Balfron Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Moor Road
Balfron
Glasgow
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Telephone: 01360 440 027

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 March 2023

Service provided by:
Stirling Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002689

Service no:
CS2003015601

About the service

Balfron Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 32 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school full-time.

The service is located in Balfron, Stirling and is based within Balfron Primary School. The environment consisted of an open plan playroom with kitchen area and children's toilets. A raised area was used by children as a quiet space for rest and relaxation. Children had direct access to an enclosed garden area and had access to a community woodland that supported their outdoor learning experiences.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 21 March 2023 between 09:00 and 18:00. We provided feedback to the service at the end of the inspection visit. 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 four families
- gathered feedback using an email sent via the service - four families responded
- gathered feedback from two professionals that support children in the service
- spoke with staff
- observed practice and daily life including staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children felt secure and confident in their nursery because they were nurtured by a staff team that recognised the importance of secure attachments and high quality interactions.
- Children were learning to be responsible and to stay safe as a result of the SIMOA initiative being developed in the service.
- Staff interests were maximised to support very good play opportunities for children including leading on outdoor learning experiences.
- Strong leadership in the service had supported staff to develop confidence and knowledge in their roles, creating a positive culture across the team.

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
Children felt secure and confident in their nursery because they were nurtured by a staff team that recognised the importance of secure attachments and high quality interactions. Children were welcomed at the entrance of the nursery by a member of staff. A chat with each child and their family enabled staff to respond to the child and how they were feeling. We could see that respectful interactions and caring approaches by staff met the needs of children.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported by the effective use of personal plans. Staff knew children well and had a good understanding of how to support them individually. The information contained in personal plans was individual to each child including detail of their interests and their progress and learning. The visual format and use of SHANARRI wellbeing indicators showed a focus on outcomes for children. Staff were guided in their practice and planning to ensure children were supported to achieve their potential.

Mealtimes were safe, unhurried and sociable experiences for children. They confidently followed the mealtime routines and enjoyed chatting with staff as they sat at the table. They had opportunities to develop life skills and independence during mealtimes including pouring drinks and clearing away their crockery. Staff were exploring ways to extend these opportunities including being involved in food preparation and self-serving their food.

Staff demonstrated a calm restorative approach when supporting the emotional wellbeing of children. They worked closely with families to agree consistent strategies that supported children to settle into their day and to manage their emotions. The use of visual cards for example, supported children to explore and chat about how they were feeling. Staff were aware that some children had a favourite space where they were able to cuddle up and spend some time alone. Children were building emotional resilience as a result.

Quality Indicator: 1.3 Play and learning
Staff had a very good understanding of how children learn through their play. Children were leading their own play and learning through a balance of planned and spontaneous experiences. They used the play dough in the kitchen area and referred to recipe books as they cooked imaginatively. They then invited their friends to taste the soup and porridge they had made. A child told us they had made a flower and that they liked bluebells and daffodils best. Another told us about the sparkles they had added to the water as they scooped up and poured the water. Children were having fun and were engaged in play experiences that stimulated their natural curiosity, learning, and creativity. Parents said, "activities for children are well planned and wide ranging."

Children's play and learning was enhanced through being able to play outdoors across the day. Staff interests were maximised to support very good play opportunities for children including leading on outdoor learning experiences. Children told us about their woodland trip. They said they were bird spotting and using the tree trunk as a plane, train and ferry as they pretended to go on holiday. Children used the garden area as they climbed on the tree trunk and jumped off. They relaxed inside the play shed reading a book or drawing with their friends. Children were supported to feel a sense of connection with nature and the world around them.

Staff planned responsively taking account of children's interests and their stages of development. Staff were adopting a new planning system to ensure the voices of children and their identified next steps were included. This linked to the planning wall that showed children's interests and experiences. Children felt valued because they were being listened to and were having fun taking part in experiences that were planned around their interests.

Families were welcomed into the service each day spending time chatting with staff. They were building relationships with staff and developing confidence as they spent time in the nursery environment. This meant they felt included and respected as they heard about children's experiences and achievements.

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 benefited from a calm, welcoming environment. Staff reflected on and developed the environment so children were supported to feel relaxed and safe. They recognised that creating a homely play space supported children's wellbeing and helped them to feel secure. The layout of the open planned space allowed children to have quiet time alone and to play with friends in small or large groups. Children's play and learning opportunities promoted fun, learning and independence.

Children's health and wellbeing benefited from having access to the enclosed garden space and a wooded area in the local community. Access to the outdoors across the day meant children had opportunities to run, climb, dig, build, and play imaginatively. Children were learning about nature through their woodland visits and when planting and growing fruit and vegetables in the poly-tunnel.

Children were supported to be healthy and safe through effective infection prevention and control routines. The environment was well ventilated, hand washing was embedded in practice and regular cleaning took place. Staff awareness of their role and responsibilities in ensuring children were safe in the service had been developed through work around the Care Inspectorate SIMOA initiative. A member of staff had consulted children about their understanding of safety in the nursery. They had helped to place pictures of SIMOA the elephant in areas where there was a potential risk. Children told us about the risk at the steps that provided access to the garden telling us there was 'danger.' Children were learning to be responsible and to stay safe as a result of this initiative.

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
A shared vision across the nursery and the school created a happy and welcoming ethos. This promoted a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn. Families told us about the trusting relationships they had with staff and about how welcomed they felt in the service.

Strong leadership in the service had supported staff to develop confidence and knowledge in their roles. Staff were passionate and motivated and worked well together. This created a positive culture across the team.

Quality assurance systems and processes were supporting the service to identify how they were doing, how they knew, and what they were going to do now. Self-evaluation was having a positive impact on the service delivery so that care and support for children and families was tailored towards their needs and choices. Various processes to monitor and audit practice had supported staff to reflect on and improve practice. Families told us, "There has been regular opportunities to provide suggestions for improvement with feedback given on measures implemented." Seeking the views of children and families contributed to them feeling valued and included.

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
The senior leadership team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring the service was staffed to meet the individual needs of children and families. Staff were flexible and breaks were planned to minimise the impact on children whilst making sure staff had time to rest. The senior leadership team supported staff well recognising the importance of supporting their wellbeing. Staff told us that they had a strong relationship with the senior leadership team and felt valued and listened to.

Children and families benefited from the consistency of a caring and nurturing staff team. Staff knew children well and had developed relationships with families delivering a consistent approach in responding to their individual needs. A shared approach ensured that children and families were supported to achieve their potential. Parents told us about the positive relationships staff had developed with children and about how well staff knew their children. They said, "Staff are great with children and I am confident at leaving my child in their care."

Staff were confident in their roles and communicated well as a team. They were empowered to deploy themselves across all areas of the playroom and outdoors so that the necessary levels of supervision for children were in place. Staff continued to reflect on and develop the pace and flow of the day so that children's play and learning opportunities were not interrupted by the daily routines.

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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