

## **Item: 8**

**Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 6 September 2023.**

**Education Scotland – Inspection of Papdale Nursery.**

**Report by Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To advise of findings of the recent Education Scotland inspection of Papdale Nursery undertaken in May 2023.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is invited to note:

#### **2.1.**

That, in May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Papdale Nursery.

#### **2.2.**

That four key quality indicators from How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare are used in a standard inspection, with the evaluations of these quality indicators for Papdale Nursery as follows:

- 1.3 Leadership of Change – Good.
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment - Good.
- 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion - Good.
- 3.2 Securing Children’s Progress - Good.

The Committee is invited to scrutinise:

#### **2.3.**

The inspection report for Papdale Nursery, attached as at Appendix 1 to this report, issued by Education Scotland, together with next steps outlined in section 5 of this report, in order to obtain assurance.

### **3. Background**

#### **3.1.**

Although nurseries are regularly inspected by the Care Inspectorate, the regulator of care, this was the first full inspection of a nursery by an Education Scotland team since the COVID-19 pandemic. The new nursery manager had been in place since 26 September 2022.

### **3.2.**

For Papdale Nursery, the grades were as follows:

- Leadership of Change - Good.
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment - Good.
- Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion - Good.
- Securing Children's Progress - Good.

## **4. Summary of Inspection**

### **4.1.**

The inspection team found the following key strengths in the setting's work.

- The leadership of the manager who motivates all practitioners to continually improve their practice to ensure the best learning experiences for children. Improvements in the nursery take place at a pace which ensures they become part of daily practice.
- Practitioners who have developed positive relationships with children and families. They have made a nurturing, inclusive environment for children to successfully play and learn. This has led to happy, settled, and confident children who greatly enjoy their time at nursery.
- Practitioners who have a sound understanding of how children can learn through play. This has led to the creation of a rich, meaningful, enabling learning environment with high-quality experiences and opportunities.
- Strong partnership working with other professionals which leads to families being well supported by both nursery staff and other professionals.

### **4.2.**

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the manager and a representative from the Education Service.

- Further develop leadership roles for practitioners and children. This will effectively support the on-going and continuous improvement of the setting.
- Continue to develop approaches to learning, teaching, and assessment, including the way practitioners interact with children. This will help ensure that learning is at the appropriate level for all children.
- Continue to ensure that the progress of learning targets for all children, including those who require additional support, is clear and measurable. This will help to identify the interventions which make the biggest difference for children.

## **5. Summary and Next Steps**

### **5.1.**

Strengths will be built upon and any areas for improvement will be taken forward by the nursery as part of their improvement planning processes.

## **5.2.**

Local Authority officers from the early years team will continue to engage with the manager and practitioners to monitor and support the improvements identified.

## **6. Corporate Governance**

This report relates to the Council complying with governance and scrutiny and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

## **7. Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations to this report.

## **8. Legal Aspects**

There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

## **9. Contact Officers**

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## **10. Appendix**

Appendix 1: Education Scotland Inspection Report for Papdale Nursery.

# Summarised inspection findings

**Papdale Primary School Nursery Class**

Orkney Islands Council

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## Key contextual information

Papdale nursery is situated within the primary school. The setting has one large playroom and a large outdoor area. Children attend from the age of three until starting school. The setting is registered for 96 children at any one time. Currently, the roll is 96. Children access 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (ELC) and can attend the setting from 8:30 till 3:55 . All children have lunch within the setting. Children attend for the full session for 5 days or part-time. A manager, who has been in post for six months, has overall responsibility for the setting supported by a depute and two lead practitioners. There are also 16 full-time equivalent practitioners.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

good

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

- The nursery team reviewed the vision, values and aims during 2021 -2022. They consulted very well with a wide range of stakeholders ensuring that children's voice was well represented. The nursery team plan to review the vision, values and aims involving all stakeholders this year to ensure they are relevant. The management team are considering approaches to encourage and increase the consultation process more widely during this review. The nursery team should ensure that the unique aspects of the setting are captured and are presented in language that is accessible to all stakeholders.
- The manager encourages and supports practitioners to develop leadership skills by providing them with opportunities to lead improvements. For example, practitioners lead on aspects of pedagogy, communication and outdoors. Their leadership roles and professional learning support them well to improve the quality of children's learning experiences. This is having a positive impact on children's development. Practitioners are now ready to undertake increased responsibility for improving the nursery while building their confidence and expertise. Working in this way is sharing responsibility, building a strong coherent team and increasing capacity for improvement and change. Clear roles and responsibilities of the manager, depute and lead practitioner will help build this strong coherent team.
- Practitioners are reflective in their practice and routinely make changes in the nursery and then evaluate their effectiveness. For example, the lunch routine. The manager and depute ensure they have meaningful discussions with practitioners about their work. This has resulted in improvements in the environment and other aspects of the life and work of the nursery. Practitioners welcome and benefit from the professional learning provided by Orkney Council staff. For example, practitioners use this professional learning to develop high quality spaces for play and improve planning for children's maths and numeracy. Practitioners welcome and take up opportunities for professional learning to support ongoing improvement. They particularly benefitted from visiting other nursery provision in Orkney and the feedback they received from other visiting practitioners to their nursery. Recent professional learning on approaches to planning for children's learning and quality experiences outdoors has resulted in improvements to practice.

