

# Summarised inspection findings

**Rowantree Primary School and Nursery  
Class**

**Dundee City Council**

**SEED No: 5320224**

**20 June 2017**

## Context of School

The school has gone through a period of significant changes of staff over recent years and change of leadership over the last year. At the time of inspection an acting headteacher and acting depute headteacher had been in place undertaking these roles for four months, along with an acting principal teacher who had been in place for a week. Most of the staff in the primary stages had been in school for less than two years, with many staff less than a year and some members of staff joining the school in recent months or weeks. At the time of the inspection additional staff had been deployed in the school by the education authority to support literacy, numeracy, nurture and enhanced provision. Therefore leadership of change is with a newly developing and temporary leadership team in the school along with many new members of staff.

<b>1.3 Leadership of change - School</b>	<b>unsatisfactory</b>
<b>1.3 Leadership of change - Nursery</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<p>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 in 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community</i></li> <li>• <i>Strategic planning for continuous improvement</i></li> <li>• <i>Implementing improvement and change</i></li> </ul>	

- Given the context of the school, leadership of change is with a newly developing and temporary leadership team in the school, along with many new members of staff.
- There are major weaknesses in leadership of change and improvement across the school. However, over recent months there has been a focus from the acting headteacher and temporary leadership team on positive relationships and respect, which children and staff report is having an impact on behaviour throughout the school. There are early signs that this is having a positive impact for all.
- The school has a vision, values and aims which have been in place for a period of time. A few older children report that the vision, values and aims are referred to in assemblies. As the acting headteacher has identified, there is now a need to refocus attention on the vision, values and aims in collaboration with the whole school community. This re-focus on vision, values and aims should support the school in addressing the significant aspects of improvement required in the school to improve experiences, attainment, curriculum and outcomes for children, whilst meeting the needs of all.
- Staff, children, parents and members of the community report positively about the initial work of the acting temporary leadership team in recent months and early stages of improvements to the school. Examples include improving culture and ethos across the school, celebrating success, changes to the school playground and positive partnership with parents. However, as all acknowledge, these are early signs of improvement to the school and the continued leadership arrangements for the school are unknown at the time of inspection. The school does not have the capacity on its own to support the necessary improvements that are required, strong support will be required from the education authority, including for improving attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Previous school improvement plans were in place with seven areas of action. However, there is little evidence of impact on improvements for children from the previous improvement plan. A recent short-term action plan has been created by the acting headteacher with support from the education authority, which identifies appropriate immediate actions for improvement.

- Staff are aware of the social, economic and cultural context of the school. They now need to take greater account of this to develop their curriculum rationale and the raising attainment strategy. They are beginning to develop an awareness of national priorities such as the aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge.
- The acting headteacher is proactively engaging with parents to develop positive relationships.
- Despite the significant changes to staff and temporary leadership team, the current staff team demonstrate a collegiate approach to supporting creating a positive learning environment including taking forward aspects of leadership. There is now a need for a strategic approach to develop leadership at all levels, with a more coherent focus on improving outcomes for all learners. Use of national guidance such as the GTCS standards and effective performance review and development (PRD) would support staff to reflect on and improve their own skills. There is little evidence that staff have received their entitlement to this.
- Through the recently devised short-term action plan, the temporary leadership team and education authority have identified the need for the whole school community to be involved in school improvement, including through working groups. Staff are keen to contribute to school improvement through the re-establishment of working groups and school improvement.
- There are a few examples of children contributing in some way to school improvement, such as house captains, prefects, eco warriors and a pupil council. There is a need to extend this further to ensure that all children are able to contribute fully to school improvement.
- In a short period of time, there are early signs that the acting headteacher and temporary leadership team have created a positive culture for improvement and change in the school, with a commitment to an improving school evident in all interactions within the school community. The acting senior leadership team encourage professional learning for the staff team, including through staff sharing any professional learning they have undertaken. Currently, the acting headteacher and education authority officers are leading the short-term plans for strategic direction and pace of change. They recognise the need to develop arrangements to enable all staff to take responsibility for aspects of school improvement.
- There are a few examples of formal self-evaluation activities put in place by the temporary leadership team to support auditing aspects of the work of the school, for example a few professional learning visits. Staff are reflective on their practice. However, there are significant weaknesses in the school's arrangements for self-evaluation and school improvement, including professional review and development and a well-planned programme of professional enquiry. There is a need for rigorous and robust self-evaluation procedures to be in place across the school to review whole school and individual classroom practice. This includes the need for all staff to further develop skills in self-evaluation and gathering and analysing information that provides evidence of whether changes lead to improvements. There is a need for the school to develop clear monitoring of the work of the school to ensure all children experience highest quality learning across all classes
- For leadership of change to be effective, there is an urgent need for strong and sustained leadership of improvement. This should enable staff to develop further their understanding of key aspects of national standards.

## Nursery Class:

- Overall the leadership of change is satisfactory. The manager is now working with the acting headteacher to be more involved in the school community. Strategic direction is required from the senior leadership team to ensure that the setting is effectively supported to deliver high-quality early learning and childcare.
- The setting's vision values and aims were recently reviewed as part of a whole school initiative by the management team and practitioners. These need to be evident now within the setting. Practitioners should now work towards involving parents and children in this process. This would allow them to reflect the context of the setting within the school and the wider community.
- The manager and the team of practitioners work well together. Relationships of mutual respect and trust have been developed to support the team and improve outcomes for children and families.
- The manager and practitioners are keen to improve their practice. They have access to a range of career long professional learning opportunities to support their knowledge and practice. This includes attending in-house events and authority training courses. Through this, there are opportunities for some practitioners to take forward improvements and develop their skills. It is recognised that this could be strengthened further, as they develop their knowledge further, with a sharper focus on learning. Practitioners should now look outwards to explore current innovations in early learning to initiate well-informed change.
- There are systems in place to identify some areas for improvement but these need to be more consistent and robust in order to achieve high-quality outcomes for children's learning. Practitioners, supported by the manager would benefit from using the self-evaluation framework *How Good is Our Early Learning Centre?* to collectively evaluate practice and provision within the setting. This would enable the team to clearly identify future priorities taking account of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The school's annual improvement plan includes priorities for the setting. In taking these forward the manager has identified some key targets for the setting. These need to be developed further to include roles and responsibilities of practitioners and set out realistic timescales to take forward targeted improvements. In order to identify where effective progress has been made and where additional planning is required, there is a need to regularly and robustly monitor the plan. This should include, where appropriate, the views of children, families and other partners.

