

Summarised inspection findings

St Martin's RC Primary School Nursery Class

East Lothian Council

31 October 2023

Key contextual information

St Martin's RC Primary School Nursery Class is situated within the town of Tranent. The nursery is registered for 25 children to attend at any one time. At the time of inspection, the roll was 20. More than half of children aged three years and above are very new to the setting. Children attend Monday to Thursday (6.5 hours) and Friday mornings (4 hours) during term time. The team includes a Senior Early Years Practitioner (SEYP), full and part time practitioners, and a part time support worker. The headteacher has responsibility for the leadership and management of the nursery. All posts are now filled following previous difficulties recruiting staff.

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

- The team has established a welcoming, calm atmosphere. Practitioners are consistently nurturing, caring and respectful with all children. Positive relationships support children to feel safe, secure, and increasingly confident. Practitioners have made necessary changes to routines and spaces. Interruptions to children's play have been reduced. Occasional large group experiences are beginning to better reflect children's stage of development. Children are highly motivated and increasingly independent as they develop their ideas. The team should now sustain and develop further a balance between child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-directed experiences.
- Almost all children spend extended periods of their day in the interesting outdoor area. Practitioners use this small space well to support children to explore, investigate and challenge themselves alongside or with their friends. Children and staff are resilient and resourceful as they work together to re-establish their outdoor space following repeated vandalism. Practitioners should develop further their work with the local community to reinforce and celebrate the importance of this space for children.
- Practitioners have a good understanding of children's early language and communication alongside child development. The team draw on professional learning on language acquisition to inform their thoughtful interactions with individuals. Staff plan weekly small group sessions that improve children's talking and listening skills. Practitioners use gestures, visuals and questioning well to support children to express their needs and extend their thinking. The team should continue to support all children to recognise and talk about their learning across the curriculum.
- Practitioners share children's learning with parents in conversations, social media and through weekly emails. Parents appreciate the recent improved joint working between the school and nursery class. The team use information from parents effectively to inform their interactions with, planning for and profiles of learners. Practitioners should continue to develop further their skills in recording children's specific next steps in learning. The team recognise that a few

children would benefit from more challenge in their learning. Practitioners have rightly identified a need to increase opportunities for children to explore digital learning and science and technology. This will support children to develop their creativity.

- The SEYP, collaborating closely with practitioners and the headteacher, has improved the quality of observations of children's learning. The team use local authority guidance and national practice guidance to inform their planning. They track, monitor and assess the progress of individual children effectively. Practitioners pay careful attention to children who experience challenges in their learning. Practitioners meet termly with the headteacher to agree a shared understanding of progress and inform next steps. The headteacher and SEYP should ensure approaches to assessment are manageable and support practitioners to identify clearly areas where children could make better progress.

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.

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

- Overall, most children are making good progress in communication, early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing.
- Almost all children are increasingly independent as they help prepare snack, learn to tie their laces and confidently access resources to develop their ideas. Most children are beginning to learn to share spaces and resources appropriate to their stage of development and time in nursery. A few children develop their fine motor skills, follow instructions and work together well as they help staff make playdough. Most children develop their gross motor skills as they challenge themselves to carefully balance, jump with support and explore the tree swing. A few children continue to need support to manage change as they move between different activities or to different spaces in the school or nursery.
- Children make good progress in communication and early language. Most children are enthusiastic, keen communicators as they discuss how to make coffee or soup in the mud kitchen. They take turns in an extended conversation to plan a trip to the beach in their car made from loose parts. Children listen and participate well in frequent songs, rhymes, and stories. A few returning children enjoy exploring sounds, clap syllables from their name and recognise familiar letters. A few children would benefit from opportunities to apply their skills in new and unfamiliar contexts.
- Most children are making good progress in developing their skills in early mathematics and numeracy. Most children enjoy exploring volume and capacity as they fill and empty containers as they explore sand and water. A few children are able to describe and compare height and length as they play in the construction and outdoor areas. Most children can count, and are beginning to identify, numerals to ten as they play simple games on the interactive board. A few children are not yet confident in matching and sorting familiar objects and exploring data handling.
- Practitioners monitor and track children's progress through the early level experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence and local authority frameworks. Floor books, wall displays, photographs, children's folders and dialogue with parents is used to build a useful profile of children's progress over time.
- The team work well with children, parents, visiting professionals and one another to identify and celebrate children's individual achievements. Practitioners recognise, value

and celebrate when children have demonstrated the school and nursery values. Children are excited and proud successful learners, celebrated by the whole school during headteacher awards. The team should continue to develop further the range of ways children's achievements are captured and used to inform planning. This will support children to identify and celebrate the skills they are developing.

- The team know children, including new children, and their families very well. The team pay careful attention to getting to know, valuing, and including all families. Practitioners are sensitive and resourceful as they find ways to support the specific needs of families. Staff are responsive and act quickly where parents would benefit from additional support. Partnerships with the local parish, community projects and with volunteers provide practical help if needed. This supports parents and children's wellbeing, supports children's progress and maximises attendance at nursery.

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.