

# Summarised inspection findings

**Kemnay Primary School Nursery Class**

Aberdeenshire Council

26 November 2024

## Key contextual information

Kemnay Nursery Class is based within Kemnay Primary School, in Aberdeenshire. There is a large playroom, with access to an outdoor space and the school playground. The nursery offers 1140 hours, between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm for 50 weeks per year. Children can attend from age 2 years to those not yet attending primary school. At present, the nursery does not have any 2-year-old children registered. There are currently 39 children registered, with a maximum of 24 children at any one time.

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery and has delegated the strategic leadership to the deputy headteacher. There is a senior early years practitioner (SEYP) who is the registered manager for the nursery. There is one lead early years practitioner and seven early years practitioners. The nursery has a modern apprentice and a support worker who both started very recently.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

**satisfactory**

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- Senior leaders and practitioners reviewed the vision, values and aims of the nursery in 2022. Staff, children and families collaborated well to create the SHINE values, where children are safe, happy, inquisitive, nurtured and enthusiastic. Senior leaders plan to review the values, to bring them closer in line to the recently developed school values. Staff should ensure new values are effective, relevant and meaningful. They should support all children to understand these values and embed them fully in practice.
- The SEYP leads the nursery well. She has a clear vision for meaningful changes to ensure better outcomes for children. She has established positive relationships with practitioners, children and their families. The SEYP knows and understands the local community well and strives to ensure children and families are fully supported.
- The SEYP understands the impact of staff professional development on outcomes for children and strongly promotes this across the nursery team. This includes professional learning to teach children how to use woodwork safely and effectively. Children confidently use real tools to create their own models as a result of this work. A minority of practitioners have leadership roles, which include developing language communication, leading on Gaelic, outdoor learning and block play. Practitioners should all now begin to focus on areas for improvement across the nursery in line with the nursery improvement plan. This will help them to take forward improvement priorities relating to planning, tracking and monitoring. This will help to enhance learning opportunities for all children.
- Senior leaders and practitioners engage with clear quality assurance processes to ensure systems are effectively monitored. Senior leaders distribute quality assurance tasks between all practitioners to share the responsibility and promote leadership roles. This includes, for

example, accident and incident audits. All staff are involved in this process to help them identify areas which may not be safe and may need re-planning. This is supporting all staff to consider the nursery environment more widely. Senior leaders and practitioners use self-evaluation to support their improvement journey and have identified areas to develop further. For example, they recognise the need to improve the quality of observations, partnerships and family engagement.

- The headteacher, depute headteacher and SEYP should now work together regularly as a leadership team to drive forward the strategic vision and direct the pace of change more effectively. They need to reflect critically on practice across the nursery and have a more focused approach on nursery improvements. This will increase the pace of improvements and have a positive impact on children's progress and outcomes.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

**satisfactory**

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 have created a warm and caring atmosphere for all children. Together they have developed positive, respectful relationships with children. All children are happy and almost all settle quickly by engaging in familiar routines. Practitioners use appropriate strategies to encourage positive behaviour, including the use of visuals. This supports children to follow routines and understand what is happening next in their day. Practitioners recognise skilfully when they need to intervene and when to offer children support to regulate their emotions.
- A few practitioners are highly skilled in supporting children to be fully engaged in their learning. For example, children confidently and safely use real-life tools to create their own designs. As a result, all children successfully created objects to sell in their nursery shop. Children feel successful and proud of their work. Children currently have limited opportunities to use digital technology. All practitioners should plan more effective use of digital technologies, to provide rich experiences.
- Practitioners have created inviting areas of the nursery using loose parts and open-ended materials. Practitioners should develop this further to promote children's creativity and curiosity. Most children engage well in their play and explore confidently all areas of the nursery. However, the playroom can be noisy and offer little opportunity for children to engage in play in a quiet space. Practitioners should now develop the environment further to provide opportunities for children to sustain play in a relaxed and calm atmosphere.
- Most practitioners listen well to children and are sensitive in their interactions. A minority of practitioners are skilled in asking open-ended questions and extending children's learning with appropriate questioning. As planned, all practitioners should continue to develop high quality interactions and questioning techniques with all children throughout their nursery sessions. This should support children to make links in their learning and lead to better outcomes. A few practitioners sing nursery rhymes and songs. Children are highly engaged and interested in participating in singing. A few practitioners talk and sing to children in Gaelic and environmental print is beginning to support this, for example, numbers written in Gaelic. This is helping children to enjoy learning and practising language.
- All practitioners record observations of children's learning using an online platform which is shared with parents. A minority of practitioners record children's learning and skills, and enjoyment of activities. All practitioners should now ensure they capture children's significant learning and identify appropriate next steps.
- Senior leaders and practitioners track literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, as well as developmental milestones. They review these termly and use them to plan individual targets for children. Children have individual targets to support them to make progress in their learning.

