Westquarter Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Westquarter Avenue
Westquarter
Falkirk
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 June 2023

Service provided by:
Falkirk Council

Service provider number:
SP2004006884

Service no:
CS2003015570

About the service

Westquarter Primary School Nursery is a day care of children service provided by Falkirk Council. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 50 children. The children will be aged between three years and those not yet attending school.

The service is located in the village of Westquarter near Falkirk. The accommodation is on one level which is open plan area with a separate kitchen, laundry, changing area and office. Children have direct access to a fully enclosed outdoor space. The local community is also used to provide children with learning opportunities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 14 June 2023 between 08:45 and 16:00. 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 ten children using the service and four of their parents/carers. We received four completed electronic questionnaires.
- Spoke with seven staff and management.
- Observed practice and how children were supported in their play and with routines.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experience being cared for in an inclusive and supportive way as a culture of respect is embedded in practice.
- Children could lead their play and were supported to participate in a range of stimulating activities.
- Quality assurance has been effectively used to support the development of the service.
- The proactive management and staff team work very well together to make positive changes which have improved outcomes for children.
- Positive relationships with parents and carers meant effective partnership working was well established.

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 major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

The positive ethos within the service meant that a culture of respect and inclusiveness was embedded in practice. Children experienced positive interactions which had enabled them to form close attachments to all staff and develop nice friendships with each other. Children had a sense of belonging as they felt welcomed, valued and safe in the setting. Parent's said "My child has built up a strong bond with her key worker and other staff at the nursery. They know my child well and work hard to ensure her needs are met." and "I feel that my child receives excellent care, she is listened to and respected, and comforted when upset."

Staff helped children to have positive experiences as they recognised the importance of transition. They used home visits to build relationships with parents/carers and children. Information shared at this point prepared children for staring nursery and helped staff plan for their care. We also saw how children were helped to get ready for starting school. For example, they went to the dining hall for lunch. They were encouraged to learn about the routine so they knew what to expect when they started primary 1.

Partnership working with families and other agencies was well established. Children's development, learning and well-being was supported as regular contact enabled information to be shared. They contributed to the team around the child (TAC) meetings which promoted continuity of care for children. As a result, staff talked knowledgably about the needs of children and how they were supported and met.

There were a variety of ways in place which supported communication with parents. They felt this was a key strength as through daily chats, use of Class Dojo and reviews, everyone kept updated. This meant they felt listened to, valued and involved in their child's care. Parents liked that all staff contributed to the information gathered about their child. They found the 'two weeks of me' and six monthly review beneficial, as they could discuss their child's progress and agree 'next steps' for their continued development and learning.

Almost all children had positive meal and snack time experiences. Staff encouraged them to learn life skills as they served themselves and tidied up when they were finished. Children benefitted from the social aspect of meal times as they chatted with friends and staff. Due to the layout, staff, on occasion, had to leave the area to get items from the kitchen. There were plans in place to refurbish this area, which will result in the kitchen being situated next to the area for eating. This will enable staff to focus more on children and be responsive to their needs.

If children required medication, we confirmed that best practice was followed as appropriate information was recorded, it was safely stored and audits carried out. This helped ensure it was safely administered to children at the right time.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children benefited from a well organised environment where a range of activities supported their development and interests. This meant that they could lead their play both indoors and outdoors. Open ended resources helped children use their imagination, curiosity and investigation. As they experimented, one child said "I'm making the water pink. Now it is going to be black." As staff used questions well, children talked about their learning and shared ideas for developing their play. Staff positively responded to children's ideas which extended their play. As a result, we saw children were busy, had fun and spent long periods of time at activities. Parents told us "There are a wide variety of play experiences on offer, and these are regularly refreshed.

Direct access to the outdoor area and wider community meant children had opportunities to play in the natural environment. Children learned life skills as they problem solved, followed instructions and worked together as they shared ideas for their games. Staff used observation well so they were responsive to children's play. As a result, they were progressing well in their learning and development. One parent said "My child loves going to nursery, her confidence has grown so well since starting. She loves outdoor play at nursery."

Staff responded to children's interests and joined in their games. Their enthusiasm meant children felt listened to and valued as staff followed their lead. For example, children laughed and had fun when they helped them 'scare' people. Staff were skilled to use this as an opportunity to talk about feelings. One child said they liked "Playing with my nursery friends Teachers." Parents told us "Learning is child centered, and staff make the effort to engage and extend my child's learning through her own interests."

Staff were skilled at including opportunities to promote literacy and numeracy through play and talking with children. One initiative was helicopter stories. Children told staff stories which they wrote down. They were given meaning as children were encouraged to retell them as they acted them out.

Meaningful observations and reviews ensured children's progress, development and learning was well monitored. Along with parents, staff identified 'next steps' which ensured continued progression was supported. This enabled planning approaches to be child centred which supported them to achieve.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities.

