

Summarised inspection findings

St Monans Primary School Nursery Class

Fife Council

17 September 2024

Key contextual information

St Monans Primary School Nursery is located in a small village in the East Neuk of Fife. The nursery comprises two separate purpose-built units situated close to the primary school. Both buildings offer children free access to an outdoor learning environment. The children access different opportunities in the local area, including green spaces, the harbour and the beach. The provision is registered for children from two to primary school age. Currently, 21 children aged three to five access 1140 hours from 8 am to 12.40 pm, and nine children attend the early entrant's unit for children aged two to three.

The headteacher has oversight of the setting and delegates the day-to-day responsibility for leading the nursery class to two senior early years officers. The nursery team are supported by regular visits from a visiting early years teacher from the local authority central team.

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

- Practitioners' respectful and caring interactions create an inclusive ethos where almost all children are involved and keen to learn. Practitioners have developed strong partnership working with parents. This ensures they have a good understanding of children's strengths and challenges at home, and enables them to respond sensitively where needed.
- Children are engaged, curious and resilient as they play indoors and outdoors. The learning environment offers a rich variety of experiences that motivate children to inquire, create and problem-solve. Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to explore the local community, including beach and woodland experiences. Children are developing well their skills and confidence in using digital technology, capturing learning experiences, playing games and drawing with digital devices. In the two to three room, practitioners are responsive and support children well to engage in a range of experiences indoors and out.
- Practitioners' interactions with children are supportive and nurturing. They know the children well and prioritise supporting children's emotional wellbeing when they meet challenges. As a result, children play and interact happily together and are developing friendships. Practitioners encourage children to talk about their learning and give them freedom to develop their ideas. Most practitioners consider carefully when to step in as children explore and experiment. The team should continue to develop consistent approaches to commentary and asking open-ended questions.
- Across both playrooms, practitioners focus on responsive planning and use daily observations to extend children's interests and explorations. Children revisit their plans and ideas captured

on learning walls. This has a positive impact on their learning. For example, children's current interest in weddings prompted sustained periods of role play. Practitioners ensure that children receive a broad curriculum, making clear links to Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes.

- Practitioners use focused assessments and gather observations to help them identify where children are in their learning. They work with parents and carers to identify next steps for individual children's learning and development. As a team, they have correctly identified the need to improve their approach to planning support for individual children's next steps.
- The team use a local authority system to track children's progress in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing. Staff now need to implement this tracking process more consistently. This should better inform their understanding of any gaps in children's progress. Practitioners create additional plans for children who may be experiencing barriers to their learning. These plans identify clear strategies to assist children to continue to make progress in their development and learning.

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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

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

- Almost all children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They relate well to adults and to their peers, developing positive friendships. Practitioners use emotional wellbeing approaches skilfully to support children to recognise and express their feelings and find strategies to support each other. Children are becoming increasingly resilient and independent, learning to persevere when they meet challenges. A nursery initiative to engage children in risk-assessing activities and environments has led to children taking the lead in keeping themselves safe. Children develop their physical skills well as they run, balance and climb in the outdoor area. Younger children are growing in confidence, supported by nurturing interactions. They explore the environment and make choices from the activities on offer. They are developing their language and physical skills well. Practitioners should continue to develop children's understanding of the wellbeing indicators.
- Almost all children are making good progress in communication and language. They are keen to share their interests and experiences with adults, and talk confidently to each other, sharing ideas and developing role play. Most children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. A few children are keen to retell familiar stories. Children would benefit from further opportunities to enjoy rhyme and songs and retell or create their own stories using props. Children make marks indoors and outdoors to communicate their ideas as they play. Children would benefit from wider opportunities to develop and apply literacy skills through routines and experiences.
- Most children are making good progress in mathematics and numeracy. They explore concepts of size, shape, and measurement as they play. Children make very good use of the range of open-ended resources outdoors, engaging for long periods of time in problem-solving, and working together. For example, children experiment with the flow of water through tubing in a muddy area or build with loose parts and large construction materials. Children count and explore number in play and real-life contexts and are developing an understanding of mathematical language. Children would benefit from further opportunities to develop their numeracy skills in meaningful contexts indoors and outside.
- Overall, children are making good progress across their learning. Practitioners share regularly with parents when children are successful, and families are encouraged to share achievements from home. Parents and carers have a variety of opportunities to engage with the nursery team

to support children's learning at home, and share these through the online platform. Children are proud to share their learning folders and talk about their experiences and achievements.

- The team know children and families well. They are respectful and caring when supporting families who are experiencing challenges. They take account of any barriers to learning that exist and put interventions in place where additional support is needed. This helps to ensure that all children make appropriate progress from prior learning.

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.