

Summarised inspection findings

Lundin Mill Nursery Class

Fife Council

25 August 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

Lundin Mill Nursery class is located within the grounds of Lundin Mill Primary School. It is within the accessible rural village of Lundin Links, Fife. The nursery is a modular building with an extensive outdoor space with direct access from playrooms. There are two playrooms, one of which is used currently as a dining room and cloakroom. Children make use of the school gym hall occasionally.

The nursery operates term-time from 9 am until 3 pm. It provides early learning and childcare for a maximum of 22 children at any one time from the age of three to those not yet attending primary school. At the time of the inspection there were 25 children on the roll. The majority of children attend the nursery for the year before they begin school.

The headteacher leads the work of the nursery. At the time of the inspection, she had been in post for ten weeks. Four members of staff who work across the week support her. A representative from Fife Council works closely with the nursery team on a regular basis.

Curriculum	good
This quality indicator highlights the importance of placing the needs, interests, rights and progress of children at the centre of curriculum design and implementation. <u>Curriculum</u> is defined as the totality of all that is planned for children from ELC, through school and beyond. It emphasises that children are entitled to a curriculum underpinned by the <u>principles of curriculum design</u> and enriched through meaningful learning experiences indoors, outdoors and within the community. It recognises the need for all children to experience opportunities to develop the interests, knowledge, skills, and attributes they will need to adapt, thrive and achieve in today's world. This quality indicator also recognises the importance of the curriculum supporting progress in children's learning as they enter the setting and at key points of transition. The themes are: • curriculum rationale and design • continuity and progression in the curriculum • partnerships • skills for life and learning	

■ Senior leaders and staff have established a whole-school curriculum rationale rooted in values of kindness, respect, inclusion, teamwork and fun. Children consistently demonstrate these values through positive play and relationships. The recently appointed headteacher and staff should now develop a clear, nursery-specific curriculum rationale. Working with partners and families they should clearly articulate their ambitions and pedagogical approaches for children's learning.

■ Staff and local authority representatives collaborate well as a team to provide engaging learning opportunities across the curriculum. They blend children's interests and learning within the coastal locality well. Children enjoy regular visits to the beach to learn about wildlife and discover what the tide has left behind. Staff plan a breadth of learning opportunities within meaningful contexts. This is helping children make sense of their world. Children talk

animatedly about connections they notice in their learning through curiosity, investigation and by researching new information. Staff recognise most children show a strong preference for learning outdoors and provide access to the extensive nursery grounds freely throughout the day. With valuable support from local authority representatives, staff review and improve continuously the quality of their attractive indoor and outdoor play spaces. They offer children thoughtfully selected resources which stimulate interest, collaboration and high engagement. Staff now need to make more use of intentional planning within the curriculum to ensure children can readily build on and deepen what they already know and understand.

- Staff plan and regularly review children's learning opportunities, working together to improve how learning is organised. Staff demonstrate that children are making positive progress in health and wellbeing, early language and mathematics. They now need to focus on building on children's prior learning across all areas to improve planning and ensure appropriate challenge for all children.
- Staff provide children and families with high quality transition experiences. They share their practice with local colleagues. When children start nursery for the first time, staff support them to do this at their own pace. Staff benefit from close working relationships with the local preschool setting where children attend. They ensure children make a smooth transition from one nursery into another. Staff in the nursery and school liaise together closely to provide a well-planned, extended transition for all children moving through to P1. They share helpful information about children's progress and achievements through reports and children's personal learning journals.
- Children benefit from partnerships with the local community. They visit the local library and engage in fun sessions with stories, singing and rhyme led by the librarian. Children enjoy creative activities through the school's connection with a local arts committee. Staff have an established link with a local care home where children take part in intergenerational experiences. The headteacher and staff plan to develop local partnerships further.
- Children are developing important skills for life and learning. They have a strong voice in the nursery and influence the play they take part in. Children organise themselves well through selecting materials they need, accessing their snack at a time of their choosing, sharing and taking turns with ease. Children are capable of taking a greater role in the nursery by following their interests, including opportunities to explore sustainability and early enterprise experiences.

