

Summarised inspection findings

Caskieberran Primary School Nursery

Fife Council

22 September 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

Caskieberran Primary School Nursery is situated in Caskieberran Primary School. The nursery serves the Caskieberran catchment and surrounding areas in the North West of Glenrothes. The nursery is registered for 58 children with currently 46 children on the roll. Children from age three to those not yet attending school access early learning and childcare (ELC) from 9 am to 3 pm during term-time. The nursery comprises of a playroom, sensory room, lunch space and outdoor courtyard area. Children also have access to spaces within the school such as the gym hall.

The headteacher is the registered manager of the nursery and delegates strategic and day-to-day leadership of the nursery to the depute headteacher. Staffing in the nursery comprises of a full-time early years lead officer, five full-time early years officers (EYO), six part-time EYOs and a peripatetic teacher.

Curriculum	very 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	

- Staff recently refreshed the nursery values and curriculum rationale which is rooted in strong, positive and nurturing relationships with children and families. Staff use national and local guidance and their local context effectively to shape their curricular approaches. For example, staff's core focus on the development of communication skills serves very well the needs of children. This, paired with well-considered family learning opportunities supports everyone to understand clearly the purpose of the nursery curriculum. Staff have developed a curriculum that is built upon high-quality spaces both indoors and outdoors, responsive and supportive interactions and purposeful play experiences. This supports children very well to be curious and creative in their play. Children's rights underpin the work of the nursery and staff should continue to develop these in a meaningful way with all children.
- Staff worked very effectively as a team to refine their planning which enables intentional and responsive approaches. They know children very well as individuals and include the voices of

children to shape the curriculum offer. Children are highly engaged throughout the day and sustain their play for extended periods of time. Staff use very well a range of information about children's experiences and progress to ensure they plan progressively across all curricular areas. They look at where children's skills and knowledge should be revisited or extended to plan experiences that build upon what children can already do. Staff work closely together to plan spaces and experiences that build children's early communication and numeracy skills. They ensure a broad range of experiences are on offer through the well-designed environments. These experiences help support children to develop a range of skills for play and learning. Staff should continue to plan progressively across the curriculum both indoors and outdoors. They should ensure all children receive breadth, depth, and challenge in all their learning.

- Staff consider carefully how they develop meaningful partners and links with the local community. Children's experiences and learning is enriched through forest outings and an intergenerational project. These experiences help children develop confidence, communicate with residents from the local care home and learn about their local community. Staff also prioritise families as partners to ensure parents' views are gathered to inform the curriculum. Parents enjoy highly positive relationships with staff. They are included in their child's learning through opportunities to stay and play with their child. They also share in their child's learning through an online application and through children's personal learning journals.
- Staff are highly responsive to children and support them very well to develop their confidence and skills. For example, children enjoy performing with each other on the nursery 'stage' and challenge themselves to jump from a height in the nursery garden. Most children are motivated and engage and interact purposefully with a range of challenging and open-ended opportunities across the curriculum. Children develop their skills for life and learning well through the range of experiences offered indoors and outdoors. Children problem solve using equipment, such as attaching a wheelbarrow to the back of a trike to make it into a trailer. Children confidently ask questions and engage in conversations with adults about their interests in animals. These spontaneous group times are supporting very well children's social and communication skills. Children develop skills in turn taking, listening to and responding to their peers. Staff should consider how to build more regular high-quality group times into the flow of the day to help children revisit and extend their learning.