**2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment - School****weak****2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment - Nursery****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 teaching*
- *Effective use of assessment*
- *Planning, tracking and monitoring*

- During the week of inspection relationships were positive and inspectors observed a good standard of behaviour throughout the school. Children listen well overall and, in lessons observed by inspectors, children show that they can work well with each other whether in pairs, groups, or whole class activities. Across the school staff are committed to creating positive learning environments. Staff reported the impact of the recent deployment of additional staff in school, supporting learning experiences to be enhanced.
- Learners' experiences are not consistently of a sufficient quality across the school. In too many lessons children remained passive as a result of tasks and activities which were not well matched to the variety of needs within the class. Children are not confident in describing how and what they are learning. There is a need for children to be aware of the purpose of learning and for learning experiences to be of a consistently high quality throughout the school. There is now a need for children to be offered opportunities to be active in leading their learning and learn independently. Although they are offered some choice in aspects of their learning, the school should continue to review personalisation and choice of learning activities through setting and monitoring of clear and appropriate learning targets.
- Learners have a few leadership roles such as house captains, prefects and the pupil council. The school should now consider how leadership roles impact on improvement and are linked to learning along with how these support developing skills for life, learning and work.
- Most children find it difficult to recall their prior learning and therefore struggle when asked to apply this in new and unfamiliar contexts.
- Teachers use a variety of tasks and activities and staff are committed to creating positive and enjoyable environments for learning. However, on many occasions the pace of learning is slow, learning is teacher directed, children are all undertaking the same activity and opportunities for learning could be utilised better. In order for children to learn and achieve more, there is now a need to ensure that differentiation is much more appropriate and that there are consistently high levels of challenge across the school. Development of higher order thinking skills would support deepening of learning.

- In most lessons, instructions and explanations are clear and in a few lessons children are aware of the purpose of learning activities. In a few examples, open ended questioning is used to develop children's independence and confidence. Teachers need to plan more effectively to develop children's skills and support them to apply these in meaningful and relevant contexts.
- There is a need for an increased use of digital technologies to support learning.
- Learning intentions shared and discussed in most lessons. However, there is a need for further development of appropriate learning intentions and purposeful success criteria. A limited range of assessment techniques are used across the school. In a few lessons observed, assessment approaches support the needs of children, for example feedback is shared with children in a variety of ways, including peer assessment, and success criteria are shared and discussed in plenaries. In order for children to extend their independence and lead their learning, there is now a need to ensure there is consistency of use and embedding of Assessment for Learning strategies. For example, clear and relevant learning intentions and success criteria, along with children further developing their own success criteria in relation to assessing their own learning. This will support up-skilling children in the language of reflecting and evaluating their learning and taking ownership of their learning, therefore knowing more about what they need to do to improve.
- A few teaching staff have received training on conceptual understanding in mathematics although this is not consistent across the school and more staff would benefit from revisiting this aspect.
- Learning diaries are used to a limited extent in a few classes; however, the school does not record progress and achievements over the year in a consistent way. As the school had identified, there is now a need to review the recording of progress and achievement through the use of learning diaries and through setting and reviewing appropriate learning targets.
- Most class teachers have a broad understanding of aspects of children's strengths and next steps in literacy and numeracy. Individually, they use a range of approaches to assess and track children's progress in these areas and to provide information for parents. Stage partners work together informally to moderate their judgements. As a result of limited professional learning, staff are not confident of their skills and understanding in relation to the national guidance on assessment and moderation. They require stronger consistent leadership and professional learning in these aspects. Familiarisation and moderation around the national benchmarks to support planning for assessment should be initiated.
- Planning of learning takes place in a variety of ways across the school, through individual short and medium term planning. However, as the acting headteacher and temporary leadership team have identified, there is a need for support in planning and delivering quality learning experiences which are progressive and are built on prior learning.
- There is limited evidence of consistent monitoring and evaluating of learners progress or of learners involvement in planning of learning. Teachers work together in stages on occasions planning for learning together.

- Across the school, the extent of staff engagement with the standardised test data is variable, as is their current understanding of Curriculum for Excellence assessment principles. The acting headteacher, acting depute headteacher and the local authority recognises the urgent need to address the significant weaknesses in this area. Working together they have developed a plan for professional learning and support to increase staff skills in this aspect.
- There is limited evidence of moderation of learning across Curriculum for Excellence levels, or of use of Curriculum for Excellence benchmarks. There is a need for support for a shared understanding of standards and expectations and aim to improve attainment across the school.
- Other than through standardised assessment through the use of InCAS at various stages in the school, the school does not yet have systems to track individual progress, apart from through teacher professional judgement. The school is aware that confidence in professional judgement of a level is at the early stages of development and that there is a need to develop approaches to monitoring and tracking across curriculum areas.
- As the school has identified there is a need for staff development in the analysis of information, in order to plan appropriately to meet the learning needs of children. There is a need to improve the schools approaches to assessment, tracking and monitoring to ensure there are clear processes in place which are used by staff to track, review and enhance children's progress in learning

### **Nursery Class:**

- The ethos and culture of the setting supports positive and nurturing relationships. Children were observed to feel safe, secure and confident in the setting. Most children show a developing interest to learn and engage for short periods of time in experiences on offer both indoors and outside. Overall, practitioners provide an appropriate range of activities to offer children breadth and enjoyment in their learning. However, most children do not have enough opportunities to explore more challenging and relevant experiences to extend their skills in learning across the curriculum.
- Practitioner interactions with children are warm and caring. They respond appropriately to children's feelings by offering praise and encouragement. Most practitioners engage appropriately in conversation with children during play and are developing questioning techniques to support and extend children's thinking.
- Practitioners are becoming more responsive to children's interests. As identified, this should now be built on to involve children in having a key role in leading their own learning. This will allow children to follow their interests more fully while extending and deepening their learning. Practitioners are currently exploring ways to do this including by allowing children opportunities for documenting their learning. These include the use of topic books and a learning wall.
- Throughout the session, most children need more support from practitioners to sustain their learning. The timing and organisation of the day is causing interruption to play and is resulting in most children waiting too long to take part in planned activities. Adult led group activities are too lengthy. In such activities, most children are not fully engaged in their learning and this results in challenging behaviour from a few children. Practitioners should



monitor routines and develop more effective strategies for managing the structure of the day to support high-quality learning.

