

Summarised inspection findings

Comrie Primary School and Nursery Class

Perth and Kinross Council

25 November 2025

Education Scotland ELC inspections (pilot phase)

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](#). As this inspection is part of Education Scotland's inspection pilot phase using the Quality improvement framework for early learning and childcare sectors, these quality indicators have not been graded. This document provides our summarised findings.

Key contextual information

Comrie Primary School Nursery is part of Comrie Primary School. The nursery is registered for 24 children at any one time. It caters for children aged three to those not yet attending school. There are currently 23 children on the roll. Children can access their entitlement to funded early learning and childcare (ELC) by attending from 8.55 am until 2.55 pm, during term time. The headteacher of the school has overall responsibility for the nursery class, supported by a principal teacher, two full time early childhood practitioners (ECPs), two part time ECPs and a play assistant. A peripatetic teacher visits one day every week.

There has been a number of changes across the staff team in recent years. The practitioner team has been more settled since January 2025 following the most recent appointment. The visiting nursery teacher joined the team in August 2025. The nursery is in a self-contained building, adjacent to the school building. It consists of a large playroom, smaller multi-purpose room, entrance hall, children's toilets and direct access to a large outdoor area. Children make use of the school dining hall for lunches.

Curriculum

This quality indicator highlights the importance of placing the needs, interests, rights and progress of children at the centre of curriculum design and implementation. [Curriculum](#) 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 [principles of curriculum design](#) 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

- The curriculum rationale places high value on children's learning. Staff use the visual representation of a dandelion as a helpful metaphor for curriculum design. They use this visual to represent acknowledgement of children's prior learning that is shared from home and the value of building on this through ELC experiences. Staff use their knowledge of local and national guidance to inform curriculum design. A few members of staff are undertaking further study, and they recognise that this new, deeper understanding will refine further curriculum design. As the rationale and design evolves, staff should consider how they plan for all curriculum areas. This should be both in response to children's interests and to broaden and deepen children's knowledge and understanding. Staff may find it helpful to evaluate their curriculum design using the design principles, particularly challenge, breadth and depth.
- Staff ensure outdoor learning is a key feature of curriculum design. Children benefit from regular visits to local woodland and other community resources. This is helping children develop an early understanding of learning for sustainability, the natural world and a strong sense of the community in which they live.

- Using their in-depth knowledge of children as individuals, staff ensure the curriculum is responsive to the individual needs of children, their families and the local community. They use their understanding of how children develop and learn to promote continuity and progression through the use of individual learning targets. They now need to ensure that this is applied across more curricular areas.
- Staff ensure important pastoral transitions are personalised and well-planned both to nursery and to school. Staff should now consider building on well-established arrangements to have a sharper focus on curricular transitions with a clear focus on continuity and progression in learning. This includes for children attending more than one setting and also across the early level.
- Staff have an extensive knowledge of the local community and context in which children live. They have developed a range of partnerships that support the curricular experiences of children. These include the local fire service, library, businesses and visiting physical education teacher. Staff should continue to explore and choose meaningful partners with whom to foster sustained relationships to enrich the curriculum offered. Parents make valuable contributions to support children's learning. Last session, a small group of parents worked with staff to develop the 'Dandelion room' which now offers a quieter space for children to learn. Staff could develop more opportunities for parents to contribute to the curriculum including opportunities to engage with family learning.
- Staff deliver the curriculum in different contexts, supporting the development of children's skills for life and learning. Staff could build on what exists already to develop new partnerships. Such new partnerships could provide increased opportunities for learning in real-life, relevant contexts where children can contribute to the setting and community.
- Staff offer sensitive encouragement and support as they help children to identify the skills they need and are developing. Staff are at the early stages of embedding digital skills across the curriculum. This exciting development should support children to explore, create and connect with the world beyond their immediate, lived experience.

