Bellshill Family Learning Centre
Day Care of Children

91 Deans Street
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 January 2023

Service provided by:
North Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000237

Service no:
CS2003015346

About the service

Bellshill Family Learning Centre is registered to provide care for 74 children not yet attending primary school. Of those, no more than 10 are aged two to three years.

Care is provided from a detached building located in Bellshill, North Lanarkshire. The centre is based at the heart of the Bellshill community close to green space, shops and other local amenities.

Children were accommodated within three separate playrooms. An enclosed outdoor play area can be accessed from all rooms.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 10 January and Wednesday 11 January 2023. 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 and 14 of their family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm and caring interactions which helped them to feel nurtured.
- Staff knew children well and supported their individual needs.
- Children were engaged in play and confident within their environment.
- Staff were flexible and supportive of each other. They worked well as a team to support and care for children as individuals.
- Management had a vision for the service and clear plans for improvement.
- The provider should review the changing facilities and make necessary improvements.
- Quality assurance processes need to be embedded to secure sustained improvement across the centre.
- Lunchtime experiences should be improved for children.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children attending the service were happy, settled and secure in the setting and were confident in their interactions with staff and each other. Children were engaged in their play and were having fun with friends and staff. One child told us "I love my friends here, they are nice and its fun."

Children were supported with kind and nurturing approaches that supported their overall wellbeing. Staff knew the care and support needs of individual children well, and were responsive to children's physical and emotional needs, helping to promote self-esteem, confidence and independence. Parents told us, "staff are very attentive, and often go above and beyond for children" and "the nursery have always been massively supportive in my child's development and have always supported my child's wishes and needs."

Children's care and support needs were further supported through positive relationships that had been established with external agencies. This included regular engagement with speech and language, educational psychologist and occupational therapist, which ensured continuity in children's learning and development. External agencies agreed that staff were committed and supported children's needs and were eager to identify approaches to reduce barriers to ensure they are getting it right for children. Visiting professionals described staff as "devoted to the service" and "always want the best for children at all times."

All children had personal plans, which had been created in partnership with parents and carers. Plans contained important information needed to care for children. We discussed with management how these could be further developed to reflect strategies to support individual learning and development. Most parents were aware of their child's personal plans and had updated this with staff. One parent told us "my child has a personal plan since they have started which is updated regularly" and another shared "the nursery has worked well with me when I have identified specific issues."

Children were encouraged to make independent choices throughout their session, including snack time. We observed snack time to be a time for children and staff to talk together and connect. This experience promoted children to develop skills in literacy and numeracy through conversation and problem solving, as well as promoting their independence. This promoted a positive, relaxed and unhurried snack experience.

However, we found these opportunities were not consistent with the lunch time routines. We found some staff to be task orientated at lunchtime which minimised the opportunity for children to develop skills and engage in unhurried social interactions. The setting should further develop opportunities to promote children's independence further at lunchtime. More opportunities to prepare food, self-select and serve would help build children's confidence and develop skills for life. More information on supporting positive mealtimes can be found on our website. Staff agreed to take this forward.

Children were safe and protected from harm with clear policies and procedures in place relating to child protection. Staff clearly understood their role and responsibilities and had participated in training, helping them develop their knowledge and skills.

The head of centre acted as child protection officer, ensuing a robust system was in place and we were confident that any child protection matters would be responded to appropriately.

Medication was stored appropriately. Boxes were clearly labelled with children names. Medication was administered sensitively and safely in line with children's needs. Staff had participated in training to administer life saving medicine, and understood how to keep children safe and healthy.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were leading their own play and learning through a balance of planned and spontaneous experiences. The environment ensured children had opportunities to be creative and curious during play. They had choice and independence of where they wanted to play and how they would lead their play both indoors and outdoors. We discussed with the service how access to outdoor space could be further developed to ensure children could access play more frequently and independently.

Children had fun while at nursery. Their play and learning was supported by having access to a range of stimulating play spaces, where they also had the opportunity to use their imagination and explore their natural curiosity. For example, using green beans and limes within the house corner to make dinner.

Children were engaged in play and were progressing well in their overall development. We observed children engage in play experience for prolonged periods of time showing high levels of engagement, whilst also developing their skills in language , literacy and numeracy. For example, counting how many scoops to fill a bucket at the water area.

Most staff were responsive to children through skilled observations, responding appropriately to enhance learning, through skilful questioning, extending children's thinking and learning. Staff should continue to develop their skills and confidence in extending children's learning through meaningful conversations. To further support staff's understanding of how children learn and develop, the management team should continue with planned training and development opportunities.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

2.2. Children experience high quality facilities

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children experienced a warm and welcoming ethos within the nursery. One parent told us, "staff are very friendly and welcoming. They have made both myself and my child feel very welcomed."

