

Summarised inspection findings

Sanday Community School Nursery Class

Orkney Islands Council

3 September 2019

Key contextual information

Sanday Nursery Class is part of Sanday Community School, on the Isle of Sanday, Orkney. At the time of inspection five children attend the nursery, across five morning sessions. Plans are in place to increase the length and number of sessions for August 2019. The nursery has their own playroom, which is situated next to the P1-P4 classroom. The nursery has access to many areas outdoors, which include their own enclosed play area, a large wooded area (plantation) and polytunnel, along with access to the whole school playground. Outdoor learning is very much part of nursery life. The nursery also access facilities throughout the school, including the swimming pool and gym hall.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- Practitioners are enthusiastic and committed to delivering provision in the nursery that reflects the agreed values for the school. We agree that the nursery and the school should now make the values more visible, including looking at ways that they can share the values with children in a meaningful and developmentally appropriate way.
- Practitioners responded positively to professional dialogue during the inspection. Practitioners access a range of professional learning opportunities, for example, Bookbug to support early literacy. Practitioners value the strong support from the visiting early years teacher, including sharing of practice from other settings. This is of particular importance, given the geographical location of the nursery. We would encourage practitioners to build on their experience and continue to access professional learning, taking forward an outward perspective on the nursery. This could include linking with and visiting other settings, use of the National Improvement Hub and other sources in order to implement improvements and changes, which reflect best practice and current thinking in early learning and childcare.
- Weekly meetings with senior leaders support planning for improvements. The visiting early years teacher supports evaluating aspects of learning and teaching. For example, there was an identified need to make improvements and review the layout of the playroom. Following consultation with the children regarding resources, additional funding was accessed. The playroom layout has been changed, with new resourcing and divided defined areas of learning. As a result of this, practitioners report the increased use of different learning areas by the children, including engagement in learning in areas of interest. The nursery have started to use a floorbook approach to self-evaluation. This is at an early stage of development. The principal teacher has provided valuable support in leading improvements in the nursery. There is now a need for regular monitoring of the provision in the nursery to evaluate what is working well and what needs to improve, in a more structured way. Practitioners would benefit from continued support to look more critically at their practice. Developing further understanding and use of national guidance such as 'How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare?' will support

practitioners to identify clearly their strengths and areas for improvement. In turn, this will help to secure a pace of change that will continue to make a positive impact for children and families.

- Practitioners are aware of the school improvement plan and key priorities relevant to the nursery, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The leadership team should now consider ways to enable practitioners to contribute more meaningfully to this process.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning 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

- A nurturing, positive learning environment where children are welcomed and valued is well established in the nursery class. Children are motivated and engage enthusiastically in learning in the playroom. They are happy, confident, feel safe and secure in the nursery. Children enjoy playing together and are developing friendships.
- Practitioners know children well and are caring and supportive in their interactions. Children are listened to and their needs are responded to appropriately. There are some examples of questioning being used effectively, for example, during group time but there is scope to develop this further. It would be useful to explore approaches to promote higher order thinking. This will support practitioners to intervene appropriately and consistently in children's play, in order to build and extend children's learning.
- The learning environment has been reviewed and evaluated with children. As a result, a more stimulating and shared learning space has been created. There is a commitment to the continuation and extension of the resulting learning opportunities. As discussed, continued use of national guidance documents such as, 'Building the Ambition' will support this process. Technology is used by children as they take photographs of themselves, one another and their learning experiences. As planned, opportunities to maximise the potential for using technologies across the whole school in a progressive way will enrich and support learning further.
- Practitioners observe children and record information about their learning in the recently introduced 'Learning Logs' and these are shared with parents and carers. They include written observations, photographs and examples of children's work. 'Learning Story' sheets record children's learning episodes, next steps and are linked to the principles of curriculum design. As discussed, more regular use of these methods for recording children's significant learning would better support planning for children's needs and better evidence progress in learning over time. Next steps should be shared with children to help them understand what they need to do to be successful in their learning.
- Practitioners and the visiting early years teacher use their knowledge of children's needs and interests to plan experiences weekly. The nursery is at an early stage of involving children meaningfully in the planning process. Developing approaches to enable children to be fully involved in this process would be a positive next step. Planning should take account of observations of children's learning and information on achievements and experiences from home. This will help to build on what children already know and involve them in planning next steps in learning.

