Dalry Nursery
Day Care of Children

Dalry Primary School
Dalry
Castle Douglas
DG7 3UX

Telephone: 01644 430 105

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 November 2022

Service provided by:
Dumfries & Galloway Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003501

Service no:
CS2003015480

About the service

Dalry nursery is located within Dalry primary school. The provider is Dumfries and Galloway Council. The service is located in the village of Dalry, Dumfries. It is close to shops, local amenities, and bus routes.

The service is registered:

1. To provide a care service to a maximum of 20 children aged three years and over to those who are not yet attending primary school.

2. During the operating times the service will have the exclusive use of one school classroom. The nursery shall have shared use of the primary school toilets. Following consultation between the school and the nursery management, the nursery may also have access to other rooms within Dalry Primary School. These rooms will be subject to a risk assessment prior to use.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 15 November 2022 between 09:45 and 15:15. 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, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with people using the service and eight of their family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled, and having fun at the nursery.
- Children experienced mealtimes that were relaxed and sociable.
- Children's wellbeing was supported through regular opportunities to play outdoors.
- Personal plans should be improved to ensure they consistently identify and support children's needs.
- Quality assurance processes, including self-evaluation should be further develop to support improvement.

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?	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? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, when taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, confident and having fun with friends and staff. We observed them experiencing nurturing and responsive care from staff which supported their health and wellbeing and ensured they felt loved at nursery. Children were keen to engage with staff in their play throughout the day. We found staff were mindful not to interfere in play and supported children to be respectful and kind to each other.

Children experienced snack and lunch times that were unhurried, sociable and relaxed. Children made choices about what snacks, meals and drinks they wanted to have which ensured they were involved, and their right to choose respected. Children were encouraged to independently collect cups and plates, and serve drinks and snacks. This could be further developed by giving children opportunities to serve some elements of their own lunch. Food choices were nutritious and reflected current guidance. Water was available throughout the day to ensure children remained hydrated.

Personal Learning plans (PLPs) were in place for each child and accessible to children. Staff knew existing children well and were getting to know others who had just started in the service. This meant that they could support children's needs. However some children did not have completed personal care plans or 'All about me' booklets in place to support this.

Some PLPs did not demonstrate progression in learning, next steps and how the staff would support individuals to achieve these. We suggested plans could be further enhanced by setting out strategies to support clear next steps that would support children to make progress in their learning. "All about me" booklets, containing information about children's likes, dislikes and interests, should be completed with the children and updated as they grow and develop. Management should develop systems to monitor children's personal learning plans to ensure a consistent approach to recording achievements and identifying next steps in learning. (See area for improvement 1).

Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They had attended recent child protection training and knew how to address any concerns. We have suggested the service create a short, easy read version of the nurseries child protection policy for families.

We sampled the nursery's medication policy and consent forms and found these were in line with current guidance. This ensured children's health and wellbeing.

1.3 Play and learning

Children benefited from planning approaches that were child centred and responsive to children's interests and experiences. Children were leading their own play throughout the session. We saw them explore different areas and immersed in a variety of play experiences.

We observed children engaging in conversations with staff, having fun with friends, developing meaningful relationships. Staff supported children with praise and encouragement which helped create a supportive and caring environment.

Children were unable to free flow between the indoors and outdoors, which the team were mindful off. Children could request access to the outdoors when they wanted to, and we observed evidence through photographs of children regularly playing outdoors. As identified in their own improvement plan, the nursery should continue to develop opportunities that would stimulate children's interest in numeracy and literacy outdoors.

The team were developing their 'In the moment' planning and recording process, and they had recently introduced the 'big book' and daily reflections. We suggested that the manager and staff consider processes for observations and effective assessments of children's progress and how these are recorded. Observations and assessments should be linked to GIRFEC/SHANARRI wellbeing indicators and the curriculum for excellence. Management should monitor children's learning journals to ensure a consistent approach to recording achievements and identifying next steps in learning. Families have also asked that communication be developed with them in relation to their child's individual progress.

