Cairns Primary School Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

Ivybank Avenue
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 March 2023

Service provided by:
South Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003481

Service no:
CS2003015277

About the service

Cairns Primary School Nursery Class is registered to provide care to 54 children. The age range of those children is from aged 3 years to not yet of an age to attend primary school.

Care is provided from the nursery within Cairns Primary School, located within Cambuslang, South Lanarkshire. The service is close to local shops, schools, transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 March 2023. Feedback was provided on Friday 17 March 2023. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with five people using the service and 20 families
- spoke with 13 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with two visiting professionals

Key messages

- Parental engagement was high and was having a positive impact on outcomes for children and families.
- Connections with wider school experiences and general wider experiences strengthened children's opportunities for learning.
- Children were engaged, happy and confident in the environment.
- Staff were very nurturing. Sensitive to children's needs they worked at a level that supported children to feel loved and confident in their own abilities.
- Leadership was very strong. Staff worked hard as a team and had a clear focus on delivering high quality for all children and families.

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 how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

1.1 Nurturing Care and Support

Staff had built positive relationships and supported children's wellbeing. They were committed to delivering a very high standard of care through nurturing approaches. Children's rights were respected. Their successes, achievements and differences were shared and celebrated. For example, moments of achievement were recorded in personal plans, wall displays had photos of all children with their creations and staff were observed sharing and celebrating individual moments of excitement and success in a meaningful way with the wider group of children and staff.

Parents were encouraged to be actively involved in decisions about their child's care and development. They told us "We are aware of the care plan in place and are consulted on our child's next steps by their key worker throughout the year when a new learning target is set" and "I am asked to contribute to this and provide targets to help my child learn and achieve. My child's key worker has encouraged me to help set more challenging targets as they have identified that my child is ready for this". Personal plans were created using the wellbeing indicators from Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) good practice guidance. They contained detailed information on children's interest and areas of significant need. This meant that a consistent approach was used to support children and was having a positive impact on improving their outcomes.

Two visiting professionals told us they were involved with the service. They provided regular support to children in relation to additional support needs and provided training or support to nursery staff. They told us that the service and staff were "Extremely child centred and very much go out of their way to provide not only a safe, nurturing and welcoming environment, but an environment which seeks to give rich experiential learning both within and out-with the physical building. They see the importance of working with their pupils alongside the family" and another said "The staff at Cairns are consistent in their supports. They are very caring towards the children which makes the nursery a very nurturing environment to be in. One thing I would comment on specifically, is their daily planning around broadening children's experiences. They work closely with families in doing this. Their use of the outdoor environment and other environments, both in the school and local community (gym hall, computer room, library, park) is excellent and the children enjoy these experiences".

This was consistent with our findings. Staged intervention and additional support plans support where needed were in place to support children to achieve. Strategies agreed were used consistently in practice. One parent told us "I feel my child is cared for and supported exceptionally well. I have already saw massive improvements in my child's language and communication skills".

Children were confident and secure in their relationships with staff and each other. They were happy, having fun and immersed in a supportive and nurturing community within the nursery and wider school environment. Staff were observed responding in a sensitive way to offer further challenge such as during learning for a group of children who were engaged in block play and other staff member supported a child's confidence when transitioning at pick up time.

Suitable plans were in place to support the management of medication, accidents and incidents. Medication was stored safely out of the reach of children and parents were aware of the expectations around this. We spoke with the service about regular reviews and monitoring of this documentation and they understood the importance of this. One parent told us "My child has an inhaler and the staff understand how to use this and when it to be administered. If my child has had it they let me know".

Staff told us that they had made changes to the lunchtime routine. Children were now having lunch in the nursery rather than the school dining hall. This had proved to be successful and provided children the opportunity to enjoy their meal in a smaller, cosy space sitting with their friends. One staff member told us "Children use this time to chat to one another and myself, take on leadership roles such as setting the table and serving their group lunch. We are in the process of trying to organise the children to have their own dishes so they can serve themselves at the table".

Lunch time was a relaxed positive experience. Parents were invited to join children for lunch and appreciated this opportunity. A parent told us "I was invited in to have lunch with my child's group last week. I was so impressed to see the children serving lunch to one another, pouring their own water, setting the table and sitting calmly to eat their meal. There was music on in the background and it was a lovely experience".

Staff had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. They participated in regular training and systems ensured they were confident in recognising and responding appropriately to any concerns.

1.3 Play and Learning

A parent told us "The nursery is an ideal environment to foster both learning but also development. My child has come on so much since attending the nursery". We observed children who were having fun and confident in the environment. The pace of day matched the needs of children and there was minimal disruption to their play. This fostered high-quality play, learning and development.

