



Aberdeen City Council

Progress Report following HMle Inspection of Broomhill School Nursery

9 January 2025

In March 2023, HM Inspectors published a letter following an inspection of Broomhill Primary School and Nursery Class. The letter set out several areas for improvement which were agreed with the school and Aberdeen City Council. HM Inspectors made a further visit to the school and nursery in January 2024 and published a letter on 23rd April 2024. In that letter HM Inspectors noted that the primary school had made positive progress since the original inspection, as a result they were confident that the primary school had capacity to continue to improve and so would make no more visits to the primary school in connection with this inspection. The letter noted that nursery class was beginning to make progress since the original inspection and that inspectors would ask for a report on progress from the local authority within one year of the inspection.

The Care Inspectorate inspected the nursery class at the same time (January 2024) and that report is available at www.careinspectorate.com

Area for improvement 1

Develop further approaches to learning, teaching and assessment across the nursery to ensure greater consistency in doing so it will be important for all staff to have a shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching.

How is the school doing? (What has improved since the last inspection?)

Supported by Senior Leaders, the staff team has continued to develop the revised approach to planning and assessing children's learning which had been implemented at the time of the return visit by HMle, and this is now firmly embedded in practice. All practitioners are consistently planning provocations and experiences which respond to children's interests and extend their opportunities for learning. A balance of responsive and intentional planning is now evident, and all staff are providing appropriate experiences that support children's interests and motivations.

Senior Leaders have continued to support the team to develop their skills in identifying and recording significant learning. Opportunities for professional dialogue have been created to support individual members of staff to develop their knowledge and understanding of children's progress and next steps in learning. The introduction of a new digital platform to record and share observations has supported staff to ensure a higher quality of recording of

significant learning. Staff receive regular feedback from Senior Leaders to support high quality recording of observations.

Senior Leaders have supported the staff team individually in shared observations of children, which has enhanced staff confidence in their assessment of children's learning. Staff within the nursery are now more able to plan appropriate next steps using observation and subsequent assessment information.

Almost all practitioners now support children's learning well, asking appropriate questions to extend and develop learning.

Weekly updates on nursery activities for all parents and carers have continued to be included within the school weekly newsletter. A monthly snapshot of nursery favourites has been developed to provide parents with information on how to support and build on learning at home (e.g. favourite stories, rhymes, songs, recipes etc.)

Parents/carers now receive a specific "settling in" observation/record within the digital platform.

How do you know? (What is the evidence of improvement?)

Regular and robust monitoring of planning documentation by Senior Leaders demonstrates that almost all staff have an improved understanding of children's learning and development and where they need to go next. Observations of staff interactions with children evidence increased confidence and skill across the team, particularly in questioning and supporting learners to extend their current knowledge and skills. Senior leaders provide specific feedback to individual staff members which is helping them to develop their practice in supporting and extending learners' knowledge.

Since the introduction of a new digital sharing platform, there has been a marked increase in the level of engagement and communication from parents, carers and families with the setting. Analytics within the digital platform evidence a significantly higher level of parental engagement than with the previous platform. This is evidenced within children's personal plans; parents, carers and families speak positively during termly review meetings about the information and observations shared regarding their children's learning and now frequently share learning from home.

Parent/Carer feedback includes:

"The personalised experience for each child is amazing to see."

"Communication has been great this year – Seesaw is much better."

"The teachers at Broomhill keep us updated about our child's progress and steps to take for improvement."

Staff have welcomed and engaged well with regular, planned opportunities for professional dialogue around their planning and observations of children. This has led to improved opportunities for children to demonstrate and extend their learning as almost all staff now have a more detailed picture of the progress children are making and their next steps. All staff have been open and enthusiastic about opportunities to learn from direct modelling, guidance and training from Senior Leaders, which has supported the development of a shared understanding of high-quality learning.

Evidence of progression in children's learning is now demonstrated within planning documentation, observation records and within all children's personal plans.

