26 August 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2025, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Warddykes 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 recently appointed acting headteacher and senior leadership team have identified improvement priorities which are relevant to the school context. These reflect their ambition and aspiration for all children to attain and achieve well.
- The children at Warddykes are extremely proud of their school and nursery. They demonstrate the school values of "respect, kind and safe" every day in their interactions with each other and with the adults who support them.
- The children in the nursery setting are ready to learn and engage well in their play. They are curious and motivated during their time in the nursery.
- The shared ambition of the whole school community, including parents, partners and staff, ensures that all children in the primary school and nursery setting have positive and meaningful experiences. This is leading to continuously improving levels of attainment and achievement.

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

- The senior leadership team should continue to take careful account of both the pace and the amount of change. Their planned programme of quality assurance will support them to focus on immediate priorities which will have the greatest impact on children.
- Senior leaders, staff and children should continue to work collaboratively to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching. This will ensure a greater level of consistency across all classes and support all children to make the best possible progress in their learning.
- In consultation with the whole school community, a review of the health and wellbeing curriculum should now be prioritised. This will ensure it is relevant to the context of the school and nursery and meets the needs of all children.

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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 Warddykes Primary School and Nursery Class

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

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We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the early learning and childcare setting using the quality indicators from A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare. The framework supports settings, providers and inspectors to assess what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each setting, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well early learning and childcare settings are doing. The Care Inspectorate evaluations are also used by local authorities when considering how settings are meeting the national standard for funded early learning and childcare.

The Care Inspectorate's evaluations for the early learning and childcare setting are:

Detailed evaluations	Evaluation
Key question 1: How good is our care, play and learning?	**very good**
1.1 Nurturing care and support	**very good**
1.3 Play and learning	**very good**
Key question 2: How good is our setting?	**very good**
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	**very good**
Key question 3: How good is our leadership?	**very good**
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	**very good**
Key question 4: How good is our staff team?	**very good**
4.3 Staff deployment	**very good**

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, kind and caring approaches from staff which supported their overall wellbeing. They were happy and relaxed in the company of staff and approached them with confidence. It was evident positive, nurturing relationships had been formed. This supported children to feel safe and secure.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through effective use of personal planning, taking account of the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. Families were central to this process which promoted a consistency and continuity of care. For any children requiring any additional support, staff and management worked proactively with families and professionals to identify appropriate strategies and next steps based on children's

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individual needs. This information was used consistently and effectively by all staff to ensure positive outcomes for children.

Mealtimes provided rich opportunities to promote attachments and social skills. A consistent staff member provided breakfast on arrival and welcomed children warmly. Children had opportunities to be involved in the planning and preparation of snack. These were rich learning opportunities for children as they developed valuable life skills. At mealtimes staff sat with children which promoted a safe and positive social experience for all children.

Systems and processes were in place to support the safe management of medication. Medication was stored appropriately, regularly audited and staff were knowledgeable about any children requiring medication. To further enhance the very good procedures in place, management were responsive to suggestions around the recording of any medicine administered prior to the child attending the service that day.

The service provided a welcoming ethos for children and families. The range of needs of families were fully recognised. Families' wellbeing was supported through family nurture sessions which included Bookbug and Play on Pedals. Feedback was gathered from families which enabled the service to deliver bespoke sessions that mattered to families. This ensured families received the support that was right for them to improve outcomes for children.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: very good

1.3 Play and learning

Children were having lots of fun as they engaged in meaningful play which supported their learning and development. Staff supported and extended children's high-quality play and learning experiences through the effective use of questioning. As a result, children were challenged, and their learning was being extended.

Outdoor play was valued and children had opportunities for free flow play to the garden during sessions. The outdoor area was rich in play and learning opportunities. These included opportunities for children to physically challenge themselves. Staff embraced a more benefit-risk approach as children engaged in risky play on obstacle courses they had created from loose parts. This helped support children's wellbeing and self-confidence. Small group times provided opportunities for children and staff to come together. Staff shared the benefits of their small groups to work on planned learning and children's individual targets. Group times were a meaningful experience where children were engaged and learning.

Children's developing language and communication was supported well through the rich learning environment and staff interactions. A lending library, Bookbug explorer home bags and English as an additional language (EAL) bags also contributed to this.

