

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26 JUNE 2024

REPORT ON: EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMI) INSPECTION OF ST NINIAN'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 194-2024

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report on the findings of the Education Scotland (HMI) inspection of St Ninian's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:
- i) notes the contents of this report; and
 - ii) instructs the Chief Education Officer to monitor progress towards meeting the areas for improvement outlined in the report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

- 4.1 St Ninian's RC Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland (HMI) in March 2024. This was a full model inspection, focused on four quality indicators. Education Scotland published a report of their findings on 14 May 2024.
- 4.2 At the time of the inspection 251 children were on the primary school roll. 8 children were in the 2-year-old room and 34 children in the 3- to 5-year-old room. Just over 70% of children who attend the school live in Scottish Index of Multi Deprivation (SIMD) areas 1 to 4. 83% of children are registered for free school meals. The school's Pupil Equity Fund allocation is £77,000.
- 4.3 The school's current Head Teacher and Depute Head have been in post for 12 years.
- 4.4 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:
- The headteacher and depute headteacher provide strong and highly effective leadership. Teachers are empowered to lead change and improvement across the school.
 - Across the school and nursery, children are making good progress in their learning. They benefit from high-quality learning and teaching and positive relationships with staff and each other. As a result, they are confident, happy and enjoy their learning.
 - Children are developing important leadership skills and have very good opportunities to be involved in decisions about their school. Children know that their views are valued. They understand children's rights and how these can improve their lives and the lives of other children.
 - Transition arrangements are strong and as a result, children are being well supported to build on their learning as they move into secondary school.
- 4.5 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the Head Teacher and a representative from Dundee City Council:
- Staff should continue to develop how they assess children's progress. This assessment information should be used to ensure all children attain and achieve as highly as possible.

- The senior leadership team should work more closely with leaders in the nursery. This will allow them to support further the nursery team and monitor the progress children are making.

4.6 Education Scotland (HMI) reports using a six-point scale for reporting performance:

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

4.7 Here are Education Scotland's (HMI) evaluations for this inspection:

Quality Indicator	St. Ninian's Primary
1.3 Leadership of change	Very Good
2.3 Learning, teaching, and assessment	Very Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and Inclusion	Very Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Very Good
Quality Indicator	St. Ninian's Nursery Class
1.3 Leadership of change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching, and assessment	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and Inclusion	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good

- 4.8 Appendix 1 provides a synopsis of the Summary of Inspection Findings and outlines key improvement activity to date. Appendix 2 includes the report issued to Parents/Carers.
- 4.9 As a result of the inspection findings, Education Scotland is confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Dundee City Council will inform parents and carers about the school's progress through St Ninian's RC Primary's annual School Improvement Report.
- 4.10 St Ninian's RC Primary School's Improvement Plans (2024/25 and beyond) will reflect Education Scotland's findings and recommendations from the Summarised Inspection Findings which are attached. Improvement Plans will be regularly reviewed, monitored, and evaluated in line with quality improvement procedures.
- 4.11 The relevant education officer and manager, reporting to the Chief Education Officer, will continue to monitor the school's progress and improvement in relation to the identified areas for improvement.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Council Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with its content.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

Audrey May
Executive Director
Children and Families Service

Paul Fleming
Head of Education, Learning and Inclusion
Children and Families Service

June 2024

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APPENDIX 1

Children and Families Service

Scrutiny Committee Report Summary Notes

Inspection and Reporting

Inspection Agency	HMI
Report Publication Date	14 th May 2024
Name of Establishment	St Ninian's Primary
Sector	Primary and Nursery
Name of Head Teacher	Mrs Lisa MacPhail
Roll	251 primary children and 42 nursery children

Inspection Outcomes 2024

Quality Indicator	St. Ninian's Primary
1.3 Leadership of change	Very Good
2.3 Learning, teaching, and assessment	Very Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality, and Inclusion	Very Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Very Good
Quality Indicator	St. Ninian's Nursery Class
1.3 Leadership of change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching, and assessment	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality, and Inclusion	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good

The report uses the following word scale:

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

Inspection Outcomes March 2024

Key Strengths

- The Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher provide strong and highly effective leadership.
- Teachers are empowered to lead change and improvement across the school.
- Across the school and nursery, children are making good progress in their learning.
- Children benefit from high quality learning and teaching and positive relationships with staff and each other. As a result, they are confident, happy and enjoy their learning.
- Children are developing important leadership skills and have very good opportunities to be involved in decisions about their school. Children know their views are valued. They understand children's rights and how these can improve their lives and the lives of other children.
- Transition arrangements are strong and as a result, children are being well supported to build on their learning as they move into secondary school.

Areas for Improvement

- Staff should continue to develop how they assess children's progress. This assessment information should be used to ensure all children attain and achieve as highly as possible.
- The senior leadership team should work more closely with leaders in the nursery. This will allow them to support further the nursery team and monitor the progress children are making.

Synopsis – Summary of Inspection Findings

Following publication of the inspection report and Summarised Inspection Findings, the School's next Improvement Plan 2024/25 will reflect the recommendations identified by HMI and provide a clear strategic focus for related school improvement.

The Summarised Inspection Findings highlighted the following strengths and areas for improvement within each of the quality indicators.

Leadership of Change – strengths (SCHOOL)

- The senior leadership team provide strong and effective leadership. They have created a very positive and supportive ethos in which children, staff and families feel valued. The headteacher and depute headteacher have a shared vision that ensures all children feel loved and respected. This vision permeates the work of the school. Staff and children demonstrate the school values in their interactions with each other.
- Staff are very reflective of their practice. Strong teamwork and dynamic leadership results in a proactive and positive staff team that are focused on improving the work of the school.
- Senior leaders and staff have a thorough understanding of the social, cultural and economic context of the school. They know children and families very well and have positive relationships with the school community. Staff use this information very effectively to ensure they are well informed about challenges that may impact on children's learning, attainment or wellbeing.
- Across the school, staff have high expectations of children. They ensure economic challenges do not present barriers to how well children attain and achieve.
- Almost all parents are extremely positive about the school. Parents appreciate the work of the school and the love and support provided by senior leaders and staff. Parents identify how staff

go above and beyond what is required to ensure all children feel valued and respected. They recognise the strong and visible leadership of the headteacher and depute headteacher.

