St. Ninians Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Torbrex Road
St. Ninians
Stirling
FK7 9HN

Telephone: 01786 237 975

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 August 2023

Service provided by:
Stirling Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002689

Service no:
CS2003015611

About the service

St. Ninians Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 32 children of an age not yet to attend primary school. The service is part of Stirling Council's early years provision. It is based within St. Ninians Primary School which is located in the St. Ninians area of Stirling.

Children had access to large indoor and outdoor place spaces, toilets and a large foyer area. The service is located close to local amenities, such as parks, a library and shops.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday, 17 August 2023 between 08:30 and 17:20. 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:

- spent time with the children using the service
- spoke with or received emails from 18 of their family members
- spoke with staff members and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

• Staff were kind and caring towards children because they had built loving and nurturing relationships with them.

• Children were engaged and had fun in meaningful play.

• High quality resources supported children to develop their curiosity and creative thinking.

• Children benefitted from a staff team that were passionate, enthusiastic and committed to providing high quality care.

• Children experienced relaxed, unhurried and social mealtimes.

• A knowledgeable, reflective staff team were flexible in supporting each other to ensure children's needs were met.

• Shared leadership across the team was improving outcomes for children.

• Effective quality assurance and self-evaluation led to high quality experiences for children.

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 found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality theme as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing and compassionate care. Interactions between children and staff were respectful, supporting children to feel safe and well cared for. One parent told us, "The staff are helpful and approachable. My child enjoys the company of all of them and regularly talks about them fondly at home". This resulted in strong attachments with staff and contributed to children remaining very happy and relaxed in the service.

Children's wellbeing was enhanced through effective personal planning. Children received consistent care, as information recorded in plans and learning journals were updated regularly and ensured that children's care was personalised. One parent said, "We are so thankful for the building of relationships the staff commit to, the excellent play spaces, effective communication and the general positive, nurturing environment". Positive relationships with families meant children received care which was tailored to meet their individual needs.

Some parents told us they did not feel involved in their child's care plan or receive updates about their child's day. We shared this with the service, which had already put plans in place to improve how they share information at the end of the day. This would further support families to be meaningfully involved in their child's care.

Cosy spaces where children could rest, relax and spend time alone further supported their emotional wellbeing. A small area with stories had been developed that was enclosed and allowed children to relax and spend time away. Children were given space and time if they were tired. Children's dignity and privacy were respected as staff skilfully supported them with their care needs.

Mealtimes were a very positive, social experience for children. They were given time to enjoy their snack and lunch with others. Menus were well planned and nutritionally balanced. One child told us, "My teachers were all nice and made good snacks". This promoted children's health and wellbeing. Staff sat with children for most of the time, taking part in meaningful, fun conversations. Children's independence was supported well at snack times as they cut fruit and prepared snack. As a result, children were developing a positive, healthy relationships with food.

Systems for recording medication were in place, including parental permissions, storage information and records of administration. Almost all medications were reviewed regularly. We encouraged the service to review their auditing system to ensure that all medication is reviewed every three months or every term and that there are consistent forms in use. This would ensure that children's individual medical needs were fully considered.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were meaningfully engaged in their play throughout the entire session. They were confident to move around the play spaces freely. This showed us children felt safe and secure in the setting.

The environment supported children to lead their play and independently select resources of their choice. We saw children who explored happily, confidently and had fun as they engaged in their play. One parent told us, "The staff seem to really follow the children's lead and allow them to develop and expand their interests". A wide range of resources and quality experiences supported children to be meaningfully and actively involved in their learning.

Staff skilfully listened to children and responded quickly and calmly to their individual needs and requests. Staff interacted with children at their level and always used a calm, reassuring voice. As a result, children were supported very well to communicate and express their needs and emotions. This demonstrated to children that they mattered and promoted their sense of security and belonging.

Children had electronic journals where staff added observations and photos. Parents were able to views these and add comments. Some parents said that they would like to see these updated more regularly. We encouraged the service to continue to develop these to ensure they are updated consistently and that children have access to them during the session. This will ensure that children are able to share their learning with their friends and families in the setting.

Clear links with other professionals supported positive outcomes for children. The staff team worked closely with speech and language therapist to ensure consistent approaches to supporting children's developing language. As a result, children were supported to reach their full potential.

Planning approaches were child centred with children being actively involved in planning. Children's voice was valued and respected. Their words and thoughts were recorded and displayed in floor books and on some displays. This showed children were listened to and their views were important.

The setting had recently reviewed their planning approach to ensure it is more manageable. We encouraged the service to continue to build on the good practice observed from the previous approach. This will continue to ensure that children are supported to lead their own learning.

How good is our setting? 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 quality theme as very good.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The indoor playroom provided a welcoming, comfortable and homely space. There was plenty of natural light, ventilation and direct access to an enclosed garden. The playroom was set out in a manner which enabled children to access resources easily while providing space to move freely. There was considerable consideration given to the lay out of the room to ensure it was inviting to children. One parent told us, "The nursery environment is welcoming and inviting. The foyer has been developed within the last year to be a warm space that supports learners to have a smooth transition into nursery". This showed children and families that they were valued and mattered.

