HMIE | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland
Luchd-sgrùdaidh an Rìgh airson Foghlam ann an Alba

Summarised inspection findings

Milnathort Primary School Nursery

Perth and Kinross Council

3 November 2026

HM Inspectors gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the ELC's work using three quality indicators from the Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors. This document provides our summarised findings.

Key contextual information

Milnathort Primary School Nursery is registered to provide funded early learning and childcare (ELC) for 53 children, aged from two to those not yet attending school. There are 54 children on the roll. Almost a third of children are attending for an additional year of ELC. The nursery has a large playroom with toilets and direct access to three distinct outdoor spaces. The headteacher is the registered manager. Staffing comprises a senior early childhood practitioner (SECP) and seven practitioners who work a range of patterns. They are supported by two part-time play assistants. The team also includes a nursery teacher who works approximately one and a half days each week and a family learning practitioner who runs various programmes for families. The nursery provides ELC from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm, during term-time. Children attend predominantly from the local area. There have been a number of changes to staffing, including senior leaders, in recent years.

Learning, teaching and assessment	**good**
This quality indicator focuses on how children benefit from access to high-quality spaces and well-established routines that help them feel secure and ready to engage. It explores how children are supported to build positive relationships, regulate their emotions, and purposefully participate in a wide range of motivating learning experiences. It demonstrates the importance of staff having a high level of skill supported by strong pedagogical leadership. This includes a clear understanding of pedagogy, the concept of play, how children learn, children's rights and children's behaviour. It places value on high-quality relationships, consistent expectations, and skilled interactions that enable children to sustain engagement, follow routines, and build independence in their learning. This indicator highlights the importance of observing and interacting sensitively with children to plan and assess their learning. It recognises the value of involving children fully in planning their learning indoors, outdoors and within the local community. This quality indicator emphasises the importance of robust tracking and monitoring of children's progress to ensure practitioners know all children very well as learners. The themes are: • children's learning and engagement • interactions to support learning • planning and assessment • tracking and monitoring	

- Staff have created a nurturing ethos that is underpinned by the whole school values of 'kindness', 'effort', 'inclusion' and 'integrity'. They have established predictable routines that support children to quickly settle. Staff working with the youngest learners respond with care and attention as they form important relationships and build on each child's unique developmental stage. Together they have developed very effective arrangements to ensure smooth transitions into nursery, and when the time comes, to P1. Most older children sustain purposeful engagement in their chosen tasks. They make independent choices across most of the day, choosing what and where they will play. This is helping them begin to direct their own learning.

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- Staff are flexible in their use of spaces to support children's learning. They use a range of audits and reflective discussions to adapt how spaces are used to best meet the needs and interests of children. Staff should continue to reflect on the use of spaces to ensure children's learning potential is maximised. This includes continuing, as planned, to develop further the exciting, diverse, outdoor spaces. Children are enthusiastic and curious as they explore new resources, such as digital cameras. Staff have correctly identified the need to extend opportunities for children to develop and apply a range of skills in the use of digital technologies.

- As a new team, staff continue to develop their shared pedagogy to ensure consistently high-quality learning and teaching. This includes staff skills in interacting with children to support and extend learning. They should build on the consistently nurturing interactions and promote increased commentary and questioning to support and extend learning. Working with the visiting teacher, staff are ready to explore how they can offer increased challenge and notice and develop opportunities for children's learning.

- Staff observe children carefully and record observations in individual learning journals and floorbooks. They are increasingly documenting children's significant learning which provides helpful assessment information. Moving forward, it will be important for staff to record more frequent observations, including the skills being developed, across the curriculum. Over time, this should document a coherent assessment of what children know and can do as a result of nursery experiences. Staff work well as a team to plan for children's learning, using an effective blend of responsive and intentional planning. They are now ready to increase depth and breadth of experiences and the challenge offered, to fully reflect the learning needs of children. Staff plan daily group learning experiences for their key children. This helps them develop an extensive understanding of the learning needs and progress of individual children.