The weekly update digital newsletter to all parent/carers receives a high number of views and illustrates the improved parental engagement. Parents have commented favourably to ELC staff on the addition of the monthly snapshot. "*We made this month's recipe at home – we loved the pumpkin soup!*"

Records of observations by Senior Leaders show that almost all staff are more confident in their interactions with learners, each other and with parents/carers. All staff readily engage in professional dialogue with colleagues, and in informal discussion with parents about the work of the nursery and their role in the improvement of the setting. Almost all staff share that they feel more confident in doing this.

Parental Feedback from a recent questionnaire demonstrates that 100% who responded feel their child and family are well supported by the service. 100% of responders also said that they felt staff showed an interest in their child's needs and worked with the family to achieve the best outcomes for them.

What are they going to do now?

- Detailed planning expectations and support for staff have led to increased staff confidence in responsive and intentional planning. This will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure this continues to meet the needs of the setting.
- Rigorous and robust quality assurance processes in monitoring of staff practice will be maintained to ensure continued improvement and engagement of all staff in improving the setting.
- Time for professional dialogue and discussion about children's learning and next steps will remain a high priority within the setting's professional learning calendar.
- Staff knowledge and understanding of behaviours which underpin early development e.g. schematic play will be revisited. Appropriate professional learning will be provided where required.

Area for improvement 2

Develop further approaches to tracking and monitoring children's learning across the nursery and school to ensure all children make the best possible progress.

How is the school doing? (What has improved since the last inspection?)

All staff within the nursery are tracking children's progress across all curricular areas using the tracking system consistently used across all Aberdeen City Schools and ELC settings. This is now supporting a better understanding for all Early Level staff about where children are in their learning journey, their strengths and next steps in learning, which is leading to an improved transition experience.

Regular, planned opportunities for professional dialogue about individual learner progress between practitioners and Senior Leaders has supported staff understanding and confidence to make professional judgements about children's attainment and achievement. Staff feedback indicates that opportunities for more in-depth professional dialogue have supported

them to move forward and develop their skills in assessment and planning to meet learners' needs.

Information about children's attainment is now embedded within the whole school tracking system allowing Senior Leaders the facility to measure individual progress in more detail, which is supporting more timely interventions and further strategic planning to address any gaps in provision. Information from a range of sources, including Personal Plans, Digital Platform, Planning and Assessment records is used more effectively to ensure continuity in learning across the curriculum.

Termly meetings with parents/carers have taken place to discuss individual learners' progress and identify specific areas for learner development. These areas for development are shared in the child's Personal Plan. Follow up planning based on children's interests and needs and areas for development is evident within these plans and within the digital sharing platform.

An additional tracking system to track individual learners' progress across benchmarks in literacy and numeracy is currently being developed to allow staff to better meet the specific needs of each learner, ensuring that all children can progress at an appropriate pace.

How do you know? (What is the evidence of improvement?)

Practitioners are tracking progress within Curriculum for Excellence levels for all curricular areas. A bespoke CfE tracking system across literacy and numeracy has been developed and enables the tracking of learner achievement over 3 key tracking periods within a school year. This system allows Senior Leaders to analyse the progress of specific groups of children and discuss and plan appropriate learning opportunities and interventions with key workers.

Practitioners with responsibility for key groups have engaged in regular dialogue with senior leaders to measure and discuss progress. Children's personal plans, key observations and tracking information form the basis of these discussions which have impacted positively on future planning of intentional learning ensuring that children are supported, but also challenged in their learning.

Key aspects of learner progress are shared during periods of transition and this is impacting positively on progress through the early level. Current predicted attainment across literacy and numeracy for the P1 cohort is 92% in literacy and 95% in numeracy, an increase of 5% on session 23-24. This demonstrates that the systems for information sharing around key points of transition are improving continuity and progression in learning.

What are they going to do now?