- Practitioners are at the early stages of tracking children's learning. Developing an awareness of early level National Benchmarks will support practitioners to understand how children's progress compares with other children. Continued involvement in the local authority sharing practice and moderation process to ensure a shared understanding of standards would be a positive next step.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes are increasingly used for planning children's learning and there is an overview of coverage. Planning in response to children's interests and experiences is evident. The use of local authority progression frameworks for curriculum areas will support the planning and delivery of learning experiences that provide appropriate pace, challenge and progression across the early level.
- Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are evident across learning, with practitioners supporting the development of skills naturally through daily interactions, routines and play experiences. The need for more well-planned adult-initiated experiences will support children to make the progress they are capable of.
- The outdoor area consists of an enclosed wooded plantation area and garden space that has recently been used more regularly, for example, the use of the school poly tunnel. Children enjoy exploring and climbing the trees and are developing a sense of risk management and curiosity in the world around them. Children enjoy the wider school grounds and are increasingly aware and comment on the natural world. Outdoor learning is a key feature of the nursery. As planned, there is scope to develop this provision further using national guidance to ensure high quality outdoor learning is planned for and developmentally appropriate. As this develops, there is potential to promote children's creativity, curiosity and inquiry further in the outdoors.
- Practitioners now need to work with the headteacher and senior leadership team to create an appropriate rationale for the curriculum in the nursery. This will ensure that all experiences provided for children are appropriate and meaningful.
- Appropriate pastoral arrangements to support children moving from nursery to P1 are in place. Children's 'Learning Logs' are shared with P1 teachers. As planned continue to improve progression across the early level through more effective sharing of prior learning. Staff from across the early level should be encouraged to work together to share expectations and their understanding of early learning pedagogy. Parents reported that transition to P1 was a positive feature of their children's experience in Sanday nursery class.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have developed positive relationships with parents. They encourage parents to share their views about the nursery and ways to improve the quality of the provision. This includes asking for feedback through questionnaires across the whole school. Social media is used to exchange information on events and children's experiences.
- On a daily basis, practitioners spend time with parents, sharing information on their child's achievements and wellbeing. This is giving parents reassurance, particularly while their child is settling into the playroom. Children have the opportunity to take their individual learning logs home to share with their family. Parents have the opportunity to attend parents' evening discussions and receive a helpful report on their child's progress at the end of the year. These opportunities are enabling parents to be more involved with their child's learning.
- Practitioners share information with parents to help them understand how they can support their children's learning. There is scope for practitioners to consider how they can extend this practice and offer a wider range of opportunities.
- Parents and many community partners are very supportive of the nursery and regularly make themselves available to take part in supporting learning in the nursery, for example, through bringing lambs or a baby owl to school, or to the volunteer lifeguards who enable nursery children to access swimming lessons.

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

good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- There is a very warm, welcoming atmosphere in the nursery and relationships between children and practitioners are caring and very positive. Practitioners value each child as an individual and welcome them into the nursery. They know each child, their personal circumstances and families very well. This helps them to be responsive to the wellbeing needs of individual children and families and ensures that children are supported appropriately. Children's needs are met in a caring and supportive way. Parents are comfortable sharing information about their children with practitioners and appreciate the support they receive.
- Practitioners are aware of the wellbeing indicators of 'Getting it right for every child', having a sound understanding of wellbeing. This is used to underpin the support for children to meet their needs. They now need to continue to build on their practice to support children and parents to develop an awareness of what it means to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included in meaningful ways. This will help children understand how these indicators relate to themselves as individuals. As this work develops, practitioners could consider how they make appropriate links with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Practitioners use guidelines to develop their understanding of statutory duties. Care plans have recently been completed for all children. Practitioners liaise closely with parents and where necessary, link with other agencies to create individual plans and chronologies for children who require additional support. As plans develop, there will be a need to review them regularly and note and act upon any changes that arise, to ensure children make appropriate progress towards achieving their targets, and have access to the support they need. Practitioners use information and guidance from other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, through face-to-face meetings or linking by video-conferencing, to meet the needs of children.
- Practitioners are highly inclusive and are aware of potential barriers to learning for children. The solution focused approach ensures children can access and benefit from all aspects of nursery life.
- All children and families are treated fairly and with respect. Appropriate experiences enable children to learn about a range of celebrations from around the world. There is scope to develop opportunities for children to learn more about equality, diversity and cultures in a meaningful way. Practitioners should consider planning more opportunities to develop children's awareness of gender equality and cultures through careful selection and use of appropriate resources.

