

Sheephouse Nursery



PROGRESS REPORT FOR SESSION 2023/24

(Standards & Quality Report)

2-6 Sheephousehill

Fauldhouse

West Lothian

EH479DY

ABOUT OUR SETTING

Sheephouse Nursery is a small nursery and out-of-school club based in Fauldhouse, West Lothian and serves the community of Fauldhouse and the surrounding towns and villages. Sheephouse opens 51 weeks of the year, Monday to Friday between the hours of 7am and 6pm. Recently, Sheephouse built an extension on to the under 2.5-year-old playrooms and undergone a variation inspection with the Care Inspectorate, with the aim to add value and flexibility to our spaces which will enable our team to better support our children and afford them the highest quality opportunities for play and learning. The variation afforded an additional 11 nursery places taking the capacity from 43 children to 54 children, with no more than 12 children under 2 years, and 12 of OSC age.

Sheephouse was established in 2012 and has continued to grow from strength to strength, whilst growing the culture of our setting, and being recognised by colleagues and partners across the local authority for best practice. In 2021, Sheephouse achieved an innovation award from The Scottish Government and the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) following the success of using our outdoor space flexibly and creatively to raise attainment across the early level. This project has continued for three consecutive years and is now firmly established as best practice within our setting. This was recognized nationally as well as within our own local authority of West Lothian, when we presented at the Froebel conference and most recently at the West Lothian council Early years conference in 2023.

The Sheephouse team consists of our Director, ELC and OSC manager, Senior ELC team leader, team leader, ten practitioners, two trainee practitioners, our own nursery cook and three "Sheephouse keepers" who clean the setting daily. The setting comprises of five playrooms, including our new extension, a separate kitchen, dining room, three baby changes, two sets of toilets, and a large garden space including an outdoor playroom "The Baa'rn.

Upon entry to school, several of our children continue to attend our out-of-school club which serves both local primary schools; Falla hill Primary school and St John the Baptist Primary school.

We get outdoors in all weathers using a lot of loose parts and participate in a lot of risky play opportunities across the entire setting. Our team also make best use of the facilities within our local community including the local library, parks, and community hub, as well as local walks to see wildlife in our surrounding areas. We also visit the local forest weekly, with both our youngest and older children, led by our team, four of which have completed the forest kindergarten course.

Sheephouse is a West Lothian Council Partner provider, and we work in close collaboration with the Development Officers to ensure best practice and high-quality care, support, and learning. Our Senior Management Team attend moderation sessions with other leaders and attend working groups with colleagues, to support and lead changes and improvements across the authority.

We are an inclusive service and provide care for children with varying additional support needs meaning that the team work closely with teams in local schools, West Lothian Council's ASN Development Officer, the health visiting team, speech and language therapists, pre-school home teaching and educational psychologists. The senior team regularly lead IEP meetings and CPM meetings alongside the appropriate team members, including other professionals as required to ensure quality care, consistent strategies to support behavior and learning and meet the individual needs of children and their families. Our team are recognised for their commitment to supporting these children and their families during their Sheephouse journeys.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Our improvement priorities are always based on the national priorities in the National Improvement Framework (NIF). Below we have indicated what progress we made with these priorities in Session 2022/23 and what the impact has been. Our future improvement priorities will be identified in our

settings recovery improvement plan, which will respond the national and local advice on the reopening of ELC.

We have shown which NIF driver for improvement we used – you can find out more about the National Improvement Framework and drivers at https://www.npfs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/NPFS_NIF_E-1.pdf

We have also evaluated our overall provision using quality indicators (QIs) in How Good is Our Early learning and Childcare? (HGIOELC) which is a key aspect of the Scottish approach to self-evaluation and improvement.