Connections were in place with the local community. These included visits to the shop, cafe and the local college. Plans were in place to develop links with the local care home

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which involved children writing letters inviting residents to visit. This supported children's sense of belonging.

Planning was child led and responsive to children's interests. Planning incorporated children's learning targets and focus was placed on individual children's needs. Observations of children's play and learning were of a high quality and provided evidence of a wide variety of play experiences. Floor books documented children's learning, their voice and their mark making. Progression pathways were used to support staff's understanding and planning for children's next steps. This ensured children were challenged and were progressing well.

There were opportunities for children to recognise and celebrate their successes. For example, through proud clouds and learning journals which were shared with families. Staff shared learning bags with families and they celebrated children's creations they created at home. This was an area that the service had identified they would like to further develop.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: very good

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a safe, secure and well-maintained environment. Staff effectively used risk assessments and worked together to minimise risks to children. Children also participated in risk assessing their environment indoors and outdoors. Our Look, Think, Act campaign to support children to be safe had been fully considered by staff. This approach promoted children, families and staff safety and wellbeing.

The setting was furnished to a high standard and benefitted from plenty of natural light and ventilation. Dimmed lights, fairy lights, cosy and covered spaces supported children's emotional wellbeing. Homely touches which included family photos, and the use of real-life resources created familiar and safe spaces for children to relax and feel safe.

A wide range of resources and experiences were available in the rich learning environment. Real life resources and loose parts were effectively used to support children's play and learning. Children used tyres and planks of wood to create obstacle courses outdoors. Indoors children played with real vegetables in the home corner. This approach supported children's imagination and creativity.

Infection prevention control procedures and regular staff training ensured that the risk of infection for children was minimised. There were appropriate changing facilities for children and hand washing by staff and children was completed effectively and at appropriate times. A suggestion around more robust face cleaning was taken on board, and a self care station was set up for children to access. This supported children's health and wellbeing.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: very good

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3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A positive ethos and shared values amongst the staff team put children and families at the heart of the service. Children had been involved in creating the services values which included Safe, Kind and Respect. Children used values language naturally throughout discussions. These values were also evident throughout staff and children's relationships. As a result, children were respectful and played well together with their peers.

The management and staff team were approachable and committed to improving outcomes for children. Staff wellbeing was well considered and management had strived to ensure all staff felt supported. Staff shared they regularly met together at team meetings to reflect using best practice guidance to bring about positive change to outcomes for children and families.

There were opportunities for families and children to be involved in the development of the setting. For example, children had been asked for suggestions of how to improve the garden area and families helped with planting. This approach supported families to feel informed and included.

An improvement plan was in place which focused on promoting positive outcomes for children through quality play and learning experiences. Champion action plans also supported ongoing improvements. A range of quality assurance systems were effective in ensuring that children consistently experienced quality care and support. As a result, children benefitted from high quality interactions and engaging play spaces. This included the addition of a cosy reading nook outdoors. We discussed how using floor books could be a helpful way to fully evidence the services improvement journey.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: very good

4.3 Staff deployment

Families were warmly welcomed into the service, and we observed very positive relationships with families. A consistent member of staff at pick up and drop off supported good communication sharing with families. Almost all parents shared that communication at handovers was good.

Children benefitted from a stable and consistent staff team which promoted consistency and continuity of care. Staff were skilled and knowledgeable and demonstrated a commitment to provide a high-quality service. They were motivated and enthusiastic within their role and spoke positively of how their champion roles and continuous professional development supported them to provide a high-quality service to children and families.

Newer staff benefitted from a robust induction process using the National Induction resource. New staff worked with a mentor to support them, and they shared they felt valued and supported. This ensured they had the right knowledge to safely care for children.

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Children's needs were met consistently because the right number of staff were available at all times. Staff were proactive in recognising any gaps and supervised children while also spending quality time with them. They worked flexibly to supervise children in their play and offered a range of experiences safely. Transitions were well planned throughout the day and staff lunches did not impact on children's experiences. This ensured that children's individual needs were met.

Care Inspectorate evaluation: very good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no areas for improvement. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no areas for improvement.

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: Warddykes Primary School | Inspection Report | 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. Angus Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

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HM Inspector

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Care Inspector

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