

Summarised inspection findings

Carronshore Primary School Nursery Class

Falkirk Council

8 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

Carronshore Nursery Class is situated within the grounds of Carronshore Primary School. It is housed in a purpose-built nursery building which opened in 2022. The nursery serves the village of Carronshore in Falkirk. Almost all children move through into P1 in the school. Almost all children use their entitlement to funded hours within the nursery. The nursery is open term time from 8.45 am until 2.45 pm. It is registered for 56 children at any one time. The roll at the time of the inspection was 60 children.

Children have access to a large playroom which includes a dining space for all meals. They have free flow access to an extensive garden. There is a kitchen, office and a meeting room which staff use flexibly for small groups of children and parents.

The deputy headteacher provides leadership of the nursery. A senior early years worker provides day-to-day leadership and management of the nursery team. They are supported by seven full-time early years officers, a support for learning assistant and two assistants working for part of the day.

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	

- Led by senior leaders, staff work well together to refresh the nursery curriculum regularly. They created recently an attractive bespoke curriculum rationale to increase the engagement of children and families. Senior leaders and staff underpin the curriculum through local and national guidance. They learn together as a team continuously. This is helping them understand and develop pedagogical approaches which they feel create the best conditions for children's learning and wellbeing. Staff lead aspects of the curriculum willingly. For example, early communication skills, fire pit and textiles. Staff enrich the wellbeing and progress of all children across the curriculum and should continue to capture the totality of the curriculum they provide over time.

- Senior leaders and staff offer children engaging learning possibilities each day. They rightly prioritise children's health and wellbeing indoors and in the garden. Staff, through consultation with children, create well-resourced designated learning spaces. They have developed the outdoor environment well, offering rich possibilities for investigation, problem solving and large physical play. Children benefit from indoor spaces to be creative, play imaginatively and explore technology. Staff use the experiences and outcomes from Curriculum for Excellence effectively to help them plan learning and resource each play space. Staff should continue to take full account of children's prior learning. This will support them in ensuring continuity and progression in learning for all children across the curriculum.
- Children benefit from a partnership with the Falkirk Youth Music Initiative and show great enthusiasm as they use their playroom stage to sing and make music. Staff should look to build more local partnerships to enrich further aspects of their work such as, woodwork, gardening and sustainability. Families work in close partnership with staff. They take part in supportive 'focus child' engagement discussions to find out about their child's learning and progress at nursery. Staff organise thoughtful stay and play sessions where families are welcome to learn alongside their child.
- Senior leaders and staff provide a quality transition experience when children and families start nursery for the first time. Families speak highly of the personalised approach to transitions, allowing children time to settle into their new environment. They value the helpful reassuring report they receive soon after their child starts nursery. Senior leaders and staff plan an extended programme of transition activity for children moving through to P1. Children and their families engage in meaningful experiences to help them learn about the approaches to learning and teaching in P1. Staff and teachers liaise closely to share valuable information about children's development and progress.
- Most children demonstrate well-developed independence skills. They confidently provide detailed tours of their nursery for visitors. Children know their opinions are valued by staff and they readily share their ideas and preferences. They value the freedom to play with their friends in all areas of the nursery. Children access a range of technologies to enhance their learning. They take photographs for their electronic learning journals and use electric tools safely when cooking.

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 receive a warm welcome into nursery. Staff support them well and recognise their emotional and developmental needs. Children are highly motivated, engaged and excited in their play. Staff guide them well to develop their independence and make choices about their learning. Most children play for extended periods of time and share their learning enthusiastically with staff and each other. They are ready to take greater responsibility within the playroom and outdoors, particularly when caring for their learning environment.
- Staff value conversations with children to find out about their interests, ideas and prior knowledge. They use questions and encouraging comments to sustain children's interests and support them in playing well together. Staff should continue to develop their use of high-quality interactions to extend children's learning and offer greater challenge. Staff ensure an appropriate balance between the time children spend choosing activities and time spent in adult-initiated tasks. However, staff should review the organisation of together times at the beginning and end of the day to meet children's needs and interests consistently. Staff support children well during lunchtimes to develop their independence and self-help skills. Children enjoy accessing freely the extensive, well-resourced outdoor area. Staff make effective use of this space to provide children with access to a wide range of stimulating play opportunities and to develop an interest in nature. Children enjoy cultivating and harvesting vegetables and learning about the life cycle of minibeasts.
- Children enjoy using an interactive screen as part of their digital learning. They also explore well-selected technology toys whilst playing such as torches and programable floor robots. Staff should continue to build on all children's access to a wide range of digital technologies indoors and outdoors to support and extend their learning.