Areas for improvement

1. In order to meet children's needs, the manager should further develop children's personal plans that identify appropriate strategies to meet children's needs, support progress and help children to achieve their full potential. Personal plans must be reviewed with parents every six months, or sooner if necessary.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:
'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.1)

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, when taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced an environment that was clean, comfortably furnished and welcoming for the children. The room had natural light and was ventilated with open windows and doors. There was space for children to play together, or alone if they chose to do so. The nursery had cosy spaces available in the story area and we observed children collect a book and relax on the bean bag.

Children could lead their play - they could easily access toys and equipment at their level. Natural, opened ended materials and loose part materials were available to stimulate children's curiosity and extended their play, in both the indoors and outdoor environment. This meant that children felt valued.

Although free flow access was not available in the nursery, staff were mindful of this and ensured children had access to the outdoor play space and large gym hall daily and when children requested this. The outdoor area had been developed over the past few years, allowing opportunities for children to engage in a variety of risky play, imaginative play, active play and sensory based play.

An outdoor sheltered area allowed children opportunities to read or draw. The outdoor area was developed in line with the interests of children. Parents told us the outdoor area was fun and stimulating for their children.

The nursery, as highlighted in their own improvement plan, should continue to evaluate with children, the space and resources available to them. They should expand resources to stimulate literacy and numeracy in a high-quality environment, including outdoors.

Infection prevention and control measures were in place in line with current guidelines. Children and staff regularly washed their hands throughout the day. The setting had an adequate supply of personal protective equipment which was stored appropriately. We advised that potties should be stored in individual sealed tubs after being cleaned between use.

Risk assessments were in place for all areas and activities within the setting. Mitigation measures were well considered and realistic.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, when taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led

We found the leadership team engaged well during the inspection process. They were welcoming, friendly and open to our suggestions. This demonstrated a commitment to improvement.

Aspirations for the nursery were shared by all staff and supported by the manager which showed us the service had capacity for change. Staff were motivated to continue improving the nursery for each individual child - they discussed a focus on literacy and numeracy in the nursery and the outdoors.

Staff worked well as a team to achieve quality care and experiences of children in their care. They told us they felt respected, included and listened to, and their ideas acknowledged by management. This supported a positive working ethos which was highlighted by families as a strength of the service. Included in their comments were:

"All the staff are very approachable"

"(Staff) are very caring and make my son feel safe and happy there"

"The nursery teaches and supports the children in a really positive and caring environment, allowing them to learn and grow through play. The positive impact this has had on (my child) in just a few months is a credit to the hard work and dedication the team puts in".

The service used some self-evaluation processes to identify strengths and areas for improvement. These should be further developed to ensure procedures are consistently followed, and to secure sustained improvement. To support this, management should develop a more focussed monitoring calendar to observe practice and lead discussions with staff. This should include monitoring of children's personal plans, medication, children's experiences, staff practice, and evaluating and improving the nursery as a whole. This will support more reflective practice and improved outcomes for children.

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 key question as very good.

4.3 Staff deployment

Children were supported in a nursery that was appropriately staffed to meet their individual health, wellbeing and safety needs. Continuity of care and effective communication was promoted by the manager and staff. This minimised the impact of staff breaks on children during their time at the nursery. Staff worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement across the day. We observed examples of staff engaging with individuals and small groups of children which helped children feel valued and loved in the nursery.

Staff were committed to their roles, and they talked warmly about supporting children to reach their full potential. Staff were skilled in their roles and discussed utilising each others' strengths as a team to support high quality play and learning for children in their care.

Staff were recruited in line with safer recruitment guidance and were registered with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Newly recruited staff were supported by an induction process. This ensured staff knew their roles and responsibilities.

Children and their families experienced a warm, caring and nurturing setting. This was supported by good working relationships that had been established between the team and manager. Effective teamwork ensured care and support was consistent because people worked well together to identify support required for the children in their care. We found staff worked well together, and they were respectful in their interactions with each other. This helped create a positive ethos within the service, and positive role modelling for the children.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The routine and practice should be more responsive to children's needs.

National care standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16, standard 5 quality of experience.

This area for improvement was made on 28 February 2017.

Action taken since then

Staff had introduced 'In the moment' planning to the setting and were observed to be following the lead of the children in their play. Although there was some structure to the day, children were able to opt in and out activities if they chose too. This area for improvement has been met.

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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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