

Summarised inspection findings

Saline Primary School Nursery Class

Fife Council

16 June 2020

Key contextual information

Saline Primary School nursery class is a valued part of the school community. It is registered to provide early learning and childcare (ELC) for a maximum of 24 children aged between three years and primary school entry at any one time. At the time of inspection, 16 children attended morning sessions and 15 attended afternoon sessions. The nursery is housed in a separate building in the school grounds. The acting headteacher has leadership responsibility for the nursery, supported by the peripatetic nursery teacher and the early years development officer from Fife Council's central early years team. The nursery team, including the support from the peripatetic nursery teacher, has undergone significant changes recently.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

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 nursery shares the recently reviewed vision, values and aims with the school. These are relevant to the school community and support staff's high aspirations for all children. Practitioners use the values well to inform their daily practice. They should now begin to develop children's understanding of the values, and what it means to be determined, kind, innovative and resilient.
- The nursery shares the improvement priorities with the school. These are illustrated clearly for parents on the 'Routes to Improvement' display. The newly formed team, led effectively by the acting headteacher, is working very well together to make changes for improvement. Senior leaders support practitioners well to use local and national guidance to evaluate their practice. They have made very good progress in improving the nursery environment in line with local authority guidance, and in consultation with children and parents. This has resulted in a more stimulating and enabling learning environment for children. Senior leaders should continue to support practitioners to evaluate the impact of improvements on outcomes for children and their families.
- Practitioners share leadership responsibility to take forward areas for improvement such as developing the learning environment. Senior leaders should support practitioners to identify and develop leadership roles. This should help to build capacity for improvement and support the pace of change. Practitioners should develop leadership roles for children. A next step is to give them opportunities to contribute effectively to the life of the nursery and the wider school community.
- All practitioners engage in appropriate professional learning and this is beginning to impact positively on their practice. The nursery teacher has shared professional learning recently on the cycle of observation and planning. She is supporting practitioners to embed this in practice and monitors observations of children's learning to evaluate impact. She gives practitioners

informative and useful feedback. This should help to continue to improve quality and consistency across the team in the recording of children's learning.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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 provide a welcoming, well-resourced environment that stimulates children's interest and curiosity. As a result, most children engage readily in their learning through play. Most children are motivated by the learning experiences, both indoors and outside. The majority engage in their learning for extended periods of time. Most play in pairs or small groups, where they interact positively with each other and share ideas. A few children prefer to play alone or seek adult support to enhance their play. Practitioners should continue to build on their positive start with developing the environment to enhance children's experiences further.
- The new team of practitioners share similar values and approaches towards ELC. Practitioners develop positive relationships with children based on mutual respect and trust. They work closely with children to stimulate their interest and curiosity in activities they choose. Practitioners use careful questioning and discussion to help children to think for themselves and to solve problems. Not all children are yet able to talk confidently about their learning. Practitioners should support children's understanding of learning through well-planned small group activities. This should help to encourage children to develop their talking and listening skills and support their progress overall. Practitioners need to monitor children's engagement in learning across the curriculum and encourage a few in a broader range of interests.
- Practitioners are working to improve and update children's personal learning journals (PLJs). Children are involved in their PLJs and enjoy including their special work. Practitioners encourage parents to share achievements from home through the PLJs. Senior leaders need to continue to monitor PLJs to improve consistency in tracking and the quality of observations of children's learning. Practitioners should work with children to identify their next steps in learning and the ways to achieve them in language they can understand. In addition, they should encourage children to reflect meaningfully on their progress.
- Practitioners are developing planning which aims to be fully responsive to children's interests. This helps to encourage children to lead their own learning. Practitioners ask children what they know, what they want to know and what they have learned. They use the learning wall effectively to display children's work. Practitioners should continue to evaluate and develop this approach to encourage children to reflect confidently on their learning. Practitioners work with the nursery teacher to track children's learning and identify what they need to learn next. This is at an early stage and is not yet shared with children or influencing their progress. Practitioners should continue to review and develop this approach further to support children to develop their skills.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- The nursery does not yet have a curriculum rationale. The newly revised vision, values and aims should help to inform practitioners in developing a rationale that is relevant to the nursery and the community in which it is situated. A next step is for the new team to continue to develop a clear understanding about their shared pedagogy.
- The curriculum takes account of Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and the principles of curriculum design. Practitioners are beginning to build on children's prior learning in the planning process. This is supporting practitioners to provide rich, relevant experiences for children. Practitioners ensure learning is based firmly on play and active learning.
- As planned, practitioners should continue to develop the use of the community to enhance children's learning experiences. This should support the development of relevant, real life experiences for children to apply their developing skills.
- Practitioners tailor transitions for children starting nursery to suit individual needs. Parents and carers are welcome to stay at nursery until their child feels settled and ready to separate happily. Transitions for children moving on to primary are well planned across the year. Practitioners transfer children's PLJs on to P1 teachers to help support continuity in learning across early level.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners work well in partnership with parents. They have established a parent forum to provide opportunities for parents to gather and share their views and ask questions. Practitioners are available at daily drop off and pick up times to share information informally. 'Parent chat' meetings provide opportunities for parents and carers to discuss their child's individual learning and achievements.
- Practitioners provide a range of information for families to support their understanding of children's learning and ways they can support this at home. This includes leaflets with strategies to support children's spoken language, stay and play sessions and singing and story sessions. The singing and story sessions are open to the wider community. This supports families to make links with the nursery before their children are of an age to start. Practitioners have reviewed the stay and play sessions to make these more meaningful and focused for parents. They make books available for parents to borrow to encourage reading at home.
- Parents have supported the development of the nursery garden to improve the experiences for children outdoors. As planned, practitioners should make better use of the skills and interests of families to enrich children's learning in the nursery. This should support further children's developing understanding of the world of work.

