children the recorded information was conflicting or lacked detail. Work had started to address these issues, however, to maximise children wellbeing, further improvements should be made and embedded (see area for improvement 1).

Care Inspectorate evaluation: good

1.3 Play and learning

Children enjoyed a balance of planned and spontaneous play and learning experiences. Planning approaches were responsive to children's interests and provided them with a range of experiences and activities. Staff responded to children's play with enthusiasm. This showed children that their ideas were valued. As a result, most children were engaged in sustained periods of play.

Outside, children could transport, create and work together through play. This created fun and engaging periods of play. Opportunities within the garden supported children's wellbeing and development.

Real-life items and open-ended materials supported children to be curious and develop their imagination. For example, children used jar lids and pebbles creatively in role-play. Moving forward, the setting should continue to develop resources and experiences to further provoke

children's creativity and inquiry skills. For example, children would benefit from greater opportunities to explore experiences and materials that would promote schematic play such as rolling, connecting and enveloping.

Children's literacy and communication skills were encouraged through stories, songs, rhymes and talking time activities. Staff valued the purpose of stories and created opportunities for children to experience the joy of books. At times, some children needed more challenge within their literacy experiences. For example, outside children wanted to make maps, however, mark making materials were not readily available. To enhance children's opportunities for challenge, the setting should continue to develop the breadth and depth of resources and experiences.

Children's learning journals were updated regularly with observations that enabled parents to see their children's experiences over time. Observations were beginning to record children's current and emerging skills. However, at times they were not always specific enough in identifying the significant learning taking place. To support the planning and tracking of children's learning, the senior leadership team had started work to develop the staff team's skills in capturing significant learning within observations.

The setting had developed positive connections within the local community. For example, children and families could take part in 'Wednesday Wanders.' These experiences supported children to understand the world around them and feel part of their wider community.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: good

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The layout of the environment enabled children to choose how and where they played. Open shelving and labelled storage supported children to select materials and plan their play. Most children knew where resources were and could confidently access them. However, the environment could be further developed to reflect all children's development needs. For example, to aid relaxation throughout the day children would benefit from cosier spaces being developed. Creating these spaces could enhance children's wellbeing and support the environment to feel homely and welcoming.

Children's safety was prioritised as staff were attentive and communicated effectively during pick-ups and drop offs. Boundaries and outdoor spaces were checked for hazards and staff used a guide to help implement a consistent approach. As a result, children were safe.

The implementation of effective infection, prevention and control practices promoted children's health and wellbeing. The areas used by children were clean and staff engaged in appropriate cleaning routines to limit the spread of germs. Most of the time staff and children conducted effective handwashing. For example, children washed their hands before eating and when arriving in the morning. However, after mealtimes children finished eating and returned to play without washing their hands. As a result, there was a missed opportunity to promote children's personal care needs and ensure robust hand hygiene. Staff should support children to wash their hands after eating to help maintain consistent practices.

The toilet and nappy changing facilities had the potential to compromise children's wellbeing. The toilet area did not have an external door to the playroom, meaning there was an increased risk of germs and smells spreading into the playroom. The nappy changing arrangements did not reflect good practice guidance as children's nappies were changed within the staff toilet. This increased the risk of cross infection and meant the nappy changing area was not as comfortable as it could be. To maximise children's wellbeing, the provider should make improvements to the toilet and nappy changing arrangements in line with good practice guidance (see area for improvement 2).

Care Inspectorate evaluation: good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The ethos of the setting reflected the vision and values of the school community. For example, staff interactions were warm and caring. Staff, parents and children were valued as the senior leadership team worked hard to foster an ethos of nurture and inclusion.

Staff had distributed leadership roles and some of these roles led to children and families experiencing positive outcomes. For example, some staff had undertaken training that supported them to offer parent and child transition groups for families joining the setting. As a result, staff were using their skills to help families become familiar with the setting and the new experience.

