St Catherine's Early Learning and Childcare Class
Day Care of Children

St Catherine's Primary School
Brabloch Crescent
Paisley
PA3 4RG

Telephone: 01418 876 085

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 February 2023

Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003388

Service no:
CS2003014764

About the service

St Catherine's Early Learning and Childcare Class is a day care of children service provided by Renfrewshire Council. The service is attached to St Catherine's Primary School in Gallowhill, Paisley.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 79 children not yet attending primary school at any one time. Children attended various patterns.

'no more than 15 are aged 2 years to under 3 years; and
no more than 64 are aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school full time.

Adult: child ratios will be a minimum of:
2 years to under 3 years - 1:5
3 years and over - 1:8 if the children attend more than 4 hours per day, or 1:10 if the children attend for less than 4 hours per day'.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 6 and 7 February 2023 between the hours of 08:30 and 16:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service;
- spoke with staff and management;
- received feedback by email from nine families;
- received feedback by email from fourteen staff;
- observed practice and daily life; and reviewed documents.

Key messages

• Children experienced nurturing and compassionate care by staff who knew them well and understood their needs, personal characteristics, and sensitivities.

• Planning for children's play and learning was child-centred and responsive to their interests.

• Staff had a very good understanding of child development, relevant theory, and practice and skilfully used learning to support high-quality play and learning experiences.

• Staff had created a positive learning environment with purposeful play zones with opportunities for all children to lead their play and learning.

• The management team will continue to ensure that all staff feel valued and listened to in relation to changes and service improvements.

• Children benefitted from a service committed to continuous improvement.

• The deployment of staff within the service was well managed and effective in meeting children's needs.

• The management team agreed to review the communication processes between staff and parents to ensure a consistent approach to information sharing.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and these supported positive outcomes for children; therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing and compassionate care by staff who knew them well and understood their needs, personal characteristics, and sensitivities. Interactions between children and staff were respectful, supporting children to feel valued, included, and safe.

Children's care plans were updated and reviewed with parents in line with legislation every six months to plan for children's care and support. Staff completed observations for children linked to the GIRFEC SHANARRI wellbeing indicators, which are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. Staff liaised with parents and relevant professionals for children that required additional support and completed an action plan that included strategies and outcomes with detailed intervention and support.

Almost all children were happy, having fun and settled in the setting. Staff supported, reassured, and comforted new children who were settling and were responsive and respectful of individual children and families' needs. Feedback responses from parents told us they were satisfied with the gradual approach, which helped their children to settle.

Children had a hot meal or a packed lunch from home, supporting their preferences. Meals were nutritious and followed healthy eating guidance. For the majority of children, lunchtime was a pleasant experience. However, some staff missed opportunities to sit with children to help them to develop their social, language and independence skills. It was mainly from staff who had to gain further experience or knowledge in promoting high-quality social experiences for children. The management team responded well to the raised points and quickly implemented improved measures to enhance children's mealtimes.

Staff supported children's safety, emotional security, and wellbeing through the sensitive arrangements for sleep routines. Routines were reflective of individual children's needs. For example, children could cuddle with staff when tired or sleep on the mats with a blanket in the cosy area. The positive attachments formed supported children to feel loved and promoted good habits around sleep.

We reviewed the setting's medication policy and procedures. We found medication was stored securely, labelled and out of reach of children. However, we found some inconsistencies in the management of medicines, which increased the potential for errors in administering medication safely. As a result, the service immediately updated the monitoring system for auditing medications to sustain best practices. In addition, feedback from two parents confirmed that the service had updated their child's medication plan.

Quality indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Staff had a very good understanding of child development, relevant theory, and practice and skilfully used learning to support high-quality play and learning experiences.

Planning for children's play and learning was child-centred and responsive to their interests. A skilled staff

team provided appropriate resources and materials to support all children. Staff used their observations of children's play and discussions with them to create mind maps, floorbooks and wall displays. These recorded children's thoughts, ideas, and discussions, and staff worked together to extend children's ideas to provide breadth and depth to their learning. This approach helped create meaningful change and enriched the provision, enhancing children's play and learning.

During discussions and the Dojo app, staff shared information about children's play and learning with parents, which allowed them to be involved in their child's experiences and share information between the setting and home.

Children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their play and learning through a balance of planned and spontaneous high-quality experiences promoting their choice and independence. The exciting, open-ended materials and resources supported their creativity, inquiry, and lifelong skills.

The well-considered innovations and creative approaches successfully engaged children's imagination and enriched their numeracy and literacy skills. An example was the Dolly Parton Imagination Library which inspired children's love of reading. The staff further promoted the storybooks during play and cross-curricular experiences; for example, cooking and malleable activities where children developed early maths skills at nursery and home, and IT skills where children learned how to use QR codes using a tablet device when listening to stories and songs. Children also had the opportunity to retell the stories during their transition visits to primary one.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided which impacted positively on children's outcomes; therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was safe, secure, and comfortable, furnished to a high standard and welcoming, with plenty of natural light and ventilation. It gave a strong message to children and families that they matter with ample space for their needs.

Staff had created a positive learning environment with purposeful play zones with opportunities for all children to lead their play and learning and choose from a wide range of toys and resources that stimulated their imagination and curiosity. The free flow access to the outdoor space allowed children to be healthy, have fun and develop skills.

Improvements to maximise the outdoor space with the help of parent volunteers were in place to maximise children's play and learning experiences to support further engagement.

Risk assessments and daily checks ensured a safe environment. Staff identified and removed potential risks to children indoors and outdoors, while recognising the benefits of activities to support challenging and fun play and learning experiences.

We were satisfied that the service had the appropriate infection, prevention, and control procedures to support a safe environment for children; for example, good handwashing routines. The playrooms were visibly clean, and monitoring records for cleaning minimised the spread of infection.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided which impacted positively on children's outcomes; therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We found the leadership team engaged well in the inspection process and were welcoming, friendly and open to our suggestions, demonstrating a commitment to improvement.

Children and families participated in the development of the service through discussions and questionnaires. It supported them to be involved and included in the nursery and feel that their suggestions, ideas, and opinions mattered.

Staff participated in regular meetings and professional discussions. It was an opportunity to share responsibilities, evaluate the progress of improvement priorities, and discuss children's play and learning, supporting positive outcomes.

Almost all staff felt supported by the management team professionally and personally. However, some staff felt that support was not always readily available due to short staffing, and requests took longer than expected to see results. The management team agreed that the service had faced some challenges over the past few years. However, they understood the importance of ongoing communication across the staff team. Therefore, they would continue to ensure that all staff feel valued and listened to in relation to changes and service improvements.

Children benefitted from a service committed to continuous improvement. The staff team were dedicated and passionate about providing high quality care for children. There was a clear focus on self-evaluation and quality assurance and how this could promote change and improvement.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided which impacted positively on children's outcomes; therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

There had been changes to staffing, management and the setting since the last inspection. However, we found the staff had adapted well and worked collaboratively to support one another. Regular meetings enabled the staff team to reflect on their childcare practice, develop professionally and provide children with a happy, secure, and supportive environment.

The deployment of staff within the service was well managed and effective in meeting children's needs, allowing them to access the full provision. Staff skills, knowledge and interests complemented one another and resulted in quality experiences for children.

Staff communicated well with one another, sharing relevant information to meet children's day-to-day needs. It included information sharing about children's daily routines, family updates and requests. Most parents were happy with how the staff communicated about their child's day, supporting continuity of care. However, feedback from some parents said that communication at handovers could be better. As a result,

the management team agreed to review the communication processes between staff and parents to ensure a consistent approach to information sharing.

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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