- The nursery team should continue developing their understanding of self-evaluation. This will support them to identify aspects for improvement through the use of self-evaluation frameworks. The current improvement plan contains appropriate priorities. Practitioners should continue to focus on these priorities to help ensure that the implementation of change is embedded and makes a difference for children and families. The pace of change needs to continue to be appropriate embedding fully identified areas of change.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

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

- The caring and encouraging ethos of the setting supports children well. Relationships between practitioners and children are nurturing and respectful. Children have formed positive relationships with each other and play well together. As a result, most children settle quickly and are happy, secure and enjoy their time at nursery.
- Practitioners work well to create a rich, stimulating indoor learning environment with a very good range of real-life and opened-ended materials and resources. This carefully designed environment enables children to lead their own learning and to access a wide range of high-quality experiences and opportunities. The outdoor environment offers an appropriate selection of resources and equipment, including opportunities for children to take part in risky play. Overall, children engage well as they make choices and follow their own interests across the setting. As planned, practitioners should continue to develop further the outdoor opportunities and experiences for children. This should include the everyday maintenance of some outdoor resources and equipment.
- Overall, practitioners demonstrate a good understanding of how children learn through play. They plan children's learning based on Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and other national guidance. Practitioners have recently reviewed their planning processes to include both child initiated and adult directed planning. A Weekly Planning Meeting supports practitioners to plan for children's needs and interests. Practitioners and senior leaders should continue to review planning processes to ensure all children make the best possible progress.
- Practitioners observe children during free play opportunities and short group times. As a result, they know and understand children well. Children's curiosity, creativity and inquiry is developed very well. However, there is scope for practitioners to develop further the quality of their interactions with children. Practitioners need to be more actively involved with children as they play and learn. They should use more commentary during interactions, as well as effective questioning and scaffolding techniques. This will support practitioners to more successfully extend and challenge children's learning and thinking.
- Children's Learning Journeys document their learning and development. These include observation notes and details of more significant learning. There is a need for practitioners to capture children's progress and achievements more clearly, using a more consistent and streamlined approach. Practitioners should include opportunities for children and parents to reflect on, discuss, and understand children's personal learning and achievements.
- Practitioners and senior leaders collaboratively track and monitor children's progress using key aspects of learning linked to the national benchmarks. This involves opportunities for moderation within and out with the setting. Practitioners and senior leaders should continue to work together to develop further this shared understanding. As a next step, senior leaders and

practitioners should gather and carefully analyse data relating to children’s progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This information should be used to influence their planning and interventions to secure the best possible outcomes for all children as learners.



## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Across the setting there is a shared understanding of early learning pedagogy and learning through play. Senior leaders and practitioners use CfE to plan stimulating learning experiences and opportunities. They are reflective in their approach and use national guidance Realising the Ambition: Being Me and other research well. This has led to the creation of a high-quality environment with a consistently broad and well-balanced range of core learning experiences and opportunities. Senior leaders and practitioners have correctly identified the need to look closely at the principles of curriculum design, with a particular focus on challenge and depth. There is also a need to look at progression in the key areas of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Collectively, this will help ensure the best possible outcomes for all children.
- Parents and carers have opportunities to visit the setting for informal Stay and Play Sessions. We discussed with senior leaders and practitioners how workshops could also be planned for children's learning and curricular areas. A transition programme is in place to support children's wellbeing as they transfer from nursery to P1. Information is shared verbally about children's progress, successes, and achievements. Children's Learning Journeys are shared with Primary 1 staff. Senior leaders and practitioners should now look towards creating individual transition reports detailing children's progress in the key curricular areas, successes, and wider achievements.

