

Summarised inspection findings

St Charles' Primary School Early Learning Childcare Class

Renfrewshire Council

10 March 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

St Charles' Early Learning Childcare Class (ELCC) is situated in a residential area in Paisley. The ELCC is registered to offer a maximum of 50 early learning and childcare places at any one time. Ten places are for children under three. Children attend nursery from the age of two until they begin primary school. There are currently 48 children who are three to five and six children under three years of age on the roll. Two playrooms connect to a large outdoor area. A third playroom is the base for children aged under three and opens into a small outdoor area. The deputy headteacher has overall responsibility for the leadership of the nursery. She is supported by a senior early learning and childcare officer who is full time in the nursery. They are supported by a local authority graduate part-time. There are a large team of early learning and childcare officers and early years support workers. There have been significant changes to staffing and leadership of the nursery over the last year.

Curriculum	satisfactory
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	

■ Across the playrooms and outdoor areas, staff offer a range of engaging learning experiences for children. Children enjoy these activities and sustain their interest for the majority of the session. Over the course of the week, children come together for physical education, yoga and drama. Staff provide children with regular high quality learning experiences in the local forest. Children also have a few opportunities to learn in the local community. Staff should provide children with learning across all curricular areas. For example, children should experience more opportunities to learn about science, sustainability, music and social subjects. Senior leaders should now work with parents, children and staff in the primary school to develop a clear purpose for what they are trying to achieve with their curriculum. Staff should collaborate to develop a high-quality curriculum that ensures all children receive their entitlement to a broad, balanced curriculum.

■ Staff link a few planned experiences to CfE and have taken positive steps to be more responsive to children's needs and interests. However, there is a need to ensure that staff plan

for progression in children's learning across the playrooms and outdoors. Staff should ensure all children are able to build on their previous learning. Staff gather information on children's progress a few times across the term completing children's learning journals and staff records of progress. This supports staff to clearly identify children's progress and informs subsequent planning. This now needs to be conducted more regularly and with a clearer focus on observations of individual children's learning in a more systematic way. Senior leaders and staff should now increase the focus on children's progression in learning across all curricular areas.

- Staff value highly information from parents about children's individual interests, personalities and experiences. They record these in children's learning journals. Staff successfully involve parents and grandparents in suggesting and delivering experiences for children. A few parents enjoy spending time in the playroom as they read stories to children in their own language. Staff involve partners in the community such as the fire service and the local library. Senior leaders should now support staff to develop greater confidence in this working with partners to enrich the curriculum offer. Stronger partnerships with parents and the community will further enhance the curriculum and children's learning.
- Staff carefully gather significant information from parents through home visits to support children as they start nursery. They ensure they share information about children's progress in nursery with colleagues and teachers in local primary schools. As a key part of transition, the team now needs to improve continuity in learning and how children progress in their learning experiences across the early level. They need to ensure children build on prior learning as they progress through their ELC experiences and move into primary school.
- Across the nursery, staff encourage children to be independent. For example, in the woodland children identify risks and mark these with signs. These experiences support children well to develop leadership skills, organisation skills, and confidence. However, there needs to be a clearer focus on developing children's skills in a planned and progressive way across the nursery. Staff should ensure that they record more effectively how learning experiences are developing a wide range of skills across curriculum areas.
- Staff provide young children in the two to three room with access to experiences both indoors and outside their playroom. Staff now need to develop a curriculum appropriate for younger children with a stronger focus on language development and sensory play bespoke to individual children's development needs. Staff should plan with parents how they can be more involved to influence and implement this curriculum. They should also strengthen daily communication between staff and parents to meet all children's needs. To help transition from home, staff should work together to improve the environment further to make it more homely.

Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
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	

- A majority of staff understand and are committed to developing children's learning through play. Children are becoming increasingly independent as they make choices about what and where they will play. Children explore open-ended resources, such as loose parts in the garden and follow their interests in the forest. Staff should now build on this and allow children to follow their interests more in the playrooms. They should develop further the use of provocations to provide depth and challenge to learning. There are a number of lost opportunities for learning. For example, staff should encourage children to make their own paint and play dough and to decide when they are ready for snack. As the day progresses, there is not enough variety or challenge provided with a few children becoming disengaged. The staff team should make more effective use of the together time to provide more focussed learning for small groups of children.
- A majority of staff use questioning skilfully to support children to extend their thinking as they play. They intervene sensitively to help children who need support to regulate their emotions. Staff now need to build on this and develop a deeper understanding of how they can scaffold learning through well considered questioning and commentary. Most staff are sensitive to the needs of children who require additional support in their learning. They encourage them to interact positively with staff and each other. Staff listen to children and encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings. Children access the interactive board and tablets. Staff should now develop further children's skills in using digital technology.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified the need to improve their approaches to gathering, recording, and sharing information about each child's learning. Staff record observations of learning in children's personal learning folder. This now needs to focus more clearly on children's significant learning and progress. Staff should review and increase the frequency of

the observations they record to ensure that they are reflecting accurately the progress each child is making.