- Staff across the school are highly committed to continuous professional development in order to improve outcomes for children.
- Across the school there is a strong focus on children's leadership and pupil participation

Leadership of Change – strengths (NURSERY)

- Practitioners reflect the school's vision and values effectively in their everyday interactions, practice and approaches with children and families. The nursery team use the values well to promote positive behaviour and support children to be nurturing, respectful and kind towards each other.
- The nursery team have developed positive relationships with each other. The Senior Early Years Practitioner has day to-day responsibility for the setting and is supported well by the nursery teacher. Together they spend time each day in the playrooms providing effective support to practitioners. Practitioners work well together and know that their skills and experience are valued by the senior leadership team.
- Practitioners demonstrate a professional approach to their work and are keen to continue to develop their knowledge and practice through ongoing study. Practitioners have leadership roles to take forward initiatives, which support improvements within the setting, and develop their skills.
- The headteacher and nursery team have developed an improvement plan that includes relevant improvement priorities.
- The team gather feedback from parents on a few aspects of the work of the nursery such as the availability of family learning activities.
- The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery. Together with the depute headteacher, she works with the nursery team to monitor practice. The headteacher meets regularly with nursery leaders to share information, discuss self-evaluation and improvement priorities.

Learning, teaching and assessment (SCHOOL)

- Children enjoy learning in a warm and caring environment. Almost all children display positive behaviour. All staff know children, their families and the community very well. Across the school, relationships are positive and nurturing. There is a strong work ethic across the school. Children understand the purpose of learning, respect staff, and are proud of their school.
- Children understand their rights as outlined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These feature in class lessons, assemblies and in displays around the school. Across all stages, children are eager learners and are motivated to do their best in tasks and activities across the curriculum. The focus on children's rights is supporting almost all children to display positive behaviour in their learning and play.
- Across the school, children benefit from consistently high-quality learning and teaching. At the outset of lessons, all staff use clear instructions to share the purpose of the learning.
- All teachers ensure children experience differentiated learning that is well matched to their needs. Children who need extra help with their learning are very well supported by teachers and support staff. This includes the provision of individual and small group learning activities that support children to improve reading, writing and numeracy skills.
- Staff have worked well together to improve learning environments across the school. Children have access to high quality resources and tools they need in their learning. Wall displays are used well to display prompts for learning and children's work.
- Children use a range of digital tools to support and enhance their learning. Across all classes, children use laptops and tablets regularly.

- Children at P1 learn through a well-considered approach to play pedagogy. Staff have a sound understanding of national practice guidance. They create purposeful learning environments that support children well to be curious and make independent choices.
- Teachers work very well together in the moderation of children's work. This includes sharing standards and expectations with their local cluster primary schools and designated secondary school.
- All staff know children very well and have a good understanding of the factors related to poverty in their local community. This is managed well and discreetly.

Learning, teaching and assessment (NURSERY)

- Children under three years enjoy warm, nurturing and positive relationships with adults who care for them well. Practitioners make effective use of space in the indoor and outdoor areas to motivate and engage children's interests. Children access resources independently and lead aspects of their own play.
- Children aged from three years to five years receive a warm welcome into the nursery class. Practitioners support them very well, know them as individuals and recognise their emotional and developmental needs. Children are happy, safe, secure and developing confidence.
- Practitioners make good use of conversation to find out about children's interests, ideas and prior knowledge. Children enjoy freely accessing the enclosed outdoor area. Children have opportunities to use digital technologies such as a smartboard and tablet computer.
- Practitioners regularly discuss individual children's development. This enables them to provide a range of learning experiences relevant to the needs of most children. Practitioners capture examples of children's experiences in learning journals.
- Practitioners use a variety of planning formats, including floor books, to plan and record children's learning. Staff engage in regular professional dialogue to discuss the progress children are making in their learning.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality, and inclusion (SCHOOL)

- Across the school, relationships between staff and children are very positive. The school values are evident in day-to-day practice. As a result, children are happy and confident. Almost all children behave well and are respectful to adults and each other. Children demonstrate care and support for each other.
- Staff are helping children very well to understand the wellbeing indicators. Children use a shared language when talking about their emotions and wellbeing. They talk confidently about the wellbeing indicators.
- Children have a very good understanding of their rights and how rights can help everyone across the school. Supported by the Rights Respecting School (RRS) group, children talk and refer to their rights in all aspects of their day-to-day activities.
- Senior leaders and staff are highly committed to helping children recognise and manage their own thoughts, emotions, and behaviours.
- Children are developing a very good understanding about what they need to do to keep healthy and safe.
- Senior leaders and staff are effective in providing individual interventions to support children's learning and wellbeing. Staff effectively use a clear process for identifying and supporting children who require support.
- Children who have additional support needs benefit from a wide range of targeted interventions.
- Support staff contribute very well to helping children learn and play successfully. Support staff have a very good understanding of the strengths and abilities of children, including issues that

may impact on their wellbeing. Across the school, children are encouraged to 'Strive for Five' to help all children and families understand the importance of maintaining good attendance.

- Staff have very good understanding of their responsibilities and statutory duties related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Approaches to child protection, safeguarding and meeting the additional support needs of learners are firmly embedded in legislation and national guidance such as Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).
- Children benefit from effective partnerships with other agencies and specialists. Partners speak very positively about how staff in the school engage with them to implement high quality support for children.
- Children are developing an understanding of diversity through class lessons and school assemblies.
- Senior leaders and staff ensure that all children feel included and respected. Staff have high expectations of all children in relation to their learning and behaviour. Senior leaders and staff have a good understanding that some children may face barriers to learning as a result of their social or economic status or additional support needs.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and Inclusion (NURSERY)

All practitioners have a strong focus on supporting children's wellbeing in the nursery. This ensures children experience a consistent, caring environment. Children are developing their understanding of the wellbeing indicators and most talk well about how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Practitioners treat children with respect and support their individual needs and preferences well. This is enabling children to develop self-awareness and make choices about their learning. Practitioners recognise the need for supportive transitions.

- Almost all parents are confident that their children are well supported in the nursery. Practitioners role model positive behaviour and work well together. Children are very well behaved. They show kindness and empathy towards each other and towards practitioners. Practitioners create a safe, nurturing environment where almost all children are settled and are developing their skills and confidence well. Children have a few opportunities to contribute to decisions when playing.
- All practitioners are very clear of their statutory duties and understand what they need to do to keep children safe. They take part in regular professional learning to develop their knowledge and receive regular updates to ensure they have current knowledge. Practitioners understand their roles and are clear about following procedures.
- Prior to children starting nursery, practitioners collect and record important information about each child. They use this information effectively to support them to meet the individual wellbeing needs of children. There are strong relationships with other agencies. Practitioners work closely with a range of partners to put in place strategies to support identified children to make progress.
- There is an inclusive ethos throughout the nursery. All children and families are treated with the highest levels of respect. Practitioners show a very good understanding of children and families' individual circumstances and support them very well. Practitioners continue to support children to understand diversity and challenge discrimination.