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

- Practitioners have strong positive relationships with parents. Parents are extremely positive about the support they and their children receive from the nursery. Practitioners work well with families and encourage a partnership approach to develop children's wellbeing and skills. Effective partnership work with agencies allows support to both the children and families to have a positive impact.
- Practitioners have established positive relationships and effective communication with parents. This keeps parents informed about their child's learning. This communication includes informal daily chats, access to physical learning journals, weekly blogs and more formal opportunities to discuss children's learning, progress and care. In the future the manager plans to provide an app which allows parents to instantly have information about their children's learning. Parents enjoy the 'Stay and Play' sessions which offer parents opportunities to spend time in the nursery, allowing them to observe how their children learn. The management team and practitioners ran informal events like the Christmas fayre which was well supported by parents. They are now planning events to strengthen further parental engagement. Parents have led helpful sessions in the nursery using their skills and experience.

## 2.1 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.

### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

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

- Senior leaders and staff have developed a strong sense of community and the wellbeing of children is paramount. They develop positive and nurturing relationships with children and their families. These relationships impact positively on children's wellbeing. All children are valued as individuals with their own personalities and needs. Practitioners take account of children's views well.
- Practitioners have a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators which are embedded in the nursery. Practitioners should continue to build on their practice to support children and parents to develop an awareness of the wellbeing indicators in meaningful ways. They should also continue to encourage the children to be aware of their rights by promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Practitioners value the views and opinions of children.
- Practitioners know each child and their personal circumstances very well. Parents speak very positively of their relationship with practitioners. These strong relationships allow practitioners to provide appropriate and sensitive support for children and their families at an early stage. Practitioners support children with barriers to their learning well. They promptly seek help from other professionals when required. Children and families benefit greatly from practitioners' positive partnership working with a wide range of professionals. Practitioners use the local authority staged intervention process to plan targeted support. All children have a care plan, which is reviewed regularly with parents to update and discuss next steps. The manager and the depute should continue as planned to review the care plans to ensure all plans are of a high standard. Children who require additional support have an individualised support plan, which outlines targets and strategies to meet their needs. Practitioners should ensure that the progress in meeting these targets is appropriately documented in order to robustly assess progress.
- Children and families benefit from the highly inclusive, nurturing and respectful ethos within the nursery. Practitioners are proactive in improving their skills in order to offer appropriate and relevant support when required to ensure every child is included fully in the life of the nursery. Practitioners teach children sign language in order that they can communicate better with all children. Learning experiences in the community support children to consider the needs of others. For example, children visit a local "memory" café to support adults with health needs. Practitioners should continue to explore how they can engage children and themselves in relevant learning about diversity and equality.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

good

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

- Most children make good progress in their communication and language development. Children engage in conversations with practitioners and peers. They listen well to instructions and are becoming increasingly confident in sharing their ideas and opinions. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories in the numerous cosy spaces created indoors and outdoors. They are developing their early writing skills through various mark making opportunities in real-life and play contexts. A few children can write their own name and other familiar words. Most children create detailed drawings and can form letters. During visits to the Secret Garden, children enjoy letter hunts and are beginning to identify letters and sounds. Children are learning to use simple sign language. As a result, most children are beginning to sign letters and simple words.
- Most children make good progress in their mathematics and numeracy through play. As they build and measure in the block play area, children are developing their understanding of shape and mathematical language well. In real-life and play contexts children count and order numbers to 10 and beyond. Children benefit from open-ended opportunities, allowing them to explore, investigate and solve problems. Children use the language of volume as they investigate water and sand both indoors and outdoors. Whilst using scales, a few children confidently compare and discuss weight. Children benefit from opportunities to develop their skills in using tally marks and interpreting information from simple graphs.
- In health and wellbeing children make good progress. Children play well together, take turns, and share resources. They have opportunities to discuss their feelings and emotions using stories and visuals. During snack and lunch times children make healthy food choices and develop their independence well as they self-serve. As identified by Senior leaders and practitioners, there is still a need to improve children's lunch experience and ensure it is relaxed and comfortable. To ensure children's play choices and experiences are not restricted, senior leaders and practitioners should review the daily routine.
- Senior leaders and practitioners collaboratively track and monitor children's progress. They should now create individual learning goals for all children. Involving children and parents in this will increase awareness of individual learning and progress.
- Practitioners use praise well to celebrate children's successes. Children take great pride in carrying out leadership roles in the nursery. Learning walls, floor books and learning journeys document children's learning and achievements at nursery. Opportunities should now be

created to recognise and celebrate children's wider achievements from home and beyond. This will help develop further children's talents and skills.

- An inclusive ethos is evident across the setting. Senior leaders and practitioners promote equity. They understand the unique cultural and socio-economic backgrounds of children and families, and value diversity.

## 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.