Pittencrieff Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Dewar Street
Dunfermline
KY12 8AB

Telephone: 01383 602 429

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 April 2024

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2003015902

About the service

Pittencrieff Primary School Nursery is a day care of children service registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 61 children at any one time, age from three years to an age to attend primary school.

The setting is located in a residential area in the city of Dunfermline. The nursery setting compromises of two playrooms, nappy changing area, toilet, and cloakroom. Children have free flow to an enclosed garden. In addition to this, the service operates an outdoor nursery in the nearby Pittencrieff Park.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 April 2024 between 09:30 and 16:15 and 24 April 2024 between 09:15 and 15:15. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed children using the service
- received feedback from seven families from our online questionnaire and spoke with two family members
- spoke with the staff and management team
- observed practice
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals

Key messages

• Children were cared for by staff who were warm, compassionate and nurturing supporting their wellbeing, play and learning.
• Children experienced challenging, and fun play experiences that promoted opportunities for creativity, curiosity, problem solving and risk assessing.
• High quality care and support was achieved by quality assurance systems and processes including self-evaluation and an improvement plan.
• Effective staff deployment across the service meant that the right number of staff were meeting children's individual needs, consistently throughout the day.

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 key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, settled and enjoyed their time at nursery. They experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to their personal care and learning needs. Staff recognised children as individuals and responded effectively to their needs and wishes which provided them with responsive care throughout the day. They communicated with children at their level in a quiet and sensitive way. These supportive interactions developed close bonds between staff and children, contributing to them feeling safe and secure.

Children's individual wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning. Staff knew children very well and spoke knowledgably about children's differing needs. Overall, information recorded in children's personal plans reflected the care and support staff provided which contributed to continuity and consistency in care.

Meal and snack times were relaxed and sociable experiences for children. We saw children had a wealth of opportunities to develop their health self-help skills. For example, children were able to choose when to go for lunch, collect their own cutlery and crockery and serve food and drink independently. Children benefited from this social experience as they chatted with friends and staff at a relaxed and unhurried pace. This contributed positively to children's overall wellbeing.

Parents were welcomed into the service to drop off and collect their children. This contributed to creating positive attachments between children and staff, and enabled opportunity for information to be shared between nursery and home.

1.3 Play and learning

Children led their own play and learning across the setting. This included all rooms within the indoor nursery and outdoor setting based at Pittencrieff Park. The effective and well considered use of real resources and natural materials provided children with a wealth of exciting opportunities to be curious, creative, and develop enquiry skills across all areas of learning. Literacy opportunities were very well supported as children had access to various books and texts; fiction and non-fiction books, and resources to support early writing skills were easily accessible for all children. Numeracy opportunities were naturally woven into play experiences across the setting to support children's development. For example, children explored length when finding logs and sticks in the outdoor nursery.

Children were engaged in high quality outdoor play experiences that provided a variety of opportunities to be creative, develop problem solving skills, and have fun. We observed children enjoying exploring sensory experiences with pretend 'algae' and created structures with the large items of real material. As a result, children were happy and engaged in play outdoors.

The outdoor nursery encouraged children to make connections with nature. For example, children experienced awe and wonder as they excitedly made potions and concoctions. They discovered newly sprung flowers and used books to help identify them. Children used a variety of natural resources to support their creativity and curiosity as they explored the woodland with confidence. This supported children to feel connected to nature.

Staff demonstrated an awareness of when and how to effectively intervene, picking up on cues to support children's wellbeing and extend their play experiences. They asked 'I wonder how' questions to extend children's thinking and encourage curiosity and problem solving. Staff played with children when they were invited to do so and when they could see that this would support children's experiences. This approach supported children to play without unnecessary interruption and encouraged a deeper learning experience.

Child centred planning approaches were responsive to children's interests and offered a balance of responsive and intentional experiences. This ensured children's interests and prior learning had been considered. Children's ongoing learning and developmental progression was supported using observations within children's Personal Learning Journals (PLJ's), updates about some nursery activities were shared on an online platform. Observations detailed significant learning that was relevant to individual children. However, children's next steps were not clearly detailed. The service had identified this as part of their on-going improvement work with PLJ's. Some parents told us they did not feel well informed of their child's development. We shared this with the service who agreed to review current how they share information.

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 key question as very good.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The premises offered a calm, warm and welcoming environment. It was clean, tidy and a well-maintained space that had plenty of natural light for children to play and learn.