Raising attainment and achievement (SCHOOL)

- Most children in P1, P4 and P7 achieve expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in reading, writing and numeracy and mathematics. Almost all children achieve in listening and talking. Across literacy and numeracy, children's attainment is above or in line with the local authority and national measures. A few children are exceeding national expectations.
- Most children who receive additional support for their learning make good progress against their individual targets for learning. A minority are predicted to achieve nationally expected CfE levels.
- Overall, most children are making good progress from prior levels of attainment. A few children are making very good progress.
- Staff use a robust tracking system very effectively. They monitor the progress of individuals, groups and cohorts of children in literacy and numeracy. Where a dip in attainment has been identified, staff have been aware of this and responded appropriately. Senior leaders and teachers engage in meetings termly, to consider children's progress over time.
- Children's achievements are celebrated very well across the school. As planned, staff should now record and track the range of children's achievements both in and out of school and link these to skills development.
- Children contribute to the wider life of the school very well by being members of a variety of school leadership groups such as the Junior Leadership Team, The Health and Wellbeing Team, The ECO Group, School Ambassadors and as ICT Champions. As a result, they are active participants in their school and wider community.
- All staff have a very good understanding of the social, cultural and economic context of children and families. Staff fully understand the challenges affecting the school community. Staff provide free clubs, snacks, an in-school food bank, clothing bank, and work with partners to provide support for families. As a result, families and children have benefitted from a range of financial advice, resources, and opportunities for personal achievement.
- Senior leaders consult with staff, pupils, and the Parent Council about the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). PEF is used appropriately to provide very effective universal and targeted interventions.

SECURING CHILDREN'S PROGRESS (NURSERY)

- Children aged two to three years are making appropriate progress in their learning and development. They are growing in confidence as they explore the environment and make choices from the activities on offer.
- Children aged three to five years are making good progress in early language and communication. Almost all children interact well with adults and other children and communicate their thoughts clearly and with confidence.
- Children are progressing well in early numeracy and count with increasing confidence when playing. Children are developing good early mathematical skills through a wide range of available toys and resources.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing across the curriculum. They are developing good fine motor control and coordination through the range of experiences available.
- As a result of their nursery experience and from information gathered from learning journals, children are making good progress across all areas of the curriculum. Children with additional support needs are making appropriate progress in relation to their individual developmental stage.
- Practitioners highlight children's achievements using the 'wow' and learning walls, and children's personal learning journals. They also celebrate achievements in the setting through appropriate use of praise.
- Practitioners work well to develop a supportive and inclusive ethos that promotes equity. Senior leaders and practitioners should continue to make use of all data and information, including that relating to socio-economic backgrounds. This will help to plan appropriate interventions to meet the needs of individual children.

Key activity to date has included the following:

- The headteacher led a whole staff development session to ensure full understanding of the inspection findings, including strengths and identified areas for improvement.
- School staff continue with planned improvement activities for the remainder of this school session, as agreed by HM Inspectors.

Planning for School Improvement Plan session 2024/25 is underway.

SCHOOL PRIORITIES

- A review and refresh of a wider range of assessment to ensure transference of skills learned.
- Track wider achievements across the school.

NURSERY PRIORITIES

- Senior Leadership Team being more involved in self-evaluation activities with the nursery team.
- Ensuring children have greater responsibility within the playroom and outdoors.
- Ensuring more structured transitions around lunchtime and wraparound care.
- Developing early literacy and numeracy skills across the playroom and outdoors.
- Continuing to make use of data to support appropriate interventions.

Full details of the Summary of Inspection Findings are available at [Details | Find an inspection report | Find an inspection report | Inspection and review | Education Scotland](#)

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%

APPENDIX 2



14 May 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited St Ninian's Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

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

- The headteacher and depute headteacher provide strong and highly effective leadership. Teachers are empowered to lead change and improvement across the school.
- Across the school and nursery, children are making good progress in their learning. They benefit from high-quality learning and teaching and positive relationships with staff and each other. As a result, they are confident, happy and enjoy their learning.
- Children are developing important leadership skills and have very good opportunities to be involved in decisions about their school. Children know that their views are valued. They understand children's rights and how these can improve their lives and the lives of other children.
- Transition arrangements are strong and as a result, children are being well supported to build on their learning as they move into secondary school.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Dundee City Council.

- Staff should continue to develop how they assess children's progress. This assessment information should be used to ensure all children attain and achieve as highly as possible.
- The senior leadership team should work more closely with leaders in the nursery. This will allow them to support further the nursery team and monitor the progress children are making.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for St Ninian's Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
Leadership of change	very good
Learning, teaching and assessment	very good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	very good
Raising attainment and achievement	very good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Leadership of change	good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good
Securing children's progress	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[Details](#) | [Find an inspection report](#) | [Find an inspection report](#) | [Inspection and review](#) | [Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Dundee City Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Monica Reilly
HM Inspector

14 May 2024

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Monica Reilly
HM Inspector

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Summarised inspection findings

St Ninian's Primary School

Dundee City Council

14 May 2024

Key contextual information

St Ninian's Primary School is a Roman Catholic school in the Menzieshill area of Dundee. At the time of the inspection there were 251 children across nine classes. Just over 70% of children who attend the school live in Scottish Index of Multi Deprivation (SIMD) areas 1 to 4. 83% of pupils are registered for free school meals. The headteacher and depute headteacher have been in post for 12 years.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

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

- The senior leadership team provide strong and effective leadership. They have created a very positive and supportive ethos in which children, staff and families feel valued. The headteacher and depute headteacher have a shared vision that ensures all children feel loved and respected. This vision permeates the work of the school. Staff and children demonstrate the school values in their interactions with each other. In their 12 years in post, senior leaders have led changes and improvements very effectively. They have responded well to the ongoing changes in demographics such as an increase in the school roll and more children attending the school who have English as an additional language.
- Across the school, staff are very reflective of their practice. Strong teamwork and dynamic leadership results in a proactive and positive staff team that are focused on improving the work of the school. Senior leaders and staff use a range of information to identify appropriate priorities for improvement. These priorities are well considered and focus on improving outcomes for children.
- Senior leaders and staff have a thorough understanding of the social, cultural and economic context of the school. They know children and families very well and have positive relationships with the school community. Staff use this information very effectively to ensure they are well informed about challenges that may impact on children's learning, attainment or wellbeing. Across the school, staff have high expectations of children. They ensure economic challenges do not present barriers to how well children attain and achieve.
- Almost all parents are extremely positive about the school. They feel that the headteacher and staff have a clear vision for the school. Parents appreciate the work of the school and the love and support provided by senior leaders and staff. Parents identify how staff go above and beyond what is required to ensure all children feel valued and respected. They recognise the strong and visible leadership of the headteacher and depute headteacher. The views of parents contribute to driving change and improvements. For example, parents' views contributed to the development of the relationships policy. The senior leadership team are very responsive to parents' views and parents feel well informed about the work of the school.

- Staff across the school are highly committed to continuous professional development in order to improve outcomes for children. Ongoing professional dialogue, professional review meetings and strong teamwork creates a culture in which staff continually seek opportunities for change and improvement. Professional learning opportunities are appropriately matched to the needs of children in the school. For example, all staff participated in training related to trauma informed practice. As a result, staff have a greater understanding of the challenges faced by some of their children and families. Staff use their learning well to support and care for children.
- The senior leadership team have created a culture of leadership across the school. All teaching staff lead on key priorities linked to the school improvement plan. These areas of leadership are leading to improved outcomes for children. For example, recent work on pedagogy and the importance of developing a better understanding of the learner has resulted in high quality learning and teaching across the school. This culture of leadership results in highly motivated staff who understand that they have individual and team responsibility for improving outcomes.
- Staff have developed important and successful partnerships with local cluster primary schools and their designated secondary school. This highly effective collaborative working supports staff in St Ninian's to pilot initiatives and share practice with others. For example, the school has recently piloted new approaches to learning profiles for P7 pupils who are moving to secondary school. Staff in St Ninian's are proactive in participating and leading on initiatives across improvement partnership schools that support colleagues, such as sharing very good practice in their learning and teaching. These close working partnerships with other schools is leading to a motivated staff team who are enthusiastic about learning from colleagues and share their knowledge to benefit other schools.
- Across the school there is a strong focus on children's leadership and pupil participation. Staff provide children with regular opportunities to contribute their views and to be involved in school improvement and decision making. For example, information from children's surveys and children's focus groups were used to change approaches to the digital learning offer. Children participate very well in a wide range of improvement activities such as the Junior Leadership Team, Playground Problem Solvers and Rights Respecting Schools Team. They talk positively about the skills they are developing including problem solving, communication and organisational skills. Children discuss the impact of their decision-making such as the creation of the playground charter to support positive behaviour. Children have been involved in auditing the school environment in order to maximise learning. These leadership opportunities are helping children to realise their rights and understand that their views are important and valued across the school community.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Children enjoy learning in a warm and caring environment. Almost all children display positive behaviour. All staff know children, their families and the community very well. Across the school, relationships are positive and nurturing. There is a strong work ethic across the school. Children understand the purpose of learning, respect staff, and are proud of their school. School leaders and staff foster a learning culture where children know their voice is listened to and their views are valued and acted upon. A whole school commitment to children's rights is evident at all stages. Children learn and play in a calm and purposeful environment. As a result, they are motivated and enthusiastic learners. They are respectful to adults and their peers. Children are kind to each other and work well in pairs and groups. They play well in the school grounds where children of all ages socialise and play together.
- Children understand their rights as outlined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These feature in class lessons, assemblies and in displays around the school. Children recognise their role as rights ambassadors and their responsibility to respect and support their peers in their work and play. Across all stages, children are eager learners and are motivated to do their best in tasks and activities across the curriculum. The focus on children's rights is supporting almost all children to display positive behaviour in their learning and play.
- Across the school, children benefit from consistently high-quality learning and teaching. At the outset of lessons, all staff use clear instructions to share the purpose of the learning. In most lessons children are invited to outline the steps required to achieve success. Teachers use questioning very well to check understanding and promote reflection, curiosity and further exploration. School leaders, teachers and support staff have shared ambitions, standards and high expectations for children's learning. Everyone is encouraged and supported to do their best.
- All teachers ensure children experience differentiated learning that is well matched to their needs. Children who need extra help with their learning are very well supported by teachers and support staff. This includes the provision of individual and small group learning activities that support children to improve reading, writing and numeracy skills. Teachers also ensure high-attaining children receive appropriate challenge in their learning. The pace of lessons is managed appropriately by staff. They ensure children complete tasks within given timescales and present their work well. Most teachers use praise well to support children to improve their work further. They should continue to ensure written feedback provides children with a better balance of praise and next steps.
- Staff have worked well together to improve learning environments across the school. Classrooms have been decluttered, offering space for learning and play. Children have access to high quality resources and tools they need in their learning. Wall displays are used well to

display prompts for learning and children's work. Almost all staff use displays well in their teaching, for example in referencing school values.

- Children use a range of digital tools to support and enhance their learning. Across all classes children use laptops and tablets regularly. As children move through the school, they access digital platforms to find texts for reading for enjoyment and research. In a recent development, children have been introduced to virtual reality headsets to support motivation and creativity in their writing. Staff use digital screens effectively in lessons to provide instructions, share examples of work and provide video links to enhance lessons. Staff use a digital platform well to record children's work and achievements and to share learning and progress with parents.
- Children at P1 learn through a well-considered approach to play pedagogy. Staff have a sound understanding of national practice guidance. They create purposeful learning environments that support children well to be curious and make independent choices. Children reinforce and consolidate their learning in literacy and numeracy through quality interactions and use of open-ended materials. As a result, children are developing as engaged, motivated and independent learners.
- Senior leaders have adapted local authority learning pathways to support the planning, assessment and recording of learning and teaching across the curriculum. This electronic tool is used by all staff to plan learning each term. School leaders monitor these plans and discuss progress regularly in both informal ongoing discussions and timetabled tracking meetings. Increasingly, teachers work very well with each other to plan learning and teaching, share ideas and resources and evaluate their work. Experienced teachers support and mentor newly qualified teachers in planning and assessment. This supports consistency in whole school approaches to planning learning. School leaders have plans to review aspects of the curriculum and recognise the need to develop a framework to enhance planning across the year.
- Across the school, teachers use assessments effectively. This includes a range of standardised, commercial and teacher devised tools. Teachers store children's assessment tasks, clearly marked with success criteria and evaluation of children's work. This information is shared regularly with parents and appropriate members of staff. Staff use the information well to inform next steps and plan new learning. Teachers' plans outline clearly what is to be assessed. Moving forward, staff should continue to develop assessment approaches such as the nature, format and timing of assessment as an integral feature of planning. Teachers use data to identify gaps in children's learning and plan interventions and support. As identified, staff should continue to improve how assessment information is used to identify and address gaps in attainment.
- Teachers work very well together in the moderation of children's work. This includes sharing standards and expectations with their local cluster primary schools and designated secondary school. Teachers across the cluster have adopted a shared approach to recording children's progress across Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) second level. This supports improved understanding of children's achievements and learning needs during transition.
- All staff know children very well and have a good understanding of the factors related to poverty in their local community. Senior leaders and teachers plan a variety of interventions to support children who require help with their learning or wellbeing due to barriers to learning or factors related to poverty. This is managed well and discreetly.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Teachers plan learning using progressive pathways which are based on the experiences, outcomes, and principles of curriculum design. These are in place for all curriculum areas. Staff use them effectively to plan, highlight areas of assessment and evaluate learning and teaching. This helps teachers to ensure that children develop important, progressive skills as they move through the school. Teachers should ensure that as part of planning, they consider how children will apply their learning and what children will say, make or do to assess their learning.
- Staff have developed a progressive outdoor learning curriculum pathway, 'Love Outdoor Learning' This learning pathway builds on and develops children's prior learning. Approaches to outdoor learning promote teaching, learning and collaboration across all stages of the primary school. As planned, staff should continue to develop links from children's outdoor learning to their skills development. This should help children better understand the knowledge and skills they are developing through engaging in outdoor activities.
- Staff ensure all children receive their curriculum entitlement of two hours of quality physical education each week. Children across the school learn French from P1 to P7 and Spanish from P5 to P7. The teaching of modern languages is taught appropriately through a combination of discrete and integrated learning opportunities.
- Children benefit from regular Catholic religious education. Teachers make effective use of This Is Our Faith, the Scottish Catholic Education Service guidelines for religious education in catholic schools in Scotland. Children have very strong links to the local church and participate in religious observance through daily prayer, assemblies, and school and parish Masses. Children understand how putting faith into action can make a positive difference both in school and in the local community.
- Children enthusiastically borrow books from the library and take them home. The provision is supported by P7 children who take on leadership roles to support access to the library for children across the school. Children visit the school library regularly and make recommendations to others, highlighting books that they have read and enjoyed. This helps develop children as independent readers and enhances their reading skills at home and at school.
- Staff work with partners to enhance the curriculum and provide children with opportunities to develop skills for learning, life, and work. They plan a World of Work Week to encourage partners from a range of professions and vocations to attend school. Children experience talks and presentations on how knowledge and skills are developed and applied in the workplace.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The senior leadership team and staff have positive relationships with parents, carers and families. Parents are kept informed of school activities through newsletters, social media and an online application. They value contact from the school about their child's learning. Parents are kept up to date with the progress children are making through well attended open events and family learning activities such as stay and play. This helps them to understand teaching methods and increase their knowledge in the use of phonics, coaching and other aspects of school life.
- Parents value the buddy support system at P7/P1 and P6/P2. They feel this helps the transition process. They appreciate the enhanced transition opportunities for children facing challenges as they move to a new phase of learning.
- The Parent Council enjoys a positive working relationship with senior leaders. The headteacher shares priorities in the school improvement plan. Parents are active in organising fundraising events. They have worked with school staff to establish a foodbank and uniform donation bank. The Parent Council are aware of how Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is being used such as help with payment for trips, residential experiences and the purchase of laptops for class support. Staff should support the wider group of parents to have increased decision making as to how PEF is being used to support learning in school.

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

very good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's 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 every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Across the school, relationships between staff and children are very positive. The school values are evident in day-to-day practice. As a result, children are happy and confident. Children feel well supported by staff and they know that if they are worried, they can talk to adults in school. Almost all children behave well and are respectful to adults and each other. Children demonstrate care and support for each other.
- Staff are helping children very well to understand the wellbeing indicators. Children use a shared language when talking about their emotions and wellbeing. They talk confidently about the wellbeing indicators. For example, they know what it means to be safe, healthy and nurtured. Ongoing work in classes and assemblies helps children understand how they can use the wellbeing indicators to understand and improve their own wellbeing. Visual displays are increasing children's vocabulary and understanding.
- Children have a very good understanding of their rights and how rights can help everyone across the school. Supported by the Rights Respecting School (RRS) group, children talk and refer to their rights in all aspects of their day-to-day activities. Children and staff have developed 'rights scripts'. These are used to provide child friendly guidance about how each of the relevant rights should be used to create a supportive and inclusive ethos for everyone.
- Senior leaders and staff are highly committed to helping children recognise and manage their own thoughts, emotions and behaviours. Children are developing a very good understanding of events and circumstances that cause them to experience emotions such as being worried, angry or feeling anxious. Strategies to help children manage their feelings and behaviours are used and discussed consistently throughout the school. Staff use visual aids to prompt children to use a range of strategies to regulate how they are feeling. Children at P7 are trained to support younger children to adopt these strategies in the playground. Children talk confidently about how they are feeling and display respectful and positive behaviours.
- Children are developing a very good understanding about what they need to do to keep healthy and safe. For example, they know about the importance of different types of food to keep healthy and are aware of the harm caused by substance misuse. Learning and activities to develop children's health and safety are impacting positively on their wellbeing. Children have very good opportunities to develop physical fitness through a range of activities and sports such as dance, football and tennis. Outdoor learning is helping children understand about the benefits of being outdoors and the positive impact on their physical and mental wellbeing.
- Senior leaders and staff are effective in providing individual interventions to support children's learning and wellbeing. Staff use effectively a clear process for identifying and supporting children who require support. Teachers and senior leaders talk regularly about the support children receive in class. Support and interventions are discussed at planning meetings

involving staff, parents and partners. Teachers' interventions are well-planned, recorded and tracked through detailed Addressing Barriers to Learning (ABLE) plans. Children who have additional support needs benefit from a wide range of targeted interventions. For example, staff use specific resources to improve fluency in reading. Senior leaders and staff review support strategies to determine if they are leading to improved outcomes. As a result, children who face barriers to their learning make good progress.

- Support staff contribute very well to helping children learn and play successfully. Support staff have a very good understanding of the strengths and abilities of children, including issues that may impact on their wellbeing. They use professional learning opportunities well to support children. Support staff work in collaboration with teachers and senior leaders to improve attendance. The school has recently implemented approaches to tracking children who show deteriorations in attendance. The senior leadership team communicates with parents to remind them of the impact of absence on their child's learning. As a result, attendance has improved. Across the school, children are encouraged to 'Strive for Five' to help all children and families understand the importance of maintaining good attendance.
- Staff have very good understanding of their responsibilities and statutory duties related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Approaches to child protection, safeguarding and meeting the additional support needs of learners are firmly embedded in legislation and national guidance such as Getting it right for Every Child (GIRFEC).
- Children benefit from effective partnerships with other agencies and specialists. Senior leaders and staff work closely with health professionals and partners to support children's wellbeing. Partners speak very positively about how staff in the school engage with them to implement high quality support for children. This effective partnership work ensures the learning and wellbeing needs of children are very well met.
- Children are developing an understanding of diversity through class lessons and school assemblies. Children speak confidently about their identity and that this means everyone is different and unique. Across the school, staff and children recognise and respect different cultures, languages and religions.
- Senior leaders and staff ensure that all children feel included and respected. Staff have high expectations of all children in relation to their learning and behaviour. Senior leaders and staff have a good understanding that some children may face barriers to learning as a result of their social or economic status or additional support needs. They work hard with children, families and partners to ensure children can overcome these barriers and have every opportunity to attain and achieve.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Most children in P1, P4 and P7 achieve expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in reading, writing and numeracy and mathematics. Almost all children achieve in listening and talking. Across literacy and numeracy, children's attainment is above or in line with the local authority and national measures. A few children are exceeding national expectations.
- Most children who receive additional support for their learning make good progress against their individual targets for learning. A minority are predicted to achieve nationally expected CfE levels.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Across the school, most children are making good progress in literacy and English. By P7, a few children are making very good progress in reading and writing.

Listening and talking

- Across the school, most children listen well and speak with confidence in group and class activities. Children at early level enjoy exploring patterns and sounds and participate actively in rhyming stories and tasks. They follow simple instructions well and respond to questioning with confidence and enthusiasm. Children working towards first level are developing skills in engaging in small group discussions. They express their views well. They now need support to take turns and contribute at an appropriate time. In their eagerness to participate, they are not yet listening well to others. Most children working towards second level demonstrate effective skills in listening and talking. They have developed strategies to engage well with others, including building on the contribution of others by clarifying points or providing additional ideas and examples. They respond well to a range of literal and inferential questions and demonstrate understanding of spoken texts.

Reading

- Children at all stages enjoy reading a range of books and digital texts. Most children at early level use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read words. They use images in texts well to support their understanding. They are developing skills in using their growing knowledge of sight vocabulary to read aloud texts in books. Children working towards first level identify and locate key information in texts and make notes to organise their findings. They enjoy using information they have read to predict what happens next. When using digital tools, a few children at first level need support to select appropriate texts. Children working towards second level read with fluency, expression and understanding. They recognise techniques used to influence the reader, including choice of vocabulary and emotive language. They understand how to identify reliable sources when using digital platforms for research tasks.

Children across first and second level talk with confidence about books they have read. They identify preferred genres and authors and enjoy suggesting novels for their classmates to read.

Writing

- At early level, children are developing early writing skills. They use pencils and pens with increasing control and confidence. They attempt to spell and write familiar words correctly. Most write simple sentences independently using capital letters and full stops. Children working towards first level write regularly for a range of purposes. They present their writing in a clear and legible way. They are developing confidence in writing independently using accurate spelling and punctuation. For example, children recorded facts about Dundee landmarks and things to do during a visit. They enjoy writing book reviews to share with others. Children working towards second level practise a broad range of writing skills in their class work. Most write with fluency, using paragraphs to separate thoughts and ideas. They organise and present information in a logical way and use vocabulary and language well to engage the reader. They summarise information and use the facts gathered to present a clear report about climate change. Their love of reading is reflected in their imaginative writing through the creation of interesting characters.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making good progress from prior levels of attainment. A few children are making very good progress.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, almost all children add and subtract within 10 and a few children extend this within 20. They are developing their confidence in their mental calculation skills. Most children at first level demonstrate the value of each digit in a whole number with three digits. They are less confident working with 24-hour notation in time. Most children at second level accurately round whole numbers to the nearest 1000, 10,000 and 100,000. They understand the relationship between common fractions, decimal fractions, and percentages. They are developing their skills in applying this knowledge to solve word problems.

Shape, position and movement

- Almost all children at early level recognise and sort common three-dimensional (3D) objects according to various simple criteria. They are developing their mathematical vocabulary to describe two-dimensional shapes. Most children at first level describe 3D objects using appropriate mathematical language including face, edge and vertex. They are increasing in confidence at identifying lines of symmetry in pictures and patterns. Most children at second level use correct mathematical language including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex to describe and classify a range of angles. They are less confident in using the eight compass points and angles to describe and follow directions.

Information handling

- Most children at early level, use knowledge of colour, shape, and size to match and sort items into different sets. They are developing their skills in interpreting simple graphs and charts. They use tally marks confidently to record information. Children at first level extract key information from bar graphs. They should continue to develop skills in collating and presenting data from real life contexts. Children at second level accurately analyse and interpret data from bar graphs and line graphs. They are less confident in understanding and drawing conclusions from pie charts.

Attainment over time

- Staff use a robust tracking system very effectively. They monitor the progress of individuals, groups, and cohorts of children in literacy and numeracy. Where a dip in attainment has been identified, staff have been aware of this and responded appropriately. Senior leaders and teachers engage in meetings termly, to consider children's progress over time. They use these opportunities very well to evaluate the impact of interventions and plan further support. They have a clear focus on raising attainment. Staff have used the school tracking system to accurately identify support needs of children in writing. Teachers have employed a variety of interventions to raise attainment. For example, they have creatively used virtual reality headsets as a stimulus to promote engagement in writing with Primary 3 children. There are early signs of improvement in children's writing. Staff should continue to develop these approaches to raise attainment for individuals and cohorts across the curriculum.
- Children make positive progress in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) over time. Staff build children's knowledge and skills effectively. Children develop their inquiry and investigative skills as they engage and apply their knowledge in a range of STEM lessons. Staff should now extend tracking and monitoring approaches across all curricular areas to determine attainment and progress.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children's achievements are celebrated very well across the school. Children talk about their achievements at assemblies, receive star pupil certificates and green tokens for living the school values. Children's out of school achievements are celebrated and displayed on the 'Celebrating Success Board'. Children are encouraged to reflect on and discuss their achievements. As a result, they effectively and accurately articulate the skills they are developing. These approaches are helping to build children's self-belief and confidence in their abilities, skills, and achievements. Staff monitor participation in achievement opportunities and take action where children are at risk of missing out. As planned, staff should now record and track the range of children's achievements both in and out of school and link these to skills development.
- Children contribute to the wider life of the school very well by being members of a variety of school leadership groups such as the Junior Leadership Team, The Health and Wellbeing Team, The ECO group, School Ambassadors and as ICT Champions. Children develop self-confidence through taking on these duties to support the work and life of the school. This is helping them develop as confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens. The school has gained national accreditation for their work on children's rights and for their participation in sport. These awards help children understand the importance of being healthy and respecting themselves and others. As a result, they are active participants in their school and wider community.

Equity for all learners

- All staff have a very good understanding of the social, cultural and economic context of children and families. Staff fully understand the challenges affecting the school community. Staff have developed a cost of the school day action plan. This helpful plan sets out clear interventions and guidance for staff. It helps to minimise financial constraints that may prevent children from taking part in opportunities for learning and achievement. Staff provide free clubs, snacks, an in-school food bank, clothing bank, and work with partners to provide support for families. As a result, families and children have benefitted from a range of financial advice, resources, and opportunities for personal achievement.

- Senior leaders consult with staff, pupils, and the Parent Council about the use of PEF. PEF is used appropriately to provide very effective universal and targeted interventions. For example, PEF has been used for resources to support literacy and numeracy, including additional staff hours to provide supported study for pupils. Senior leaders should continue to develop approaches to monitoring the impact of initiatives on outcomes for children. This will help senior leaders to demonstrate more clearly how they are accelerating progress towards closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Practice worth sharing more widely

QI. 1.3 Partnership working within the local cluster of schools and the role of St Ninian's PS in leading within this cluster.

This is a strong example of schools working together to share effective practice. Staff in St Ninian's work collaboratively with their designated secondary school and cluster primary schools to ensure equity and continuity for learners in the locality and as they transition to secondary school.

- Staff and children in St Ninian's have led cluster schools in changing approaches to learning profiles for P7 pupils. These are used to support children to identify and share their learning and skills in preparation for transitioning to secondary school. This has impacted positively on engagement and inclusion as well as raising the profile and importance of a skills-based approach.
- Staff have been involved in national events to improve the teaching of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and implemented approaches across cluster schools.
- Staff have worked with other schools to ensure consistency of approach in meeting the needs of young carers and care experienced children.
- Staff have led and shared effective practice about pedagogy linked to high quality learning and teaching. This has also supported consistency of research driven approaches across school improvement partnership schools.

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.

Summarised inspection findings

St Ninian's Primary School Nursery Class

Dundee City Council

14 May 2024

Key contextual information

St Ninian's Primary School nursery class is located within the primary school building. The nursery class provides 1140 hours of early learning and childcare between the hours of 9.00am and 3:00pm during term time. The nursery is registered for 39 children aged three to those not yet attending school and 15 children aged two to three years. The current role is 42 children, including eight children under three years. The nursery also offers parents the opportunity to purchase care outwith the entitlement to 1140 hours of early learning and childcare. The headteacher has responsibility for the leadership of the nursery. She is supported by a senior early years practitioner (SEYP) and a nursery teacher. The nursery provision consists of two playrooms which each have direct access to outdoor play spaces. Practitioners and children also have access to other areas of the school such as the gym hall.

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

- Practitioners reflect the school's vision and values effectively in their everyday interactions, practice and approaches with children and families. The nursery team use the values well to promote positive behaviour and support children to be nurturing, respectful and kind towards each other. The senior leadership team have identified the need to make the nursery's vision and values more accessible to parents and are exploring ways to achieve this.
- The nursery team have developed positive relationships with each other. The SEYP has day to-day responsibility for the setting and is supported well by the nursery teacher. Together they spend time each day in the playrooms providing effective support to practitioners. Practitioners work well together and know that their skills and experience are valued by the senior leadership team.
- Practitioners demonstrate a professional approach to their work and are keen to continue to develop their knowledge and practise through ongoing study. Practitioners have leadership roles to take forward initiatives, which support improvements within the setting, and develop their skills. For example, practitioners lead areas such as outdoor learning and family learning experiences. Practitioners have visited other settings to learn from others. This is allowing them to identify and implement good practice. It will now be important to monitor and evaluate new developments to ensure maximum impact on learning.
- The headteacher and nursery team have developed an improvement plan that includes relevant improvement priorities. Senior leaders and practitioners accurately identified important improvements such as outdoor learning and support for children's wellbeing. The team follow a planned self-evaluation and monitoring process using national indicators of quality. They would benefit from the support of the senior leadership team to guide them further in their self-evaluation activities and to support the development of a quality assurance calendar.

- The team gather feedback from parents on a few aspects of the work of the nursery such as the availability of family learning activities. Senior leaders should now seek the views of parents on other aspects of the work of the nursery such as the quality of the curriculum and children's experiences.
- The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery. Together with the depute headteacher, she works with the nursery team to monitor practice. The headteacher meets regularly with nursery leaders to share information, discuss self-evaluation and improvement priorities. The headteacher should now work more closely with nursery staff. This will provide the senior leadership team with a clear overview of practice and allow them to provide appropriate, focused challenge and support.

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 under three years enjoy warm, nurturing and positive relationships with adults who care for them well. Practitioners make effective use of space in the indoor and outdoor areas to motivate and engage children's interests. Children access resources independently and lead aspects of their own play. Sensitive interactions support children to transition well from home to the playroom. Staff ensure children and their families are welcomed into the nursery. This helps children to settle and feel relaxed within the nursery.
- Children aged from three years to five years receive a warm welcome into the nursery class. Practitioners support them very well, know them as individuals and recognise their emotional and developmental needs. Children are happy, safe, secure and developing confidence. They are motivated, engaged and enthusiastic in their play and learning. Children are developing their independence and take responsibility for a few aspects of their learning. Children should now have more opportunities to take greater responsibility within the playroom and outdoors.
- Practitioners make good use of conversation to find out about children's interests, ideas and prior knowledge. They should continue to build their skills in extending children's thinking through a more consistent use of open-ended questions and commentary. Overall, children experience an appropriate balance of time between choosing activities and time spent in adult directed tasks. However, practitioners should review the organisation of lunchtimes as children spend too long before and after lunch in adult directed activities. Children enjoy freely accessing the enclosed outdoor area. Practitioners have correctly identified the need to improve planning for outdoor learning experiences. Children have opportunities to use digital technologies such as a smartboard and tablet computer. They should now have increased access to a range of digital technologies indoors and outdoors to support their learning.
- Practitioners regularly discuss individual children's development. This enables them to provide a range of learning experiences relevant to the needs of most children. Practitioners capture examples of children's experiences in learning journals. This includes photographs and comments. Practitioners should continue to develop their skills in observing and recording children's significant learning. This will improve further the quality of children's learning journals, help them make increasingly accurate judgements about the progress children are making and identify appropriate next steps in learning.
- Practitioners use a variety of planning formats including floorbooks to plan and record children's learning. They should build on this approach, ensuring they focus more clearly on developing children's voice. Practitioners have rightly identified the need to develop approaches to responsive planning. This should help them to take better account of children's interests in their planning. Staff engage in regular professional dialogue to discuss the progress

