

Summarised inspection findings

**Croy Primary School nursery class (primary
school nursery class)**

The Highland Council

SEED No: 5138523

26 January 2018

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.

- The newly formed leadership team involve practitioners in creating vision values and aims for the whole school. Practitioners are enthusiastic and committed to delivering an early learning and childcare (ELC) service that reflects the agreed values for the school. Positive attempts have been made to share these with parents. They now need to look at ways that they can share the values with children in a meaningful and developmentally appropriate way.
- Although the nursery team has only recently formed, together, they are already starting to create a positive ethos in the playroom. They take part in meetings with the leadership team where they informally discuss and evaluate some aspects of the nursery. They report that they feel supported and included in the life of the school. The leadership team should continue with their plans to formalise procedures for monitoring the provision in the nursery. Practitioners are keen to develop their leadership skills and currently take responsibility for the smooth running of the nursery class. As the team become more established, the leadership team should provide opportunities for practitioners to develop further their leadership skills. This will enable practitioners to utilise their talents and interests.
- Practitioners access an appropriate range of professional learning opportunities. Visits to other ELC settings have provided opportunities for practitioners to discuss good practice with their colleagues. Practitioners self-evaluate the quality of their service using national quality indicators. They would benefit from direction from the leadership team to support them to look more critically at their practice. As a result, more accurate evaluations will be made based on sound evidence. This will help practitioners to identify clearly their strengths and areas for improvement. They will require clear guidance from the leadership team to ensure continuous improvement is made at an appropriate pace. Practitioners are aware of the school improvement plan and key priorities relevant to the nursery. The leadership team should now consider ways to enable practitioners to contribute more meaningfully to this process.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences 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.

- Relationships between children and practitioners are positive. Children settle quickly into the nursery session and are confident with the nursery routine. For most of the session, the majority of children engage well with the learning experiences available. A minority of children require support to sustain interest and engage in purposeful play. There is a tendency for adults to select resources and games for children to use. There will be benefit in reviewing and adapting the layout of the playroom to enable children to access resources independently. Practitioners have made use of national guidance '*Building the Ambition*' to support their practice. Building on this, they now need to consider increasing the range of natural and open-ended materials. This will give children greater choice and encourage curiosity and creativity. Practitioners have reviewed the nursery routine to provide opportunities for children to move freely between indoors and outdoors. They could now consider extending this to give children the choice of where they want to play for longer periods of time. During the inspection, limited use was made of digital technology. Practitioners should consider ways to increase the use of digital technology to support learning and teaching.
- Practitioners' interactions are warm and nurturing. They have created a friendly and positive ethos for children. They readily engage in conversation with children make use of effective questions to support and extend children's learning. This now needs to be more consistent, particularly during free play. Practitioners observe children at play. The quality and quantity of observations is variable. Observations do not always identify the skills children are achieving. Practitioners now need to ensure, observations and other assessment information identify clearly, children's learning and the progress they are making. Practitioners would benefit from time to engage in professional dialogue. This will enable them to reach a shared understanding of their expectations of children and the progress they are making in their learning.
- Individual learning journeys include learning targets, observations, and a few photographs and examples of children's work. We would suggest that practitioners consider ways to develop these further. This includes adapting them to be more 'child friendly' to enable children to have greater ownership. Parents have the opportunity to look at learning journeys at home with their children. Practitioners should continue to seek ways to encourage parents to be more involved in contributing to their child's learning journey.
- Practitioners plan using The Highland Council's guidance. They involve children in the planning process to ascertain what children know about specific learning contexts. This is used as a starting point by practitioners to build upon children's knowledge and skills. As