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

- All staff foster caring and nurturing relationships with children and their families. They model the nursery values in action consistently and promote respectful relationships across the nursery. Staff have successfully created an ethos and environment of inclusion for all children. They have developed calm learning environments, rich with purposeful visual supports. Staff use these visuals consistently and effectively to help children to settle into nursery, regulate their emotions and make positive choices. As a result, children feel secure with all members of the staff team, who know them very well. This results in almost all children sustaining positive relationships with their peers throughout the day. Staff should now consider how to support further a few children who are working within early developmental stages. This includes reviewing the flow of the day. They could apply their highly-effective 'scripts' to ensure a few children receive clear and consistent responses when they are redirected in their play.
- Staff ensure clear and consistent routines that help children settle quickly and confidently each day. Children demonstrate independence as they navigate the inviting and engaging spaces, selecting resources that supports very well their play. Staff have developed clearly identified zones where children can be guided towards an aspect of the curriculum without adult intervention. Children engage well in the wide range of motivating experiences offered, moving freely between indoors and outdoors. They confidently transport items to enhance their play experiences between different spaces. Staff facilitate very well schematic play to build important cognitive skills. Staff should now review how they build in meaningful opportunities for children to gather together and with key workers. This should support further children's early communication skills as well as provide opportunities for children to settle and engage purposefully with adult-initiated experiences.

- Staff have a strong understanding of early learning pedagogy. Staff attune sensitively to children's wellbeing and developmental needs, thoughtfully interacting to support children to play and learn together respectfully. This includes ensuring they pause and give children time and space to think and respond. Staff move between questioning and commentary skilfully to support children's thinking, enquiry and curiosity across the curriculum. Children engage enthusiastically with a range of digital technologies that add value to their play. For example, children transport phones and devices to dial numbers and make phone calls to family during their play.
- Staff use children's interests and needs to shape clearly the interactions, experiences and spaces in the nursery. Over a number of years, staff have refined planning approaches to ensure a balance of intentional and responsive approaches. This ensures experiences are relevant and address children's needs, gaps in learning and ongoing interests. Staff seek out and weave children's views through their day-to-day planning.
- Staff capture very well ongoing and important observations of children's learning. They document these in children's personal learning journals. This helps them plan a wide range of differentiated experiences for children throughout the day. Staff have developed a learning wall and floorbooks to capture the wide range of experiences children engage in. They use daily responsive planning which is analysed and used very well to inform the next block of planning. Daily responsive planning is accessible and visible to staff. Their strong team approach ensures everyone has a sense of ownership when contributing to planning and evaluating children's learning. Staff should continue to strengthen how they record connections across the curriculum in their intentional planning.
- The deputy headteacher meets regularly with staff to discuss the progress children make across the curriculum. This includes early identification of children who may face barriers to their learning. There are robust systems in place to monitor all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment. Senior leaders provide staff with clear and explicit guidance to assist with key elements of the moderation cycle. For example, they look at national expectations and developmental expectations in children's skill development. Staff use children's personal learning journals very effectively to highlight key aspects of children's learning and their next steps. They track children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff provide opportunities for children to reflect on their own learning and share their personal achievements. Staff capture children's range of experiences and learning across the curriculum. They should consider how they can strengthen this further through evidencing more fully children's learning across the four capacities.

Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	very 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 enjoy highly positive relationships with children and families. They have created an ethos that centres the wellbeing and inclusion of all children in their practice. Prior to starting nursery, staff use a well-considered transition programme. This helps builds trust and a strong knowledge of children’s needs. Children and families feel welcome, safe and secure with children settling very well into the setting. Staff value children’s individual strengths, needs and talents. They place a high value on the views of children and families and use this meaningfully to make positive changes to the nursery. Senior leaders ensure they share the importance of attendance at nursery and are proactive when children are absent. They track children’s attendance and use a range of communication approaches to suit the needs of families when children are not at nursery.
- Staff use the language of wellbeing in their interactions with children. For example, they provide opportunities for children to understand how to stay safe when using a wide range of equipment. They sensitively display images and comments that show children’s understanding of key vocabulary. Building this language into children’s daily experiences supports children’s ability to talk about how they feel in an age-appropriate way. Staff have considered very well the spaces indoors and outdoors. They provide children with calm, cosy spaces as well as environments that allow children to engage in physical and risky play. Staff use well other spaces, such as the gym hall, to enable children to be active. The highly reflective staff team use very effectively environmental audits to review spaces and resources on offer. This ensures children’s needs are at the centre of their planning.