children are making in their learning. They monitor and track children's progress through their learning journals using local authority guidance. The SEYP and the nursery teacher track progress in learning using Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes. As a next step, practitioners should link observations in children's learning journals to CfE experiences and outcomes to aid this tracking process. It will also be useful for senior leaders and practitioners to link with other early years settings to compare approaches to recording and tracking children's learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Practitioners provide an early years curriculum based firmly on play. They have recently revised approaches to planning for children's learning taking greater account of national guidance. This will help practitioners plan more effectively for appropriate challenge for children. Practitioners are developing the learning environment to support children's literacy and numeracy skills. They should make further use of the national practice guidance to help them review their use of spaces to enhance learning opportunities. Practitioners should now ensure they plan for progression in learning across all curriculum areas.
- Practitioners make good use of the local community to enhance children's experiences. They organise useful cooking groups for parents and children at the local community hub. Regular visits are made to the library, parks and open spaces by practitioners and children to enhance learning. This is helping children to understand their environment and learn in a range of different contexts.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Practitioners have positive relationships with parents and value opportunities to engage with them. Practitioners facilitate learning events such as stay and play, cooking classes and messy play. These sessions raise awareness with families of how they can support their children's learning at home. Practitioners share information about children's learning and nursery developments through an online platform. As they welcome parents into the nursery, practitioners should consider how they can improve ways to share information through noticeboards and displays.
- Practitioners regularly share children's learning and experiences with parents through an online platform. Parents use this platform to comment on children's learning. A few parents provide examples of learning and achievements from home. Practitioners share a useful written summary of children's progress each term with parents.

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

- All practitioners have a strong focus on supporting children's wellbeing in the nursery. This ensures children experience a consistent, caring environment. Children are developing their understanding of the wellbeing indicators and most talk well about how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Practitioners treat children with respect and support their individual needs and preferences well. This is enabling children to develop self-awareness and make choices about their learning. Practitioners recognise the need for supportive transitions. A few children could be supported better when moving between key phases of the nursery day such as lunchtime and wraparound care.
- Almost all parents are confident that their children are well supported in the nursery. Practitioners role model positive behaviour and work well together. Children are very well behaved. They show kindness and empathy towards each other and towards practitioners. Practitioners create a safe, nurturing environment where almost all children are settled and are developing their skills and confidence well. Children have a few opportunities to contribute to decisions when playing. They would benefit from assuming leadership roles during snack and lunch times and when preparing for outdoor play by contributing to risk assessments. Senior leaders should consider how children can be enabled, at a developmentally appropriate stage, to have their views and ideas represented on school groups such as the eco committee.
- All practitioners are very clear of their statutory duties and understand what they need to do to keep children safe. They take part in regular professional learning to develop their knowledge and receive regular updates to ensure they have current knowledge. Practitioners understand their roles and are clear about following procedures.
- Prior to children starting nursery, practitioners collect and record important information about each child. They use this information effectively to support them to meet the individual wellbeing needs of children. There are strong relationships with other agencies. Practitioners work closely with a range of partners to put in place strategies to support identified children to make progress.
- There is an inclusive ethos throughout the nursery. All children and families are treated with the highest levels of respect. Practitioners show a very good understanding of children and families' individual circumstances and support them very well. Practitioners continue to support children to understand diversity and challenge discrimination. Practitioners should continue to develop the use of resources and toys to support children's understanding of the diverse world in which they live.

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

- Children aged two to three years are making appropriate progress in their learning and development. They are growing in confidence as they explore the environment and make choices from the activities on offer. Appropriately nurturing interactions from practitioners, including the use of songs and stories, is supporting children's early communication skills well. Children enjoy accessing the outdoor play space and tending seedlings they help cultivate. Their skills in physical development will be improved through access to a wider range of suitably challenging equipment.
- Children aged three to five years are making good progress in early language and communication. Almost all children interact well with adults and other children and communicate their thoughts clearly and with confidence. They listen with interest to stories in small groups and recount the events. Children should make improved use of non-fiction texts to support their play. Children develop knowledge of the language and layout of books well when visiting the local library. They show a keen interest in mark making and enjoy sharing their writing as they compose letters. Children should now continue to develop early literacy skills when playing at a wider range of contexts in the playroom and outdoors.
- Children are progressing well in early numeracy and count with increasing confidence when playing. Children are developing good early mathematical skills through a wide range of toys and resources available. They are learning about two-dimensional shapes as they play with construction toys and complete matching games. Children develop skills at using money when making purchases at the 'shoe shop'. A few children develop their understanding of simple graphs when organising information, detailing how they travel to nursery. Children use appropriate mathematical language as they compare the capacity of containers when playing with water. Children should continue to develop early numeracy and mathematical skills through real-life contexts and throughout the nursery.
- Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing across the curriculum. They are developing good fine motor control and coordination through the range of experiences available. Children enjoy climbing towers made from crates outdoors. However, the wheeled toys available do not always provide sufficient challenge. Children understand how to keep themselves safe when playing outdoors. They show familiarity with routines such as hand washing and dressing for outdoor play. They are developing their awareness of healthy lifestyles through the range of food offered during snacks and at lunchtime.

- As a result of their nursery experience and from information gathered from learning journals, children are making good progress across all areas of the curriculum. Children with additional support needs are making appropriate progress in relation to their individual developmental stage.
- Practitioners highlight children's achievements using the 'wow' and learning walls, and children's personal learning journals. They also celebrate achievements in the setting through appropriate use of praise. Practitioners should continue to explore ways to encourage parents to celebrate and share children's achievements, for example through learning journals.
- Practitioners work well to develop a supportive and inclusive ethos that promotes equity. Senior leaders and practitioners should continue to make use of all data and information, including that relating to socioeconomic backgrounds. This will help to plan appropriate interventions to meet the needs of individual children.

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.