- Senior leaders support staff well to make increasingly skilful observations of children's significant learning as they play. They record these observations regularly in children's individual electronic learning journals which they discuss with parents. Staff use these observations to identify children's next steps in learning. Staff should now improve the consistency of approach for all children. Staff gather important information about children's development and interests in 'Being Me' booklets which are updated regularly with families and shared with children. Families have regular opportunities to share what they want children to learn next, building on their achievements from home. Staff use well-illustrated floorbooks to evidence children's engagement within learning activities. They should continue to develop this approach to more readily capture children's thoughts, views and questions as their interests develop.
- Staff collaborate well to use a variety of approaches to planning for children's learning. They should continue to build on their approaches to planning responsively as children play, recording appropriate next steps in learning. Staff engage in regular team professional dialogue to discuss children's wellbeing and progress. They use information gathered about children's learning from observations and small group activities to make accurate judgements about their progress. Senior leaders meet staff at agreed times to review the progress children are making over time. Together they monitor and track children's progress using local authority guidance. Going forward, they should build on this positive approach as they track children's progress across the curriculum.

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	

- Children are very happy, safe and secure. Staff value each child as an individual. All staff are kind, warm and nurturing towards children and their families. These relationships are based on trust and respect. This helps children show care and kindness to each other and develop strong friendships. Children demonstrate empathy to others in meaningful and caring ways. They know how to take turns and share resources. Children talk confidently about how to be safe in their play. For example, they share the importance of wearing a helmet when using bikes and scooters. Children support staff daily to risk assess the outdoor space before going out to play.
- Children are very keen to come to nursery and attend well. Senior leaders and staff have agreed approaches in place should children not arrive at nursery as planned. Staff work very hard to build and maintain supportive relationships with all families and communicate with them effectively. Children enjoy snacks and an unhurried lunchtime experience in their playroom. Staff provide lunch outdoors and each child is able to experience the wonder of a 'fire pit' lunch with their family.
- Staff uphold children's rights and place a high value on their wellbeing. They use thoughtful dialogue and games to reinforce children's understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Children respond enthusiastically to their work with colourful monsters to support their own self-regulation and relationships. Recently, staff have developed a universal approach to the use of pictorial symbols. These enable all children to access play spaces and the routines of the day. Staff work well alongside children to develop and enjoy quiet and calm spaces which meet their wellbeing and sensory needs. They should continue to ensure they make connections across all

of their approaches to wellbeing indoors and in the garden. This will support and deepen children's understanding in a developmental way.

- Senior leaders and staff collaborate closely with families through their 'focus child' approach to gather and share holistic information about children's progress. This enables families and staff to share what matters to them, children's strengths and areas where they need more support. Through regular observation, staff provide intervention groups to support children in key areas of their learning. This small group approach meets children's specific learning needs very well. As a result, children make better progress in communication and language skills.
- Senior leaders work alongside the staff team to identify promptly children who require additional support with their learning. They use local authority staged intervention processes knowledgeably and organise a team around the child approach to progress individualised planning. Families feel consulted and very well supported. Senior leaders and staff collaborate with the most appropriate external professionals and take account of their guidance. Nursery staff liaise with staff in the school through receiving helpful advice and guidance and by exchanging relevant information. Staff demonstrate through observations and feedback from families that children make significant progress as a result of their interventions.
- Staff are consistently welcoming, respectful and sensitive toward families. They know the community deeply and understand the barriers families face. Staff value diversity and ensure children have the opportunity to learn about celebrations that are different to their own. They need to continue to build on this work more broadly as they engage with families.

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 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.

On behalf of His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland.