

Summarised inspection findings

St John Bosco Primary School and Nursery Class

Renfrewshire Council

23 April 2019

Key contextual information

St John Bosco nursery class is located within the shared campus for St John Bosco Primary and Bargarran Primary schools. It is a purpose built nursery, comprising a spacious entrance area; a large 'active' area; and three spacious playrooms, with access to a secure outdoor play area. The nursery is registered to provide early learning and childcare for a maximum of 20 children aged two to three years, and 80 children aged three to starting school.

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 highly effective deputy headteacher is responsible for the strategic management of the nursery. She works well with the skilled senior nursery officer, who is responsible for the day-to-day organisation and smooth running of the nursery. Together, they provide effective support and direction to the early years team. This support helps practitioners to be clear about their roles in the nursery. The deputy headteacher worked closely with practitioners and parents to create a vision, values and aims for the nursery. This captures their high expectations and reflects the importance placed on quality, learning, caring and fostering confidence and creativity in children. It also helps to lead the work of the nursery team and ensures they have a shared vision. Moving forward, there is scope to continue to share the values more fully with children in a meaningful way.
- Practitioners work well together as a team and share the vision of high expectations for all children. The priorities in the nursery focus on improving outcomes for children. Practitioners are clear about how the work they do contributes to the priorities within the school improvement plan. Collectively, they are committed to developing the service and are reflective in their work as they explore how they can make changes leading to improvement.
- Practitioners are enthusiastic about taking on leadership roles and are encouraged to use their skills and interests to start to develop identified areas in the nursery. As a result, practitioners are taking responsibility for areas including developing outdoor learning, literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. As these leadership roles develop further, they will start to impact positively on the learning provision in the nursery. There is a positive ethos of professionalism within the team. Practitioners are accessing additional accredited qualifications and ongoing professional development. They take part in professional dialogue and are keen to learn from each other.
- Led by the deputy headteacher, the nursery team have used 'How good is our early learning and childcare?' to evaluate aspects of the nursery provision. We discussed with the deputy headteacher how she can work with the team to build on this positive start and continue to embed the process of self-evaluation.

- Positive team work, together with clear direction from the depute headteacher, has resulted in good progress in creating an interesting and motivating learning environment for children. The team should continue to monitor carefully how children use different areas in the nursery, plan future changes and evaluate the impact. This will help to ensure they continue to make well planned changes that impact positively on outcomes for children.

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

- Children aged two to three years are relaxed within their playroom. They benefit from sensitive, caring relationships with practitioners, who give them the comfort and reassurance they need. The flexible and responsive routines allow practitioners to meet the needs of each child. Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible. Further consideration should now be given to build on existing provocations within the environment, to support younger children's need to explore and discover, inspiring curiosity.
- Overall, most children aged three to five are enthusiastic and engage well with the experiences available in the playrooms. They work together, engage in conversations and follow their interests. Children are motivated and concentrate for extended periods while using the woodwork bench and using loose parts to create structures. During the inspection, we observed individual learners leading their own learning effectively, building on previous knowledge and applying their skills in new contexts.
- Children make good use of digital technologies to support their learning and practitioners are consistently available for children to support their engagement with digital learning. They take time to support children to develop their understanding while using programmable toys. This is maximising the learning opportunities for children and enabling them to support the learning of their peers.
- Across both playrooms for children aged three to five years, there is evidence of a range of strategies being used by practitioners to support children's communication. In the best examples, clear language supports individual learners to extend their vocabulary and process information. There are positive examples of questioning and interactions helping to promote children's curiosity and inquiry throughout the playrooms. As planned, practitioners should continue working together, sharing their knowledge and developing their skills. This will lead to a greater consistency in the quality of interactions across the playrooms.
- Practitioners make frequent observations of children at play and can talk about the progress they make over time. They record a wide variety of information on children's experiences, including photographs, comments and examples of work in their scrapbooks. Children enjoy looking at the scrapbooks and can reflect on their experiences. Moving forward, children will benefit from more opportunities to use their scrapbooks to talk about their learning with practitioners and start to plan for what they would like to learn next.

- The team are using a variety of systems to support them in planning for and tracking children's development and learning. These include the use of developmental pathways, national benchmarks, mind maps, floorbooks and children's individual scrapbooks. In time, senior leaders should support practitioners to refine this process, towards a more streamlined approach that is mindful of bureaucracy. This will enable children and practitioners to more easily identify and build on progress across the key aspects of learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners provide strong, nurturing attachments for all children and support them to develop confidence as they play and learn in a safe and attractive environment. The routine and rhythm of the day within all playrooms minimises disruption to children's engagement and allows them time to develop and sustain their play. Practitioners place importance on developing children's skills, knowledge and attitudes within wellbeing, communication and numeracy. As a next step, developing a clear curriculum rationale will help practitioners to plan effectively taking account of children's needs and stages of development.
- The curriculum is based firmly on child-initiated play, and practitioners use national guidance and children's interests to plan appropriate learning experiences. Practitioners are responsive to children's interests and we observed play scenarios being developed over a few days in response to children's feedback. Children make choices from the range of high-quality resources available to them. As planned, practitioners should consider the flow within the learning environment and development of individual learning spaces further. This will help to maximise the potential of the playrooms.
- Free-flow access to the outdoor space enables children to make choices about where they want to play. They explore, investigate, develop physical skills and take part in planned experiences linked to prior learning. Visits to the local shopping centre and library help to extend the curriculum.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners welcome parents into the nursery and share valuable information about children, informally at the end of each session. Parents we spoke to during the inspection commented that they value this input and find it very informative. There is a wide variety of interesting information displayed around the entrance hall informing parents about children's experiences. Regular newsletters update them on what children are learning in the nursery and how they can help.
- The nursery provide 'song bags' and 'nurture packs' to help parents play and learn with their children at home. The nurture packs have been well received by parents and evaluations indicate that they find them helpful and encourage them to spend time playing with their child. To build on this, as planned, the nursery should continue to explore how they can involve parents in learning together with their children.
- Practitioners organise a variety of opportunities for parents to find out what their children are learning about in the nursery. These include 'join-in' sessions in the playroom; informative curriculum workshops; sharing children's scrapbooks and providing informative reports on children's progress and development at parents' nights.
- The active Parents Committee plays an important part in the life of the nursery. They support fundraising, help out at trips and by responding to questionnaires on matters relating to nursery events.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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

- The nurturing approach demonstrated by all practitioners is helping to develop positive relationships throughout the nursery. It is evident that practitioners know children and families well and these positive relationships help them to meet the needs of individual children effectively. This together with a strong focus on children's wellbeing is resulting in children who appear to feel safe, valued and happy in the nursery. Practitioners have a sound knowledge of the wellbeing indicators and work with children to help them understand the importance of keeping safe and healthy. Children talk about the importance of eating healthy foods, taking exercise and brushing their teeth. There is scope for practitioners to continue to develop children's understanding of the wellbeing indicators in a meaningful way. They would benefit from a focus on being respectful of nursery resources and opportunities to develop responsibility as they clear up areas in the playroom.
- Practitioners model positive behaviour in the nursery and use a set of appropriate child-friendly rules to help children understand how they should behave. As a result, most children behave well and demonstrate caring attitudes towards friends as they play together and share resources. Nurture is a priority in the nursery. The nurture training is supporting practitioners to have a clear understanding of children's behaviour and they support all children in a positive and caring way. Use of the nurture room, provision of nurture bags for families and using nurture kits with children is resulting in increasingly positive outcomes for all children. As planned, the nursery should continue to embed this work throughout the nursery.
- Practitioners are clear about their statutory duties and understand the importance of keeping children safe. They comply with legislation and ensure children's plans are in place and reviewed regularly. Practitioners undertake appropriate training to help them carry out their duties in providing quality early learning and childcare.
- There is an inclusive ethos within the nursery and all children and families are treated fairly and with respect. All children are welcomed into the nursery and supported to access all experiences. Practitioners take time to ensure children settle well in the nursery. They have an individualised approach for each child and work closely with parents to support the settling in process. Parents spoke very positively about home visits prior to the youngest children starting in the 'sunshine room'. They felt the visits were very beneficial to both children and themselves as parents.
- Practitioners identify children with barriers to learning and work with parents and other professionals to put in place strategies and supports to help children make progress. These include increased nursery hours and visual timetables. They maintain careful records of meetings and where necessary work with partners to create individual learning plans for children. Practitioners would benefit from sharing targets for identified children to ensure there is a clear and consistent approach to meeting children's identified needs.

