Townhill Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Townhill Primary School
Chisholm Street
Townhill
Dunfermline
KY12 0EX

Telephone: 01383 602 439

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 October 2023

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2003015900

About the service

Townhill Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a day care of children service to 40 children from 3 years of age up to an age to attend primary school. The service is located in a residential area close to a wooded area and is within walking distance to local amenities.

The nursery is provided by Fife Council Education Department. It is situated in a self-contained, purpose-built building. The accommodation includes a large bright playroom, a small entrance hall/cloakroom area, toilets and an adjacent enclosed outdoor play area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 26 October 2023 between 08:40 and 17:15. 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 nine of their family members
- spoke with staff members and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

• Children experienced nurturing, care and support from a dedicated staff team.

• Well-developed spaces and a wide range of resources enabled children to lead their own learning.

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

• The team should continue to develop their approach to planning to ensure that it is child led and responsive.

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

• Effective quality assurance and self-evaluation led to improved outcomes 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?	4 - 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? 4 - Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator 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 team are all lovely and welcoming." "My child loves the staff." Another parent told us, "Staff are excellent with the children and parents. I can't fault them." This showed children and families were respected and valued.

Children were provided with comfort and reassurance which contributed to positive relationships being formed. Children were relaxed and remained happy throughout the session. Staff were in tune to children and their needs, responding to their requests and picking up on their cues. As a result, children felt listened to.

The setting had recently developed some homely, calm spaces where children could rest and relax. There was a tent where children could take time away from the room to relax. Children used this space very well. One parent told us, "I don't feel there is an adequate 'quiet' space within the setting to allow for a calming/ rest experience. I know the nursery have been working on this lately to try and create one." We found children benefitted from areas with low lighting and some soft furnishings. This showed that children's emotional well-being was well considered.

Mealtime experiences were calm, unhurried and social. Children were given time to enjoy their snack or lunch with others. They were able to choose when they would like to eat. This meant that children's play was not interrupted. As a result, children benefitted from a relaxed mealtime experience.

Children's independence was well supported during snack time as they helped prepare snack, clear the table and pour their own drinks. We encourage the service to continue to develop the lunch time experience to include the good practice observed at snack time, such as setting the table or washing plates off after finished. Staff told us that lunchtime routines had recently changed and previously, they had ensured these opportunities were available to children. We encouraged the service to continue with their plan to re-introduce these opportunities. This would further support children's independence and developing skills.

Systems for recording medication were in place, including parental permissions, storage information and records of administration. Some medication was not 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 old medication is discarded appropriately. This would further ensure that children's individual medical needs were fully considered.

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on children's outcomes and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were meaningfully engaged in their play throughout the entire session. The environment supported children to lead their play and independently select resources of their choice. For example, loose parts, playdough and a variety of natural materials were available inside and outside. As a result, children's creativity and curiosity were promoted as they were able to develop their problem solving and imagination.

Staff responded quickly and calmly to children's individual needs and requests. They interacted with children at their level and always used a calm, reassuring voice. This demonstrated to children that they mattered and promoted their sense of security and belonging.

Interactions with children were responsive and staff used effective questioning to support children in their learning. The current planning did not always reflect children's interests and curiosities. We suggested the service review their approach to planning to ensure it reflects children's interest and the responsive interactions observed. This would further support children to reach their full potential.

A recent improvement focused on improving approaches to supporting children's numeracy and impacted positively on children's learning. There were opportunities to explore early maths both inside and outside. As a result, children's developing numeracy skills were supported well. We encouraged the service to continue with their plans to further improve how early mark making and pre-writing skills are supported in the learning environment. This would ensure that children continue to make good progress in their learning.

Links with the local community were improving outcomes for children. For example, children regularly visited the woods, took walks in the community and linked very closely to the attached primary school. This supported children to feel part of their local community.

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

Children had access to resources that were clean, well-organised and encouraged exploration and fun. The indoor and outdoor spaces were very well considered to include a variety of interesting, open ended and natural resources. One parent told us, "The nursery is well equipped and the garden is excellent." The staff team ensured that most areas were well developed, set up and supported children to lead their own learning. As a result, children were enabled to explore opportunities which promoted and challenged their curiosity and imagination.

