

19 June 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

**Alexander Peden Nursery Class
North Lanarkshire Council**

Recently, as you may know, I visited and inspected your child's nursery within the school. Throughout the visit, I talked to many parents and children and I worked closely with the headteacher and staff. I wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the nursery supported children to do their best. The headteacher shared with me the nursery's successes and priorities for improvement. I looked at some particular aspects of the nursery's recent work, including ways in which children had become more involved in planning some of their own learning. As a result, I was able to find out how good the nursery was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what I found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Your children clearly enjoy their learning and achieve very well. They help each other and take turns. Your children make choices and take responsibility for their learning. They concentrate for lengthy periods of time when playing interesting table-top games. They are developing various life skills, including preparing 'snack' or when dressing themselves when going outdoors on a daily basis. They have lots of friends with whom they spend time. They relate very well to staff. They particularly enjoy music and movement sessions and exploring and investigating outdoors. They like when staff take account of their individual interests. They enjoy planning and reviewing their learning using large floor books. They were able to discuss their 'learning journeys' which include photographs and drawings which illustrate what they can do and what they would be learning next.

Children are making very good progress in early language and developing their understanding of early mathematics. They listen very well, talk enthusiastically and share lots of information with adults and each other. They enjoy looking at illustrations in books and having stories read to them. Many explore books on their own. Children are interested in making marks and exploring different letters. They are developing their skills well, for example when writing down 'message lists' in the home corner. They use their numeracy skills often when playing, for example, when cutting vegetables and counting ingredients for making 'meals'. They use the correct mathematical language when designing and painting a grandfather clock as part of their work about 'Hickory, Dickory, Dock', including measuring the height of the clock and when exploring numbers and time. Children use their skills in literacy and numeracy well as part of their learning. To support their progress further, children

now need to continue to develop and use these skills further, both inside and when playing outdoors.

How well does the nursery support children to develop and learn?

Caring staff support your children to develop and learn and are meeting their needs very well. They are very sensitive to individual circumstances and engage very well with children to help them learn. A few children need greater challenge in their learning. Staff now need to continue to support, challenge and further children's learning. One way could be to develop the use of questions to further children's learning and understanding. Some of the nursery routines need to be reviewed to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between those sessions which are led by adults and those where children who have varying needs take more of a lead. Parents are very pleased with what the nursery offers their children. They like that their children also receive help from other services, including speech and language, and they report that they see improvements for their children.

Staff use Curriculum for Excellence to plan varied learning experiences. They provide quality outdoor learning experiences on a daily basis which also allow children to have regular access to fresh air. Staff have reviewed and improved how they plan for individual children to support further their progress. They observe children's learning and use the information very well to record their progress and to plan further learning. Parents also help support children's learning during sessions by acting as helpers. The nursery has carefully planned approaches which support children when they start nursery and when they move to P1.

How well does the nursery improve the quality of its work?

The headteacher, with staff, has a clear vision for the nursery which is being taken forward to support further improvements. With staff, and in particular with the nursery teacher, the headteacher has reviewed and evaluated aspects of nursery provision. The nursery teacher provides strong leadership and direction for children's development and learning. Other nursery staff are very effective in reviewing children's experiences. These arrangements are helping staff to identify strengths and areas needing to improve. Nursery staff are very reflective and regularly review children's learning. They use training and professional development well to increase their skills. They have taken positive action to improve children's experiences in an ongoing and daily way. With staff, the headteacher now needs to develop systems further to track children's progress. Parents and children are consulted regularly about nursery provision and their children's experiences. With staff, the headteacher wants to ensure that parents continue to play an active part in the nursery's development.

This inspection of your nursery found the following key strengths.

- Motivated children who clearly enjoy and benefit from their learning experiences.
- Ways in which children readily engage with and help each other in the nursery.
- Supportive relationships with parents which have a positive impact on children's learning.

- Teamwork and staff's enthusiasm and support of children's achievements and in meeting their needs.
- The nursery teacher's leadership.

I discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the nursery. This is what I agreed with them.

- Continue developing Curriculum for Excellence, ensuring that children experience continuity and progression in their learning in all curricular areas.
- Develop more systematic arrangements for reviewing nursery provision and the quality of children's experiences.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The local authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its schools.

Moira Cummings
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/AlexanderPedenPrimaryNorthLanarkshire.asp>

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