Children had access to resources that were clean, well-organised and encouraged exploration, enquiry and fun. The continuous provision outdoors had been very well considered to include a wide variety of interesting open ended and natural resources. Children had fun as they explored the resources outside, such as blocks, books, bikes and a drawing area.

The committed staff team ensured that areas were well developed, set up to allow children to lead their own learning. There was a range of resources available. For example, in the art area there were different kinds of paints, pens and other materials to explore. One parent told us, "My child talks about engaging in several different areas within the nursery and I love hearing about the different areas available to them". As a result, children were enabled to explore opportunities which promoted and challenged their curiosity and imagination.

The service had plans in place to further develop some areas of the setting, such as the block area. We encouraged the service to continue with their plans to ensure that all areas are developed to the same high standard and that children continue to benefit from an environment with rich learning opportunities.

Spaces reflected children's current interests and curiosities. For example, some children showed an interest in messy play and this was available for them to explore on the day. The use of some attractive displays to celebrate children's own work, encouraged children to re-visit their learning experiences. For example, children used a range of resources, such as junk modelling to make beautiful pieces of artwork. The staff team had carefully written the child's words under their work. This showed that children's achievements were valued and celebrated.

Infection prevention and control practices were embedded across the service. Children and staff were seen regularly washing their hands, in line with good practice. Children were confident and familiar with their routines. This minimised the potential for the spread of infections.

Risk assessments were in place and regularly reviewed which effectively highlighted hazards and appropriate actions to minimise potential risks to children and staff. Children benefitted from a risk benefit approach from the staff team which valued meaningful real life experiences such has climbing trees and exploring large loose parts.

How good is our leadership? 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 quality theme as very good.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The management and leadership team were approachable, motivating, and empowering, with everyone involved supported and encouraged to develop leadership skills. A strong commitment to continuous improvement was evident. Current best practice guidance underpinned effective self-evaluation, with a strong focus on children's experiences and outcomes. One parent told us, "The nursery is well managed and as parents we are kept involved". Another parent told us, "The nursery appears to have a clear vision and I feel as a parent that I am confident and comfortable putting my child to St. Ninians". As a result, families were confident in the care that their children received.

The passionate, solution focused team were committed to delivering high quality experiences for children and families. All staff had specific leadership roles and spoke passionately about their roles, for example yoga, numeracy leader and play on pedals. They continually reflected on experiences for children to ensure continued improvement. There was very good communication throughout the team. This ensured consistent approaches and a shared understanding of the priorities of the service. As a result, children benefitted from a service that continued to improve.

The current improvement plan was targeted and focussed on outcomes for children. This put them at the heart of the setting. Staff knew the service well and were able to discuss confidently their areas of strengths and areas for improvement. The team had specific roles within improvement priorities and this ensured that they were led well and impacted positively on the development of the service.

Robust self-evaluation and quality assurance systems were in place which included parents' and children's voice. This ensured that everyone was involved in evaluating and improving the service. Children were meaningfully consulted about the development of the outdoor space. We observed that their plans and ideas to develop this area had been listened to and acted on. One parent told us, "The playroom has been developed greatly since my child started and there is a range of different activities/play areas". Another parent told us, "Parents are able to interact with questions about nursery development when entering the nursery and communication with parents of weekly plans are shared". This showed children and families were listened to and valued.

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 quality theme as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Positive working relationships had been formed between staff which meant they were all meaningfully contributing to the inclusive and positive ethos of trust and respect. The staff team worked very well together and supported each other very well. This meant that staff felt valued and empowered to grow professionally and provided children with a happy, secure and supportive environment.

Effective staff deployment across the service meant that the right number of staff were meeting children's individual needs, consistently throughout the day. Staff were proactive in recognising any gaps and ensuring effective supervision and quality engagement with children. Transitions were seamless throughout the day, such as at drop off, pick up and mealtimes. Staff placed themselves thoughtfully and followed children to ensure they were able to explore freely. As a result, children benefitted from a very calm and positive experience.

Staff were highly motivated and clear about their roles. There was a shared leadership approach with each staff member leading an area of development or practice. Staff were confident in their leadership roles and documented their journey to ensure that improvements resulted in positive outcomes for children. Staff told us they were listened to and felt valued. Staff values, leadership skills, experience and knowledge resulted in high quality experiences for children.

Children benefitted from having opportunities to develop relationships with all staff in the service. Staff took a shared approach to ensuring all children were supported to achieve their potential. This allowed children to benefit from the range of skills and knowledge of the whole team. Staff interacted positively with the children and were very supportive, kind, nurturing and caring towards them.

A wide range of training opportunities was available. Staff spoke confidently about their recent training and the impact this had on outcomes for children. As a result, children benefitted from a knowledgeable and committed staff team.

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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