Playrooms were homely, well ventilated and bright, providing a warm and nurturing environment for children. The inclusion of soft furnishings, neutral décor, fairy lights and natural materials ensured that children had spaces to relax and refresh, supporting their emotional wellbeing. We discussed with the service how this could be further enhanced by ensuring quiet spaces are available across the playrooms.

Careful consideration had been given to the layout of the rooms to offer a range of spaces for children to make choices, support their interest and develop their ideas. Children benefitted from a well resourced and carefully set out indoor play space. This gave a real sense that children mattered and were valued. We saw children who explored happily and were engaged in their play. Children told us "I love nursery, I really like playing in the garden" and "I like the house, I get to make dinner for my friends."

Both indoor and outdoor spaces boasted a range of experiences, toys and materials available to children to stimulate their natural curiosity. For example, blocks, loose parts, play dough, sensory items. This could be further developed within two to three room, adding further natural resources to promote curiosity, creativity and schematic play. One parent shared with us, "We recently had a play and stay day which was so good, I was impressed with the resources and toys on hand for children."

Health and wellbeing was promoted through outdoor play experiences. The garden provided a range of spaces for the development of physical skills and exploration. Opportunities for risky play were provided with children assessing their own risks. For example, children balancing on large tractor tyres and balancing beams. Children made good use of this and were confident when using all areas of the outdoor space.

Improvements were needed to the toilet and nappy changing facilities, to ensure children experienced privacy and dignity when having their nappy changed. We signposted the service to best practice guidance, such as 'Space to grow' and 'nappy changing facilities for early learning and childcare services: information to support improvement.' The provider should take steps to ensure children's privacy and dignity during care routines.

Children benefitted from a safe and secure setting with a range of safety measures in place to help ensure children didn't come to harm. This included secure entry systems, clear boundary fencing, secure gates as well as regular headcounts and communication between staff.

Suitable measures were in place to reduce the risk of infection being transmitted with good handwashing facilities for staff and children which were used effectively for most of the day. Parents told us, "the nursery is clean and tidy and I regularly see the caretaker taking good care of the nursery inside and outside."

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The management team and staff team all worked together to ensure a positive ethos within the setting. The nursery's vision had recently been reviewed and enhanced to reflect the ongoing development of the service and positive outcomes for children. The manager promoted a positive attitude to change and recognised the importance of including others when developing the vision.

Some quality assurance processes were in place, including a clear improvement plan with realistic targets to support the development of the service. The management team and staff were reflective of their practice and were keen to make changes to ensure positive outcomes for children.

As a result, we were confident that the service was well placed to continue to develop practice with a focus on improving outcomes for children. This should include developing systems to ensure all quality assurance processes are being documented to ensure consistency in all approaches.

Children and families were involved in directing change in the setting. This was achieved through consultations with children in the playroom and questionnaires to parents, to actively seek their thoughts and views on recent 'stay and play' session and how the service could improve. The service should continue to develop this approach to collect information more regularly on relevant aspects of the nursery life.

Staff were given the opportunity to lead areas of practice. For example, a programme of distributive leadership was in place, with staff members taking on champion roles. The service should continue to develop this to ensure staff are sharing their learning with each other and to support children's experiences further.

Professional dialogue and environment audits had helped to develop children's play spaces, ensuring they progressed in their learning and wellbeing. Staff should continue to develop their knowledge of best practice guidance, to build knowledge and aid future reflections.

Team meetings provided staff with opportunities to receive updates on the service and kept them informed about all aspects of nursery life. These opportunities enabled them to discuss individual children and share their ideas on what was working well in the playrooms and what could be improved. Staff felt supported by the management team and felt that their views and suggestions were important.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

4.3 Staff deployment

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The setting had sufficient staff to meet the needs of children, which allowed staff to be flexible in their approach. Staff were attuned to children needs, children who required additional support were supported by staff to feel respected and included in daily experiences.

Children benefitted from warm and caring relationships with staff. Staff understood the importance of developing nurturing relationships and listened to children's ideas and experiences. This meant that children were valued and respected. Parents told us, "staff are amazing not only with children but making me as a parent feel I'm a big part of my child's education" and "staff absolutely brilliant, they always have an ear and take time to listen."

Staff worked well together and were committed to improving outcomes for children and their families. They communicated well with each other and met regularly using health and wellbeing discussions to share important information about children's needs, which ensured they maintained quality interactions with children.

Communication was effective when tasks took staff away from their responsibilities. Staff worked well to ensure effective supervision and engagement with children across the day. As a result there were minimal interruptions to staff engagement with children. The service should consider the deployment of staff at key transition times, such after lunchtime, to ensure these levels of engagement are maintained.

Staff were deployed well, ensuring a mixture of differing experienced staff worked together. This provided opportunities for good role models and mentoring of less experienced staff, to ensure positive experiences for children. The management team were also visible and played a key role in promoting good practice.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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