- Staff are aware of the need to develop further their approaches to planning for children's learning. They use floor books to help children to reflect on what they know and what they would like to find out about contexts for learning. Staff should continue to develop their approach to intentional planning to offer a broader range of high-quality experiences for all children, linked to CfE. In developing approaches to planning, staff should ensure that they plan learning to better meet the needs of individuals within the nursery.
- Staff are at the early stages of tracking children's progress. Staff use a local authority progression tool to record the progress children make in key areas of their development. Senior leaders now need to ensure that these judgments on progress are based on sound assessment evidence. Together, staff need to share and discuss the progress of individuals and identify how they can meet all their needs across the nursery regularly. They should ensure that the information gathered about children's progress is robust and accurate.
- In the under three room younger children have access to a playroom, gym hall, and outdoor area. They have large play equipment to help develop their physical skills. Staff interact well with children and comfort them effectively when needed. At times, staff focus well on the language needs of individuals in their play. However, this is not consistent across the playroom. Staff should increase the focus on learning and development in the under three room. They should continue to improve the quality of experiences for children across the day to support improved engagement. Staff need to improve the planning, tracking, and recording of children's progress. This should provide staff and parents with clearer information on the progress children are making and inform subsequent plans.

Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	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	

- Most staff foster positive relationships with children and families. Almost all children play well together and are developing developmentally appropriate awareness of others and friendships. All staff demonstrate and model the values of kindness, honesty and determination. Most children share resources and where required, staff support them well to understand the impact their actions have on others. Staff should now improve children's understanding of their own and other children's rights. This should include supporting children to feel heard and actively involved in decisions that affect them. Senior leaders should support staff in providing more calm, restorative spaces for opportunities for rest and relax.
- All staff make use of their knowledge of the local community to enhance children's wellbeing. Staff provide well planned experiences such as forest kindergarten, cookery club and yoga which promote children's physical health, emotional regulation and confidence. Staff should now work with children to increase their use of the language of wellbeing through everyday interactions, routines and real-life contexts. They should expand on using books and other resources to increase children's daily opportunities to talk about their emotions and share how they are feeling.
- Almost all children engage well in baking, cooking and snack preparation, showing enthusiasm and engagement in real life experiences. Children's lunchtime experiences would benefit from greater opportunities for independence and choice.
- All staff provide home visits which provide a valuable opportunity to build trusting, respectful relationships with new families. Parents shape their child's wellbeing targets, ensuring these

are meaningful and personalised. Staff work with parents to review and progress these targets. Senior leaders should provide staff with opportunities to share and discuss individual targets more consistently to ensure a coherent approach to supporting all children.

- Staff are aware of their statutory duties relating to ELC. They understand their responsibility in keeping children safe and the necessary procedures to follow when concerns arise. Staff should consider carefully how they support children to access snack and water across the day to suit their age and stage of development. All children have an individual personalised plan containing key information on children's health, care, and development needs. Most staff support children who face barriers to their learning effectively. In doing this, children are included well in the life of the nursery.
- Senior leaders monitor attendance at nursery effectively. Staff use the school system to report and follow up on absence. Senior leaders make direct contact with families or emergency contacts when children do not come to nursery as expected. This ensures children are safe and encourages parents to maximise time for their child to learn and benefit from nursery.
- Staff demonstrate positive, nurturing relationships with children and promote inclusion. Staff should now review and develop their approaches to promoting and supporting diversity through a wider range of resources and experiences. They should help children to gain a greater understanding of the diverse world in which they live.
- Staff show positive nurturing relationships to children in the under three room. They respond sensitively to their emotional and physical needs. Children are happy and safe in their environment. To help staff focus on developing the wellbeing and learning needs of individuals, staff should develop targets for children's wellbeing and development with parents.

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.