St. Mary's ELCC
Day Care of Children

Chapel Road
Duntocher
Clydebank
G81 6DL

Telephone: 01389 873 923

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 March 2020

Service provided by:
West Dunbartonshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003383

Service no:
CS2003014743

About the service

St Mary's Early Learning and Childcare Centre is located in a custom-built unit within the campus of St Mary's Primary School in Duntocher, Clydebank. The children have access to a large open plan playroom, a small room and an enclosed outside play area. The service also has access to the primary school nature area.

The service is registered to provide care for a maximum 50 children, three years old to those not yet attending Primary School. At the time of inspection children attended the service on a full time or part time basis depending on the needs of individual families.

The new vision and aims statement includes:
"To provide a positive, caring, stimulating and secure environment for our children, where everyone feels valued, included and respected." The full statement can be accessed from the service.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it right for every child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

What people told us

During the inspection there were 30 children present. We observed the children in the playroom, the outdoor area, the school nature area and children eating snack and lunch.

The children were engaged in their play and learning activities throughout the inspection. Children were smiling, laughing and chatting with friends and staff as they played. We noticed children particularly enjoyed going on a 'Bear Hunt' and playing outside.

We observed some children in the playroom planning and building structures with blocks. Some children were observing, predicting and comparing as they experimented with paint and mixing different colours.

We noticed that staff sensitively supported children using IT equipment. We saw one child jumping for joy as they watched their friend achieving an IT task.

Children were keen to show us their folders. We saw pictures of the range of activities the children had enjoyed and heard about particular stories and songs children had enjoyed.

Four parents took the opportunity to speak with us during the inspection. The parents told us they were very happy with the service and their children were happy and keen to attend. Parents spoke about management and staff being helpful and supportive and spoke about valuing the individual support staff had given their children.

One parent spoke about how much their child enjoyed the introduction of guitar music sessions in the service. One parent commented they valued the outdoor play opportunities.

Parents' comments from our care standard questionnaires included:
"My child has developed so well over the last few months. The support and care my child has received at Saint Marys has played a major part in this."

"We are happy with the service as our child enjoys attending the nursery. We would be keen to see her challenged more academically as she spends a lot of time working on skills she already had prior to beginning early years education, for example, number work."

During the inspection we observed staff supporting and challenging children to explore number in fun ways and children were keen to share their skills with us in number recognition and counting. For example, we observed children demonstrating their skills in one to one correspondence during water play, staff provided interesting resources to extend children's interests and enthusiasm for numeracy. We heard about staff sharing information with parents during tea, toast and talk sessions. This information will help to reassure parents about how their children are challenged in the service.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at the service's own improvement plan and discussed some quality assurance systems. These demonstrated some of the service's priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

What the service does well

The nurturing staff team knew the children well and provided very warm and responsive care. They spoke knowledgeably about children's individual needs and about how they supported children's wellbeing.

Staff promoted free flow outdoor play well. They had developed interesting outdoor areas and were knowledgeable about the benefits of outdoor play for children's development and learning. Staff used effective questioning to support and extend children's play and problem solving. For example, children using the rhyming box were developing their memorisation, recall, language and literacy skills during this activity.

Children had a personal plan, which included relevant information about their health and wellbeing needs and included some information about their learning and next steps. Children in need of additional support had detailed plans, setting out actions and responsibilities to help staff and other agencies support the children in an inclusive way. This helped staff to provide respectful care tailored to children's needs.

Children had access to snacks on arrival and at different times throughout the sessions. Staff found this had impacted positively on outcomes for children settling in. Children ate well and were smiling and chatting to friends and staff during lunch and snack times. This responsive and nurturing approach supported children's wellbeing.

Staff recorded accidents and incidents and took appropriate action to inform parents and reduce the repetition of accidents. Staff were knowledgeable about procedures for protecting and safeguarding children. They were aware of children's allergies, had improved medication arrangements and taken part in training for administering particular medication. This helped to support children's health and wellbeing.

Parents and children had been involved in the development of the service. For example, they had been consulted about the vision and aims of the service. Parental engagement in improvement and improving learning was good. Initiatives, such as, stay and play and tea, toast and talk sessions helped support parents understanding about how staff encouraged and challenged children's learning in numeracy and literacy and provided further opportunities for parents to be involved in service development.

The head teacher was well supported by the depute head teacher and the lead practitioner (LP), together they formed the senior leadership team (SLT). It was clear they had high expectations for the children and were committed to helping children reach their full potential. The SLT was a keen and enthusiastic new management team focused on developing their strategy for improving outcomes for all.

The SLT had impacted positively on the service and staff confirmed they felt supported and motivated in their role. Team meetings provided time for staff to discuss any issues and reflect on practice. The LP carried out development reviews and this provided opportunity for staff to discuss their work and identify training needs.

We heard about supportive initiatives such as, cheers for peers. This helped to support staff's emotional wellbeing.

The improvement plan set out areas for priority and we could see staff had taken areas forward. For example, the SLT had led staff in the development and improvement of the outdoor area and had supported staff to transform the indoor learning environment to be more conducive to play.

The SLT had engaged in informal and some formal monitoring processes with staff providing feedback to staff and dialogue that supported improvement in practice. The lead practitioner with staff had created a vision for change reflecting on policy documents and professional learning from engagement with Froebel. (The main goal of a Frobel education is to teach the whole child in all developmental areas). The LP had set up and organised access to a digital classroom providing a range of good practice documents for staff to keep up-to-date with good practice.

What the service could do better

The SLT had identified the need to make further improvements to children's personal plans. This will help ensure staff observations of children are more evaluative and help parents and staff track children's progress further.

The SLT told us about plans for a more formal monitoring calendar and we discussed the benefits of keeping more detailed records of the progress made to outcomes for children. The SLT agreed to continue to review and assess the quality of the service using national guidance. In addition, staff should reference the Health and Social Care Standards in supporting the overall audit of the service.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
7 Dec 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed
8 Nov 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 5 - Very good 4 - Good
11 Nov 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed
4 Dec 2008	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 5 - Very good

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