PRIORITY	HOW DID WE DO?
<p>Improvement in all children and young people’s wellbeing:</p> <p>1. Develop a professional, passionate, and sustainable team who are knowledgeable in the delivery of the Sheephouse way of care to achieve continuous improvement.</p> <p>Our measurable outcome for the 23/24 session was to:</p> <p>Support the well-being of our team and children through a period of change and transition ensuring the children are at the centre of our practice in the delivery of high quality ELC.</p> <p>NIF Driver(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education. • Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing. 	<p>We have made Very good progress</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruited a new team leader for our under 2.5-year-old playrooms. • Recruited three new practitioners and two trainee practitioners to support staff turnover and the addition of our extension playroom. • Involved our children and families in the recruitment process. • Supported our new team leader with a leadership coach for 8 weeks alongside their team leader specific induction. • Conducted thorough inductions for our new practitioners and trainee practitioners in line with The National Induction Resource. • Redesigned our personal plans in collaboration with our stakeholders to ensure they take cognisance of national guidance and best practice and meet the individual needs of our children. • Added child’s voice to our personal plans, incorporating and developing an understanding of the well-being indicators. • Introduced chronologies for children where there is a well-being need for example, attending a dietician. • Review of Vision, Values and Aims with the team, children, and families. • Team building activities during room meetings, team meetings and as a whole team. • Used strategies such as intensive interaction, to support children with additional support needs. • Used resources such as “The colour monster” and social stories to support children to communicate their feelings and emotions during periods of change and transition. • Updated CPL on planning processes, tracking, and monitoring of progress, reporting, quality observations and personal planning during the induction process. • Updated CPL on the West Lothian Progression pathways across health and wellbeing, literacy, and numeracy during the induction process. • The ELC manager used the Leuven scale to measure children’s wellbeing and involvement in different play and learning opportunities with new team members and in new play spaces. • Delivered a development day to develop team knowledge of how to support neurodiversity in our team and children, and how to support our families on the journey to diagnosis and beyond. • Continued to access CPL across the west Lothian cluster network including language and literacy, numeracy and mathematics, two-year-olds, Froebel and ASN, (having a practitioner assigned to each, to support devolved leadership.)

Evidence indicates the impact is:

- Team supervisions, probationary reviews and appraisals, which incorporate parents voice and peer review, show that the team are settled and confident in their roles at Sheephouse.
- Room monitoring and audit tools show that the team are working effectively together to deliver high quality play and learning experiences.
- Our vision, values and aims and curriculum rationale are reflective of current thinking, relevant guidance and national policies and support current pedagogy.
- Moderation of learners journals, reports, consultative planners and personal plans show that the team have a thorough understanding of planning processes, tracking, and monitoring of progress, reporting, quality observations and personal planning.
- Tracking data for the end of the pre-school year remains steady between 2023 and 2024.

Our next steps will be to:

- Review our team induction to include reflective learning for new team members or team members in new roles throughout their probationary period using The National Induction Resource.
- Establish opportunities for stay and play sessions throughout the year to continue to develop and establish positive relationships between the team and our families.
- Support our team to create sensory profiles for children with ASN and incorporate sensory circuits into the daily nursery routine.
- Full team, in house CPL on the use of the WLC progression pathways.
- Continuation of the targeted intervention groups already in place to support phonological awareness after partnership with Murrayfield outreach services.
- CPL on (Attention & Listening, Story Telling and Preparation for Phonics. ED0011 - Early Level Literacy Skills) as advised by Murrayfield language centre to continue the outreach work.
- CPL on phonological awareness including “box clever” and “word boost”
- Set up a working group within the team with a focus on parental support and development of new skills, as well as initiatives to support the most disadvantaged children and families be included. Including:
Lending libraries for children’s books, to encourage bedtime reading, phonological awareness and the development of vocabulary.
- Team awareness of the needs of our families and sending resources home if required for home links to ensure equity for all.
- Development of a Sheephouse cookbook, with recipes from the weaning stage, and including allergens and vegetarian options.

- Targeted groups where our families can learn new skills such as:
 - Weaning, Nutrition and healthy eating, fussy eating,
 - Managing challenging behaviours,
 - Board maker and how to support language and communication
 - Developing literacy and numeracy at home

- Support the team to develop strong community links with the local care home, and include our children and residents in intergenerational working, incorporating the principles of the Care Inspectorates “Bringing Generations together” including.
- Consistent visits with the same group of children and residents for 6-8 weeks.
- Involvement in each other’s events such as the local gala day, Christmas fayre’s and stay and play sessions.