- Practitioners know children well as individuals, but not yet well enough as learners. They observe children during free play and group activities and use the information gathered at weekly meetings to discuss what changes could be made to their practise that will support children to continue to make progress. This now needs to be developed further to ensure appropriate next steps in learning are identified.
- Children's individual learning journals have recently been reviewed. Observations form the basis of personal journals and describe children's participation in learning activities. As these continue to develop they could be used more effectively with children as a tool to promote an increased ownership of learning.
- Practitioners are at an early stage of tracking and monitoring children's progress. As a result the setting is not always able to make confident judgements about children's progress. Together, practitioners need to develop robust systems to track children's progress to ensure they have high enough expectations of what children "can achieve" and achieve in their learning. An increased understanding of the standards and expectations of the early level of Curriculum for Excellence will ensure consistency of assessment and more accurate documentation of children's progress

## Quality of provision of Special Unit (contributes to school evaluations)

### Context

The school has an Enhanced Provision (EP) for children from P1 to P7 requiring additional support in their learning. Historically, the EP took children from across Dundee City but recently the referrals have mainly come from learners living in the locality. At the time of inspection there are 14 children attending the EP. The facility has three well-resourced classrooms with a few children attending mainstream classes. Almost all the children transfer to Craigie High School on completing P7.

### Leadership of change

- In a short time the acting headteacher has engaged well with staff from the Enhanced Provision (EP) to support planning and implementing improvements including introducing nurturing approaches. These improvements are at an early stage and require to be developed further and the impact to be evaluated.
- The newly appointed acting principal teacher (PT) of support for learning took up post a week prior to the inspection. She is using the experience and skills acquired from working in similar provision elsewhere to identify areas of practice to be addressed as priority. For example, children are responding well to having a more structured programme of activities and by accessing the local library and shops. Senior leaders now need to support her to develop the PT role and to implement planned improvements as a matter of urgency.
- The acting headteacher and temporary leadership team have introduced regular professional learning sessions for staff including using planning formats more effectively. Due to a number of significant staffing challenges at classroom level there are a number of new staff who require further training to develop their professional skills and competencies in supporting learners. All staff working in the EP need to be trained in de-escalation techniques deployed when children are experiencing difficulties in exercising self-control. Currently only one member of staff is trained in safe holding. All staff need to be trained in safe holding techniques as a matter of urgency.
- The school and Dundee City Council should continue to aim for continuity and stability within the EP team of teachers and support staff. Planning to ensure that children benefit from consistency in relationships and that staff know them and understand their needs well.

### Learning, teaching and assessment

- The motivated EP staff team are committed to helping children to make positive choices. A high level of staff supports the majority of children to engage with a learning activity for an appropriate period of time. Children learning skills for learning, life and work by visiting the local library engaged enthusiastically in selecting books. However, in few classes observed there is scope to improve the pace of lessons. A slow start to lessons, lack of pace, learning activities which lack a clear purpose and over reliance on unstructured choosing time or computerised games leads to children becoming disengaged and disruptive.
- Recently learners from the EP benefited from participating in whole school activities and visits. They receive tokens and merits for positive behaviour and Star of the Week certificates at school assemblies. Recently, children joined their mainstream peers for educational excursions to Crombie Park and Arbroath Abbey. Staff should now actively

seek opportunities for learners from the EP to engage in more learning activities with their peers both within class and on visits to the wider community.

- Most children respond appropriately to staff interactions. Most staff are reinforcing the skills of listening by using visual cues and praising children for “good listening.” Staff use symbols to help children sequence their learning activities. They are used on wall displays to plan daily activities. Across the school, staff need to use the visual clues more consistently to reinforce learning and social skills.
- Planning in the EP is focused on the use of Dundee City Council’s Addressing Barriers to Learning (ABLE) toolkit. The plan adapts the learning environment to help children engage with learning. Recently teaching staff have been re-trained in the use of ABLe. Across the school, a more consistent use of the toolkit would promote more inclusive classrooms. Parents should be more involved with the planning process.
- Planning for the curriculum is based on a limited range of experiences and outcomes. Staff use weekly planners to support daily activities. The school does not use Individualised Educational Programmes (IEPs) to formally plan to meet learners’ additional support needs in education. There is little evidence of assessment linked to planning or tracking of children’s progress in place. The school should explore opportunities for EP staff to work with colleagues to develop effective planning and moderation of standards.

### **Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion**

- Staff within the EP are sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing needs of individual children. Children benefit from the nurturing ethos and almost all children enjoy attending the EP. Across the EP relationships are generally positive. The use of personalised structured play provides staff with opportunities to interact with children to develop social skills.
- No children who attend the EP have a coordinated support plan (CSP). The school should work with the authorities who have placed children in the EP to assess whether any of them meet the criteria for a CSP. In addition, a number of the children are deemed to be Looked After with direct support from other agencies.
- Staff in the EP should now know and understand GIRFEC and be confident in the use of the *Common Practice Mode* to assess wellbeing. The assessment information could be used to inform multi-agency planning. The school uses daily diaries to keep parents updated on progress but there is little evidence of regular formal meetings with parents to discuss individual children’s progress
- The school needs to ensure all learners are receiving their entitlement to full-time education. Children on part-time timetables should be marked as absent if not in school. The school should review the balance of direct teaching support provided for each class against the time provided by the education support workers.

### **Raising attainment and achievement**

- The EP has not yet developed a process to systematically record children’s attainment or achievement. Staff now need to urgently develop effective ways to measure children’s progress in key areas of the curriculum.

## 2.2 Curriculum: theme 2: Learning Pathways and Development Pathways

- The school are aware they must develop clear and flexible progression pathways to support the planning and delivery of the experiences and outcomes across all curricular areas from pre-school through to P7. These pathways will offer staff guidance to ensure appropriate pace and progression in learning. This should be done alongside the planned review of the curriculum rationale so that staff, parents and children have a shared understanding of the uniqueness of their setting and the contexts embedded within it.
- All teaching staff must use these pathways to identify children's prior learning and the subsequent steps to be planned for. There is some evidence of prior learning being sought in the early stages however this was not consistent. This information will support transitions more effectively as learners progress through the school. Teaching staff should plan high quality learning with a shared understanding of the curriculum design principles as well as the four contexts children should be offered opportunities to learn through.
- There are some opportunities for children to apply learning within inter-disciplinary learning (IDL) contexts. Work to strengthen learning pathways should include a review of current approaches to IDL delivery to ensure there are relevant and meaningful contexts for children to develop and apply skills as they progress through the school.
- The school has recently planned a few visits to local areas of interests to enhance learning, for example, Arbroath Abbey. There is scope to extend these opportunities across the school to ensure learning pathways include learning in the outdoor environment. This is important to support children to increase their knowledge and understanding of their local context.

