

Summarised inspection findings

Carstairs Junction Primary School Nursery Class

South Lanarkshire Council

23 April 2024

Key contextual information

Carstairs Junction Nursery Class is situated within Carstairs Junction Primary School. The nursery serves the area of Carstairs Junction and the village of Carstairs in South Lanarkshire. Children attend from the age of three until starting school. Almost all children access their 1140 hours of early learning and childcare (ELC) between 9 am – 3 pm, term time. The nursery is registered for 30 children. The current roll is 16. Just over half of children are aged four and above. All other children are aged three, with a few having started nursery between January and March of this year.

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the nursery. This has been delegated to the deputy headteacher and principal teacher who share the responsibility for the nursery. Staffing within the nursery consists of a team leader, four practitioners and a support worker.

Children have access to an attractive playroom and two outdoor areas. They use local woodland twice per week for 'Funky Forest' visits. Children access this on a rotational basis.

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

- Most children arrive at nursery eager and ready to play. They engage very well with the wide range of stimulating experiences available both indoors and outdoors. Most children are confident and independent within the nursery and are leading their learning well with effective support from practitioners. Practitioners provide high quality experiences and resources that encourage children to explore, be curious and creative in their play. As a result, most children sustain interest in experiences for extended periods of time.
- All children benefit greatly from 'Funky Forest' visits where they learn from and within a natural environment. Practitioners' professional learning has enabled them to provide high quality holistic experiences for all children. They plan carefully for the day at the forest to ensure children have access to a wide range of resources to support their learning and care needs. Children are confident and relish the challenge of different types of experiences outdoors including negotiating different terrain.
- Practitioners demonstrate a commitment to children's rights through their positive interactions with children. They are at a very early stage of exploring rights with the children. Practitioners should continue to help children to become aware of their rights and ensure this is through developmentally appropriate experiences.
- All practitioners continue to develop their knowledge of early years pedagogy through professional learning, personal studies and engagement with national guidance. They use this learning well to ensure experiences, spaces and interactions support the learning needs of

children. Practitioners give children time and freedom to develop their ideas. They use comments and open-ended questions well to support and extend children's learning. Practitioners assist children to develop relevant skills in using technology. This includes using tablets and computers for research and a pedometer to record their steps during forest visits.

- Practitioners know children well as individuals and as learners. They observe children at play and record observations within children's individual learning journals. Practitioners now need to ensure the quality of their observations continue to improve. They should record consistently the skills children are developing to help them identify clear and specific next steps for individual children. Practitioners should provide opportunities for children to have greater ownership of their learning journals. This would enable children to reflect meaningfully on their achievements and to recognise themselves as learners. Practitioners meet regularly with each other and senior leaders to discuss children's learning and the progress they are making. This ensures children's learning needs are continually met and that they learn at the appropriate pace for their stage of development.
- All practitioners track children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They are at the early stage of using a new local authority tracker. This is helping practitioners to identify more clearly where children require further help or challenge in their learning. Practitioners have an appropriate balance of responsive and intentional planning which supports children well to develop their interests and lead their learning. They use key events, celebrations and a monthly focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to plan experiences tailored to meet the needs of individual children.
- Senior leaders along with practitioners, create additional plans for children who may be experiencing barriers to their learning. These plans identify clear targets and strategies to assist children to continue to make progress in their development and learning.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The setting submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.2 Securing children's progress

very 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

- Overall, as a result of high-quality learning experiences, most children are making very good progress in their learning in line with their developmental stage.
- In early language and literacy, children make very good progress. They are developing their listening and talking skills very well during story times and when engaging in conversation with adults and their peers. Children recall the events of stories in detail. They understand the role of an author and illustrator. Older children demonstrate confidence in retelling stories using a variety of props. All children mark enthusiastically using different tools and materials. Increasingly, they are adding detail to their drawings. Children practise 'writing' their name as they self-register. A few children are ready to develop their early reading skills further by exploring rhyme and initial word sounds.
- Children make very good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. They recognise basic two-dimensional shapes confidently with a few identifying sides and corners. All children count naturally as they play. As identified, a deeper focus on using number through a range of contexts will support children further. Almost all children use relevant mathematical language in different contexts to explain size, weight and length. All children are developing numeracy and mathematical skills relevant to their stage of development. These include using money, time, pattern, fractions and information handling through a wide range of play experiences.
- In health and wellbeing, children make very good progress. All children improve their physical abilities during outdoor play. A few children talk confidently about the impact of exercise on their bodies such as their heart beating faster. Children demonstrate confidence when cutting with scissors, using tongs, threading and weaving. All children have the opportunity to share how they feel and explain why through daily check-ins. Children are respectful of one another and demonstrate good manners. They play well together, share and take turns as a result of the respectful approach taken by practitioners.
- Overall, almost all children are confident, resilient and independent learners. Practitioners use information gathered on children's learning and from parents very effectively to build on children's prior learning and experiences. This information demonstrates that most children are making very good progress over time, in line with their developmental stage.
- Practitioners capture the range of children's achievements well. Parents share children's achievements from home which are displayed on a 'wow' wall or in learning journals. Moving

forward, practitioners should seek ways to track children's achievements from outwith the nursery. Children demonstrate early citizenship skills as they take responsibility for keeping their community tidy and care for their Funky Forest. They assess risk and talk confidently about how to make situations safe. Children demonstrate teamwork, perseverance and problem solving in a range of contexts.

- Senior leaders and practitioners are proactive in ensuring equity for all. They respond promptly to make sure children and families receive the help they need at the right time. Senior leaders and practitioners seek advice from colleagues and other agencies to reduce any potential barriers. Where gaps in children's learning are identified, practitioners use individual planning to support children. As a result, children continue to make the best possible progress. Senior leaders and practitioners review agreed strategies and children's progress systematically. This ensures children continue to develop and learn at a pace appropriate to their needs.
- Senior leaders and practitioners are very aware of the financial pressures that families may be experiencing. When required, they support this sensitively through, for example, the provision of outdoor clothing, preloved uniforms and dressing up clothes for key events. As a result, all children have equity of opportunity to participate fully in all activities.

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.