<p>Raising attainment for all, particularly in literacy and numeracy(universal):</p> <p>2. Develop and expand the use of technology to enhance learning and development across the early level and in turn raise attainment across health and well-being, literacy, and numeracy.</p> <p>Our measurable outcome for the 23/24 session was to:</p> <p>Develop team confidence in the use of digital pedagogies which will enrich our learning environments and in turn motivate learning and stimulate curiosity during children’s play and learning.</p> <p>NIF Driver(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education. • Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing. • Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy. • closing the attainment gap between the most and least 	<p>We have made good progress.</p> <p>What did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed the digital learning CLPL audit tool with all team members. • Completed IT inductions for all new team members, or where the audit tool suggested refreshers for current team. • Consulted with our team, families, and children regarding the implementation of more technology and the benefits of this project. • Updated our curriculum rationale to include the use of digital pedagogies and technology to enrich learning experiences. • Developed the use of sound buttons around our setting to support language and literacy development. • Developed QR codes within our environment where children can scan to access the daily menu board, relevant songs, and audio books. • Developed QR codes within our environment to develop home links further on our consultative planner for parents to scan upon drop off and collection. • Developed QR codes to develop children’s independence to lead their own learning for example, when accessing recipes for playdough, or finding ideas for construction / STEM opportunities. • Encouraged children to use audio devices to record their voices and the different sounds in their environment. • Continued to access brain breaks, yoga etc via Alexa and online. • Continued to use technology to support children with ASN to regulate their emotions. • Continued to make use of GLOW resources as a source of information and CPL. • Use tracking data to track progress across health and wellbeing, literacy, and numeracy <p>Evidence indicates that the impact is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our vision, values and aims and curriculum rationale are reflective of current thinking, relevant guidance and national policies and support current pedagogy in regard to digital technology. • Room monitoring and audit tools has shown the positive impact of the sound buttons in supporting the use of song signifiers across the pre-school playrooms. • Children’s vocabulary and use of QR codes for song of the week has supported children’s phonological awareness. • The number of children completing home link and family learning has increased with the introduction of QR codes being available within the playrooms at collection times. • Children are remaining regulated due to the implementation of yoga, and brain breaks throughout the nursery day using Alexa and online. <p>Our next steps will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support children to make use of technology to record and reflect on their learning with their keyworkers including accessing their online learning journals. • Use GLOW more frequently for networking across the authority. • Deliver an open morning / stay and play session to encourage our families and develop their confidence in contributing to their children’s online learners journals. • Work in partnership with parents to support the development of sound buttons, using their home language to support children’s understanding of
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disadvantaged children.	<p>spoken language in a format they understand to ensure full integration into the setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the use of sound buttons around our setting to support children who have English as an additional language, alongside a visual. • Make use of children’s tablet to access online resources to support mark making digitally e.g., paint. • Make use of children’s tablet to access a range of online resources to develop numeracy and maths skills. • Make use of children’s tablet to access a range of online resources to develop language and literacy skills including their own voices. • Develop opportunities to record themselves and their learning using digital photography and video. • Opportunities for team building and peer review to enable practitioners to share skills across the team and support each other in developing digital confidence. • Working group within the team, to lead on more use of technology and digital pedagogies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand the use of song signifiers across our setting - Expand the use of sound buttons across our setting - The use of QR codes for children to lead their own learning - Speaking apps on tablets - Google translate to support EAL children and families. - Parental partnerships to include home languages on sound buttons, ensuring equity for all.
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Evaluative statement on the effectiveness of the setting’s engagement with parents and other stakeholders in improvement planning and on reporting school performance.

Our improvement plan was sent to our parents and families in August 2023 ahead of the new session to keep them updated on our identified areas of improvement for the year ahead. We also sent a revised copy of our curriculum rationale and vision, values and aims – The Sheephouse Way, created at the end of the 22/23 session for the 23/24 session.

Children’s progress reports based on the Building the Ambition drivers of learning were sent in November 2023 and May 2024. We also held two in person parents evenings for our children across the entire setting in the months of November and May. This gave additional time to review and update children’s personal plans, discuss progress and any concerns or next steps for learning with our families. Feedback and uptake were excellent with many of our families attending these sessions.

