McLean Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Baldridgeburn
Dunfermline
KY12 9EE

Telephone: 01383 602 423

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 November 2023

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2003015904

About the service

McLean Primary School Nursery is in Dunfermline Fife. They are registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children from the age of three years up to an age to attend primary school. The nursery is in a purpose build premise in the grounds of the primary school. Children have access to designated playrooms with personal care facilities, secure outdoor spaces that can be accessed directly from each room and other areas within the school agreed by the headteacher.

The service is close to green spaces, parks and other local amenities and can be reached by transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 27 November 2023 between 09:00 and 16:15 and continued on Tuesday 28 November 2023 between 08:00 and 11:00. Feedback was given following the inspection. 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:

- spoke with children and observed their play
- spoke with 13 families on the day and received feedback from 10 via an electronic link
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals

Key messages

• Children and families experienced a warm, welcoming, and inclusive setting that valued them as partners.
• Staff knew children's needs and preferences and supported them to make progress at a pace that was right for them.
• Children benefitted from inviting play spaces that were resourced to a high standard.
• Children experienced nurturing, caring and warm interactions from staff who respected them as unique individuals.
• Staff were skilled at supporting children to lead their interests through quality interactions and effective questioning that promoted deeper learning.
• The service could review their management of medication procedures to ensure they are in line with guidance.
• Staff could be involved in reviewing risk assessments to ensure they follow steps to minimise risks and hazards 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?	4 - 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 evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, nurturing approaches that supported positive relationships. Staff took time to get to know children's individual needs and preferences through close working with families. Staff showed a genuine care for children and offered cuddles and reassurance in a kind and calm manner. Families commented "The nursery provides a safe, nurturing environment for my child. The care given from the staff is impeccable and consistently a very high standard." Families described staff as a "Very caring team." As a result, children's needs were met through individualised care and support.

Mealtimes were relaxed, unhurried and at the child's pace. Staff valued the importance of offering this routine within the room. This minimised the disruption to play and offered children the choice when to eat. Most children had opportunities to develop independence in making their snack from a selection of food choices offered. Some families would like to see more healthier options at snack time and are aware that meals are provided by the local authority. We shared this with the service who will raise this with the authority. Staff spent time talking with children about their favourite foods and what was important to them. We encouraged the service to promote consistency across both playrooms in the opportunities offered to children during the mealtime routine. This would ensure all children were supported to develop skills for life through everyday experiences.

Staff had a good awareness of children's dietary needs and had systems in place to promote their health and wellbeing. For example, they had considered how to minimise the risk of cross contamination of food items where children had allergies. This meant that children's health, safety, and wellbeing was promoted.

Children's emotional wellbeing was supported as staff had created cosy, calm, and inviting areas to rest, and relax. They developed an understanding of their emotions using puppets, books, sensory resources and talking with staff. As a result, children felt safe and secure.

Personal plans were in place for children and were reviewed with families in line with guidance. This supported staff to ensure children received consistency in their care and support. When required, additional plans were in place and detailed clear outcomes for children, and the role of other services. Staff worked closely with other professionals. As a result, children were supported to achieve their full potential at a pace that was right for them.

The service had a system in place to manage medication. We found that the recording, reviewing, and administering of medication was not consistent. We signposted the service to the Care Inspectorate guidance 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services.' This would ensure medication is recorded and reviewed correctly and follows their policy and procedures to meet children's healthcare needs (See area for improvement 1).

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were actively leading their play and learning. They told us ""I like all the stuff to do and games to play", "I love playing outside in the garden. The bikes are my favourite." and "I liked to play with the sand box and the slide." Staff were skilled at engaging with children at their level. For example, one child had an interest in aeroplanes. Staff took time to support this, providing the materials needed to create their ideas. They offered praise and encouragement and were skilled at using effective questioning to build on learning. Other staff extended this learning through the use of technology and engaged children in this interest through discussions. As a result, children were problem solving, being creative and using their imagination.

Planning approaches were responsive to children's interests and ideas linked to observations of play and learning across the indoor and outdoor provisions. Staff offered a balance of intentional promotion activities to scaffold learning. Families commented "My child has, and is, receiving a very full curriculum of learning. She has been part of so many wonderful learning experiences and learns a lot through great play opportunities on a daily basis.", "We are very happy with the range of learning experiences my child has." and "The team do a great job encouraging all the children to learn and experience new things." This meant that staff valued children's ideas and ensured they made progress across the breadth of the curriculum.

Floor books and learning walls were of a high standard and offered children opportunities to revisit learning and talk about what they had enjoyed. Observations, pictures and children's creations captured rich experiences and children's voice. This meant children were able to share learning with peers and their families. As a result, families felt included in their child's learning.
Journals were easily accessible to children as staff had organised them in the playroom so children could spend time looking at these. Journals evidenced consistent observations, pictures and samples of creations. They were well organised. Families told us they regularly met with staff to look at their child's journal and agree how they would work together to support learning and development.

Children benefitted from inviting and well resourced provision. Staff had created rich and purposeful spaces indoors that promoted children's overall development. We could see the team had focussed on improving the quality of the learning experiences through their audits, reflective discussions and improvement journey. This gave a message that children mattered.
Children had some opportunities to engage with nature to extend learning. This included visits to the park and woods as the service had established weekly outings. This offered children and staff opportunities to come together and learn in their wider community. As a result, children were developing connections with nature.