- Staff have embedded inclusive practices to support children to access experiences across the setting. They use communication strategies, visual prompts and model good practice in social interactions with children. This supports almost all children to interact appropriately with their peers and engage positively with experiences across the nursery. Staff are highly skilled at knowing when to intervene and provide support to children during their play. They are strong role models for children, using well-considered ‘scripts’ to provide consistent and responsive support to children throughout the day. Staff should now extend these scripts further to ensure they provide high-expectations and clear and consistent boundaries for a few children across the nursery. This should support children to increase their understanding of core expectations and improve further their social skills to manage better disappointment and unfamiliar situations.
- Led very ably by the deputy headteacher, staff use a wide range of evidence and data to identify early and plan for children’s individual needs. Staff have built strong professional partnerships which ensures they have access to the right advice and expertise to support children and families. Staff work tirelessly as a team to identify strategies to support children’s communication, learning and wellbeing needs. They test approaches, evaluating regularly based on high-quality observations. Staff involve families to ensure children experience a consistent approach between nursery and the home. This includes all children having personalised planning which staff review regularly with parents. Educational partners have confidence in staff’s planning which is robust and built upon sound educational research and practice.
- Staff use wellbeing indicators to plan holistically for a few children who have barriers to their learning. They use each child’s voice to ensure they plan using a strength-based approach. This supports staff to develop high-quality plans with targets that have clear measures of success for children. Staff ensure they utilise the expertise of educational partners who provide well-timed support for individual children where appropriate. As a result of this approach, children make strong progress against their individualised targets.
- Staff consider very well the context of their community and how to involve parents more widely in their child’s learning. Staff also place a high value on supporting parents as partners and do this sensitively, with the dignity of parents at the centre of their practice. They have developed a calendar of events to support parents to engage with the nursery. These wide range of family learning opportunities ensure parents are supported to understand better how their child learns through play. Staff’s approach, coupled with their use of digital approaches to share children’s experiences with parents, ensures links between home and nursery are strengthened for children. Staff also work collaboratively across the nursery to ensure transitions are flexible to meet the needs of individual children. They ensure children’s transitions beyond and between settings are enhanced through close working and sharing of tracking data to support children’s continuity of experience.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Highly effective approaches to supporting children's communication skills

Staff have implemented an effective and well-considered approach to communication across the nursery. Staff worked collaboratively to audit and enhance the learning environments to ensure children have access to quality spaces for play, supported by consistent visual prompts. Staff have strengthened communication approaches across the nursery. They use a universal approach to ensure all children are included, can access the experiences on offer and are supported effectively to communicate their feelings and needs.

- Professional learning has deepened staff's understanding of inclusive approaches. Staff have a shared understanding of their role in supporting children's communication and vocabulary.
- A few staff have taken on leadership roles to improve communication approaches used by staff. They work closely with educational partners and share their learning across the team.
- Staff gather information prior to children transitioning into the nursery. Their strong relationships with parents ensures clear communication and partnership working with families to get it right for every child.
- Senior leaders and staff work closely together to gather important evidence of children's strengths and next steps in communication and early language development. They use this information effectively to track, and identify early, children who may require additional support in this area.
- Staff ensure each play space is supported by visual cues and prompts. This consistent use of symbols supports children to participate and engage independently with experiences.
- Children and staff enjoy positive and trusted relationships. Staff use a range of agreed 'scripts' to support children to engage positively when they experience unfamiliar events or transitions. Staff's consistent use of 'scripts' supports children to experience consistent responses and expectations. Children are secure and confident in the nursery environment and engage positively with these prompts, regardless of which adult is supporting.
- Senior leaders, staff and educational partners identify and embed highly effective strategies for identified children. These are planned and shared with parents to support children to experience consistency between home and nursery.
- Staff have developed a carefully considered calendar of family learning opportunities. These well-attended events build families' understanding of strategies and activities children engage with in the nursery. Parents feel they are upskilled to use these helpful and practical approaches with their child to support them further. Together, this ensures children experience consistent support to improve their early language and communication skills.

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.