Macmerry Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Main Road
Macmerry
Tranent
EH33 1QA

Telephone: 01875 610 234

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 29 August 2017

Service provided by:
East Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002600

Care service number:
CS2003015823

About the service

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Macmerry Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 20 children aged 3 years - entry into primary school.

The areas used by the service were the main playroom, cloakroom, toilets, gym hall and nursery garden.

The inspection took place on 29 August 2017. We completed the inspection and gave feedback to the head teacher on the same day.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting it Right for Every Child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it Right for Every Child. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

What people told us

Sixteen children were present during the morning session and eight during the afternoon of the inspection. We spoke to several children and observed their play both indoors and outdoors. Children presented as very secure, confident, happy and achieving. They were not unsettled by the change of staff on the day due to illness or our presence. The children were able to discuss their play and share their learning within their own 'learning stories' folder.

We received five completed Care Standards Questionnaires, some of which had added comments. These demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the service. All parents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that 'overall, they were happy with the quality of care their child received in this service'. There were some additional comments within the collated responses which we shared with the head teacher. A sample of some of the additional comments are noted below;

"The staff at Macmerry have been nothing short of outstanding. We have regular meetings. The staff are always looking for new ways to engage my child both to improve his educational needs and his relationships socially with his peers. We are very lucky."

"Good quality workers who clearly love their job. Very warm and caring towards all the children. They change the activities and stations around often so the children don't get fed up or bored. Very good well run school nursery!"

"My child is very happy in the nursery and has formed good relationships with staff and so did I. We completely trust them to look after our child and provide a good stimulating learning environment."

"A uniform for the nursery would be nice. It would also make it easier for parents."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan which demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

What the service does well

Children's emotional wellbeing was positive as they benefitted from a relaxed ethos and nurturing care from the consistent staff team. Although it was early in the new term, all children were secure and comfortable in exploring the nursery environment and confident in approaching staff.

Through the varied experiences in nursery children were developing positive attitudes to healthy eating and physical activity. Children chose to spend most of their time outdoors due to free flow access to the garden where they were active. Healthy snacks and other learning opportunities enhanced children's health through developing healthy habits for life.

Children with additional support needs were achieving and enjoying their time in nursery. Robust systems were established and kept under review with strong links with other agencies. Providing appropriate supervision ensured responsive support was given, along with space for children to be independent.

'Loose parts' play materials and a mud 'kitchen' provided children with opportunities to direct their own play and use their imagination leading to positive engagement. Children were achieving as they worked together for extended periods with the loose parts to create different constructions which challenged them.

Activities such as recycling, fund raising and becoming involved in national wildlife initiatives such as the 'Bee cause' supported children in being responsible through building their global awareness and social responsibility.

Children were achieving through appropriate challenge. Staff encouraged and empowered them to solve problems themselves or with peer support. Talking groups supported children's thinking and included them in giving their views. Evidence of frequent family involvement in the nursery extended children's breadth of experiences contributing to their overall learning, enjoyment and success.

Staff were fully involved in self evaluation processes and were working with key guidance documents to support this. The head teacher explained the quality assurance she and the nursery teacher carried out. This was having a positive impact as some aspects discussed were already highlighted within the school improvement plan. These robust quality assurance systems ensured children benefitted from consistent high quality care and provision.

Staff spoke positively of the new head teacher and her support and availability. They were included in the revised strategic vision for the service which contributed to a shared approach for improvement. The head teacher valued the team and their ability to take responsibility. Staff felt trusted and confident in their ability to take the lead in different aspects of provision.

The head teacher had made positive steps in including the nursery in whole school events which valued staff's opinions and contributions leading to improved outcomes for children.

What the service could do better

The service should continue to develop opportunities for children's rights linked to the current work on gaining the 'rights respecting schools' award. This would further develop children's understanding of their rights and democracy in practice.

There was scope to review the rhythm of the day to allow children more control over how they spend their time. This would support improved engagement and less interruption to children's play.

Children could be supported to further develop their skills as assessors of their own learning through having opportunity to identify their own next steps, evaluating each other's work and identifying what they 'know now' within their 'big books'.

We discussed with the head teacher some ways to further develop children's emotional wellbeing through building resilience to enhance children's mental health and reduce inequalities.

Although the head teacher told us about the various audits carried out, some of these were done verbally through discussions between herself and staff, for example evaluation of 'learning stories'. We discussed with the manager that it would be beneficial to record this auditing process.

The head teacher and nursery staff should continue with plans to develop a separate nursery action plan to support more targeted improvement for the service.

Staff were not aware of the 'step into leadership pathway' resource available to them through their SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council) website. Staff should now familiarise themselves with this resource to support improved leadership capacity and positive outcomes for children. More information can be found at http://www.stepintoleardership.info/

The head teacher should continue with plans to formalise staff's opportunities to take lead responsibility in different aspects of provision linked to the curriculum and key aspects as identified within the nursery action plan. This should be monitored to ensure impact.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
29 Aug 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
27 Sep 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed

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