Staff extended and widened children's thinking through skilful interactions. For example, one child used large blocks and bears to create a "Gummy bear temple" and spoke of how the yellow bears had "Electricity power in them". A member of staff observed this play and asked children if they could share in the experience. They asked questions about electricity and the structure of the temple. This rich conversation sparked children's imagination and was shared with the wider group. Staff were then mindful to ensure the child could re-visit their temple later. This demonstrated to children that they mattered and their creations were respected.

Staff were aware of providing a good balance of spontaneous and planned play experiences that promoted choice and the development of lifelong skills and independence. The service was proud of the additional events and activities they had built in for children. These delivered rich, broad and deep opportunities such as weekly mindfulness and yoga sessions, a computer group within the school, tending their own allotment of produce and mini masterclass Friday's where children were able to bake, cook and learn new things with older pupils from the school.

Skills in language, literacy and numeracy were being developed through play in a holistic way. Staff were tracking and supporting children's progress and learning in these areas. There were many opportunities indoors, outdoors and in the wider community for children to engage and learn.

Parents agreed with this and told us "The staff also focus on early literacy and numeracy skills and my child is always singing songs from nursery. They also have taken part in storytelling and can repeat with great joy stories they have been told. Their confidence has grown so much, since starting Cairns".

Staff had a solid understanding of child development. They told us they were lifelong learners and shared research and further reading as a team to ensure they remained up to date with good practice. For example, some staff were undertaking further studies in childhood practice and another had recently undertaken training in woodwork. Practice and theory were being used to support planning children's experiences.

Children's learning was progressing. They were accessing stimulating learning across all curricular areas and reflective planning processes were at the heart of this approach. Children were placed at the centre of learning and were encouraged to lead their own learning. For example, parents told us "My child has been involved in many exciting learning activities, including cooking, woodwork and outdoor learning. Not a week goes by without something interesting happening, from parent workshops, showcases of learning or library visits" and another told us "My child enjoys book bug at the library, park visits and a range of themed days/ weeks at nursery which allows them to develop skills across various areas of learning".

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

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

The setting was comfortable, well-furnished and a homely space for children. The playroom was spacious and well-ventilated with plenty of natural light. Staff had created a welcoming atmosphere for children and relaxation music played quietly in the background.

The staff had worked hard to develop inviting spaces that offered stimulating provocations such as large-scale weaving with wool and ribbon and regular opportunities to conduct experiments through a commitment to learning around science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). This meant that children were able to engage in deep learning.

Staff met regularly to monitor both the indoor and outdoor environments. For example, recent observations noted that children were transporting large blocks to a certain area of the outdoor space to build. Staff as a result reflected and made changes to the space to support this area of ongoing interest for children. They were active and flexible in their approach to delivering developmentally appropriate spaces. Parents supported this and told us "There are lots of different areas of the room for my child to explore and we can see from the photos on learning journal that they visit lots of different areas".

Parents told us that they felt their child's interests and stages of development were reflected throughout the environment saying "My child asked the nursery to host a superhero day and the nursery made this happen, involving all of the children in the planning process. It Is clear that my child's views are valued and they feel part of the Cairns nursery family" and another said, "My child gets to interact with the wider school too and really feels like part of the school" and we agreed.

The service had a variety of safety measures in place such as a secure entry system and risk assessments. Children received care in a safe environment that was well maintained. We discussed and the service agreed on the importance of the safe storage of equipment and furniture.

Suitable infection prevention and control practices were in place and helping to minimise the spread of infection. Parents agreed and told us "The nursery has always been clean during my visits" and "The nursery is a safe, clean and welcoming learning space". Staff used appropriate personal protective equipment when required and handwashing was embedded. This supported a safe environment for children.

Children's information was securely stored and managed. Consideration had been given to data protection and use of online systems and parents had signed permission as part of that.

The service had a variety of policies such as administration of medication, promoting positive behaviour and child protection. These policies were aligned with the aims, vision and values of the service. This included supporting children in their nursery journey, celebrating their achievements and providing a nurturing and safe space to learn.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

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

Staff used good practice guidance, team meetings, professional development reviews and training opportunities to facilitate discussions. This meant that focus areas for the service where in place where they needed to be for children and staff to excel. A parent told us "Staff always ask for parent feedback after every event and at the parent group meetings". This was supporting children to learn and achieve.

