Houston Early Learning and Childcare Class
Day Care of Children

Houston Primary School
Houston Road
Houston
Johnstone
PA6 7EJ

Telephone: 01505 610 043

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 January 2020

Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003388

Service no:
CS2003014759

About the service

Houston Early Learning and Childcare Class is operated by Renfrewshire Council to provide early learning and childcare to a maximum of 40 children not yet attending primary school.

The service is located in a residential area within the village of Houston in Johnstone Renfrewshire and is part of the Houston primary school campus. The service is provided from a separate purpose-built premises, which is on one level, with a secure outdoor play space.

The service aims include:

- provide an appropriate curriculum for our children that will be
- well planned and evaluated
- delivered using a variety of approaches
- broad, balanced and will provide continuity
- effective, ensuring our children achieve their full potential
- provide opportunities, appropriate to individual children's learning needs, which will ensure children's development and progress
- develop children's learning through high quality play experiences indoors and outdoors
- build partnerships with parents/carers and the wider community, and provide support for children and their families
- create a positive ethos where:
- there is a safe, relaxed and happy learning environment
- children, staff and parents are valued and their contributions acknowledged
- visitors are welcomed
- children are encouraged and motivated to give of their best
- provide high quality resources to support effective teaching and learning
- manage the nursery effectively by establishing a team that works towards providing a high quality service, using effective quality assurance procedures

A full copy of the aims can be obtained from the service.

We check services are meeting the principles of 'Getting it right for every child' (also known as GIRFEC). This is 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 GIRFEC. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

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We compiled this report following an unannounced inspection carried out by an early learning & childcare inspector.

What people told us

Prior to inspection we issued 13 questionnaires for parents and carers, 8 were completed and returned before the inspection. We also spoke with four parents during the inspection, comments included:

'The nursery has a lovely atmosphere and there is a real sense of 'family' amongst the staff and the children. My son has got to know and love all of the staff, not just his keyworker and for me that speaks volumes. We are looking forward to our younger son starting at the nursery, and have the same wonderful experience'

'A great nursery where my little boy has always been well supported by staff who have developed his confidence and personality'

'My child has really enjoyed the Book Club and talking about and reading the different books at home. He has loved taking part in the shows and we have loved seeing them and being involved in what is going on at the nursery'

'The Stay and Play was a fantastic experience. It was also great to meet her friends and other parents'

'I really enjoy being able to come in a see what my child has been learning'

'Great to be involved in activities at nursery and good to see my daughter progress and increase in confidence'

'I feel that there are lots of opportunities for myself and other family members to share my daughter's nursery experiences'

'Always included: school engagements, Family Disco, Fun Nights with siblings. Great overall!'

'We think "The Special Book" is an excellent addition. They have really enjoyed looking through the learning journeys'

'Excellent communication, both orally and written. Parents meetings are very useful for updates on progress'

'Staff communicate well both informally and formally. Lots of information on the website.'

'I feel that the children could do with some more 1-1 with the teachers, especially if there is some issues regarding learning that have been noted, e.g. not advanced with letters/numbers as the rest of the group'

'I think the nursery has a great range of resources that are well used and responsive to the children's interests.'

'My son has enjoyed the French lessons, learning about the Chinese New Year and preparing for the Burns Scottish Celebration. I have really noticed him taking on interest in words the last few months'

'Our son loves learning at Houston Primary Nursery'

'Our son always enjoys his time at nursery. He has grown in confidence and his numerical and literacy skills have developed, ready for school'

'Our son just loves going to "his" nursery. He feels a real sense of ownership. His learning and understanding has developed tremendously over the past year'

'All staff are helpful and friendly. My son has built a strong relationship with his key worker Mr Donnelly'

'All staff are very friendly, welcoming and enthusiastic and take a genuine interest in the children. My son has grown very fond of Mrs Smart over his time at nursery - she has been a great teacher'

'Always very, very welcoming and attentive to my daughter's needs. All staff very supportive and helpful. Senior Management Team are supportive and obliging through personal difficulties'

'Staff have worked hard to maximise the available space.'

'Love the outdoor space! Great to let them play and get dirty! The space has a real sense of home and natural surroundings about it - like a mini adventure'

'Fantastic staff - caring, engaging and encouraging'

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of the inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

What the service does well

Houston Early Learning and childcare class have effectively established a friendly welcoming ethos where children were able to form friendships and have fun. We observed happy smiling faces and 'busy' children enjoying their play. Staff had worked hard to provide an enabling environment where children were supported to independently choose what they wanted to do.

We found staff were skilled in setting up areas with a focus on curiosity, learning and creativity. We found most of the environment indoors was attractive, stimulating and enabled children to learn through play. We observed children actively exploring resources on offer and testing out their own ideas. Through effective staff intervention, children were actively making predictions and leading their own learning.

Children had opportunities to direct their own play and learning within the outdoor environment. Staff had developed imaginative play linked to the building site of the new nursery premises which was popular with all children. Children also had space to run, access resources linked to loose parts play, mark making and growing their own vegetables. We found this was supporting children to cultivate friendships while investigating real life situations.

