Avonbridge Primary School Early Learning and Childcare Class
Day Care of Children

Main Street
Avonbridge
Falkirk
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Telephone: 01324 861 247

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 November 2023

Service provided by:
Falkirk Council

Service provider number:
SP2004006884

Service no:
CS2003015556

About the service

Avonbridge Primary School Early Learning and Childcare Class is registered to provide a service to a maximum of 23 children: three-year-olds to those not yet attending primary school.

The service is located in Avonbridge, Falkirk and is based in Avonbridge Primary School. The environment consisted of a large open plan playroom with kitchen area, children's toilets, and cloak room. Children had direct access to the enclosed garden area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 November 2023 between 08:45 and 17:00. 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 three parents
- spoke with staff
- observed practice and daily life including staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents
- gathered feedback from families using a Microsoft Forms survey.

Key messages

- Children felt safe and secure benefitting from high quality interactions and the attachments they had formed with staff.
- High quality engagement with families facilitated a partnership approach to children's care, play, and learning outcomes.
- Children's wellbeing and learning was supported by a calm, peaceful, and welcoming environment.
- Strong leadership in the service had supported staff to develop confidence and knowledge in their roles.

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.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support
Staff understood the importance of secure attachments. Children's overall wellbeing was supported by high quality interactions. We could see that sensitive and caring approaches met the needs of children. A soft start to the day sensitively supported children's emotional wellbeing. A parent said, "My child is nurtured and listened to."

All children had a personal plan that was individual to them. Their care and wellbeing was supported by the plan providing information that guided staff in their practice and planning. Plans offered a rich picture of children's learning and the fun they had in the setting. A person centred approach to personal planning focused on including the child and their family. A parent said, "The children experience high quality play and care, and all their experiences and developments are recorded for us to view via their online learning journals. The staff are always available to talk via daily dialogue in person or on the telephone."

Mealtimes were relaxed and unhurried. Children were sensitively and calmly informed that lunch was ready. That meant they could finish reading their story or drawing their picture. Their choices were valued and respected. Children confidently followed the mealtime routines. They had opportunities to develop independence skills when helping to set the tables and serving their food. Staff and children sat together chatting. This created a sociable mealtime experience.

Opportunities for families to be involved in the life of the service included a variety of focus groups. Families were supported to understand the importance of children's learning at home and in the service. Staff had responded to a child's request to have Dad at a play and stay session. A date was planned to accommodate the family. A child said they were going on a number hunt with Mum. The child and parent had been involved in a number hunt as part of a focus group they had attended in the service. A parent said, "Other nursery events such as stay and plays, sing and rhyme, peep sessions etc., are always on offer. It is wonderful to see them visit the woods, explore within the local community and share their learning from home. There is lots of family engagement with the nursery and that is extremely important to us as a family."

Staff facilitated a partnership approach to ensure families were included in children's care, play, and learning outcomes. Children experienced consistency and continuity as a result. A creative range of focus groups and home link initiatives had been introduced. Families were supported to understand the importance of children's learning opportunities in their home environment.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning
Children benefitted from meaningful learning experiences. They were supported to achieve their potential as a result. Staff had a very good understanding of how children learned through play. All staff demonstrated a knowledge and understanding of schematic play. They told us about providing a box for a child to sit in supporting their enveloping schema. Staff interacted with children effectively asking questions that sparked their curiosity and interest. Children talked with staff about ice that was melting into water in the garden. They were being introduced to early science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM) enriching their play and learning experiences. A parent said, "Staff are lovely and friendly, they provide a wide range of activities for the kids. They treat each child as an Individual and ensure every kid is included."

Children's play and learning was enhanced by their outdoor learning opportunities. They were supported to feel a sense of connection with nature and the world around them. Children told us about the leaves they had collected when on a woodland walk. The use of the fire pit to melt wax to seal the leaves provided an opportunity for children to talk about staying safe. They were confident and competent as they answered questions and followed instructions that ensured their safety. Children told us that the hot chocolate with marshmallows was 'yummy' as they sat around the fire pit.