The reception area was well organised and set out to ensure children and families felt welcomed. One parent told us, "The nursery supports me as well as my child." Key information about the service was displayed to help parents feel well informed and included. As a result, positive relationships with children and families had been formed and led to improved outcomes for children.

The staff had given careful consideration to the environment to ensure that resources were well presented and inviting to children. For example, a tent area had been developed to ensure children had a space to relax.

The environment was developed based on feedback from parents and staff. Some areas could be further developed to ensure there is the same consistent approach. For example, in the block area, children did not have enough room to move freely and access the quality resources available. We shared this with the service that had already highlighted this as an area to develop. We encouraged the service to continue to review the environment to ensure that all areas are of a consistent high quality.

Spaces reflected children's current interests and curiosities. For example, some children had shown an interest in the changing seasons. Children spoke about what they knew about Autumn and staff gathered their thoughts and views. Staff ensured that appropriate resources were available to children to further explore this interest. The use of displays to promote discussion, exploration and to celebrate children's learning, encouraged children to reflect and share these experiences with their families and friends.

Infection prevention and control practices were mostly embedded across the service. Children and staff were seen regularly washing their hands, in line with good practice. In the nappy changing area, some clothes and mops were not stored appropriately on the day of inspection. We shared this with the service that took action to fix this immediately. As a result, the risk of the potential spread of infection was minimised.

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 using real tools and sitting around a fire. As a result, children were developing an awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe.

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 team were committed to delivering high quality experiences for children and families. There was a shared vision amongst the staff team which recognised each individual child's potential. The setting's vision stated, "Together we will climb the hill to success." We saw practice that reflected this vision and the values of the service.

The service had worked hard with the school to ensure that children were involved in developing and understanding the values of the service. For example, children in the school worked with the nursery children to share the values of the service through play. This approach and learning had been shared with parents. As a result, children benefitted from a truly shared vision, values and aims that put them at the heart.

Very good communication was embedded throughout the team, which ensured consistent approaches and a shared understanding of the priorities of the service. The leadership of the service was passionate about improving the quality of care for children. All parents agreed that the service was well led and managed. One parent told us, "The leadership are brilliant." As a result, children benefited from a service that was well led.

Effective self-evaluation and quality assurance processes highlighted strengths and areas to improve. There were opportunities for the leadership team and staff to review and monitor various aspects of the service. A calendar helped ensure that all aspects of the service were regularly reviewed. Children, families and staff were regularly involved in giving feedback about the service and suggestions on how it could be improved. As a result, the service continued to improve based on the views of children, families and staff.

The current improvement plan was targeted and focused on outcomes for children. The staff had effectively improved opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills. This was done through a measured and planned approach. As a result, improvements in the setting were having a positive impact on experiences for children.

Staff recognised that one of the improvement priorities was not as meaningful for the nursery setting; for example, the priority of teaching French in the nursery. They told us that this was an agreed priority for all local nurseries and schools. We shared this with the head teacher and encouraged the service to ensure that all improvement priorities are meaningful and relevant to the individual setting. This would further ensure children benefit from meaningful, focused improvements.

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

Staff knew children very well and secure relationships between them had been established. Children were consistently supported by staff in ways which were nurturing, respectful and meeting their needs. This meant that children safe, secure, and happy in the service. All parents' feedback was very positive about the staff team and their skills.

Staff were motivated and clear about their roles. They worked very well as a team by sharing ideas and communicating effectively. Staff had a range of experience and skills. Some leadership opportunities for staff were available. We encouraged the service to continue to develop this to ensure that all staff have meaningful opportunities to take on leadership roles. One parent told us, "The teachers really care about each child. They are well looked after and happy." As a result, children benefitted from dedicated staff.

The management team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed throughout the full day. Rotas were well organised, and staff were clear where they should be and what tasks they had to do. Staff breaks did not impact on the children's play or learning. They communicated clearly with each other when leaving areas or taking children to other parts of the setting. As a result, transitions throughout the day were seamless as children's individual needs were met consistently.

A variety of training and professional development opportunities allowed staff to develop their skills and knowledge to meet the needs of children. Staff understood the benefits of training in furthering outcomes for children and were motivated and keen to further their development. Staff had attended training on topics such as conceptual maths and child protection.

Staff told us they were listened to, felt valued and were fully aware of their role and responsibilities. There was a range of skills and experience within the team. Staff values, skills, experience and knowledge resulted in quality experiences 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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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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