

Summarised inspection findings

Our Lady's RC Primary School Nursery Class

Perth and Kinross Council

23 June 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

Our Lady’s RC Primary Nursery is registered to provide funded early learning and childcare (ELC) for 30 children, aged from three to those not yet attending school. There are 31 children on the roll. The nursery has a large playroom with a cloakroom and toilets nearby. Children access an outdoor space and the school playground directly from the playroom. The headteacher is the registered manager. A senior early childhood practitioner (ECP) and three full-time practitioners make up the staff team. They are supported by a part-time play assistant and a part-time pupil support assistant. The team also includes a nursery teacher who works alternate weeks in the nursery and a part-time family learning practitioner. The nursery provides early learning and childcare between 9:10 am and 3:10 pm, during term-time. Children attend predominantly from the local area. Thirty nine percent of children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile 1. In the nursery, 45% of children have English as an additional language and 23% receive additional support with their learning and development through staged intervention processes.

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 articulate confidently a clear and shared purpose of the curriculum. This includes key aspects such as relationships, equity and children’s rights. Staff incorporate these skilfully in the design of the curriculum alongside what they want children to experience as young learners. As a result, children receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects fully local and national guidance. Recently, senior leaders gathered the views of parents and staff to develop a curriculum rationale to underpin the curriculum offer. Senior leaders should continue to refine this rationale to ensure it captures fully the uniqueness of their curriculum, for example the importance of outdoor learning. They should also consider how the rationale and design supports children to experience continuity and progression across the early level.
- Children experience high-quality outdoor learning which is valued greatly by children and is embedded as part of curriculum design by staff. All children benefit from extensive

opportunities to learn across the curriculum as they explore, investigate, develop resilience and physical skills. Children also benefit significantly from visiting an offsite provision that introduces them to a more expansive, natural environment. This exciting environment provides an enhanced range of opportunities including interacting with nature and exploring fire. It allows children to apply previous learning and to develop their skills in a meaningful but less familiar context.

- Staff place high importance on forming respectful relationships that ensure purposeful partnerships with parents. Taking full account of the context in which families live, staff sensitively ensure that parents can contribute to children's learning. They encourage parents to 'stay and play' during focused monthly sessions that allow first hand experiences of curriculum areas, including mathematics and digital learning. Parents participate well in a range of engagements and programmes. At times, these are delivered in a very bespoke way to best meet individual needs. Strong partnerships in the community enrich the curriculum. This includes the well-established, purposeful partnership with staff from an offsite provision, who also support learning at the nursery. Recently children enjoyed a performance by the Royal Scottish National Orchestra in partnership with the local concert hall. Staff should continue to seek out and develop sustained relationships with partners whose contributions enrich the curriculum.
- Children's skills for life and learning are enhanced by the very effective opportunities provided by staff. Staff correctly identified the need to review and enhance digital learning experiences. By exploring related experiences and outcomes staff strengthened their awareness of the benefits of digital learning. As a result of this focused improvement activity staff now support children more effectively to develop a wider range of skills. This includes children being more motivated and engaged in their learning. As planned, staff should continue to embed opportunities for children to develop digital skills to allow more connection with the world beyond their immediate experience.

Learning, teaching and assessment	very 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	

- Children are supported very well by reflective, caring staff who demonstrate a strong focus on fostering secure attachments. All staff interact with children sensitively and consistently, using calm approaches and developmentally appropriate language. This results in children feeling settled, secure and happy. Staff interact effectively with children to promote purposeful learning. This includes using new vocabulary and commentary which supports, enhances and extends children's learning. Children access a motivating range of learning experiences indoors and outdoors within the local and wider community. Almost all children engage well with the experiences and resources offered. Staff help children engage in meaningful real-life experiences which helps them to develop as confident individuals. Staff provide a range of digital learning opportunities to challenge thinking and extend children's digital literacy skills.
- Children are highly motivated and sustain engagement in a variety of experiences. Staff interact appropriately with children to extend their learning. Staff know children and their families very well and respond skilfully to children's individual needs and interests. As a team, staff reflect on and improve their skills termly, particularly around their interactions with children. Recently, staff focused on and enhanced their use of effective questioning and developed further their use of props and puppets. Children are becoming increasingly independent in their learning as they choose where and with whom to play. All children benefit from, and confidently follow, well-established routines.
- Staff use highly effective approaches to plan for children's learning. They use planning meetings to guide how they plan learning spaces and resources and to identify how they will focus their interactions with children. Staff take very successful account of children's interests, family information and identify gaps in learning to inform next steps and the learning focus. They have an appropriate balance between responsive and intentional planning. Staff

identified correctly the need to promote greater learner participation in directing learning and are well placed to take this forward. Almost all children benefit from small group times that staff plan carefully. These sessions are focused, motivating and help children to progress particular aspects of their learning.