### **Nursery Class:**

- There are appropriate curriculum frameworks in place that support the development needs of toddlers and young children in the under three year's room. These are underpinned by nurturing relationships and knowledge of individual needs.
- Over this year, changes have taken place to the setting's approach to planning for children's learning. Practitioners now have an improving understanding of the design principles of Curriculum for Excellence. They are becoming more confident in using the experiences and outcomes to plan learning opportunities for children.
- Practitioners have engaged well with the teacher to develop a shared understanding of pedagogy and play. They feel supported to make positive changes to the way the curriculum is delivered. As a result, experiences for children are beginning to reflect interests and needs more, and be more flexible and responsive to all children. As part of this practitioners have recently introduced learning walls enabling children to talk more about their experiences.
- Developments to the curriculum have resulted in a few practitioners taking responsibility for the delivery and development of literacy and numeracy skills. They should continue to build on the work already done to include robust systems to track children's progress.
- Practitioners make daily use of the outdoor area to encourage children to investigate during the course of their play. We discussed with staff that as outdoor learning develops care

should also be taken to ensure literacy and numeracy are more meaningful in outdoor play. The use of outdoors needs to support quality learning opportunities.

- Transition between the playrooms is working well. Practitioners take time to get to know children and their families. Across the setting, helpful information is shared to continue the support for children and families who have faced challenges.
- Practitioners recognise the importance of smooth and positive transitions for children moving into and throughout the setting and onto school. Through professional discussion between the teacher in the setting and the P1 teacher it was decided to use a storyline context to aid transition to P1. Continuity in children's learning needs to be developed more fully when they transfer from the setting to P1.

## 2.7 Partnerships: theme 3: Impact on children and families Parental Engagement

- After a period of limited parental engagement, the school is in the initial stages of looking at various strategies to increase parental engagement. For example, meetings dates have now been set for Parent Council meeting which the acting headteacher is attending. An action plan is also in place to increase the number of parents on the Parent Council.
- Parents have responded positively to the increase in communication and the support from the current temporary leadership team. They now feel more able to approach the acting headteacher who is receptive to their concerns. However, the school should now engage further with parents in jointly supporting their children in their learning.
- The views of parents have been sought. Parents now need to be more fully engaged in the life of the school in order to effectively make improvements in the school.

### **Nursery Class:**

- Practitioners work well with parents and families. They invite parents and carers to 'stay and play' days where families can join play and find out more about learning together. These are helping to increase parental understanding of the setting and to develop positive relationships. Practitioners should now explore ways to increase opportunities for parents and carers to be more involved in their child's learning, such as developing a few home-link initiatives.
- Along with informal daily feedback, parents are kept informed about their child's progress through planned meetings with the teacher. Parents have regular access to the individual 'Learning Folders' which tells the story of the activities and experiences their child has had at the setting. Practitioners add photographs and comments to the folders regularly. Encouragement should also continue to be given to parents and carers to make valuable contributions over time to secure an even greater learning partnership between the setting and home.
- Practitioners have established good links with parents and families in order to improve outcomes for all children.
- Families would benefit from home visits where they can discuss their needs in a more personal way and this would help staff to understand how to support them more fully. This may be dependent on staffing levels.

## 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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

<b>3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion - School</b>	<b>unsatisfactory</b>
<b>3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion Nursery</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<p>This indicator reflects on the setting's or school'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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Wellbeing</i></li> <li>• <i>Fulfilment of statutory duties</i></li> <li>• <i>Inclusion and equality</i></li> </ul>	

### School

- The acting leadership team has recently prioritised the development of nurturing approaches with a focus on mutually respectful relationships between staff and children. This is supporting a calmer learning environment in classes. Through inspection questionnaires children report that they feel safe in school and the majority that the school deals well with bullying. However in conversation with inspectors, a few children expressed concerns about the disruptive behaviour of a few children. There is potential to strengthen the impact of, for example, children's learning about anti-bullying procedures by locating this within a wider approach to children's rights and positive relationships. There is scope to build upon the recent review of whole school strategies to promote positive behaviour which focuses on restorative practices, praise and rewards. Although at early stages, this has already led to a greater focus on positive relationships and children's readiness to participate in learning.
- Staff have an awareness of wellbeing indicators and individual teachers promote an understanding of how to improve wellbeing. The school is at the early stages of developing a whole school approach which will underpin all staff's understanding of their roles and responsibilities in supporting children's health and wellbeing. The frequent turnover of staff has impeded the development of a consistent approach. The school is aware of the need to develop and deliver programmes across the curriculum to ensure that all children develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to keep them safe, healthy and achieving. In doing this, it is important that the school consults widely within the school community to involve children, parents, partners and staff. This will support the development of an agreed shared rationale for health and wellbeing that best meets the needs of the community and reflects the school's vision, values and aims.
- The school has recently appointed a temporary principal teacher (PT) for supporting learners, with responsibility across the Enhanced Provision Unit and the school. In order to improve outcomes for all children, including those with additional support needs, there is now a need to support the development of this role more widely across the school. Whilst improving the systematic identification and sharing of appropriate information, this will also help staff to improve how they plan more effectively to meet learning needs. The school is currently overly dependent on teachers raising concerns about children who face challenges in their learning in order to identify additional support needs. There is currently no evidence of a planned and structured approach for identification for children who may require support for learning. There is a need to review this approach as a priority.



- There are plans in place to ensure that staff have greater access to professional learning which will support staff to identify and meet some additional support needs better. In the inspection questionnaire the majority of staff did not believe that the school has effective strategies for supporting children with their learning, including those with additional support needs; the majority of staff disagreed and a few did not know, if they were appropriately supported by the school to undertake their role.
- Overall for children with additional support needs, the school's approach to targeted support has major weaknesses, including poor communication, and a lack of well-planned, evaluated and monitored interventions. The school has recently started to implement local authority guidance which outlines a range of different interventions to support children. However, there are no strategies in place to determine the impact of supports and if outcomes or attainment are improving. The school would benefit from a strategic and collaborative approach to tracking and monitoring children's progress. This would help staff provide effective interventions that lead to improved attainment and achievement. Children and their parents should have much greater involvement in the setting of targets and evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions.
- The school should proceed with plans to hold regular timetabled meetings between senior leaders and class teachers. These meetings should include discussion of children's wellbeing and proposed interventions, including the setting of meaningful targets, which should lead to clear and measurable improvement in outcomes for children.
- The school, working with the local authority, has identified a lack of consistency in supporting children including those who display challenging or disruptive behaviour. This has resulted in the recent creation of two nurture spaces, supported by additional temporary staff. Although these developments are at an extremely early stage, there are some indications that this is enabling some children to more fully access the life of the school.
- Senior leaders and all staff must keep abreast of the full range of statutory duties. They should ensure all stakeholders develop a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities in this area. There is a need for all staff, including senior leaders, to engage in professional learning around legislation and national advice. For example we have asked the school to ensure staff continue to engage in professional learning around the Additional Support for learning Act (ASL) with particular regard to consideration of individual education planning, co-ordinated support plans and plans for children who are looked after and accommodated.
- The school is not currently meeting its statutory responsibilities regarding Religious Observance.
- Although it is clear that teachers are deeply committed to improving outcomes for children, this needs to be extended to ensure all children are included in learning. Too many lessons are whole class, with some individual children at the periphery of learning, and their needs are not being met.
- Teachers work hard to develop inclusive and welcoming classrooms and have developed individual programmes that challenge, for example, aspects of discrimination. The school is aware that it is at the very early stages of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion through the curriculum. As part of its curriculum review, the school should embed these principles in programmes of work and throughout curriculum planning.

- Funded as part of the city wide approach to the Scottish Attainment Challenge, the family worker has been instrumental in supporting recent improvements in attendance through interventions such as the breakfast club. As a result children's attendance has recently improved and late-coming has been reduced. Cooking sessions, friendship groups and working closely with the local community are supporting a number of children to access more fully the life of the school.

### **Nursery Class:**

- There has been an investment in creating a caring and nurturing ethos across the setting. Practitioners and the manager have positive and caring relationships with children and families. They are developing strong attachments with children and this is helping to promote children's emotional wellbeing. Children are learning about risk and how to be safe.
- Practitioners are developing knowledge of *Getting it Right for Every Child*. They are aware of the importance of nurturing children's wellbeing. They should now use these indicators more effectively in their daily practice to ensure all children are being supported to feel safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included. As part of this, they should continue with plans to work with children and their families to explore the indicators of wellbeing.
- On occasion, the behaviour of some children results in less positive outcomes for other children. Practitioners' approaches to promoting positive behaviour are inconsistently applied across the setting. In the best practice, some practitioners intervene in a way that is restorative and encourages children to reflect on their actions. This could be developed further as children become more aware of the setting's simple rules and are supported to take on more roles of responsibility.
- The manager and practitioners are aware of current legislation relating to early learning and childcare. There is a good awareness within the team of the individual circumstances of each child and their family. ABLE plans (Address Barriers to Learning) are in place to support children with additional needs in their learning. These are shared with parents and their views are taken into consideration. This is sensitively handled, however the manager should ensure that practitioners have sufficient and relevant information about children in their group.
- Additional staffing supports The Scottish Attainment Challenge. As part of this a Speech and Language Therapist is in place to work with practitioners in supporting small groups of children. Programmes such as "*Toddler Talk*" and "*Nursery Narrative*" are being developed and support children to develop vocabulary and listen more effectively to improve their learning.
- Practitioners are mindful of the need to promote equity across all aspects of their work with children and families. As a team they have taken part in discussions to meet the diverse learning and developmental needs of the children. Strategies are in place to improve the progress of children who are facing barriers to their learning. However, practitioners should ensure an appropriate balance is in place to support both nurture and learning for children. The success of the approaches should now be monitored closely to ensure that all children's learning needs are met.

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

unsatisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- *Attainment in literacy and numeracy*
- *Attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Equity for all learners*

- The school's attainment data provides limited information about children's progress in literacy and numeracy. The school provided the local authority summary of standardised test information and the most recent collation of Curriculum for Excellence data for June 2016. The acting senior leadership team are not confident that this data is accurate and no robust process for gathering and moderating the data could be evidenced at the time of the inspection. The school was unable to provide an accurate overview of children's progress over time. Over recent years, the school has introduced "*Read, Write, Inc.*" as a programme to support improvements in literacy for children in P1 to P3. The "*Read, Write, Inc.*" tracking data indicates that most children have made progress as a result of this work. However, this is not sustained as children move through the school.
- As a result of significant weaknesses in the school's approaches to leadership and direction regarding assessment and moderation already highlighted in section 2.3 *Learning, teaching and assessment*, no analysis of the attainment of different groups of learners is available.
- Very recently, acting senior leaders, with support from the local authority, have taken the first steps towards developing a whole school raising attainment strategy, beginning with a focus on creating a more positive learning climate. There are early positive signs that this is starting to support children to engage more readily in learning. The school and the local authority recognise that much remains to be improved in order to ensure all children make the best possible progress as they move through the school.
- There is a need for stronger strategies to ensure equity in attainment and achievement including through developing appropriate plans for using the significant Pupil Equity Funding awarded to the school. Other than previously outlined information regarding the family support worker, there is limited evidence of impact of the schools engagement with the Scottish Attainment Challenge to date.
- Overall, inspectors found important weaknesses in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. Evidence gathered through focus groups, classroom visits and samples of children's work indicated significant gaps in children's learning which is most apparent in the upper stages. Raising attainment for all now requires to be a major focus of the school's plan for improvement.
- Children are proud of their recently reorganised school library. Reading for enjoyment is encouraged. Children enjoy choosing and reading stories and novels. Those working within first and second level are confidently able to identify features of a text. In classes, they enthusiastically use non-fiction texts such as atlases and encyclopaedias to increase their

knowledge of the world and use this to enhance their writing. They need more support to develop their abilities to independently find and organise information from appropriately challenging texts. This should include regular exposure to a wider range of texts such as newspapers and digital sources. A few children working within first and could read fluently with expression, however this is not consistently the case across groups of children.

- Children are developing their writing skills in a range of contexts. Children working within first and second level require more well-planned and regular opportunities for extended writing with consistently higher expectations of what children can and should produce. At all stages, there requires to be a stronger a focus on strengthening children's use of correct spelling, accurate punctuation, interesting vocabulary and presentation. Children are developing their skills to assess their own and others work. From P2 children understand how to improve their writing for example, through using "WOW" words. A few teachers provide detailed written and oral feedback which supports children to improve. This practice needs to be more consistent across the school.
- Almost all children listen attentively to their teachers and other adults. The majority demonstrate respectful listening to their peers by taking turns, asking questions and responding to points made. The school has begun working to improve children's listening and talking skills through for example, increased group work, co-operative learning and whole school assemblies where these skills are promoted and celebrated. Children working within first level understand the difference between fact and opinion. In focus groups most children were able to explain their opinions clearly. Children working within second level require more support to extend their oral reasoning and use arguments for persuasion and to communicate with an audience. They would benefit from increased and more planned opportunities for oral presentations and debate.
- A minority of children working within early level can add and subtract within 10 and beginning to show more awareness of partitioning of numbers, for example,  $3+7$ ,  $2+8$ . They can use strategies such as skip counting to see patterns and relationships within numbers. The majority of children in can recognise the features of a clock with some being able to recognise o'clock and a few half past.
- By P4 most children show an awareness of estimation although almost all lacked the knowledge to complete such measurements with any degree of accuracy. They can confidently round numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. The majority of children know the difference between analogue and digital time and can read the time on analogue clocks to five minute intervals. Children can identify some simple fractions but lacked a real understanding of this. In mental calculations a few children could explain alternative strategies to reach an accurate a solution.
- A few children working within second level display good mental arithmetic skills but this was not consistent, especially when asked to apply learning in a context. Most can multiply and divide numbers by 10 and 100. More children displayed confidence in calculating perimeter of a shape and when explaining co-ordinates, but not as confident as to how to calculate the area of a shape. The majority of children could recognise different angles when prompted, but were not consistent in their ability to change fractions into decimals.
- Children in all stages have an awareness of the differences between 2D and 3D shape appropriate to their stage of learning.