Learning, teaching and assessment

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

- Staff welcome children individually and strong attachments between staff and children are evident. Children are well supported by staff, who recognise their individual emotional and developmental needs. Children are motivated, engaged and enthusiastic in their play and learning. Staff support children well to develop their independence and make choices about learning. There is scope for children to take greater responsibility within the playroom and outdoors, including caring for their learning environment.
- Staff provide a wide range of learning experiences to support children's learning. These provide a variety of opportunities for investigation, curiosity and enquiry. Staff could review the organisation and resourcing of the playroom to ensure they meet children's learning needs and interests better. Staff make use of the local community, including shops and library, to help children learn in real-life contexts. They make regular use of the local woods to provide an engaging range of outdoor learning opportunities. Children play enthusiastically in the woods and develop a range of physical skills as well as enhancing their interest in nature. Staff should now build on these skills more consistently when providing opportunities for children to play outdoors at nursery.
- Staff make extensive use of conversation to find out about children's interests, ideas and prior knowledge. They make effective use of questions and comments to sustain children's interests and help them play positively together. Staff should continue to develop their use of high-quality interactions to extend children's learning and provide increased challenge through more immediate, responsive planning.
- There is an appropriate balance between the time children spend choosing activities and time spent in adult-initiated tasks. Staff should review the organisation of group times towards the end of the session to ensure they consistently meet children's needs and interests. Children are motivated as they view information on an interactive screen and take photographs using a

tablet computer. Staff should now provide increased opportunities for children to develop skills in the use of a wider range of digital technologies.

- Staff discuss individual children's development regularly which enables them to provide a range of learning experiences relevant to the interests of most children. Staff gather interesting examples of children's experiences in electronic learning journals. These include photographs and comments. To improve the quality of learning journals, staff should continue to develop their skills in observing and recording children's significant learning. This could help them make increasingly accurate judgements about the progress children are making and to identify more challenging next steps in learning. Staff could consider how children can more readily access their journals to reflect on their learning.
- Staff plan for children's learning using a range of approaches, including floorbooks, and have identified planning approaches as a priority for improvement this session. As planned, they should continue to develop approaches to planning children's learning. They should ensure there is a clear focus on developing children's voice in planning for their own learning. Staff engage in helpful daily professional dialogue to discuss children's interests and progress. Senior leaders meet staff termly to review the progress children are making. Together they monitor and track children's progress using useful local authority guidance. They use this valuable information to plan learning targets for individual children, which are shared with parents.

Wellbeing, inclusion and equality

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 place high importance on wellbeing and have very positive relationships with children and their families. They value children as unique individuals. In response to valuable assessment information, staff have developed and implemented a range of strategies to help children understand and manage their emotions. At times, these strategies are used to support all children, while at others, staff personalise approaches to meet individual needs. As a result, all children are able to engage at their own developmental stage. Staff ensure everyone is included and well supported in order to experience positive relationships. Children play well together and where required, staff support them to understand the impact their actions have on others. Staff are responsive to children's views and encourage them to express their thoughts and feelings. They could build on this to include children in more decisions that affect them. For example, they could give children greater ownership of learning spaces.
- Staff provide all children with the support they need to be included. Supported by other professionals, staff have developed inclusive practice that supports every child to be part of the nursery community. Almost all children sustain engagement in their chosen experiences at their individual developmental stage. Staff sensitively use the spaces available in the setting and differentiate their interactions to meet all children's needs. All children have learning targets which are reviewed regularly with families. Staff should continue to refine targets to ensure they are more focused, based on assessment information and progress made is measurable.
- Staff monitor children's attendance at nursery. They work sensitively with families to ensure the benefits of early learning and childcare for each child is maximised. This includes shorter sessions as children transition from home to nursery.

- Staff use a range of assessment approaches and their knowledge of how children learn to help them identify the individual needs of children. They work very closely with families to ensure full account is taken of needs. Where required, staff agree with families, strategies and approaches to offer individual support to children. They record this in detailed individual plans that are reviewed regularly. At times, staff use specific approaches to support individual children. They recognise the importance of everyone being consistent in their use of approaches in order to offer the best support to children. Staff are proactive in seeking advice and guidance from other professionals, for example the early years inclusion team. They also helpfully signpost families to other agencies who can offer support and resources.
- Staff have extensive knowledge of their community including the socio-economic, cultural and linguistic context. They use this information to respond sensitively with appropriate support. Staff are keen to promote further diversity and help children develop their understanding of concepts such as fairness and equity.

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