3.2 Securing children's progress

satisfactory

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Children are making satisfactory progress in early language and literacy with a few children making good progress. The majority of children listen well during story time. They readily engage in conversation with practitioners and visitors and confidently share their experiences. Most children choose to access books independently and relish finding information about chosen topics, such as dinosaurs. The continued development of the learning environment may support and encourage children to access texts even more readily. The majority of children are developing an awareness of initial letters and their associated sounds. They show a developed understanding that print carries meaning and are inquisitive about environmental print. A few children need support to develop early writing skills. A few children recognise that writing has a purpose such as labelling items or writing their names. This could be extended by encouraging more regular opportunities and providing real-life experiences to develop further children's early writing skills.
- In numeracy and maths children are making satisfactory progress, with a few making good progress. Children count to ten with a few counting to 20. The majority of children recognise basic shapes and opportunities to explore the properties of 3D objects during play experiences with loose parts. A few children can copy a pattern using colour and are developing an awareness of symmetry through art and craft experiences. Contexts such as outdoor learning and watering the plants in the polytunnel are supporting children to develop an awareness of pouring, filling, weight and capacity. Most children use appropriate mathematical language, for example, as they compare lengths of sticks from trees they are climbing. Whilst there are examples of children using numeracy and mathematics skills in daily routines and during free play, there is potential for this to be developed further. This includes through deeper questioning and challenge for children both indoors and outdoors.
- Through their nursery experiences, children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Children are developing a sound awareness of safety. This includes how to keep themselves safe. The school grounds and plantation allow children to explore the natural environment. This helps them develop skills for lifelong learning such as resilience, perseverance, problem solving and a sense of responsibility. Experiences such as swimming lessons and tree climbing provide children with opportunities to apply their developing skills in differing contexts. Children develop their awareness of emotions and feelings through developmentally appropriate experiences. Most children are developing independence skills as they get ready for outdoors and help with the snack routine. Children would benefit from being supported in independence in tidying throughout the session. Consistent use of the language of the nursery 'rules' will help

children in developing a greater awareness of expectations. Physical skills, including fine motor skills are developing well through a range of experiences both indoors and outdoors.

- The learning folders and recent implementation of trackers are starting to show children's progress in learning. Evidence shows that children are making satisfactory progress in their learning over time, appropriate to their stage of development. Practitioners need to consistently build on what children already know and have achieved, to ensure they make the best possible progress. As the system to track children's learning embeds, this will provide more robust information about children's progress. With development of quality of observations and identification of next steps, practitioners will be better placed to provide an accurate and clear overview of children's progress.
- Children participate in relevant aspects of whole school life including assemblies, swimming gala, fundraising for national charities. Children's achievements are celebrated well through praise and encouragement. Examples of children's work are displayed all around the nursery and shared through social media. We agree with practitioners there is a need to continue to look for ways for parents to share children's achievement from outwith the nursery.
- Practitioners are very aware of the need to ensure equity for all children and take account of barriers to learning for individual children. Additional funding has been accessed and resources purchased to support equity of opportunity for all learners.

Choice of QI: 2.4 Personalised support

- Universal support
- Role of practitioners and leaders
- Identification of learning needs and targeted support
- Removal of barriers to learning

- Across the nursery, a good understanding of children's individual needs informs the planning of learning. Environments for learning are adapted, improved and personalised with the involvement of children and parents. As a result, children receive high quality universal support. Practitioners engage with children in learning conversations, which support discovery and creativity. We would encourage practitioners to continue to develop children's participation in extended conversations building a shared understanding of topics children are interested in.
- Practitioners work very well with a good range of professionals and partner agencies to support children who experience short or long-term barriers in their learning. Care plans, individual education plans are recently developed and stored securely, with plans for review. There is now a need to continue to review specific targets and agreed strategies implemented. Practitioners promptly implement helpful suggestions from the visiting early years teacher and other agency professionals.. This ensures children are provided with support and some appropriate challenge to meets their particular stage of development.
- Practitioners know individual children and families very well. There is effective communication between parents and carers, senior leaders, along with recent improvements in observation of children, which all mean children's needs are understood very well. As a result, practitioners identify, remove or work to minimise the impact of barriers to learning. Children with specific learning or social and emotional needs receive quality support. Extended transitions in to nursery and between nursery and primary are in place for a few children. In partnership with senior leaders, school staff and partners, practitioners should continue to monitor the impact of interventions and strategies implemented for individuals or groups.

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.