Children were supported to make progress in literacy and numeracy through well planned, fun activities. The environment was rich in print and numbers. Children had plentiful opportunities to mark make, share books with friends, and learn about numbers through play. Staff engaged children in meaningful conversations and they were able to add their thoughts and feelings into the selection of floor books throughout the playroom. This supported them to develop skills in talking in small groups and recording their ideas.

Strong connections with families had been made. Staff valued partnership working to promote learning and raise awareness of the importance of play. They offered weekly opportunities for families to take part in book bug, Peep, stay and play sessions and be involved in trips to the woods. Families told us they enjoyed attending these sessions and spending time in the setting with their child. As a result, children enjoyed sharing learning with their family.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's healthcare needs are met, the provider should ensure that medication held is reviewed regularly and information recorded is consistent in line with guidance. This would ensure information for the safe and effective administration is up to date.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice." (HSCS 4.11)

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as 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 benefitted from a purpose-built provision that offered two large playrooms and direct access to enclosed garden spaces. The setting was furnished to a high standard and offered lots of natural light and ventilation. There was a good balance of high-quality, well-maintained resources that offered children challenge and depth of learning in their play.

The heating in one of the playrooms was not working, making this play space cold as the door was open to allow children free flow access to the garden. The service had followed their reporting procedures of maintenance concerns; however, this was causing staff and children to experience conditions that were not comfortable at times (See area for improvement 1).

Robust, infection, prevention, and control practices were embedded. Staff supported children to engage in effective hand hygiene routines at key times throughout the day and as they moved between areas. They were mindful of the importance good hand hygiene had on reducing the likelihood of cross contamination. This ensured children's health and wellbeing was promoted.

Staff carried out daily checks of the indoor and outdoor spaces. We encouraged them to detail issues identified and the actions taken to rectify these. Risk assessments for the service were clear, concise, and relevant to McLean Nursery. These had been updated recently by the leadership team. We encouraged the service to include staff in reviewing risk assessments to ensure they followed steps to minimise any potential risks to children in the environment and the wider community (See area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure wellbeing of children and staff, the provider should take steps to ensure the temperature in the playroom is at an comfortable level.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My environment has plenty natural light and fresh air, and the lighting, ventilation and heating can be adjusted to meet my needs and wishes (HSCS 5.21)

2. To ensure children's health, safety, and wellbeing continues to be promoted through robust risk assessments, staff should be involved in reviewing and updating these regularly. This would ensure staff were clear of actions and following steps to minimise potential risks and hazards.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Children and families experienced a warm, welcoming, and inclusive ethos. Staff worked closely with families, getting to know children, their needs and wishes. The service were reviewing their aims and vision for the school community. This involved consulting staff, families, and children. The leadership team recognised the importance of involving everyone in this to strengthen collaborative working between the nursery and school. As a result, a shared vision for the service was being created that included everyone and meant staff were clear about their role in promoting this.

The service was led by a supportive and committed leadership team. Families told us they felt the nursery was led well and commented they had a "great trust in the management, found them approachable and kind." As a result, children and families experienced a service that was led well.

The leadership team promoted a culture of leadership at all levels. They invested time and support in building capacity in the team. Staff benefitted from regular training and development time. This allowed them to engage with professional reading, complete training and develop their knowledge and skills. Leaders valued the staff team and recognised their commitment to their role.

Staff were able to initiate change through reflective discussions and team meetings. The leadership team supported staff to bring about positive developments linked to their interests and ideas. For example, some staff were leading on promoting communication through sign a long, engaging families in family learning and forest sessions. Other staff were attending training to support children's emotional wellbeing. This meant everyone played a key role in promoting positive outcomes for children and families.

Children and families were involved in evaluating the service and experiences offered. The team gathered the views to support their self-evaluation process. Feedback was used to continually develop the setting. We could see the cycle of evaluation was embedded as staff continually engaged in reflective discussions. They had a very good awareness of their improvement journey. Looking inwards, outwards and forwards ensured high quality play and learning remained at the heart of the setting.

We asked children and families if they thought the service could improve any aspects. Most families told us there were no improvements needed. They commented the service was "fantastic", "amazing" and "They are doing a great job. This meant children continued to be supported to reach their full potential through high quality play and learning led by a skilled and committed team.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Children experienced high quality care and support from a committed and caring team. Families told us "Staff are friendly and welcoming.", "Staff are caring and supportive." and "I couldn't ask for a better team looking after my child. They are welcoming every day; they work tirelessly and make the children feel important and respected." This meant families had confidence in the team and children were supported to thrive and flourish.

Children's needs were met as the service benefitted from higher staffing levels. Busier times of the day were well managed and ensured children were safe and their learning supported as staff deployed themselves effectively. This meant children's learning, wishes and choices were extended through quality engagement.

Transitions were well planned, positive, and individual to meet children's needs. One family told us the service worked closely with them to ensure the pace of starting nursery was right for the child. This meant that the team were getting it right for children and families.

Communication with families was important to the service. Daily chats, updates through the online app and regular progress meetings ensured families felt included and well informed. Families told us they felt communication was very good and liked the regular updates online and the chats with staff. This meant that families felt included in their child's learning.

The team valued the system they had in place to support communication. They recognised the model they delivered meant there was limited time to meet as a whole team. However, they ensured there was time to discuss children, what was important to them and how they would work together to support next steps in learning. This meant that everyone was included and were clear about their role and responsibilities to support positive outcomes for children.

The team valued the skills, experience, and knowledge of each other. This fostered a culture of respect and support that complimented the quality learning offered to children. As a result, children benefitted from a service that valued their right to play, grow and learn through meaningful interactions, positive trusting relationships, and inviting provision.

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	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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