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	

- Most children arrive at nursery full of enthusiasm and confidence. They readily bring all their learning from home and are keen to build on their current favourite interest alongside their friends. Staff have caring, positive relationships with all children. They provide high-quality, purposeful indoor and outdoor environments that reflect children's interests and their local community. Most children freely and confidently access the outdoor area. A few children would benefit from spending more time outdoors. Children demonstrate curiosity and creativity as they explore open-ended and real-life resources. As a result, most children engage in fun and exciting learning for a sustained period of time.
- Staff interact respectfully with children. They respond positively to children's individual dispositions and interests. Most staff use effective questioning and commentary to extend children's learning. Staff should continue to recognise and build on what children already know to increase challenge for confident, capable learners. Staff know children well as they observe them closely during the day. They record children's observations regularly and add them to individual learning journals, using photographs to provide context. This is helping staff understand the progress children make. Senior leaders and staff, alongside local authority representatives, should now use this assessment information alongside families to devise specific next steps in learning for all children.
- Staff interact respectfully with families daily. They should, over time, provide further opportunities for families to be involved in their child's learning, including activities which support them to learn together. This includes activities that support shared understanding of children's achievements and progress.

- Staff make daily use of digital technology indoors and in the garden. Most children control the large interactive digital screen and desktop computer well to explore early mathematics through games. Children use tablet computers with ease to help them find out more information relating to their interests. They enjoy using programmable toys. A few children spend extended periods of time on digital devices. Staff should monitor how long children access digital tools and intervene where appropriate.
- All staff value their shared work in planning and evaluating children's learning together. Their approach to daily, responsive planning is consistent with what they have observed and heard children say. Staff meet fortnightly to plan and take account of children's developing interests. Their planning reflects children's voice and is captured in a floor book. Staff should ensure a more balanced and focused approach to planning to deepen and extend children's learning at an appropriate level of challenge. Staff work closely with children to create detailed, annotated learning walls. Children are very proud of these displays which over time, should reflect more clearly children's significant learning.
- Local authority representatives support staff well to monitor and track children's progress in early literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They use local guidance and observations within children's individual learning journals to support the process. Staff discuss individual children's progress and learning needs through recently introduced learning conversations. As a result of these conversations, staff are beginning to have a deeper understanding of the planning cycle and how to use it to meet children's individual learning needs. Senior leaders and staff are at the early stage of implementing the recently refreshed local authority digital tracking tools. They should continue to work with local authority representatives to build their confidence and consistency in applying their professional judgement accurately.

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	
■ Staff have nurturing, positive relationships with all children and families. They use a sensitive approach and individualised strategies respectfully to help children settle and manage their emotions effectively when required. Staff should continue to use the valuable wellbeing resources they have to support a few children to express their emotions throughout the day. Children play warmly together. They are polite and help each other instinctively. As a result, children feel valued, safe and secure in their environment. ■ Children attend nursery regularly. They attend at different times and for varying lengths of sessions, and they look forward to seeing their friends. Families make prompt contact when children are absent. Staff have agreed processes in place with the school to successfully monitor and respond when children’s attendance falls below expectations. Children benefit from a relaxed unhurried lunchtime where they demonstrate well-developed social and independence skills. ■ Most staff use the language of the wellbeing indicators meaningfully with children. They discuss safety and responsibility with children whilst they risk assess the garden together to make it safe. Staff are proud of their work in relation to a national initiative to keep children safe at nursery. As a result, children share and demonstrate routinely their understanding of being safe. Staff should continue to provide more opportunities for children to communicate their views about their wellbeing and deepen their understanding of their rights. ■ Staff consider increasingly the needs of children when they plan specific learning experiences and the environment. They provide a wide range of natural real-life resources that all children	

can access throughout their day. Children have access to family photographs, achievements from home and comfortable spaces to relax to support their wellbeing. Staff must ensure they include and support all children effectively to participate fully in exploration and play. Staff maintain strong partnerships with the local preschool provider. As a result, they are sensitive toward the needs of children who may attend both nurseries during the week.

- Senior leaders and staff work closely with families where children demonstrate that they need additional support to learn. They collaborate well as a team to put in place strategies that over time support children in overcoming the challenges they face. Staff value the views of families and encourage them to share information that help them support children during the nursery day. Whilst not required at this time, staff recognise the processes of staged intervention. They are familiar with the range of outside professionals who can support children's wellbeing and learning.
- Staff know the community very well and understand what is important to them. They are mindful of the busy lives of families. Staff have fostered positive relationships with wider family members that are involved in bringing children to and from nursery. They need to continue to consider how all families could become involved in the life of the nursery. When required, staff can signpost families to outside organisations that provide professional support and advice.
- Staff celebrate diversity meaningfully. Families offer to share their own cultural celebrations and languages through taking part in children's learning. As planned, staff need to continue to build on this work through the curriculum.

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.

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.