- Staff implement useful approaches to monitor, record, evaluate and report on children's progress. They make very effective use of developmental milestone trackers and progression planners for literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing to support children's learning. Their observations of children's learning capture effectively the wide range of children's experiences and resulting progress. Staff use data from their robust tracking systems very effectively to identify and plan children's experiences. This helps them to ensure the very best progress and provide appropriate challenge for all children. Staff are ready to develop tracking of learning to include other areas of the curriculum.
- Children's learning, comments and experiences are captured by staff effectively using a blend of online records and paper floorbooks. Staff support children well to reflect on and understand the skills they are developing and the progress they have made in their learning. Staff record individual children's learning experiences using comments and photographs on an online platform. Most children, along with staff and parents, identify and celebrate regularly the achievement of their own individual targets. Staff, with senior leaders, analyse children's progress termly. They use this information to identify any gaps in learning and progress. This then influences future planning.

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 understand that supportive relationships lie at the heart of children's development and skilfully prioritise the wellbeing of children and their families. This is a key strength of the staff team. They have embedded nurturing approaches, which support children to flourish in a safe and consistently calm and happy environment. All staff demonstrate and promote respect, kindness and consideration in their interactions with children and each other which improves the outcomes for children and families. Staff value each child as an individual and prioritise children's emotional needs. As a result, children play happily together, are polite and demonstrate care and respect for each other. Staff have embedded enthusiastically strategies to support children recognise and regulate their emotions. Children are increasingly able to name their feelings, identify how their body may feel as they experience different emotions and recognise situations that may trigger certain emotions.
- Staff support all children well to ensure they are included and access learning in a way that is appropriate for them. Staff have high expectations of, and aspirations for, children and families. They use a range of approaches, including mascots such as 'Rocky Rhino' and 'Concept Cat', to engage children and make learning accessible, exciting and motivating. When required, staff make creative adaptations to routines, the environment and their interactions to ensure all children are included. Staff are highly responsive and intuitive to the changing needs of children as they learn and develop. They delight in children's progress and achievements, celebrating with them and their families. Children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging and, as a result, are happy and thriving.

- Staff identify readily children's individual needs through careful observations and assessments. Where required, staff work closely with others to ensure children receive the right support at the right time. Staff create detailed plans to ensure learning is progressive and they review children's progress in a timely manner. Building on high quality universal provision, staff provide a range of interventions to enhance the support offered to individuals and groups of children. These are well-planned and reviewed regularly to measure impact on learning. As a result, children are making positive, and at times, accelerated progress in developing fine and gross motor control, and skills in communication and language, including listening. Staff should continue to review the support offered to children and consider how technology may support this further.
- Senior leaders and staff promote sensitively the value of attendance, and all children attend nursery regularly. Staff carefully monitor children's attendance and where appropriate, offer support to families to ensure children experience continuity in their learning and make steady progress over time.
- Children attend the setting with a variety of experiences, first languages and cultural backgrounds. Staff ensure that each child is celebrated as a unique person and they are very respectful of children's agency. Children thrive in an inclusive environment that naturally upholds children's rights. Staff respond sensitively to individual needs, offering responsive, individualised and well-timed support. They pay close attention to ensure that all children, including those who may face barriers to their learning or inclusion, are supported to make strong progress. This includes reducing any potential gender-based difference in progress.

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

Staff provide a range of high-quality outdoor learning immediately outside the setting, within the school playground and at an offsite venue, Westbank, provided by Perth and Kinross Council. Staff carefully manage the integration of children attending ELC and older children during school break times. This supports transitions well and promotes continuity of experience. Staff and children travel to Westbank using public transport which enhances children's developing skills. While at Westbank children access an expansive natural space. Children explore fire, experience changing seasons first hand, participate in growing and harvesting plants and have freedom to explore, be curious and investigate. Staff at Westbank support staff from the ELC highly effectively. They help ensure the safety of children during journeys to and from the site, share best practice in outdoor learning and support and extend children's learning. Children have formed good relationships with staff and apply skills and understanding in new, exciting contexts outwith their familiar ELC environment. Staff observe and record the positive impact offsite experiences have on children. Westbank is also visited by parents, for example as part of structured family learning programmes. This helps share the value of high-quality outdoor learning on children's experiences.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard ~~Education Scotland~~[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.