We sampled evidence of planning in place and found this was supporting staff to provide quality learning experiences based on children's early level development milestones, floor books evidenced very good examples that reflected children's interests, links with home and the local community.

Children were supported to be healthy through enjoying a variety of balanced snacks.
Menus were varied and shared with parents. We saw children enjoying snack and lunch which were social times allowing children to chat, which helped develop their language. Staff encouraged children to self-serve supporting their independence.

Transitions were well planned to take into consideration childrens individual needs, ensuring positive links were established and appropriate information was shared. We found friendships were encouraged and nurtured throughout the centre and this was promoted especially with new start children. Parents praised the nursery and staff in relation to both transitions links to school and children starting nursery.

We found the ethos of the centre was one of family involvement. Staff were very good at engaging with parents and carers to help them understand and strive to achieve positive outcomes for children. They did this through the effective use of a key worker system and open and professional dialogue with parents. Several opportunities to be included in the life of the centre were offered to help parents share and develop skills and become part of their child's learning and development.

During the inspection we viewed evidence of parents attending and delivering experiences to the children while being supported by staff. Examples of this included a parent who is a scientist and expert in chemistry carry out experiments with the children. Pottery sessions delivered by another parent allowed the children to use a potter's wheel while making creative decorations. Parents commented that it was great to be involved in activities at nursery and good to see their child's progress and increase in confidence.

We found staff were enthusiastic, motivated and committed which supported a strong team ethos. The team had developed a good working relationship and worked well together with a shared vision for the nursery. Staff highlighted how they felt included, valued and supported within their role by both the head teacher and depute head teacher. This empowered the team to provide quality experiences, develop their own practice and feel involved in the nursery developments. Parents told us staff were very approachable and communication was very good.

Staff were successfully leading aspects of learning throughout the service, securing better outcomes for children. The team have accessed effective training with learning undertaking beginning to influence change and improvement. Staff demonstrated through discussion and their practice, they were motivated and open to exploring new ideas. It was evident they were committed to further developing their knowledge, skills and expertise, to support and achieve positive outcomes for children and their families. For example, undertaking training in floor book planning, loose parts play and outdoor learning.

Staff were confident in reporting child protection concerns and had regular updated training ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children.

What the service could do better

During the inspection we looked at the recording of children's progress and development within their individual learning profiles 'My special book'. We found staff need to develop their skills for capturing significant learning for each child. Management should continue to develop monitoring of children's profiles to ensure identified next steps and progress is documented and tracked.

We sampled personal plans that were in place and found these should be streamlined to ensure all staff and parents have up to date information including areas of development. Management and staff should continue to monitor and develop personal plans to ensure they capture 'how' staff will support children's health, wellbeing and safety needs. Targets should reflect individual personal outcome focused evaluations of children's learning and then link these to the planning, evaluation and observation cycles.

Management to implement auditing of all records in relation accident and incidents which should include the environment, resources and individual children to identify any common patterns. Appropriate action to be taken where required.

We have asked management to review infection control procedures throughout the nursery in line with best practice guidance 'Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings' (Day Care and Childminding Settings). Ensuring good infection control procedures will help reduce the risk and spread of germs throughout the centre safeguarding children and staff.

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

Recommendation 1

The management team and staff should review and improve the current planning systems. Planning should be less adult directed and should focus more on children's interests which staff have identified through meaningful observations. Record keeping should clearly show children's progress and how this is being tracked and further developed.

NCS Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.

This recommendation was made on 12 April 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation
The service had reviewed planning systems since the last inspection and had made progress in recording experiences and outcomes covered across the curriculum. We found that planning for play using large floorbooks was less adult directed, focussed more on children's interests.

Recommendation 2

The monitoring of the service should be improved. There should be a clear protocol of who has responsibility for which task's, with the manager having the overall responsibility.

NCS Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 14: A Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 12 April 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation
We found that the Depute Head Teacher had implemented effective systems for monitoring the quality of work of each member of staff and the service as a whole. This helped ensure that staff were clear about lines of accountability for the setting's performance across care and learning aspects and supporting children's health and well-being in particular. We found a collegiate approach to improvement planning within the staff team had a led to clear focus on current approaches for evaluating the quality of children's care and learning as well as improving systems for tracking their progress and achievements.

Recommendation 3

To provide staff with professional development opportunities in observation approaches that show children's progress and how this is being tracked and further developed.

NCS Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing

This recommendation was made on 19 January 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation
We found the depute head teacher and senior nursery officer had led staff training on observation approaches, staff are implementing a new planning format which allows a shared responsibility for planning and reviewing

learning across the different areas of the nursery. Staff have weekly meetings with a focus on discussing the learning opportunities being offered and evaluating children's progress.

Therefor this recommendation has been met.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
27 Oct 2016	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 5 - Very good
16 Feb 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good
24 Jan 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 6 - Excellent
24 Apr 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 4 - Good 5 - Very good

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