- Senior leaders and staff carefully monitor children's progress in important aspects of learning using local authority developmental milestone trackers. They skilfully use this information to identify where individuals or groups of children may benefit from additional support or challenge. They also use this valuable information to inform the identification of aspects for improvement. This also informs improvement plan priorities, for example, improving children's experiences in numeracy and addressing potential differences in progress as a result of gender. The visiting teacher supports staff to check the accuracy of how they measure children's progress. This is helping ensure their professional judgement and assessment information is accurate and robust.

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Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	good

This quality indicator highlights the importance of positive relationships and children's wellbeing. It recognises the importance of providing high quality, inclusive, and appropriate rights-based support.

These approaches result in improved outcomes for children's learning, wellbeing and participation. It takes full account of children who may require additional support to access and benefit fully from their entitlement to high-quality ELC. This includes identifying and assessing their learning and wellbeing needs in a timely manner and providing personalised and targeted support.

This quality indicator recognises that strong, collaborative partnership working between those supporting children is essential. It highlights the importance of meaningful engagement with children and families to inform decisions about how children's needs should be met.

This quality indicator emphasises the important role senior leaders play in ensuring all staff have relevant and worthwhile professional learning to meet the diverse and sometimes complex needs of children.

The themes are:

- positive relationships and wellbeing
- universal support
- Identifying and assessing learning needs and targeted support
- inclusion and equality

- The whole school values support a strong sense of belonging and community for children, families and staff. All staff provide sensitive, nurturing support and build strong, trusting relationships with children and families. This consistent approach helps children settle and feel safe, secure and well supported. All staff model respectful, positive relationships providing children with strong examples of how to interact with each other. As a result, most children are developing positive relationships and friendships. They are becoming increasingly confident in playing cooperatively, taking turns and managing their emotions, with adult support.

- Staff prioritise the wellbeing of children, families and each other. They support children well to become increasingly confident and responsible learners. Children are learning different ways they can keep themselves safe, healthy and be responsible by making positive choices. Staff recognise and respect children's rights. They reinforce these through meaningful praise and feedback. 'Ramsey the rabbit' helps link experiences from home and is supporting children and families to understand children's rights in a developmentally appropriate way.

- Staff have successfully reviewed and adapted meal and snack times for children. As a result, children now benefit from a more personalised experience that supports them in developing greater independence. Staff meet the emerging needs of children using ongoing review to ensure they make appropriate adaptations.

- When children start nursery, key workers gather important information from families regarding individual children's wellbeing, learning and development. Staff visit the homes of the youngest learners to meet children and families within their own environment. As a result,

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staff know all children well as individuals with their own personalities, interests and needs. They take account of children's individual needs as they plan experiences across the day. Staff use a range of information to set personalised targets for all children.

- Staff quickly identify children's emerging wellbeing, learning and development concerns and work collaboratively with parents and partners to support children's individual needs. Senior leaders and staff have established strong relationships with partners. Partners provide important support for inclusion, speech and language development and family learning. Staff use a range of interventions and resources effectively to ensure children receive the support they require. They develop individual support plans with appropriate strategies to progress children's learning and development.

- Staff, supported by senior leaders, and working in partnership with parents, should further develop personalised targets for all children. They need to ensure targets clearly identify intended learning and expected progress. This will support staff to build more effectively on children's prior learning and ensure next steps are appropriately challenging and responsive to individual needs.

- All staff know children and families well and promote an ethos of respect and kindness. They take positive steps to address any barriers to inclusion and understand well the socio-economic context of the nursery. Senior leaders and staff respond sensitively to individual family needs. They offer a range of supports to reduce potential barriers to children's learning and development through strong partnerships within the community.

- Senior leaders and staff monitor children's attendance. Staff use the strong positive relationships they have with families to sensitively promote and address any barriers to attendance.

- As planned, staff should develop approaches to promoting and celebrating diversity through a wider range of experiences and resources. This should help children develop an understanding of the world beyond their immediate experience.

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Safeguarding

- The setting 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 setting and the education authority.

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Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard HMIE 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.

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland.

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