While some processes and systems were in place, gaps remained in the areas covered by quality assurance. For example, there should be robust and effective quality assurance to safely manage children's health care needs and medication. In relation to the quality of the environment and children's experiences, staff should be supported to further develop their skills in identifying and addressing issues as part of their everyday practice. For example, within the playroom there were some worn resources and tired soft furnishings. To ensure children experience a consistently welcoming environment, areas should be replenished and improved as part of ongoing quality assurance processes. To aid the development of staff practice, processes should be developed that allow senior leaders to guide staff and support them to build on their strengths, while considering aspects of practice that may need further development. To secure children's wellbeing and ensure positive outcomes are consistently achieved, effective and meaningful quality assurance processes should be developed and embedded (see area for improvement 3).

Staff were beginning to build their confidence in reflective practice. Discussions at weekly meetings were beginning to influence positive changes in practice. For example, staff had reflected on the introduction of the 'rolling lunchtime' and how this had impacted positively on children's play. Some planned improvements were at an early stage and staff were still developing their understanding of the recent changes to practice. To enhance the quality of experiences and identify ongoing improvements, the senior leadership team should support staff to further develop their understanding of high-quality practice and how this can be embedded across all aspects of the setting.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: adequate

4.3 Staff deployment

A consistent and caring staff team enabled children and families to develop positive and supportive relationships. As a result, children and families felt comfortable and welcomed within the setting.

Staff were flexible and worked well as a team. Effective communication enabled them to respond to children's changing needs. For example, staff recognised when the outdoor area was becoming busy and asked a colleague to join them. This approach enabled staff to deploy themselves appropriately throughout the setting meaning they were ready to support children's play. There were occasions when staff deployment could be further reflected upon. On a few occasions, staff became task focused meaning children did not always have the quality engagement they needed. For example, tidying up at the end of the session took an extended period and staff missed some children becoming restless and disengaged. To ensure consistently high-quality engagement, staff should continue to reflect on the tasks and routines of the day to maximise children's experiences.

Children were cared for by an appropriate number of staff throughout the day. This supported their safety and wellbeing. Unplanned absences were managed well due to the numbers of staff available across the week and the supportive nature of the consistent staff team. As a result, children and families experienced a consistent and well-staffed setting.

The mix of skills and knowledge across the staff team varied. Staff were respectful of each other and understood how they could use their different skills and interests to support children and families. The senior leadership team recognised there were opportunities to further develop staff skills and practice across the team. For example, staff had recently been encouraged to develop a more flexible approach to children's learning by making changes to the ways they engaged children in group experiences. These changes were still at an early stage and at times the quality of children's experiences varied. Moving forward, to ensure children experience consistently positive, high-quality experiences, the senior leadership team should continue to support staff to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence in relation to current early years practice.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and one area for improvement. From this inspection one area for improvement has been met.

As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and three areas for improvement.

Areas for improvement

1. To contribute to children's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure the management of children's medication and health care needs improves. This should include, but not be limited to:
 - ensuring staff have a consistent knowledge and understanding of children's individual medical needs and how these should be managed,
 - improving quality assurance of medication and health care management to ensure the information recorded provides accurate details to guide staff and keep children safe, ensuring the adherence to 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' (Care Inspectorate 2014).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS, 1.15) and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS, 3.14).

2. To ensure children's privacy and dignity is respected and to minimise the potential for infection spreading, adjustments should be made to the nappy changing and toilet facilities within the setting.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'If I require personal care, this is carried out in a dignified way, with my privacy and personal preferences respected' (HSCS, 1.4) and 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS, 5.17).

This is to ensure the environment is consistent with Space to Grow: guidance for early learning and childcare and out of school care settings, (Scottish Government, 2017).

3. To secure consistently positive outcomes for children and ensure a culture of continuous improvement, effective and meaningful quality assurance processes should be developed and embedded.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health & Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS, 4.19).

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.