A parent told us "I can honestly say the standards could not be higher and the community spirit and family inclusion is excellent. I can see how they continually try to improve and evaluate to raise standards". The service improvement plan linked with the needs of the service and was also linked to staff members professional development. As part of this there were opportunities for staff to take on lead roles which had supported well informed change. We could see from minutes of meetings that discussions were rich and reflective to ensure a high-quality provision was offered.

Staff shared the challenges faced since last inspection including staff changes, the introduction of 1140 hours early years provision and the impact of Covid-19 lockdowns. However, very clear and effective strategies had been put in place to support and manage change successfully. The leadership team was strong and had a clear vision to support positive outcomes for children and staff. Their vision was one of high expectations supported with high levels of support and this reflected our findings.

Quality assurance and self-evaluation was used as a valuable tool to monitor and drive the delivery of high-quality care and support. The service had an up-to-date calendar for quality assurance. Focus areas included family engagement, quality of the setting and views of the community. These tasks were supporting positive change for families and children and were underpinned by current best practice.

The leadership team and staff were confident, committed and passionate in their promotion of their shared vision. Several families shared individual experiences of the well placed and focused support they had received. For example, support for children settling after Covid-19 lockdown, guidance shared on sleep routines and toileting, building parents confidence and skills, being invited to take part in a weekly lending library, parents' group and garden committee. This demonstrated that staff understood the needs and aspirations of children, families, and the wider community.

A variety of two-way communications were in place and functioned as a starting point for future improvements. These included online learning journals, newsletters, garden and eco groups and a very regular programme of opportunities to stay and play and get involved. Two grandparents enjoyed regular attendance at the service to read stories with children and show them how to bake bread and develop their allotment. Parents welcomed this and told us "We find out about our child's day at nursery from the school/nursery online account which shows photos of the children learning. The staff also give a wee highlight of the day at pick up and we use the daily board to ask them questions when they come out. We get a weekly overview of their learning on the learning journals".

The views of children and their families were sought to support developments in the service. For example, there was an active parents' group and various weekly events for parents to attend and provide evaluations on. Children's voices were heard and acted on and this was reflected in floor books that captured children's interests, thoughts and suggestions. Parents agreed and told us they would have no problem speaking to staff about concerns. They felt the staff would "Take the time to listen" and would "Try to resolve any concerns".

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

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

Staff were well deployed across almost all of the day. They communicated well when tasks took them away from children such as when supporting toileting and when supporting an unwell child who was going home. Staff shifts and breaks were flexible which helped to minimise impact on children. One parent told us they were "Extremely grateful to the staff for their hard work in providing a stimulating environment" in which their child was "flourishing and growing". This supported our findings; the service was appropriately staff and supervision ensured children had quality engagements across the day.

Careful consideration had been given to the skills, knowledge, and expertise of the staff. For example, each member of staff had a leadership role that focused on providing extended opportunities in a variety of aspects across the curriculum such as outdoors, health & wellbeing and parental engagement. This meant that staff were focused and aligned with the current interest, needs and plans for supporting children's learning.

Staff were aligned in their vision and happy to be at work. Where there had been staff absences these were managed well by the leadership team to ensure there was minimal impact on children. This was supported through the service's maximising attendance policy and sharing with families the strategies used to secure continuity for children at those times. Families told us "My oldest child went to Cairns nursery class and they came on fabulously so it was my first and only choice for my youngest child and all I can say is they are doing exactly the same for them" and another told us "We've been very fortunate to not have any issues within the nursery, however I do strongly feel if I had any issues I would be confident raising them with the management or any other member of staff".

The service told us about staffing changes that had taken place over the last few years and the impact this had on the service. However, the management team along with staff had worked hard to ensure new and temporary staff were well supported through a detailed induction and programme of mentoring. This meant that staff were clear in their understanding of their roles and the needs of individual children.

Well-functioning systems were in place that enabled new children, families and staff to be introduced and form positive bonds that were supporting high quality outcomes not only for children but also for their families. Families felt this approach worked well. One parent told us "The settling in was all discussed prior to my child starting. Staff explained that they like to stagger all the new children to allow them time to get used to the nursery and so the staff can offer extra reassurance to each new child. This worked wonderfully for my child and she settled straight away".

Parents were confident that the service was staffed with a passionate, professional and driven team who wanted only the very best for every child. Several parents commented about this saying "My child's key worker has given my child so much of their time and care, helping to develop their confidence, interests and promoting strong friendships within the learning group" and "my child is most definitely happy and confident with all staff. They have a keyworker, but I know they spend time with all the staff as they talk at home about it" and another told us "I cannot speak highly enough of Cairns, a wonderful team and very lucky children".

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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