- Senior Leaders will continue to work with staff to develop systems for tracking specific experiences and outcomes in literacy and numeracy to support early identification of need or necessary intervention.
- Opportunities will be provided for ELC staff to continue to develop their shared understanding of progress in learning across the Early Level through moderation activities with Early Level teaching colleagues both in and out with their own school setting.

Area for improvement 3

Improve children's experiences in the nursery class to ensure all children are supported to make the best possible progress.

How is the school doing? (What has improved since the last inspection?)

Practitioners within ELC have worked closely with families to ensure a more consistent and shared approach to learning and progress. Practitioners have made very good use of the digital platform in communicating children's progress to parents/carers who have in turn responded regularly with positive comments about their child's experience in the setting.

Reviewed systems to support rigorous quality assurance and monitoring of learning areas within the setting have led to an improvement in the quality of the activities and experiences provided for children. Observations in the setting show that children are very engaged, content and confident in their play and learning.

All staff have engaged in professional learning opportunities to support the development of numeracy and mathematical learning in the experiences and opportunities planned for children. This training is impacting positively on practice and is visible within the provocations and planning across all areas of the setting. Children are developing their understanding of numbers in their environment and have fun using and working with numbers for a relevant purpose.

Almost all staff have an improved understanding of the possibilities afforded by high quality interactions and, with support from senior leaders, have worked on developing their skills to support and challenge their learners to make the best progress possible. Observation records of staff interactions with children demonstrate staff using more skillful questioning to support and extend learning.

Practitioners have worked hard to broaden the opportunities for children to have relevant and purposeful learning experiences in the local community. E.g. weekly engagement with a local care home, regular community walks to local businesses.

How do you know? (What is the evidence of improvement?)

Termly meetings between key worker staff and parents/carers have enhanced the learning opportunities for children. Practitioners now have a better knowledge and understanding of the opportunities and experiences offered and encouraged at home and are building on these within the setting.

Termly visits to the setting including peer Head Teachers and Central Officers have found the overall evaluation of the setting to be "Good" and improving, with almost all practitioners demonstrating positive relationships with children and each other. The most recent QI visit noted:

- Almost all children were engaging well and content in their learning.
- Planned learning on display was evident throughout the different learning contexts.
- Routines were planned to meet children's individual needs and promote independence.
- Almost all experiences and resources are supporting children to be independent, make choices and be confident learners.

- Most experiences offered children the opportunity to develop creativity, curiosity and problem-solving.

Personal Plans evidence improved personalisation, with practitioners focusing on planning and strategies to take account of individual needs, interests and developmental stage.

The learning environment within the setting, both outdoors and indoors, is regularly reviewed in response to the needs of individuals and groups of learners. Ongoing observations by practitioners of how children use and respond to the learning areas have ensured that the set-up of the learning environment is flexible and responsive to what works best for the learners.

Planning across the setting evidences that ELC staff are making good use of local community links to ensure a variety of experiences are in place to support and extend learning.

Staff within the setting are making use of tools to support an inclusive environment e.g. Circle Framework, to ensure that the increasingly diverse needs of learners are met. Regular 'huddle' staff meetings ensure that time is set aside to reflect upon and improve practice and to make the necessary adjustments to improve outcomes for all children, but with a particular focus on children who require further support and adaptations.

What are they going to do now?

Senior leaders and staff now plan to

- Build on the strong relationships with families by offering further opportunities/workshops or information sessions that empower parents/carers to support learning at home.
- Increase the frequency of opportunity for practitioners to engage in peer observations within the setting and within the Trio Schools group.
- Enhance 'huddle' meetings by further structuring reflection tools and techniques to encourage staff to share successes and challenges, continuing to foster a culture of continuous improvement and support.

Conclusion

The head teacher, depute head teacher and nursery staff have maintained a steady focus on continuous improvement across the ELC. Robust systems, structures and training are in place to ensure that this improvement continues. Appropriate support and challenge from senior leaders is enabling practitioners to develop their knowledge and skills in all aspects of supporting and extending young children's learning. We are confident the setting has capacity to continue to improve.



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