

# Summarised inspection findings

**Gigha Primary School Pre-Five Unit**

Argyll and Bute Council

27 August 2019

## Key contextual information

Gigha Pre-Five Unit is accommodated within the primary school. The headteacher has management responsibility for the unit. At the time of the inspection, there was a small number of children on the roll. The nursery has provision for children aged two. During the inspection week, only children aged three to five years were in attendance. Since September 2018, children are able to attend for 1140 hours within a flexible pattern of AM/PM and extended day sessions. All children will attend Gigha Primary School.

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

- There is a warm welcoming ethos in the setting. Children and their parents are relaxed and comfortable when they arrive at the setting. Practitioners know children and their families well. Although a relatively new staff team, it is evident that practitioners work well together to provide a positive and supportive experience for all children. They engage in regular self-evaluation and reflection to support their practice and take forward new developments such as the interesting outdoor space. They are supported well by the cluster lead practitioner. She is helping to support the development of their outdoor area as well as other key areas.
- Across the sessions, children demonstrate a keen interest in learning, both in their indoor and outdoor environments. The team carefully plan both areas well to ensure children's interests and development needs are supported. This leads to a high level of engagement and concentration. Interesting provocations for learning are skilfully presented across the playrooms and outdoors. Children respond well during planned learning experiences, benefitting from careful and sensitive prompting by practitioners. For younger children, practitioners intervene and support when necessary.
- Children benefit from practitioners' warm and supportive interactions. Children are clearly valued as individuals. Practitioners make good use of praise and rewards to encourage children to complete tasks and to demonstrate kindness to others. A few children require a little support to help tidy away resources. Children demonstrate growing independence as they put on their waterproof suits and boots for going outside. At snack and lunchtimes, children are encouraged to be independent.
- Across both learning environments, children access a variety of stimulating contexts, which allow them to be curious, inquisitive and creative. Resources and contexts have been carefully organised to promote and support open-ended learning experiences. Children create their own imaginative play episodes, inviting peers and adults to join their play. The outdoor learning environment, which has recently been developed with notable contributions from the local community, is affording a greater level of depth in learning. As planned, practitioners should continue to look at ways to develop this further.

- Practitioners make very effective use of the diverse and interesting local context. Each week children have learning sessions on the beach. Children also visit local gardens to increase their understanding of sustainability. Positively, children join peers from a different setting on the mainland for joint forest school activities.
- There are a few examples of children using digital technology such as tablets to support their learning. We discussed with practitioners the value of making this a more regular feature of the provision. We shared examples of how technology can be used outdoors.
- Practitioners make good use of commentary and questions to reinforce and extend learning. In a few examples, good use was made of high order questioning. This practice should become a more regular feature of every day routine.
- Due to the availability of additional hours, many of the children now access extended hours and full-time provision. The staff team take appropriate cognisance of this to ensure children benefit from a variety of learning contexts, routines, and environments. They provide children with slots of time for meditation and relaxation as well as opportunities for energetic play. The 'meditation stones' support children well to relax and enjoy a restful period of time. Practitioners are very responsive to children and allow them to influence and shape play contexts.
- Practitioners make regular observations of children as they play. These are recorded and included in each child's individual 'learning story'. Observations are used to help track and plan for future learning. There are examples of practitioners identifying next steps in learning however, progress in overtaking these is not always fully documented. It would be helpful to involve children and parents more in identifying next steps in learning.
- Practitioners make use of a local authority tracking tool to monitor children's progress in literacy and numeracy. This is completed regularly throughout the year and this informs children's next steps and planning for learning. Practitioners recognise that their use of this for capturing children's progress remains at an early stage.
- Practitioners meet weekly to plan for children's learning. Planning is mostly responsive to children's interests and development needs. Floorbooks are used as a tool to consult with children and to plan future learning experiences. We have asked the team to involve children more in reviewing their learning in different ways. This will help children to have a greater sense of themselves as learners.

## 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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

### 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

- Children in the setting are making good progress from their prior levels of development. Practitioners are making use of the authority's 'Foundation of Literacy Framework' to support planning for the development of children's language and communication skills. Overall, the majority of children converse confidently with their peers and adults. A few children engaged confidently with members of the inspection team with a few others being supported to develop further skills in oral language. Children follow instructions well and all children demonstrate a keen interest in books. They actively choose to look at books independently. They are benefitting from the setting's strong focus on rhyme and songs. Younger children enthusiastically choose props from the 'song treasure box' for song and rhyme sessions. A few children can retell familiar nursery rhymes and stories using props. Children engage well in the different contexts, which promote their early mark-making skills. A few children can form the first letter in their name. This is promoted both indoors and out. Most children can identify the initial sound of their own name with a few able to identify those of their peers also.
- Overall, children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children count and identify numerals as part of nursery routines and play. They use strategies such as using their 'magic finger' to accurately count different quantities. A few children are beginning to use numbers beyond ten. Most children have an understanding of measure as they identify who is the tallest in the nursery. There is scope to increase children's engagement with money and its purpose. Building on opportunities for real-life contexts such as buying stamps for Christmas cards will support this. A few children can identify simple 2D shapes. A few children new to the group demonstrate a good knowledge of number. It will be important to ensure these children experience appropriate challenge in learning.
- There is a sharp focus on developing children's health and wellbeing. As a result, children are aware of the importance of healthy eating and physical exercise. Interesting and developmentally appropriate ways are employed to support children to understand and talk about their emotions. A story has been used very effectively to support children to identify when they are feeling happy, sad etc. A daily emotional 'check in' reinforces this well. Children are developing their fine and gross motor skills well in a variety of contexts. Daily access to the outdoor areas allow children opportunities for energetic play and to enjoy fresh air. This is supplemented by the well-considered use of the local beach and forest areas.

- The team are able to demonstrate the progress children are making. Learning stories, floorbooks, daily diaries and wall displays capture children's progress over time. We have discussed ways in which these can be developed further.
- Children's achievements are captured in different ways. Parents are encouraged to share children's achievements from home. There is scope to develop this further, for example, adding information about children's achievements from home to the 'wow board'.
- Children in the setting have opportunities to join older children in the school for different events. Older children visit the setting to act as reading friends to younger children. There is scope to develop greater continuity of learning across the early level. This will ensure children build on their learning in the Pre-Five Unit. Joint play sessions in the newly developed garden area would provide very worthwhile contexts for this.
- Practitioners promote equity in meaningful and sensitive ways. The team have a good understanding of children's individual circumstances and this is reflected in their practice and in the offer of flexible patterns of attendance. The setting is very inclusive and makes positive attempts to support children who may require additional help with learning. We have asked that record keeping is more robust to ensure there is a clear overview of strategies to be used and the impact on children's progress. We have discussed with senior staff and the education authority the importance of improving the way information and details of significant events are documented and followed up.

## 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.