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

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

- Practitioners are aware of the importance of promoting wellbeing for all children. They have established positive, caring relationships with children and their families. This is supporting almost all children to be happy and relaxed in the setting. Most children are becoming independent in their personal care. Practitioners should ensure they encourage children consistently to try things for themselves before offering help. Most children are developing their understanding of how to keep safe and how to manage their own risks outdoors. There is daily free flow access to the garden where children benefit from fresh air and exercise. Practitioners should review snack experiences to develop further children's independence and social skills and ensure snack time is a nurturing experience. They should ensure the snack provision adheres to national nutrition guidance 'Setting the Table'. This should support further children's developing awareness of healthy eating.
- Practitioners make good use of their 'Fix It Folder' to support children to deal with disagreements. The folder contains pictures that support children to talk about what has gone wrong and what they might do to make things better. This is supporting children to develop positive relationships with their peer group. Practitioners should develop children's awareness of emotions and the vocabulary to talk about them. This should support further children's ability to reflect on their actions and how this can affect the way other people feel.
- Wellbeing indicators are displayed in the cloakroom and are illustrated with photographs of practice in the nursery to inform parents. Practitioners should introduce the language of the wellbeing indicators with children in meaningful ways. This should support further children's understanding of what it means to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included.
- Senior leaders and practitioners comply with statutory requirements and codes of practice. They know what is involved in fulfilling statutory duties and undertake relevant training to ensure they keep their knowledge and practice up to date.
- Practitioners use observations, tracking information and the language-screening tool to identify children who require additional support or challenge to progress in their development. They discuss and plan appropriate strategies in collaboration with the nursery teacher, the support for learning teacher and where required with other professionals. They should ensure they implement any identified strategies to support children's progress in learning consistently. Practitioners should review children's progress regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and use the evidence gathered to make well-informed decisions about future interventions.
- Practitioners recognise and value diversity. The home corner contains photographs of a range of different family groups including differently abled families and families from different cultural

backgrounds. The open-ended dressing up materials are not gender specific and practitioners are aware of challenging children's beliefs of gender stereotypes. This is supporting a culture of inclusion that helps children to learn to value the uniqueness and differences of individuals.

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

- Most children are making satisfactory progress with their health and wellbeing. They are becoming aware that some foods, such fruit and vegetables, are good for us. They are aware that regular tooth brushing keeps their teeth strong. Children are making friends. They are learning to take turns as they play with board games and on the assault course. They help each other and are learning to negotiate as they play. A few children require help to develop skills in regulating their emotions and behaviour. Most children are developing their skills in climbing, sliding and balancing as they play on the assault course in the gym. They engage in risky play as they slide down slopes during their weekly forest kindergarten experience. Children need to develop their independence skills and their awareness of different emotions.
- The majority of children are making satisfactory progress in communication and early language. They talk happily to adults and each other as they share their ideas. A few children are not yet confident in communicating with others. The majority choose to read books by themselves or have stories read by adults. They enjoy their story of the week. A minority of children need more focused input from practitioners to encourage their engagement with literature. Most children recognise their name as they self-register, using picture clues and a few recognise the initial sound in their name. The majority of children develop emergent writing through play as they mark-make and draw pictures. A few children are beginning to attempt to write their name. They need a stronger emphasis on early mark-making to encourage them to develop their emergent writing.
- The majority of children are making satisfactory progress in mathematics and numeracy. They count in sequence to 10. A few are making better progress in counting and understanding the value of number. The majority of children are developing mathematical language through their play. They count the birds in the garden and make tally marks to create a simple graph. Children recognise simple shapes. They need to develop further their knowledge and understanding of numeracy and mathematical concepts and apply these in real life contexts. Children are not yet benefitting from exploring concepts such as measurement, pattern and time, and the importance of these in the world around us.
- A few children are developing their observational skills as they reproduce the works of famous artists. Others use digital technology to draw birds' nests complete with baby birds. A few children independently select board games and puzzles and sustain interest as they play. Most children are creative in their play during their experience of Forest Kindergarten. They use the natural resources in the wood to stimulate imaginary play.

- Practitioners celebrate children's achievements through their 'Star Moments', which are displayed on the wall and in their PLJs.
- Practitioners are building positive relationships with families well. They are aware of the different socio-economic backgrounds of families and treat each child as an individual. They are developing their understanding of different approaches and supports that are required to help all children make appropriate progress. Practitioners are not yet able to evidence how the approaches and supports are impacting on children's progress in learning.

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.