We are now into our second year of using iConnect/ParentZone as a means of daily communication with our families. This has been a positive experience and the levels of parental engagement are continuing to increase, with some parents preferring this means of communication to email or updates on our social media platforms. Many families are much more engaged in their child’s learning and feel confident to share home learning, or wider achievements with our team via the parent zone app. As a result, the team have now introduced a “Proud Cloud” and a “Sheeperstar” display in the playrooms to celebrate our children’s successes and achievements. This has had a positive impact on our children’s learning and attainment as a whole.

Following the completion of our extension, we conducted a survey with our parents about drop-offs/collections. This was sent via ParentZone, on our social media and via a QR code linked to Microsoft Forms. Pick-ups were reintroduced back inside for all children either via the extension or the pre-school playrooms. After around two to three weeks of the new arrangements for drop off and pick up, our senior team conducted another survey on how pickups were working, via the same methods, to gauge feedback our

families had. This enabled them to amend the corresponding risk assessments and areas for change/where practice could be improved.

Ahead of the commencement of the 2024/2025 session we reviewed our vision values and aims with all stakeholders including through surveys for our families, and professionals who visit our setting in a CPL capacity, or to support children with ASN, a Quality improvement session for our entire team, where we implanted four working groups to support each of our improvement priorities, and via floor books for our pre-school and osc children and talking mats for our children under two years. Our Vision, values and aims and curriculum rationale were then updated to include in our SIP for the 2024/2025 session to be sent ahead of the new term.

Our Wider Achievements this year including successes at the time of Remote Learning:

We presented at the Early Years Conference run by West Lothian Council, detailing how we promote health and wellbeing at Sheephouse, how we support our children to express and develop knowledge of their emotions, express their feelings and foster resilience with hands on practical examples for other practitioners to take part in, and develop their skills and knowledge.

We continue to be signposted for best practice visits across the authority. These opportunities have continued to upskill our practitioners and develop their professional knowledge and support personal growth.

Our Senior team have been working in partnership with other leaders and the West Lothian Council central team, participating in working groups to ensure the principles of the National Standard are implemented to maintain effective partnership working.

We facilitate weekly forest visits for all our children from our littlest lambs under two years to our pre-school and osc children. The skills learnt from this have been included in our family learning programme, encouraging our families to take part in scavenger hunts and woodland walks in both local forestry areas and further afield.

One of our practitioners who is trained in sign-a-long also had the opportunity to shadow a teacher from Murrayfield language centre during outreach work for eight weeks. This afforded her new skills and has allowed us to implement targeted interventions with a small group of children. As a result of this, the tracking data for the 23/24 session shows significant learning in literacy in particular the understanding of how to use syllables.

We had a Christmas fair and raised £1200 for Cash for Kids Mission Christmas, as well as being a collection point for gifts for the appeal where our office was taken over with gifts for children across Edinburgh, The Lothians, Fife, and Falkirk. Our partnership with St Andrew's church also supported this appeal with their congregation donating gifts collected at their advent celebrations to Cash for Kids. This went a long way to support disadvantaged children in our area.

We continued to build community links with our children visiting the local library for book bug sessions and attending their arts and crafts and Lego clubs with our older pre-school children and OSC children. We continue to have effective partnerships with St Andrew's church too, taking part in their local tree-fest celebrations. We have also borrowed their chairs for our children's grad"ewe"ation ceremonies in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

The team have also completed a range of CPL including child protection, growing our culture, supporting neurodiversity, supporting children with additional support needs, Vision, values and aims and self-evaluation, supporting children with selective mutism, food hygiene, health and safety, paediatric first aid, networks, and clusters across the authority with partner settings. The ELC manager also attended the RIC event in Stirling to learn to observe using different methods, for example how observations of children's engagement, staff interactions and children's mood states, can be recorded and collated effectively. This has supported the development of our new team, practitioner deployment, and how we develop and enhance our learning environments. As a result, children are engaged and thriving in their play and learning.

How good is our Early Learning and Childcare? The quality indicators* evidence that:

1.3 Leadership of change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Very Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Very Good
3.2 Securing children's progress	Good

*(Indicators used in How good is our school? 4th Edition, Education Scotland 2015 and How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? 2016)