St. Francis Xavier RC Primary School, Early Learning and Childcare Class
Day Care of Children

St.Francis Xavier RC Primary School
Merchiston Avenue
Falkirk
FK2 7JS

Telephone: 01324 508 570

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 November 2022

Service provided by:
Falkirk Council

Service provider number:
SP2004006884

Service no:
CS2003015427

About the service

St. Francis Xavier RC Primary School, Early Learning and Childcare Class is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 64 children. The children will be aged between three years and those not yet attending school.

The service is located in Falkirk, and is set within a purpose-built building within the grounds of St. Francis Xavier RC Primary School. The environment consisted of; the main playroom, kitchen area, children's toilets, and a cloak room. Children were able to directly access the enclosed garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 23 November 2022 between 09:00 and 16:45. 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 several children using the service and seven parents
- spoke with staff
- observed practice and daily life including staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children and families were supported by staff that were warm and compassionate. They felt welcome and included in the service.
- Staff had made an impact on children's progress and learning through effective partnership working with families and links with other professionals.
- The outdoor environment impacted positively on the wellbeing of children and stimulated their natural curiosity, learning, and creativity.
- The service continued to review and develop personal plans so they consistently reflected children's progress and learning.

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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children's wellbeing was supported because of the kind, caring, and nurturing approaches used by the staff team. They chatted with children at their level in a calm and sensitive way supporting them to manage their feelings. The feelings wall was used effectively meaning that children could express themselves using visual aids. This helped them to feel emotionally safe and secure. Parents said they felt welcome in the service and were able to chat with key staff at drop off and collection times.

Children's progress and learning was supported by effective partnership working. Staff had developed trusting relationships with families. Respecting the knowledge that families had of their children meant that personal plans were developed in a personalised way. Regularly reviewing the care and support for children in consultation with families meant they felt included, and children's care and support was consistent at home and in the service. Staff told us about their learning when they had linked with other professionals to seek advice about the strategies that would best support children's needs. This approach meant children were receiving a service that was right for them. Dialogue during 'Huddle' meetings supported consistency of care for children. Recording formats including 'what matters to me' and learning journals were supporting children to have a voice. This meant they were included in their care and support plan. The service continued to review and develop the detail within personal plans so they consistently reflected children's progress and learning.

In the main, staff respected children's rights and promoted them through their work with children. They promoted the right for children to play and have fun, and supported personal care taking account of their privacy and dignity. We asked staff to consider their practice to ensure children's rights were central to every aspect of their care, play, and learning, including when administering medication. This will ensure children are aware of their rights, feeling valued and respected.

Mealtime routines provided children with choice including eating indoors or outdoors. They were unhurried and sociable experiences. Children were developing life skills, independence and learning about healthy lifestyle choices. They were pouring drinks and self-serving food. When helping to make soup they were learning to stay safe when peeling and chopping vegetables. Staff sat with children at the table chatting and positively role modelling social behaviours. Systems were in place to support children's dietary needs and help them to feel included in the mealtime experience.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children were valued and recognised as individuals. They had a sense of achievement as they developed life skills through their play and learning. We saw children outdoors using magnifying glasses on a bug hunt. They became interested in fungi growing on a log. Staff talked with the children about the risk of touching or eating the fungi. It was agreed that it should be carefully removed by an adult. Children were learning about nature and about staying safe outdoors. Staff responded to children's interests by listening to them and planned their experiences using provocations that encouraged them to be curious and to use their imagination. Children were leading their learning and being spontaneous.

Children's overall wellbeing was enhanced through access to the outdoor environment. Children were keen to show us their garden and to tell us about the fun they had there. They showed us the shed where they could relax and have a story, play a game, or draw. The polytunnel had been used for planting and growing, and we saw a child relaxing inside having a story with a member of staff. Children showed us the trees and logs that they could climb, balance and jump off. They told us about risks in the garden including how they had to be careful because the logs were slippy when they were wet. Children were growing in confidence and developing a love for nature and the outdoors.

Staff were developing a very good awareness of child development, theory, and practice. An understanding of schematic play had helped staff better engage in children's learning. Woodwork, the use of the sewing machine, and being part of the gardening club were some of the learning experiences children were enjoying that supported their learning and development.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

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

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children had the freedom to make choices about where to play throughout the day. They benefited from a comfortable and welcoming environment that was clean and well ventilated. Staff were aware of how children used the areas making small changes to ensure they found their environment exciting. This supported children to be curious and to engage in a variety of play and learning experiences.

Children had free access to the outdoor garden throughout the day including having the choice to eat outdoors. Staff recognised the positive impact being outdoors had on their wellbeing. Staffing levels and a risk benefit approach ensured children were safe. Children were learning to stay safe through conversations with staff including when involved in risky play experiences.

Keeping children safe and healthy was a priority. We saw robust infection prevention and control measures that were embedded into routines. Hand washing indoors and outdoors was effective and staff cleaned the areas used for mealtimes.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

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

3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The vison, values, aims, and objectives for the service had been reviewed and shared with families. There was a clear vision for the service which was evident throughout our visit. The positive ethos and values based practice focused on continuous improvement and positive outcomes for children and families.

The management team and staff were committed to developing and improving outcomes for children and families. Systems and processes including moderation of practice through floor walks and regular audits supported managers and staff to identify how they were doing, how they knew and what they were going to do next. Common areas that needed improved were identified and professional dialogue supported a consistent approach to making improvements. Staff reflected on interactions, spaces, and experiences to bring about positive change to outcomes for children and families. This supported a culture of continued improvement. The views of children and families were gathered through regular surveys. The service continued to develop ways to actively seek the views of children and families so they were actively involved in developing the quality of the service.

Time was protected to enable the staff team to meet regularly. This ensured they were included and were able to contribute to discussions and share information. This meant that there was a consistent approach to meeting children's needs and supporting their progress and learning.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment
A happy environment for staff, children, and families meant children felt valued, loved, and secure. Staff recognised the importance of nurturing interactions as they worked together.

The deployment of staff within the service was well managed and effective to meet the needs of children. The right number of staff meant children had choices and their interests were supported as they accessed their play and learning opportunities. Staff worked well together as a team. Their differing skills, knowledge, and experience allowed them to support one another resulting in a consistent approach in the care and support provided for children.

Effective communication meant staff worked well together to ensure good supervision of children across the day. This contributed to children being respected and created a positive team ethos within the service.

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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