Follow-through report

Glassford Day Nursery

28 February 2013
Background

Glassford Day Nursery was inspected by HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in 7 November 2011. Following the publication of the report in 21 December 2011, the owner, manager and staff prepared an action plan to address its main recommendations.

The Quality Link Officer for the school reviewed progress in the action plan and submitted an evaluation of the nursery’s response to the HMIE inspection report.

HMIE required that a follow through report is completed and this is the responsibility of South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources. The following provides a summary of the progress made by the nursery and the authority in addressing the main points for action included in the inspection report.

Continuous improvement

Since the initial inspection, the nursery has continued to improve the quality of education for children and young people in a number of ways. These include:

• The owner, manager and staff work well together to provide a kind and caring environment where children feel happy and settled. Staff interact well with children and offer appropriate support to children who are new to the nursery. This has been achieved through a significant change in staffing which has enabled the nursery to introduce an effective induction programme which reinforces the nursery’s philosophy and commitment to improving the provision.

• The majority of children are engaged and stimulated by their learning experiences. For example younger children enjoy messy play activities and all children in the nursery enjoy their outdoor play experiences. The nursery has made considerable alterations to the outdoor spaces to allow all children to fully utilise learning opportunities outdoors.

• Older children are becoming more independent in some nursery routines and are now ready to take on more independence.

• Children are making good progress in developing their literacy skills, enjoy spending time in the well-resourced book area and are encouraged to read through their visits to the mobile library. A focus on reading is evident in the nursery as children happily seek out adults to read them familiar stories and some of the older children confidently share their experiences with adults and other children. Staff are using the children’s interest in books to develop their learning across different areas of the curriculum.

Main points for action

The following offers a brief account of the progress made by the school and the authority in addressing the main action points of the report.

• Develop the curriculum in line with Curriculum for Excellence, to improve learning experiences for children.

The nursery has made good progress in addressing this main point for action.

The owner, manager and staff have all made a commitment to embedding Curriculum for Excellence into learning activities with an initial focus on literacy and numeracy. Staff have participated in awareness raising sessions to ensure that everyone has a common understanding. The nursery has further developed a range of activities to extend the early
literacy and language skills of the children and reinforce literacy across learning. These include children self registering, using their names and shapes. Support from the Early Years Development Team helped maintain and extend staff’s knowledge and understanding of Curriculum for Excellence to ensure that learning experiences matched experiences and outcomes.

Based on the returns of a parental questionnaire, the nursery has organised a parents’ evening to support their understanding of the terminology, content and underlying philosophy of Curriculum for Excellence and Together We Can.

The nursery is now beginning to consider all curriculum areas and how they track and monitor learning. To support this, the nursery is piloting an IT solution to record learning in real time i.e. an application for ipads which has been developed to match the experiences and outcomes. Staff now use this to record and review children’s learning and plan appropriate next steps.

The nursery has developed an achievement board. Children and parents are encouraged to participate by bringing achievement certificates from outside the nursery for display. In addition, the achievement board is also used to record children’s achievements from within the nursery.

- Review the playrooms and resources to provide stimulating and appropriate learning opportunities for all children.

The nursery has made good progress in addressing this main point for action.

The manager has put in place a range of measures to address this action point. For example a member of staff has been identified to take pictures of the resources so that they can be categorised and allocated to identified topics to ensure relevance. This will be hosted on Glow so that children will have a wider selection to choose from and to encourage independence and personalisation and choice. The playroom has been reorganised to accommodate the changes in the available resources and stimulate learning opportunities.

Assessment is for Learning (AifL) strategies continue to be developed to ensure consistency across the nursery. The manager has participated in an AifL training course to enable her to cascade this knowledge and encourage all staff to use and embed these strategies into practice. To reinforce this knowledge, strategies have been put in place to allow room meetings to take place in order to share experiences. AifL posters have been prepared and are now located in each playroom to reinforce and extend the use of AifL strategies. Learning intentions and success criteria are shared at welcome time with the children and/or at the beginning of an activity to ensure that they fully understand the learning in the activity.

- Review the care routines for younger children to ensure all children’s needs are met.

The nursery has made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

The manager has updated the methods by which the children’s routines are maintained and met. The parents are now considered and the staff work to the child’s routine from home as closely as possible. Feedback folders have been introduced to facilitate two way communications between this nursery and home to assist staff in planning for individual children’s development and learning. This includes updated routine sheets to enable staff to recognise that young children’s routines are changing regularly. These materials help staff to monitor and track individual children’s progress. A range of new resources have been purchased: new cots to aid children’s routines and comfort; new small mealtime chairs to enable all children to sit at the table to encourage social interaction; new sit and ride toys and climb and crawl equipment to promote independence with our younger children.
The nursery has updated the lunch and snack menus to reflect the children’s favourite foods whilst adhering to being a health promoting nursery. To support this move, parents were asked to supply their favourite recipes and snack ideas and children are now much more involved in lunchtime, taking responsibility for a small range of tasks.

- The nursery should develop stronger and more productive partnerships with parents.

The nursery has made very good progress in addressing this main point for action.

The nursery is now fully committed to encouraging parents to participate in the life and work of the nursery though developing a wide range of approaches. For example a parents’ notice board has been placed at the front of the nursery, a daily information sheet is posted on the door of the 2-5 room to inform parents of the day’s activities in the nursery and allow them to discuss this with their children at home. The 0-2 room has a daily feedback sheet that offers information to parents on specific aspects e.g. eating and sleeping routines and an attractive parental newsletter is now regularly distributed to all parents. These approaches have enabled the nursery to develop much more productive partnerships with parents.

The nursery has been working in partnership with an external company to develop a nursery website to help improve communication with parents and share their child’s day to day learning experiences.

The nursery has made strenuous efforts to engage parents in the life and work of the nursery. They have sought parent volunteers to organise a parent committee to support the work of the nursery. A planned programme of parents’ evenings has now been prepared and shared with parents.

- The nursery should now develop more focused approaches to self-evaluation and monitoring to improve children’s learning.

Overall the nursery has made good progress in addressing this main point for action.

The owner, manager and staff have made a good start in developing a more systematic approach to self evaluation and bringing about continuous improvements in the nursery through participating in a range of activities. They include focus groups of staff, questionnaires with parents to gather evidence of areas of strength and areas for development.

A structured programme of room observations has been developed and is routinely carried out by the nursery manager to identify areas of strength and development needs. This has been supported by peer observation visits, sharing of good practice and the evaluation of the effectiveness of staff interactions with the children to stimulate and challenge their individual learning.

Conclusion

Overall, the school and the education authority have made good progress in meeting the main points for action identified in the original report.

Education Resources will not provide any further report in connection with the original report of 21 December 2011, but will continue to monitor and support procedures within the establishment as part of its commitment to ensuring the highest quality of education for all children.
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