- All children should be offered opportunities to apply their learning in meaningful contexts to make learning relevant and support depth of understanding.
- There was no evidence of pupils using digital technology to support learning.
- There is an improved ethos of achievement developing across the school. As a result of recent improvements in the school's approaches to recognising and celebrating children's achievements in class and in assemblies, a significant number of children have achieved certificates which acknowledge their efforts and successes. The achievement trees support children to recognise and value their own and achievement of others. This focus on positive behaviour and respect is motivating children. The school should continue to strengthen approaches to praise and reward. As yet there is no collated data on children's achievements. Developing this is an important next step to ensuring all children benefit from the opportunities available. A whole school overview of rewards and achievements will also support staff to ensure equity and inclusion.
- Current approaches to increasing children's achievements rely too heavily on the goodwill of individual staff and partners. As part of reviewing the curriculum the school requires a more strategic approach to linking learning and achievement. This should ensure all children receive their entitlement to learning across a range of contexts for achievement.
- Many children extend their skills and talents through participation in an increasing range of after-school and lunchtime activities including basketball and football, chess, ukulele, art and reading clubs. They are learning about the importance of commitment and resilience and are experiencing team work and problem solving.
- Children benefit greatly from a few opportunities to engage in expressive arts. Children in P4 and P5 took part in the "Aspire" events working with children from other schools across the city. They confidently performed for an audience of parents and invited guests at the Caird Hall. 25 children are regularly engaged in rehearsals for the planned school show. As a result they are increasing their confidence and performance skills. This is supporting improvements in their reading and talking during lessons. A number of children are achieving success and making progress in learning to play a musical instrument.
- Children respond well to opportunities to develop skills for learning, life and work, for example through making products and selling them at school fayres. Their fundraising efforts are commendable. As a next step the school should involve children in deciding how their fund-raising is spent.
- Children in P6 and P7 have leadership roles as house captains and prefects through which they demonstrate responsibility and teamwork. They are increasingly good role models for younger children. There is scope to increase leadership roles for children at other stages through strengthening the work of the Pupil Council. In classes children could be given more responsibility for aspects of classroom organisation and routines.

### 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*

- Children aged 2-3 are growing in independence. Practitioners carefully consider the needs of each child. Their interactions are caring and sensitive to support children to develop. They provide some experiences for children to explore and investigate. Children show enjoyment in their learning and emerging communication skills. Through a planned programme of "Toddler Talk" children are supported well in learning to listen and follow simple instructions. The development of this programme is supported well by the Attainment Speech and Language Therapist and Attainment Practitioner. Young children are developing a range of physical skills as they explore the outdoor area.
- Overall, most children are making satisfactory progress in early language and literacy. Practitioners have correctly identified the need to have a continued focus on planning for children's progress in language and literacy. As part of this, they should continue to provide appropriate support to develop further children's listening skills. In conversation with adults and in play children's skills in talking and knowledge of vocabulary are developing well. Most children show a keen interest in familiar stories. A few children enjoy re-enacting their favourite stories such as the Three Billy Goats Gruff. Most children are at an early stage of mark-making and have a developing understanding that writing has a purpose. They would benefit from regular opportunities to develop their writing skills through real-life contexts. Practitioners need to improve their tracking of children's progress in literacy.
- In numeracy and mathematics, most children have made a good start in developing their knowledge and understanding of number. The majority of children recite numbers in sequence. A few are developing awareness that numbers represent quantities and recognise and match numerals. Most can sort and match by shape and colour. Children have opportunities to use mathematical language to describe measurement and weight in their play, for example, when measuring ingredients to make play dough. There is scope to develop children's investigation and problem solving skills in meaningful, relevant, everyday contexts.
- Practitioners should ensure children are given sufficient opportunities to apply their skills in literacy and numeracy across different contexts in their learning both in and out of doors in order to give children opportunities for maximising success.

- There is a clear emphasis on health and wellbeing with children developing confidence and independence. Emotional wellbeing is nurtured effectively to build children's self-confidence and meet children's social needs. Practitioners are encouraging children to take responsibility for tidying up after play and to take increasing responsibility for their own safety. Children are developing a good range of physical skills through regular activities in the gym and outdoor play.
- Practitioners do not yet have high enough expectations for most children. Evidence demonstrates that children are making satisfactory progress across areas of the curriculum. To ensure children make the progress they are capable of, practitioners need to build consistently on what children already know and have achieved. Activities do not always provide enough challenge for a few children who are capable of achieving more.
- Parents' meetings provide opportunities for the teacher to share with parents about children's achievements and progress. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire or met with inspectors were very satisfied with the level of information they receive about their child's progress.

## School choice of QI: 2.6 Transitions

- **Arrangements for supporting learners and their families**
- **Collaborative planning and delivery**
- **Continuity and progression in learning**

### Transitions

- Children are supported in their transition from nursery to P1 through a six week bridging programme implemented in the summer term. Children enjoy these weekly themed lessons which are supporting them well to become familiar with P1 routines and the overall learning environment. However, this annual end of year programme promotes the transition as a significant life event which some children and families find difficult to cope with. There is an opportunity for parents to join the final session. To build on this, the school should work with parents and partners with a view to increasing parental engagement. It would be better practice to introduce children in the nursery classes and their families to life in P1 earlier to promote a more fluid and natural transition from nursery to primary. Families would also benefit from home visits where they can discuss their needs in a more personal way and this would help staff to understand how to support them more fully.
- Tracking information passed from nursery practitioners to P1 staff communicates which of the early level experiences and outcomes children have covered. Whilst this has some value, it is not sufficient to support planning for progression in learning. There is a need for a stronger team approach across the early stages to develop learning pathways which consistently enable children to build on their prior learning. Such partnership working between nursery and P1 is required to support the development of a more natural transition from one to the other.
- Children in the EP are supported very effectively by strong partnership working when transferring to secondary school. Staff from both schools work collaboratively well to identify children's needs and plan timely and proportionate support including specialist input. Specialist secondary staff provide personalised programmes of support including a series of visits to the secondary school and opportunities to build relationships with key adults before they start school.
- A growing well-developed programme of visits and learning experiences from P4 to P7 supports children to make a smooth transition to secondary school. From P4 children have opportunities to visit a secondary school and to get to know children from other local primary schools who may be in their classes at secondary school. Some of these activities for example "Passport to Europe" have been in place for a long time and may need to be refreshed in line with current curriculum guidance. Through the schools' effective partnership with Active Schools staff children have participated in sporting events alongside children from other schools in the cluster. Children in P7 say these experiences have supported them well and almost all of the P7 focus groups said they were looking forward to secondary school.
- The recent appointment of two Transition Teachers funded through the Scottish Attainment Challenge has enabled further extension of the primary/secondary transition programme. A focus on strengthening progression in learning alongside the pastoral work is beginning to



emerge. Although much of the work is still in the planning stage, a few children already benefit from additional support in literacy and numeracy to increase their readiness for S1.