Children's interests were included as staff planned their play experiences. Children felt valued, were listened to, and were having fun taking part in experiences that were planned around their interests. A child had talked about a relative that had been in the war. Armistice day was important to the child's family. Children talked about poppies and made them in the art area.

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.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities
Children's emotional wellbeing was supported by a calm and homely environment. Children and families had a sense that they belonged, helping children to feel safe and secure. Natural light and sensory lighting created a sense of calmness. Soft furnishings and quiet spaces helped children to rest and relax. Children enjoyed storytelling with staff in the sensory den. A parent said, "Such a lovely, welcoming setting."

Children experienced a rich play environment that supported them to make independent choices. They were busy having fun and learning through play. Numeracy and literacy was visual across the environment. Children explored a wide variety of real life and authentic items that supported their natural curiosity, learning, and creativity. A child said, "I made a plane. It will fly up to the clouds." Another said, "Look, I have drawn a man" (mark making in the ice). Staff reflected on how children used the areas across the environment and changed them so that the resources and experiences supported children's interests. An interest in Autumn and Halloween had given children opportunities to develop life skills and an interest in nature. They had made pumpkin soup and bird feeders.

Staff understood the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing. Training in outdoor learning had supported them to develop their skills and understanding of how to plan for children's outdoor experiences. Children were active and developing physically as they climbed, jumped, and ran. The local community was used to a very good level. Children said they had fun collecting leaves on a recent woodland walk.

Children were supported to be healthy through effective infection prevention and control routines. The environment was well ventilated, hand washing was embedded in practice, and regular cleaning took place. Care Inspectorate's 'Keeping children safe - look, think, act campaign (SIMOA)' had supported staff to reflect on how they kept children safe. Daily checks and risk assessments informed staff practice. Including children in chats about safety meant they were being responsible and developing an awareness of how to stay safe. The setting could further extend children's understanding of how the service safeguards, protects, and supports children's wellbeing using props and visual cues.

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.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well
The management team and staff were committed to delivering a high quality service for children and families. The shared vision was evident in the kind, compassionate, and inclusive interactions we saw throughout our visit. This created a happy and welcoming ethos. A parent said, "Avonbridge Nursery is a lovely, welcoming nursery, they provide a high level of care for the kids. They provide the kids of many learning experiences and ensure nursery is a fun and happy place."

Children experienced high quality outcomes through the service being tailored to meet their rights, needs, and wishes. Families were meaningfully involved in the developments in the service, showing that the focus was centred on listening and taking action based on their views. A parent said, "They are happy to listen to the views of the families."

An improvement plan for the service had been developed through self-evaluation, including the views of staff, children, and families. Effective policies, procedures, and quality assurance processes supported the development of the service. A culture of continuous improvement was promoted to a very good level and secured positive experiences for children and their families.

Strong and encouraging leadership supported staff to feel confident and knowledgeable in their roles. Children were cared for by a dedicated staff team that felt well supported and valued. A positive ethos and strong leadership supported staff to have high aspirations and confidence in their abilities.

How good is our staff team? 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.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment
Staff knew children and families well and had established trusting and secure relationships with them. A parent said, "The staff team are very friendly, approachable, and always supportive. They know my child so well and meet my child's individual needs." Children were safe and happy being nurtured and supported by a caring staff team.

Staff wellbeing was a priority for the management team and the provider. An open door policy and support meetings meant staff felt valued, supported, and listened to. The importance of ensuring the service was appropriately staffed at all times was recognised and valued. Staff breaks were planned to minimise the impact on children whilst ensuring that staff had time to rest and be refreshed.

Staff were confident in their roles and communicated very well with one another. They worked together to keep children safe and engaged in their learning. Staff were proactive when anticipating where and when support might be needed. They were responsive to the needs of the children.

The staff team were committed to their own continued professional learning. Children's experiences and outcomes were improved as staff developed their knowledge and understanding. Training in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) training and outdoor learning had had a positive impact on outcomes for 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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