recognised, practitioners should consider ways to introduce a more responsive approach to planning. Trackers provided by The Highland Council are used to record children's development of particular skills. We discussed with practitioners, ways to develop further their tracking and monitoring processes to demonstrate children's progress over time.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The curriculum within the nursery is firmly based on play. Appropriate use is made of national and local guidance to support practitioners in planning for children's learning. Moving forward, it will be important to work with the school to develop a clear rationale for the curriculum. Engagement in professional dialogue will enable the leadership team and practitioners to reach a shared understanding of early years pedagogy.
- Practitioners have made a positive start to ensure a more flexible and child-led curriculum that is relevant to young children. This includes changes to the routine and the introduction of a 'learning wall'. It will be important for practitioners to take cognisance of the design principles when planning and evaluating experiences and children's learning, particularly in relation to depth, challenge and progression. Further work is required to ensure curiosity, inquiry and creativity are actively promoted and encouraged.
- Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are a focus of the planning process. Practitioners now need to ensure that they consistently provide opportunities for children to develop and apply these skills across learning.
- A positive start has been made to developing the outdoor area. Practitioners report that this is an area they wish to develop further. By increasing the range of open-ended materials, children will become motivated and more engaged in purposeful play. This will also encourage children to problem solve, work together with their peers and develop creativity. As the outdoor area progresses, it will be important to ensure that experiences outdoors are stimulating and challenging.
- Regular walks within the community enable children to become familiar with their local environment. Children benefit from the involvement of parents who share with children information on the jobs that they do. This is giving children an early awareness of the world of work. Practitioners could increase links with the local and wider community. This will develop further children's citizenship skills and their skills for learning and life in a meaningful way.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families - parental engagement

- Practitioners have developed positive relationships with parents. They encourage parents to share their views about the nursery and ways to improve the quality of the provision. This includes sending out electronic questionnaires. As a result, changes are being made to provide increased opportunities for parents to engage in their child's learning. Social media is used to exchange information on events and children's experiences. As recognised, there is scope to make increased use of digital technology as a tool to inform individual parents of their child's learning and achievements.
- On a daily basis, practitioners spend time with parents, sharing information on their child's achievements and wellbeing. This is giving parents reassurance, particularly, while their child is settling into the playroom. Children have the opportunity to take their individual learning journeys home to share with their family. Parents have the opportunity to attend parent's evenings and receive a helpful report on their child's progress at the end of the year. These opportunities are enabling parents to be more involved with their child's learning.
- A few home link resources enable parents and children to learn together outwith the nursery. Practitioners regularly share information with parents to help them understand how they can support their children to develop early language skills. There is scope for practitioners to consider how they can extend this practice and offer a wider range of opportunities.
- Parents and extended family are supportive of the nursery and regularly make themselves available to take part in events such as walks within the community.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff. 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.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

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.

- There is a warm, welcoming atmosphere in the nursery and relationships between children and practitioners are caring and positive. Practitioners value each child as an individual and welcome them into the nursery. They know each child and their personal circumstances. This helps them to be responsive to the wellbeing needs of individual children and families and ensures that children are supported appropriately. Parents are comfortable sharing information about their children with practitioners and appreciate the support they receive. Parents, who met with inspectors, report that they value the service provided.
- Practitioners are aware of the wellbeing indicators of 'Getting it right for every child' and use some aspects of this language when interacting with children. A deeper and shared understanding of the indicators and how they are used to support children's wellbeing is now required. As practitioners' understanding of the indicators develops, it will be appropriate to introduce the indicators to children through meaningful experiences. This will help children understand how these indicators relate to themselves as individuals. As this work develops, practitioners could consider how they make appropriate links with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Practitioners promote positive behaviour with the children. They provide positive role models and encourage children to care for each other. Practitioners involve children in creating rules to make the nursery a safe place for children to play. They now need to spend time discussing the rules with children and consistently reinforce them during play. They make use of a 'pompom challenge' to encourage children to recognise positive behaviour and encourage team work in the nursery. Children respond well and participate enthusiastically.
- Practitioners use a comprehensive set of guidelines from the local authority to develop their understanding of statutory duties. Practitioners complete care plans for all children, review them regularly and note and act upon any changes that arise. Practitioners liaise closely with parents and where necessary link with other agencies to create plans for children who require additional support. Practitioners carry out risk assessments when they are planning outings for the children to ensure they are safe. Risk assessments for aspects of the playroom and outdoor area now need to be created to ensure children's safety during play experiences. As discussed, it would be beneficial to involve children in this process to develop their early leadership skills and awareness of keeping themselves and others safe.

- The new leadership team now need to seek support and guidance on statutory duties relating to early learning and childcare. It is important that they fully understand their responsibilities in complying with these duties and relevant codes of practice. During the inspection, the acting headteacher made contact with the appropriate regulatory body to begin this process.
- All children and families are treated fairly and with respect. Appropriate experiences enable children to learn about a range of celebrations and cultures from around the world. There is scope to develop opportunities for children to learn more about equality and diversity in a meaningful way. More could be done by practitioners, to develop children's awareness of gender equality, through careful selection and use of appropriate resources.