Practitioners plan well using both intentional and responsive planning approaches. Practitioners listen well to children's voice to lead the learning. They involve all children in creating floor books to record their ideas. Practitioners should now consider how their observations and their interactions with children influence the planning of learning. This will ensure all children are suitably challenged and given the correct support when needed to develop their learning and skills.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners have created a well-resourced environment both indoors and outdoors, to sustain children's interests. However, to promote children's independence, curiosity and creativity, the environment should allow children to be imaginative and inspired through a variety of provocations. Further developing loose parts and open-ended resources would support children's imagination and creativeness.
- Practitioners use children's interests to be responsive in their planning and use relevant contexts to sustain children's engagement. Senior leaders and practitioners need to develop planning further to support breadth and depth of the curriculum. This should enable children to deepen their learning and make progress across the curriculum.
- Senior leaders and practitioners have successfully transitioned children into nursery this year through a new approach of inviting children in during the summer holidays. This has supported children to become familiar with the environment, other children and practitioners. Children have been more settled when starting their nursery journey as a result. Senior leaders could now explore ways for practitioners to work together across early level to support transition from nursery into P1.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners welcome families warmly as they drop off and collect their children at nursery. Practitioners know families very well and share positive information in a friendly manner. They encourage parents to join their children for walks, picnics and outings in the local community. Practitioners should continue to invite families into the nursery and as planned, organise further stay and play sessions to promote families to be involved in their child's learning.
- Senior leaders communicate effectively with families using an online learning journey platform, weekly newsletters, a social media platform and the nursery notice board. Practitioners regularly update children's online learning profiles to share current learning at nursery. This is enhanced with twice yearly parent meetings, informal meetings and emails. At times, parents contribute to the learning journals by liking and commenting on their child's individual learning journal. Senior leaders and practitioners could further extend this by encouraging parents to share learning from home.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

- 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.

### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

**satisfactory**

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Children benefit from caring, nurturing and respectful relationships with practitioners. Most children are confident to ask for support when they require it. Children begin their day by identifying their feelings using their 'cookies' with emotions from a story they have been reading. Practitioners are sensitive and offer support to those who need it. Children are beginning to learn visual communication symbols to be able to communicate effectively with others.
- As snack helpers, children are fully involved in preparing fruit and vegetables to eat for their snack, which affords them the opportunity to be independent. Children eat their lunch in the playroom, in two separate sittings. Practitioners should review this experience to ensure children enjoy their lunch in a calm and relaxed atmosphere. Furthermore, having a practitioner sitting at the table role modelling table manners and polite conversations would enhance children's experiences and skills. Children need more opportunities to develop their leadership roles across the nursery. This will allow them to be responsible, develop their own skills and have ownership of their nursery.
- Practitioners promote the national wellbeing indicators using wellbeing buddies. Children have been learning about Safe Stella and Healthy Henry. They are beginning to use these in their play when relevant, for example, at the woodwork bench. Practitioners have not yet developed children's understanding of their rights. Senior leaders have identified children's rights should be explicitly shared with children to support their understanding. This will help children's rights to be embedded into practice.
- Practitioners are aware of their statutory duties. They understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe and supporting their wellbeing needs. Staff should ensure children's support plans have more detail and specific targets. This will support senior leaders and practitioners to measure the impact of interventions and ensure children are making appropriate progress.
- Practitioners have developed positive relationships with partners, which include health services. This ensures relevant information is shared appropriately. Practitioners should now look at ways to evaluate the impact of these supports and interventions.
- Children celebrate a variety of diverse cultures such as Chinese New Year and National Unicorn Day. This supports children's understanding of the world. Practitioners should continue to offer a wide range of experiences and opportunities to support children to value diversity.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

**satisfactory**

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 make satisfactory progress in early language and communication. A minority of children engage in listening to stories and independently access a range of books. Staff encourage all children to choose and vote on their favourite books to listen to. A majority of children enjoy mark making in a few areas of the nursery. Children engage in real life experiences including creating a shopping list to buy ingredients from the shop to bake cakes. Children confidently sing familiar rhymes spontaneously to each other. Children need more opportunities for mark making across the indoor and outdoor environment to develop their skills.
- Almost all children make satisfactory progress in early numeracy and mathematics. A few children count and successfully subitise during their play. A minority of children recognise shapes and productively draw their own shapes on the smartboard. Children measure volume in the water tray and use mathematical language accurately, such as full and empty. Children problem solve successfully using block play to create their own structures. Staff should provide children with more opportunities to develop their numeracy through a numeracy rich environment. Increased provocations may help children develop their mathematical skills.
- Almost all children make good progress in health and wellbeing. Children are beginning to understand the wellbeing indicators, using home link nursery bears; 'Rainbow' and 'Pickle'. Children talk about the bears being active while playing in the park. Practitioners use the wellbeing characters, including Safe Stella, to support children to be safe when learning new routines and introducing the nursery environment. Children relate well to what they do and how to keep themselves safe. Most children run, climb, and chase each other confidently in the outdoor environment. Children are aware of the importance of maintaining good hygiene practices, such as hand washing after cleaning their noses.
- Children make satisfactory progress over time. All children have opportunities to be a snack helper, and a few children have specific leadership roles as part of their daily routines. A few children are beginning to use signed communication to express their needs with others. Practitioners should consider how to support children individually to ensure there is enough challenge and progression in their learning. For example, a few children are already meeting their developmental milestones and would benefit from experiences and opportunities to extend their learning.

- Practitioners recognise and celebrate children's achievements in the nursery. They capture and celebrate children's achievements from out with the nursery using the SHINE wall to display highlights from home. For example, attending dance classes, gymnastic classes, and raising money for charity. This helps children to be proud of their achievements.
- Senior leaders and practitioners have a focus on creating an inclusive ethos and reducing barriers for children and their families. They recognise that the current cost of living crisis may impact families. They offer support through providing free food and clothing to all as required. They could develop these approaches further to ensure this is discreet, individualised and meaningful to the children and families attending the nursery.

## 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.