All children had fun and enjoyed their play throughout the day as play spaces took account of their stages of development and learning. Children's interests and curiosities were reflected in the enabling environment which contained an extensive variety of high-quality provision that supported play. For example, curiosity corners, woodwork bench and real-life resources in rooms provided rich play experiences. The continuous provision indoors and outdoors had been well considered to include age and stage appropriate resources, and interesting, open ended natural materials. The staff team ensured that areas were well resourced, set up and supported children to be independent and lead their own learning. As a result, children were enabled to explore opportunities which promoted their curiosity and imagination.

All families strongly agreed or agreed that children had the opportunity to play outdoors every day. All children benefited from free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor area. This enabled them to have choice, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy.

Outdoors, there were opportunities for children to experience more physical play experiences, helping to extend their gross motor skills. We observed children having fun using the larger playground equipment to climb and slide and practising pedalling skills on bikes. This contributed to children being confident when playing outdoors.

Children confidently explored the outdoor nursery; they engaged in risky play experiences such as climbing trees, swinging on branches and investigating balance on the hanging boards. They were self-aware when undertaking risky play, and supported one another to assess and manage the risk, creating meaningful opportunities for collaborative play experiences. As a result, children were confident, happy, and engaged in play for prolonged periods of time.

Staff effectively supported children to identify and minimise risk whilst in the outdoor nursery. Children had been involved in setting visual boundaries, for example, hanging ribbons around the perimeter of the site. Children confidently explained what the boundaries meant, they told us, 'Boundaries mean you don't go past them rainbows'. Children were clear on how to keep themselves safe, for example, they showed us what to do in the event a dog runs into the site.

There were effective infection prevention and control procedures in place which supported a safe environment. For example, the service was clean and well maintained. Food safety practices were robust and provided high levels of safety for children. We observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene and hand washing at necessary times. This was consistent across both the indoor and outdoor sites. This contributed to minimising risks of infection for both the staff team and children.

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 key question as very good.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Children, families, and staff benefitted from a committed leadership team. They promoted high aspirations for children through a shared vision. This created a happy and welcoming ethos in the service promoting a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn. The positive ethos meant staff were proactive in taking shared responsibility for change and improvement. This meant children benefited from a staff team who were motivated and responsive to meeting their needs.

Children and families were regularly consulted, and their views gathered. They did this with questionnaires, voting systems and face to face discussions. All parents strongly agreed and agreed they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the setting. This gave a strong message that their views mattered.

High quality care and support was achieved by quality assurance systems and processes including self-evaluation and an improvement plan. The senior leadership team implemented formal and informal monitoring and auditing across the service leading to continuous improvement. Staff were skilled, passionate, and motivated, and worked well together. Continuous reflection on practice and regular opportunities for professional discussion brought about positive changes for children and families. We suggested ways in which their improvement journey could be captured to allow continued reflection.

A realistic improvement plan was driving forward nursery developments. Priorities were outcome focussed with realistic targets which focused on outcomes for children. For example, conceptual numeracy had been a priority for this year and this was evident in the environment, and staffs practice throughout the inspection. This meant children benefitted from a service that continues to improve.

The management team and staff fully engaged in the inspection process and appreciated the guidance and suggestions offered by the inspector. They demonstrated their commitment to the service and were motivated to make improvements to ensure positive outcomes for children.

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 key question as very good.

4.3 Staff deployment

Children benefited from a range of staff skills and experience within the team. A mixture of skills, knowledge and experience in the staff team contributed to positive interactions, play and learning experiences for children. They communicated well and worked together to ensure children were safe and engaged in quality experiences throughout the day. This allowed routines and key tasks to be carried out whilst ensuring children were appropriately supported and outcomes remained positive. As a result, children experienced a very calm, nurturing experience for the majority of their time. Parents comments included, 'The staff are all extremely friendly and helpful. They have been excellent when we have had any questions or needed any help', 'Staff are friendly welcoming and respectful', and 'I really like the staff. They are super friendly, warm, enthusiastic and I always feel supported.'

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 collaboratively and supported each other very well. Regular meetings and support from management engaged staff well in the process of reflecting on practice. As a result, the staff team were involved in the development of the service, which contributed to the shared aspirations of the team. 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. Staff placed themselves thoughtfully during busier times to ensure all children's individual needs were well considered. As a result, children benefitted from a very calm and positive experience. This contributed to children being respected and created a positive team ethos within the service.

Staff were respectful and supportive of each other. This created a positive environment for children and families. All staff were welcoming and engaged throughout the inspection. There was a strong sense of team work. Staff spoke positively about the relationships and team working ethos within the service. They felt valued and listened to, which had created a sense of pride in their work. The strong team working ethos contributed to a positive and caring environment for children and families.

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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