3.2 Securing children's progress

satisfactory

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 health and wellbeing, children are making satisfactory progress. They have made friendships and show care and consideration for their peers, including sharing resources. Children develop their awareness of emotions and feelings through developmentally appropriate experiences. Most children are developing independence skills as they get ready for outdoors and help with the snack routine. Children would benefit from being supported to care for resources and engage in tidying throughout the session. Consistent use of the language of the nursery 'rules' will help children in developing a greater awareness of expectations. Physical skills, including fine motor skills are developing well through a range of experiences both indoors and outdoors.
- Children are making satisfactory progress in early language and literacy. The majority of children listen well during story time. They readily engage in conversation with practitioners and visitors and confidently share their experiences. Children enjoy markmaking in different contexts. A few children recognise that writing has a purpose such as, creating shopping lists. This could be extended by providing real-life experiences to develop further children's early writing skills. A minority of children can recognise their name through self-registration and snack cards. More could be done within the nursery, to support children's phonological awareness during play experiences. Practitioners are currently implementing an emerging literacy programme to develop further children's skills in these areas.
- In numeracy and maths children are making satisfactory progress, with a few making good progress. Children count to 10 with a few counting beyond 10. The majority of children recognise basic shapes. Children would benefit from opportunities to explore the properties of 3-D objects during play experiences. A few children can copy a pattern using colour and are developing an awareness of symmetry through art and craft experiences. Contexts such as 'The supermarket' are supporting children to develop an awareness of money. A minority of children use appropriate mathematical language as they compare amounts and explore weight. Children would benefit from being able to develop and apply their numeracy and mathematics skills in different contexts. This includes daily routines and during free play.

- Children are developing an awareness of seasons and can identify key changes at particular times of the year. They enjoy creating models, pictures and collages using the range of media and materials provided.
- Overall, children require greater challenge in their learning. Records such as trackers and children's learning journeys do not demonstrate clearly enough the progress children are making over time. Practitioners need to consistently build on what children already know and have achieved, to ensure they make the best possible progress.
- Children's achievements are celebrated well through praise and encouragement. Examples of children's work are displayed on the 'our work is incredible' wall. The nursery should continue to look for ways for parents to share children's achievement from outwith the nursery.
- There is a supportive and inclusive ethos within the nursery. All children are able to access the range of learning experiences provided. Practitioners know the children and families well and take account of family's individual circumstances. When required, they work with other partners to provide support to children and families.

Setting choice of QI :2.6 Transitions

- **Theme 1 Quality of support for children and their families**
- **Theme 2 Collaborative planning and delivery**
- **Theme 3 Continuity and progression in learning**

- Practitioners recognise the importance of building relationships with children and parents during the transition process. Children and families visit the nursery the term prior to starting. This arrangement is flexible and adapted to suit the needs of children and families. Parents are encouraged to attend an open afternoon to find out about the learning experiences provided for their children. This introductory work is supporting a smooth transition from home to nursery for children and families. Information on children's likes and dislikes and their care and medical needs is gathered from parents. There is scope to develop this process further by discussing with parents, children's prior experiences. This can be used as a starting point to plan for children's learning needs.
- Good links have been established with other ELC settings for children who have shared placements. To support continuity in care and learning needs, practitioners share appropriate and relevant information.
- Older pupils visit the nursery on a weekly basis to develop relationships with the children in preparation for becoming their 'buddy'. Both pupils and children from the nursery enjoy this and engage very well with each other. Regular opportunities are provided for children to become familiar with the primary school. This includes visits to primary one. Children regularly use the gym hall and make use of the library and 'open area' for cooking activities. Opportunities are provided at certain times of the year for children to work on joint projects with primary one children. Practitioners have correctly identified that there is scope to develop this further, by increasing opportunities for children to work alongside school pupils.
- To support children moving to primary one, information on children's progress, including children's individual learning journeys are shared with the receiving teacher. For children who require additional support, enhanced transitions are provided to support their move to primary school. The nursery recognises that further work is required to ensure continuity and progression in learning for children working within the early level. The nursery makes good use of a programme to develop children's resilience and explore their feelings about moving to school. This has had a positive impact on children, with feedback demonstrating that they had made a smooth transition into primary school.

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.

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