

Summarised inspection findings

Craighill Primary School Nursery Class

Sgoil Àraich Bun-sgoil Chnoc na Creige

The Highland Council

19 September 2023

Key contextual information

Bun-sgoil Chnoc na Creige - Craighill Primary School offers 1140 hours of early learning and childcare provision in English Medium Education (EME) and Gaelic Medium Education (GME) during term-time. The EME provision, Tain Nursery, is situated in a spacious playroom within the primary school and has access to a well-equipped outdoor area. The GME provision, Sgoil-Àraich Chnoc na Creige, has a large playroom located in a separate building with direct access to a self-contained garden area. Both settings are registered for up to 20 children to attend at any one time. The provision is for children between the age of three and those not yet attending school. At the time of the inspection, there were 13 children in Gaelic Medium Education (GME), with 20 in English Medium Education (EME).

The depute headteacher of the school has overall management responsibility for the nursery provision. A team of full and part-time practitioners work on a rota system within both playrooms. Practitioners in the Sgoil-Àraich provide 1140 hours of total immersion learning and play through Gaelic.

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 have created a warm, welcoming and supportive ethos within both the English Medium Education nursery and the Gaelic Medium Education sgoil-àraich for children and families. Children are happy, safe and secure as they engage in a range of motivating learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors. Most children engage well during activities led or initiated by practitioners. They concentrate very well for extended periods while leading their own play. Children in the Gaelic Medium Education playroom sustain good levels of engagement during singing sessions provided by a partner, Artsplay Highland.
- Practitioners' and children's interactions are caring and responsive in both settings. Children are developing friendships and learning to play cooperatively with others. Practitioners are skilful in providing well-timed interventions to support and extend children's learning.
- Practitioners in the sgoil-àraich use a range of total immersion approaches including commentaries and singing to support Gaelic language development effectively. Children are hearing and absorbing Gaelic as part of their total immersion play as a result. Practitioners should continue to extend further opportunities for role-play, telling stories and use of digital technology as part of total immersion play.
- Practitioners across Gaelic Medium Education and English Medium Education are in the process of reviewing their approaches to planning. They capture daily responsive planning on revised formats and also involve children in planning using mindmaps. Practitioners should

continue to ensure that an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences is being provided.

- In both English Medium Education and Gaelic Medium Education, each child has an individual learning profile that includes photographs, practitioners' observations and a few samples of children's work. Children enjoy discussing these to share their learning story. Practitioners' observations should have a clearer focus on what children can do and understand. This will help them to identify relevant next steps in learning for individual children. Profiles are shared with parents who also receive an end of session report on their child's progress. Practitioners should continue to encourage parents to provide comments on aspects of their children's learning.
- Practitioners use developmental overviews to track children's progress. The current format does not enable practitioners to track children's progress in Gaelic language. Practitioners in Gaelic Medium Education should ensure they check children's levels of understanding and their use of Gaelic language in a more robust way. Practitioners would benefit from more collaboration with staff working at the early level within the school and other nursery settings across the local cluster. This would support them in tracking progress and with moderation across early level experiences and outcomes.

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 English Medium Education, most children are making good progress in communication and early English language. Children engage in conversations and express their thoughts and ideas well during play. Most children listen with interest to a story read aloud to them. They access texts across the contexts in which they play, for example recipe cards in their mud kitchen. Many children recognise their name through self-registration routines. A few children enjoy mark-making in different contexts. Children's drawings of themselves created throughout their time in nursery are collated and displayed in both playrooms. These show the progress that individual children are making. Children in English Medium Education, are commendably, developing an appreciation of the Gaelic language through singing and performing a Gaelic song at a recent local Mòd.
- In Gaelic Medium Education, most children are making good progress in literacy and Gàidhlig within the total immersion sgoil-àraich playroom. This is particularly evident as they follow instructions and engage in a music and movement session led by a partner, Artsplay Highland. Most children memorise songs to aid their language acquisition and are able to apply the Gaelic they learn in other situations. They understand clearly the Gaelic used during routines such as daily registration and snack. A few children choose to have stories read aloud to them. A few, for example those transitioning into C1, would benefit from practitioners encouraging them to use Gaelic phrases and to develop emergent writing skills in different areas of play.
- Children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. In both Gaelic Medium Education and English Medium Education, most children count objects and recognise colours and shapes in a range of contexts. A few children are able to count beyond 10. Children are encouraged to measure and compare the height of their sunflower plants in the English Medium Education playroom. Children as part of their Gaelic Medium Education P1 transition activities copy patterns using beads, use shapes to create caterpillars and compare their lengths.
- Children's progress in health and wellbeing is good in both English Medium Education and Gaelic Medium Education. Most children play well together and are developing friendships. Children take turns to help prepare snack. Most children are independent as they wash their hands and brush their teeth. They enjoy taking part in relaxed snack and lunch experiences, which develop their social skills and allows children in Gaelic Medium Education to hear and absorb Gaelic phrases for purposeful reasons. Most children develop physical skills during outdoor play as they use balls and skittles or run outdoors. Children and practitioners in both playrooms talk about areas of wellbeing. They need to do so more regularly for most children

to understand and in Gaelic Medium Education to reinforce Gaelic language of wellbeing. Across both settings children should have increased opportunities to develop further their awareness of diversity and rights.

- In both Gaelic Medium Education and English Medium Education, most children show increasing confidence and independence through practitioners' ongoing observations and discussions during play. Information gathered on children's learning indicates that almost all children are making good progress in their learning since starting in their nursery class. Practitioners should now identify ways of tracking children's understanding and use of Gaelic to show the individual progress children make over time in sgoil-àraich.
- Practitioners use praise well and display children's achievements in both English Medium Education and Gaelic Medium Education playrooms. Children enjoy receiving 'star' certificates and, in GME, points for their kindness cups. Their achievements are celebrated at assemblies. A minority of parents share wider achievements from home and, going forward, more should be encouraged to do so. Children are developing their citizenship skills well and their understanding of the needs of others through regular group visits, including to a local care home. Most children from both settings performed Gaelic songs confidently at a recent Mòd.
- Across the nursery and sgoil-àraich, all practitioners know individual children well and take very good account of the differing circumstances of children and families. They provide sensitive interventions to meet effectively the needs of individuals. Practitioners work well with other agencies to ensure equity for all children. They ensure there are no individual cost implications to families or barriers to children's participation in events, for example during a train trip to a farm. As a result, all children access the range of experiences and outings on offer.

Other relevant evidence

- Practitioners have made good use of the statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education (2017) to develop total immersion within the sgoil-àraich. They build foundations by which children's fluency is good by the end of C7. As new practitioners join the sgoil-àraich, they should receive professional learning in the effective use of the Guidance. This includes collaborating with practitioners across the early level within their school, as well as within the authority.
- Practitioners in the sgoil-àraich are making a strong contribution to increasing the use of Gaelic and speakers of the language in the area. There is effective joint working between the sgoil-àraich and the local Gaelic playgroup 'Casan Beaga', a 0-3 provision which meets weekly in a local hall, led by one of the part-time practitioners. This allows for effective transition into sgoil-àraich and ensures continuity and progression in children's experiences through Gaelic.
- Practitioners have established close links with local Gaelic groups such as Comann nan Pàrant. The School and Sgoil-Àraich has experienced staffing challenges this session. Practitioners are at times required to support within the GME classes. When this occurs, every effort should continue to be made to ensure total immersion play experiences are maintained within the Gaelic playroom and outdoors at all times.

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.