- The school is utilising its partnership with Craigie High school well. Young people in S2 and S3 from the secondary school visit Rowantree Primary School as peer educators support children's understanding of personal safety and other aspects of health and wellbeing. Children in P7 spoke very positively about their recent visit which had helped them to understand the more about how to keep safe on-line and to consider the dangers of illegal drug taking. Children at all stages benefit from the contributions which senior secondary pupils make to the school such as paired reading and the "badging-up ceremony" where they encourage responsibility and leadership through acting as role models.
- The transition teachers report positive partnership working with school staff, children and families. Through attendance at P7 parents' evenings they engage with siblings and parents/carers. As result they are increasingly well informed about families who need some additional support so that children can get the most out of their school experience. Their contribution is valued. The school, with support from the local authority should continue building on this work through developing a more coherent plan for children and family support including strengthening the links between class teachers, the health and wellbeing family support worker, transition teachers and school leaders in Rowantree Primary School and across the cluster. All involved need more support to plan and implement effective interventions more timeously and to ensure positive impact on raising attainment is captured, evaluated and further built on.
- Collaborative working to develop cluster plans for science and longer term for Inter disciplinary learning (IDL) and other curriculum areas is at a very early stage but staff recognise the value of doing this and are keen to get involved. Getting this work moved on is now an important priority for the school. Senior leaders should ensure nominated school representatives on these working groups are well enough supported so that they can engage fully in this work. This is particularly important since a number of previous positive initiatives have floundered when teachers were not able to attend meetings or protect the time allocated to planning and development work.
- The previous high staff turnover together with the lack of clear learning pathways and progression frameworks across the curriculum has resulted in a poor stage to stage transition for children as they move through from P1 to P7. As result, time for new learning has been lost, gaps in children's learning have occurred and too many children are not making sufficient progress. Senior leaders need to work with staff to improve this to ensure detailed information on children's prior learning, attainment and achievements are easily accessible and made effective use of for planning appropriate next steps for individuals and groups of children.

### **Nursery Class:**

- Transitions into the setting are planned for in a way that takes into account the individual needs of each child and family. Children are invited to spend time in the setting with their parents in order to build initial relationships with practitioners. Practitioners take time to get to know families and provide helpful information to support parents and children at 'settling in' time. Consideration should now be given to offering home visits to families to support this further.

- Transitions between the playrooms in the setting are working well. They are carefully managed so that they are a positive experience for children and families. Helpful information is shared between practitioners to continue the support for children and families who have faced challenge.
- Through professional discussion between the teacher and the P1 teacher it was decided to use a storyline context to aid transition to P1. This will provide continuity in learning between the settings. In order to build on these approaches, practitioners would benefit from working more closely with primary teachers to plan progression building on prior learning.

## Care Inspectorate evidence

### 1 Quality of Care and Support

#### CARE INSPECTORATE GRADE: 3 (Adequate)

- Children were happy and confident in nursery, and had established positive relationships with staff. Staff knew children very well, and there was good communication amongst the team as necessary regarding individual children's particular needs.
- Children within the 3-5 room moved around from one activity to the next, and were not supported by all staff with meaningful interactions to impact positively on outcomes. The planning of the day and use of group time impacted on the children's opportunity for play, which resulted in children sitting for lengthy periods.
- Children's behaviour, at times, had a negative impact on experiences for all children, and this was not always best supported or addressed. We would encourage more robust and regular room monitoring to provide staff with the opportunity to reflect on and improve practice (a requirement has been made in relation to this under management and leadership).
- Children were familiar with their learning stories, and were excited to share these with inspectors. We reviewed these and identified they required further development to improve consistency of recording across the setting, and consider different ways to share children's learning in a meaningful way. The manager informed they had visited other settings, and we encouraged the manager to progress with the review of these (see recommendation 1).
- Most children within the 2-3 room were engaged with their chosen play. Staff responded to their changing interests, guiding them as necessary whilst addressing the changing dynamic within the room dependent on the group of children. We discussed the benefit for the staff team of a more visible leadership role to guide and support practice (a recommendation has been made in relation to this under staffing).
- Transitions took place into the nursery as well as between rooms and into P1. Set transition programmes were in place to support this between the nursery rooms and into school. We highlighted the benefit of considering ways in which the nursery can offer home visits to families prior to starting, as part of establishing an early relationship with parents and further strengthen the transition into nursery (see recommendation 2).
- Medication procedures were in place, and we discussed regular auditing of stored medication in line with best practice guidance (a requirement has been made in relation to this under management and leadership).

#### **Recommendation 1**

- The children's learning stories should be reviewed to improve consistency across the setting, and consider different ways to share children's learning.  
This is in accordance with National Care Standards Early Learning and Childcare up to 16, Standard 4 Engaging with Children; Standard 5 Quality of Experience

**Recommendation 2**

- The nursery should consider ways in which they can offer home visits as part of the children's transition into the nursery.  
This is in accordance with National Care Standards Early Learning and Childcare up to 16, Standard 1 Being welcomed and valued; Standard 6 Support and Development

## **2 Quality of Environment**

### **CARE INSPECTORATE GRADE: 3 (Adequate)**

- There was a welcoming ethos to the nursery, with staff greeting parents at the entrance. Security entrances provided a safe environment for children and ensured staff were aware of who was in the building.
- Children's experiences and photographs were displayed for parents to view, providing children with ownership of their environment.
- The room for the 2 year olds was inviting and nurturing, providing an interesting space for them to explore. Schematic play was supported with a variety of resources relating to children's interests and stages of development. An outdoor space provided children with the opportunity for regular outdoor play. Toilets and nappy change facilities were located off the main playroom.
- The playroom for the 3-5 age group provided a variety of activities for children including water play, sand, play dough, home corner and construction. There was a large secure outdoor area which children had direct access to. Toilets were located off the main playroom.
- We identified that resources within the 3-5 room should be extended to provide more challenge and open ended learning for all children. Staff informed us that resources had been minimised due to children's behaviours. We observed a lack of respect by children for the resources, and a lack of responsibility in relation to tidying up during the session. We discussed the importance of ensuring that the environment was responsive to all children's interests and abilities, and that the whole nursery team maintained high expectations for all children, supporting them with respect and responsibility in the playroom (see recommendation 1).
- We discussed the outdoor areas, children's free flow access to these and the need for a richer learning experience during outdoor play. We discussed some of the challenges with the 2-3 room Grounds for Learning leader and ways in which to overcome these. We would encourage the development of the outdoor area as a priority in order to provide a more engaging outdoor experience (see recommendation 2).
- Infection control was observed to be mainly good; however some issues were identified in relation to wiping noses and hand washing, and self-serve snack for the older children. We referred to best practice guidance in relation to this.

