

Summarised inspection findings

Greenbrae School Nursery Class

Aberdeen City 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

Greenbrae Primary School Nursery Class is situated within Greenbrae School which sits on the north side of Bridge of Don, Aberdeen. Children attend from the age of three until they start primary school. The setting is registered for 40 children at any one time, and the current roll is 59. The nursery is open 46 weeks of the year. Children attend on a variety of part-time and full-time places. Children who attend afternoon places do not always receive their full entitlement to 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (ELC). This is parental choice. Almost all children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 7-10. The nursery comprises one large playroom, cloakroom area, and a small outdoor play space.

The senior leadership team consists of two acting headteachers who job share. They also share their substantive deputy headteacher post between them. There is a senior early years practitioner, a team of nine practitioners, including a modern apprentice. In the past year, the team has experienced issues with staffing. Recently, staffing has become more consistent.

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	

- The curriculum rationale has been designed as part of a whole school policy. It emphasises that children are respected as individuals, focusing on promoting wellbeing and learning as they develop skills for learning and life through play. Staff should continue to strengthen the rationale to ensure it reflects fully how high-quality play supports curiosity, creativity, and self-expression. The team has been improving learning spaces and strengthening their approaches to develop children's curiosity. They should continue to build on this work, to provide children with a wider range of relevant learning experiences. This should enable children to develop their knowledge and skills progressively across the curriculum.
- Children enjoy daily free-flow access to the outdoor learning space. Staff take children to wooded areas within the school grounds regularly. These experiences support children well to

learn within, and from, the natural environment. Children enjoy learning about nature and are developing their understanding of seasons and how they change over time. They develop well their safety awareness skills and are increasingly confident in identifying safe spaces to play. Staff should continue to strengthen the outdoor curriculum further to ensure all children develop a wider range of important skills as they learn in the outdoors.

- Increasingly, all staff are making use of progression pathways in literacy, numeracy and aspects of health and wellbeing. Staff also make effective use of developmental overviews. This is beginning to help them to build up a picture of children's learning across aspects of the curriculum. Staff now need to ensure the curriculum offers depth, challenge, and progression for all children.
- Staff implement a helpful transition programme that supports children as they start nursery, and when they move on to school. Current transition plans meet children's and families' needs well, helping children settle confidently and positively in new environments.
- Staff have positive relationships with a few partners such as the local library and care home. A few community visitors such as local police visit the nursery to enhance children's learning experiences. Staff should continue to extend the range of partners involved who can support the implementation of the curriculum. This should provide meaningful opportunities for children to develop their understanding of real-life contexts and help them make links to the world of work.
- Children have limited access to resources to develop their digital skills. Senior leaders and staff should increase resources and improve their use of local authority progression pathways. This should support children to develop digital skills more effectively, across the curriculum.

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	

- Relationships between staff and children and between children and each other is a strength of the nursery. This supports children to feel safe and confident to engage in play experiences. Children are kind and respectful to each other. They play together happily, showing care and consideration, often working cooperatively to extend their play. Staff know children well and engage positively with them as they play and explore. To strengthen children's engagement further, staff should review the number of transitions across the day. This will provide longer, uninterrupted play, supporting deeper and sustained engagement that extends learning. Staff should give particular attention to the flow of the day in the afternoon where a few children become disengaged.
- Staff encourage children to make choices, lead their play, and explore their interests. Children have access to a range of indoor and outdoor resources and spaces designed to develop their physical skills, sensory awareness, and creativity. They now need to build on this and continue to develop experiences and spaces further. Staff should ensure specific resources are available continuously, along with provocations, that offer challenge and enable children to sustain interest and deepen their learning.
- Increasingly, most staff use open-ended questions skilfully to build on children's ideas. Their interactions are becoming better timed and responsive to children's thoughts, ideas, and interests. Staff join children's play and are developing greater skill in extending learning through modelling and commenting. In the best practice, this supports higher levels of engagement from children.

- Staff observe children regularly and increasingly record meaningful moments of learning in children's individual learning journals. Overall, staff's comments within learning journals now need to be more evaluative, focusing on children's knowledge and skill development. This should help create a more consistent approach to identifying progress they are making and relevant next steps in learning. Staff should continue to support children to understand more fully how they are growing and developing as a learner.
- Staff plan for children's learning by responding to children's interests, play and ideas. They encourage children to share what they would like to learn. Staff now need to seek creative ways to involve children in influencing planning for their learning. Senior leaders, along with staff, should continue to review and streamline the planning process to ensure a balance of responsive and intentional planning. They should ensure that planning for children's learning, along with high quality interactions, experiences and spaces, enables all children to make the best possible progress.
- Staff complete individual developmental trackers for all children, and demonstrate clearly, children's holistic progress over time. This includes children's social development, movement skills, and emotional wellbeing. Newly introduced curriculum trackers are not yet fully embedded. Staff are still building confidence in using the new system. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to develop their understanding of learning across the curriculum and how children learn progressively. Opportunities to moderate will help staff to make accurate professional judgements on the progress children make as a result of their nursery experience.

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	
■ Staff create a calm and welcoming ethos where children are valued and respected as unique individuals with their own specific needs and personalities. They are beginning to raise children’s awareness of their rights and have created a charter that helps children link how rights relate to their lives. Staff recognise the importance of relationships and are positive role models for children. Children are respectful of each other and when minor conflicts arise, staff support each child sensitively. Most children demonstrate care and kindness for each other and take turns and share resources. Staff encourage children to share their emotions and feelings as they arrive at nursery. Children have the opportunity to discuss how they feel at the ‘emotion station’. Staff could make regular and more effective use of this station to enable children to talk about their wellbeing. To help children with this, staff should introduce the language of the wellbeing indicators. Children are aware of how to keep safe and risk assess situations. They demonstrate this well during visits to the wooded area. ■ Overall, children’s attendance is very good. Senior leaders monitor attendance and support as required to encourage good attendance at nursery. ■ Staff interact sensitively with children and include them fully in nursery experiences. Almost all children engage confidently with the range of nursery experiences, making choices about where they want to play. This can be indoors, outdoors or taking part in a woodland visit. Staff plan familiar experiences and spaces for children who require additional support with their learning. They should continue to ensure experiences and spaces are inviting and offer a wider range of sensory opportunities and resources to support children’s developmental stages.	

- Staff are aware of and meet their statutory duties in relation to ELC. They create informative personal plans collaboratively with parents as children join the setting. Staff observe children as they play and as part of this, identify when individual children require additional support with their learning. Staff work closely with parents and partners to offer children the right level of support to reduce barriers to their learning and development. They support children very well by creating clear plans with relevant targets, strategies, and experiences. Staff review these plans and strategies timeously with parents, and if relevant, support agencies.
- Senior leaders and staff know children and families well. They offer opportunities for them to be involved in the life of the nursery through stay and play sessions, parent meetings, and workshops. Staff encourage parents to share information about their culture and festivals that they celebrate to give all children a greater insight into the world in which they live. They should continue to broaden children's learning by providing a wider range of books, resources and experiences that gives children a greater awareness of diversity.

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.