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

- Within the playroom for children aged two to three years, children are supported sensitively by practitioners to become increasingly confident and resilient within their environment. The routine is predictable for children. As a consequence, they are making good progress in their learning. Practitioners use developmental milestones to support their understanding of how children are progressing in their learning. Children enjoy stories and singing as they develop their listening and turn-taking skills. During the inspection week, we observed children developing independence as they enjoyed their snack, washed their hands and made play choices. Early numeracy skills are naturally encouraged through daily routines. There are opportunities for older children to visit the playroom for younger children to join in play and offer positive language models. There is scope to develop this good practice further.
- Within the playroom for children aged three to five years, most children are making good progress within literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The real-life opportunities which have naturally evolved as a result of the transition to the new building, have been, and continue to be, fully utilised by practitioners. Children are benefiting from the opportunity to reflect using photographs to support their understanding of the passage of time in transitioning from the old to the new building.
- Children demonstrate a good awareness of how they can take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. They show kindness towards others and enjoy being active outdoors. Children communicate with each other, demonstrating respect for others in their use of good manners. Observations highlight children who have good awareness of their own emotional literacy and attune to that of others. Opportunities exist for children to be supported to take on greater responsibilities within the environment including developing their awareness of, and confidence in, talking about rights.
- The majority of children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. They are developing their skills over time, in a manner which enables them to apply their knowledge in new contexts. The majority of children are able to use number within and beyond ten, measure, copy and continue patterns and weigh materials. The 'active area' is used effectively to create interdisciplinary learning opportunities in response to children's changing interests. During the inspection, we observed a few children using mathematical language with understanding during self-directed play. These children now need a greater element of challenge to help them make the progress they are capable of.

- We observed children being well supported by practitioners across a range of opportunities to develop their phonological awareness. During conversations, a few children were observed to use rich vocabulary within meaningful contexts. They now require a greater level of challenge. The majority of children are able to use writing for a purpose as they label resources, write their names and use writing during play. Moving forward, there is scope to consider how the book area might be further developed to encourage children's exploration of story making and experience of different forms of text.
- Children's achievements are celebrated well through praise and encouragement. In the playroom for children aged two to three years, some families contribute to the 'achievements tree' to reflect special moments for their child. Within the playroom for children aged three to five room, peer assessment is encouraged and children are enthusiastic about the 'golden ticket' award. Children receiving the award can explain why their peers selected their work. Children show an enthusiasm for technologies and engage with particular focus to create models using woodwork tools.
- Within the playroom for children aged three to five years, children are learning about the importance of looking after our world and take part in the eco committee. Moving forward, there is scope for children to be supported to develop leadership roles within the nursery.
- Across the setting, there is a supportive and inclusive ethos. Commendably, consideration has been given to ensure the quality of experience of children who attend for the whole day. Practitioners demonstrate a good awareness of relevant information in relation to the child's wider world, ensuring that potential barriers to learning are reduced. They draw on the expertise of colleagues to support them in accessing appropriate additional support, in particular for children who have a shared placement.

Choice of QI : 2.6 Transitions

- Quality of support for children and their families
- Collaborative planning and delivery
- Continuity and progression in learning

- Overall, transitions throughout the nursery are handled sensitively. The needs of children and families are taken into account to ensure it is a positive experience for everyone involved. Prior to the first child in a family starting nursery, the key worker and senior nursery officer visit the home and spend time getting to know the child and family. Starting nursery is well managed to help children and parents gain confidence and become familiar in the playroom. The process is flexible and responsive to the individual needs of children. Transition between playrooms is well managed and children are supported by familiar adults to ensure their needs are met. As a result, children cope very well with transitions in the nursery. We discussed with practitioners how they can explore providing additional opportunities for children of different ages to spend more time together in the nursery in shared spaces.
- There is enhanced transition for children with additional support needs. This is well managed and the nursery involve all relevant partners to ensure continuity for children and families.
- There are well established procedures in place for transition from nursery to P1, and care is given to supporting children who attended a different nursery. This helps to support all children to become familiar with the school and meet children prior to starting primary one. Positive relationships between practitioners and P1 teachers support the transition process and the sharing of relevant information helps to make the transition effective for children. The addition of a practitioner who works between the nursery and primary school adds genuine value to the transition process. Parents are involved in the transition process. They attend workshops to find out important information about what their children need for school and how they can support their children during this time.
- Practitioners and early years primary teachers are enthusiastic about working together to continue to develop a shared understanding of early learning pedagogy. This will help to provide greater continuity in children's learning across the early level. There is scope for the school to continue to develop the transition process and we discussed possible initiatives that they could explore.

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.