### **Recommendation 1**

- The manager and staff should ensure the variety of resources offers all children appropriate challenge and depth of learning, encouraging respect and responsibility to support their overall development.  
This is in accordance with National Care Standards Early Learning and Childcare up to 16, Standard 5 Quality of experience; Standard 7 A caring environment; Standard 11 Access to resources

**Recommendation 2**

- The outdoor areas should be developed further to provide a richer learning experience for all children.  
This is in accordance with National Care Standards Early Learning and Childcare up to 16, Standard 5 Quality of experience; Standard 11 Access to resources

### **3 Quality of Staffing**

#### **CARE INSPECTORATE GRADE: 3 (Adequate)**

- Staff were very nurturing and caring in their approach with the children, and strong relationships between children, parents and staff were evident within the nursery. Staff highlighted their strength in building strong relationships with the families, offering support and guidance, including identifying consistent strategies to use between home and nursery. Parents commented positively on the support they received from the staff, and found them approachable to discuss any matters.
- Staff had leadership roles in some areas such as Grounds for Learning, literacy leader and PEEP (Parent Early Education Partnership) groups, which impacted positively on their input to the service. We discussed increased delegation of responsibilities within the nursery, which would provide staff with the opportunity to increase their confidence and skills (see recommendation 1).
- Appraisals were in place for staff, giving them the opportunity to reflect on their practice, identifying strengths and areas for development. These were not always carried out timeously, and we emphasised the importance in valuing this process for staff.
- Staff attended a variety of training and continuous professional development. We found the majority of staff to be committed to improving their knowledge and skills, and the positive impact this would have on outcomes for children. Staff spoke positively of the leadership from the teacher in the 3-5 room, and we identified the benefit of visible leadership for the staff within the 2-3 room (see recommendation 1)
- Whilst we observed staff to be nurturing with children, there was not added depth and challenge to children's learning. The teacher discussed with us planning, support and guidance she was giving staff in the 3-5 room, and we encouraged this to continue to impact positively on staff skills in this area (see recommendation 2). Reflective practice and use of self-evaluation would strengthen staff awareness of their skills and areas for development.
- Children's behaviour within the setting was resulting at times, in negative outcomes and experiences for other children attending. Not all staff were skilled in supporting the children effectively, and we discussed the importance of all staff being competent in managing behaviour to effectively meet the needs of all children attending the service (see recommendation 2).

#### **Recommendation 1**

- The staff team would benefit from further developing delegated leadership across the nursery, including a leadership role for the 2-3 room. This is in accordance with National Care Standards Early Learning and Childcare up to 16, Standard 12 Confidence in Staff; Standard 13 Improving the service

**Recommendation 2**

- The staff should receive further training and support around extending children's learning, targeted behavioural support and the impact of the environment on this. The National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 Standard 4 Engaging with children; Standard 6 Support and development; Standard 12 Confidence in staff



#### **4 Quality of Management and Leadership**

##### **CARE INSPECTORATE GRADE: 3 (Adequate)**

- Participation within the nursery was good with parents, carers and children's opinions being valued. A variety of ways to consult and contribute to the service were offered, demonstrating the service's holistic and flexible approach to best meet the needs of the families attending.
- There was an improvement plan in place, and the nursery was included in the overarching school improvement plan. We discussed the importance of the nursery improvement plan linking to the school plan, and that the targets identified had clear tasks and timescales for staff involved.
- Some room monitoring had recently taken place, and the manager used her observations from these in professional dialogue with staff. This allowed the staff the opportunity to reflect on their practice and consider areas for improvement. We highlighted the importance of ensuring these observations had value by following up particular areas, and carrying these out consistently to build up a clear picture of progress and practice within the nursery rooms (see requirement 1).
- There was no robust self-evaluation in place for the nursery, and we highlighted the importance of this being carried out to benchmark the service progress. This would also support staff to reflect and evaluate their setting and practice, identifying areas for improvement (see requirement 1).
- We found quality assurance systems to be lacking in depth and value, and minimal evidence to demonstrate evaluation or monitoring carried out since last inspection. We highlighted the importance of continual monitoring and evaluation, and the impact of this on overall standards across the nursery (see requirement 1).
- We identified the need for stronger leadership from within the school for the nursery manager, to provide a wider support network to the nursery (see recommendation 1). The school had begun to review the school visions and values, in conjunction with staff and children, and nursery staff spoke positively about their involvement in this. We encouraged the nursery manager to display and reflect these within their setting, in line with the school.
- We identified the current acting management team as welcoming and embracing the nursery as part of the school.

#### **Requirement 1**

- The provider must ensure that robust quality assurance and self-evaluation procedures are in place to identify, monitor and maintain standards across the nursery, contributing to the overall improvement agenda.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210) Regulation 4 (1) (a) – Welfare of Users

Timescale – within two months of this report

**Recommendation 1**

- The nursery manager would benefit from strong leadership and a wider support network within the school.

This is in accordance with National Care Standards Early Learning and Childcare up to 16, Standard 13 Improving the service; Standard 14: Well-managed service

## **Particular strengths of the school**

- Following a period of change, recent improvements to culture and ethos across the school, led by the temporary senior leadership team.
- Children who have shown enthusiasm and eagerness to more positive learning and achieving success.
- Nursery partnership with parents and carers which are leading to positive opportunities to find out more about learning together.
- Commitment of staff who are keen to collaborate and support the school's improvement journey from nursery to P7.

## **Agreed areas for improvement for the school**

- Provide strong and sustained leadership to take forward significant improvements across the school to help children make the best possible progress.
- Ensure consistently high quality learning experiences, including involving children in planning and reflecting on their own learning in order to improve attainment.
- Improve the school's approaches to assessment, tracking and monitoring to ensure there are clear processes in place which are used by staff to track, review and enhance children's progress in learning.
- Considerably improve arrangements for identifying and meeting children's learning needs.
- Develop clear and flexible progression pathways to support the planning and delivery of all curriculum areas from nursery through to P7, building on prior learning.

## **What happens at the end of the inspection?**

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Dundee City Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within six months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Dundee City Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

A notification from the Care Inspectorate will be sent to the Provider to complete an action plan to address any Requirements and Recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

## 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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