Staff had created a safe, welcoming and well organised environment which was inviting and supported children's learning and development. Cosy areas were available which ensured they could also have quiet time to rest if they wanted to. As a result, we saw that children had positive experiences as they influenced the pace of their day as staff listened to them and supported their choices. Parent's said "There are a wide variety of play experiences on offer, and these are regularly refreshed."

Displays, photographs and artwork displayed contributed to the children's feeling of belonging and inclusion in the setting. Resources and toys were arranged so that children could choose what they wanted to do. The layout meant children had space to develop their games and play as they could move resources around. Parents said "The nursery area is welcoming, with sofas, beanbags and sensory/quiet areas for when children require some quiet time."

The outdoor area had recently been developed and offered children a stimulating place to play. Parents told us "The outdoor area is small and mostly paved, but this has recently been refurbished, with artificial grass and plants and sandpits etc which has made it much more inviting and welcoming for the children."

We saw how the wider community was used to enhance children's experiences. As they explored the natural environment, children learned about seasons and nature. For example they went bird watching and learned the names of birds.

The spread of infection was minimised as the environment was well ventilated, hand washing promoted and regular cleaning took place. To ensure children's safety, staff carried out daily checks of the indoor and outdoor areas which helped reduce any risk identified.

Staff were security conscious as they ensured they accounted for children throughout the day and when they went to use facilities within the school. A secure door entry system was in place, so staff knew when parents were in the building. We were satisfied that children's information was safely stored.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Children benefitted from a management and staff team who were committed to providing a quality service. There was a clear focus on self-evaluation and quality assurance which all staff contributed to. This had resulted in a shared vision for the development of the service, as all staff were familiar with the priorities outlined in the improvement plan. They were enthusiastic, pro-active and worked together to enable change. A focus on the outdoor area meant children benefitted from a stimulating place to play. For example, the addition of planters offered children the opportunity to plant and grow flowers and fruit.

The use of national and local guidance as well as best practice documents supported staff to reflect on their practice. As a result, they identified gaps in provision which led to increased resources being added to support numeracy. Regular reviews and audits meant that change was effectively monitored. Staff were able to assess how children benefitted from the changes made, and had a better understanding about the progress they were making in their learning.

To continue the improvement journey, plans were in place to work with other services which would support evaluation. For example, peer moderation within the setting had been used well to develop the planning cycle. Staff were keen to build on this with other colleagues.

Staff used reflection, self evaluation and assessment very well to support the development of the service. The were motivated and committed to continued professional development. Training and best practice guidance had helped them gain confidence in their role and undertake leadership roles. As a result they shared knowledge, supported each other which led to positive experiences for children.

Opportunities were in place that supported parents' and children's views to be gathered. For example a parents' group and questionnaires enabled their feedback and involvement in the service. Children's voice was captured in floor books and learning journals which were used to support their interests and extend learning. Parents said "Parents are regularly consulted on different matters (how to spend fundraising money, ideas to go on trips, asked to provide feedback etc)." and "A few staff members also run a parents group, where parents and staff meet to share ideas about key decisions in the nursery. Parents are regularly invited in to nursery and all staff members have been welcoming and friendly."

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

Children were supported by a staff team who had a range of knowledge, experience and skills. Their sound knowledge of child development, GIRFEC (getting it right for every child) and the well-being indicators resulted in children's individual needs being met. They were committed and enthusiastic in their role which meant children were supported to reach their potential. They talked knowledgeably about children's individual needs, next steps and how they were being met. Parent's said "Staff are excellent. Facilities available for the children are great. Communication is superb."

Staff were well deployed throughout the service which ensured children benefited from their nursery experience. Effective communication between staff and their flexible approach meant almost all children were supported throughout the day. We asked staff to be mindful when children used areas that could not always be seen. For example, although fully enclosed, the garden area had corners where children could choose to play out of sight.

At busier times, children's safety was promoted as staff ensured they supervised the entrance area at pick up times. Transitions were well managed which enabled children to participate in events that took place in the dining hall. Staff ensured they had a list of children who were out of the nursery and updated it on their return. Information from parents said "Nursery leaders are visible and easily contactable through Class Dojo."

Staff used team meetings, 1:1 time and the employee review and development programme to reflect on their practice. These opportunities enabled staff to talk about their work and identify what was going well and agree approaches to support children. This ensured they were responding to children's needs in a consistent way. As a result, children received high quality play and learning opportunities from a committed team. Staff said "The team work really well together to provide for all the children. Being very inclusive for all children is important for us." and "They (management) believe in the team and this has such a positive impact in the setting. They are so approachable, it makes the setting such a lovely place to work. They are also very appreciative of everyone's hard work and make everyone feel like a valuable team member."

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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