

Summarised inspection findings

Yetholm Primary School Nursery Class

Scottish Borders Council

30 September 2025

Key contextual information

Yetholm Nursery Class is part of Yetholm Primary School and is managed by the headteacher. The principal teacher is responsible for the day-to-day leadership of the nursery. The nursery occupies a small playroom within the school building, with direct access to an outdoor garden. Staffing includes an early years officer and two early years practitioners. The school's principal teacher supports aspects of the nursery's development. Children access their 1140 hours of funding by attending during school term time from Monday to Thursday from 8.40 am to 3.10 pm and on Fridays from 8.40 am to 12.40 pm. The nursery is registered for 23 children, aged two years to those not yet attending primary school, attending at any one time. No more than five children can be under three years of age. There are currently eight children on the roll.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

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

- Children are happy, settled and motivated by their play experiences. They play very well together, and most children show sustained engagement in their activities. For example, children work together well, sharing their ideas and exploring different solutions when building an outdoor obstacle course.
- Practitioners have established very positive and supportive relationships with children and their families. They know children well as individuals and as learners. Practitioners are enthusiastic, work effectively as a team and are committed to improving the work of the setting. They listen closely to children and value their ideas and interests.
- Practitioners encourage children to develop their own lines of enquiry, particularly outdoors. They interact well with children and at times use open-ended questioning to help them extend their learning. Children are given time and space to develop new skills, promoting their independence. Practitioners offer nurturing approaches and are very good role models for children. Children are very tolerant and respectful towards each other during play. They demonstrate genuine awareness that all children have different needs and interests, and they show empathy for their friends.
- Practitioners have recently introduced a new approach to the learning environment in the playroom. By design, this approach limits stimulus, resources and spaces. Practitioners have correctly recognised that this approach does not meet the needs of most children. The nursery environment provides too few rich play spaces and resources to give children experience of the full range of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Children need to experience greater variety within the playroom, to build their creative skills and encourage them to observe, explore and investigate. Practitioners have identified the need to review this recent approach and are actively updating the environment. Practitioners should regularly evaluate the spaces and resources to ensure they meet the needs well of all the children in the nursery.

- Practitioners continuously observe children at play. They record helpful information about children's learning in an online platform which is shared with parents. These observations are used well to plan next steps in learning for groups and individuals. Practitioners should extend the use of technology further to support children to capture and share their learning using digital technology where appropriate.
- Practitioners plan children's learning well using a balance of intentional and child-led experiences. They ensure that all learning is matched to identified experiences and outcomes from CfE. This approach, if combined with an effective revision of playroom spaces, should result in children receiving a broad and well-balanced range of play experiences.
- Practitioners are effectively developing the ways they plan for and meet the needs of children requiring additional support for their learning. They are applying well the knowledge and understanding gained about additional support needs following their engagement in worthwhile professional learning. The nursery provides detailed individual plans, developed in partnership with specialist agencies, for those children who require them.
- Practitioners, working with the principal teacher, are improving the ways in which they track, monitor and evaluate children's progress. These procedures are supporting them to improve depth in children's learning and confirm the positive progress which they are making over time.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

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

3.2 Securing children's progress

good

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 good progress in early language. Most children listen well to stories and enjoy predicting what comes next in the story of the week. They are learning about the roles of authors and illustrators. Most children communicate their needs well and are keen to talk about their play activities. Most recognise their name in print and a few can write it. They enjoy using clipboards to make notes when outdoors. Children would benefit from more opportunities to write in real life contexts, learning from exemplars such as environmental print, to develop their writing skills further.
- Children are making good progress in mathematics. They make play dough by following a recipe which includes counting out cups of flour and salt. They measure ingredients to make scones, using scales accurately. Most children recognise numbers to ten and beyond. A few can add and subtract within ten. Children explore capacity as they pour water into different sized containers. They use positional language accurately, for example higher than and shorter than, when building models. To secure further progress, practitioners should provide children with access to a wide range of mathematical equipment such as balance scales, timers, shapes, money and measuring tapes.
- Children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing. Most are very independent in dressing themselves for outdoor play and serving food at snack time. Children carry out and understand their well-established hygiene practices including hand washing. They take part in a toothbrushing programme to develop their understanding of oral hygiene. They are building important skills in managing risks, for example assessing their outdoor area and keeping themselves safe on riverside walks. They are developing a range of physical skills as they climb ladders and trees and balance on planks on the obstacle course.
- The principal teacher and early years officer meet three times a year to track children's progress through the early level experiences and outcomes of CfE. They ensure that children are making good progress over time, using reliable evidence of progress from children's learning journals and the nursery's online platform.
- Practitioners value and celebrate children's achievements through visual displays, individual journals and the online platform. They use an 'achievement wall' to celebrate the range of skills children have developed, both at home and in the nursery. Through very effective outdoor learning, children are developing a sound appreciation of the natural world and living things. They confidently explore riverbeds and woodland, and many children identify numerous plants and animals, including minibeasts.

- Practitioners know children and their families very well. They have a clear understanding of the challenges families face and they provide them with effective support. The nursery ensures that all outings and experiences are free of charge, enabling all children to take part. The nursery supplies indoor clothing, and footwear, sunscreen and hats to enable all children to benefit from outdoor play. Practitioners support families effectively by signposting them to agencies that can provide help when needed.

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.