Mountfleurie Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Christie Avenue
Leven
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Telephone: 01334 659 429

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 November 2024

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2003015968

About the service

Mountfleurie Primary School Nursery is located in the town of Leven and provided by Fife Council. It is registered as a daycare of children service to provide care to a maximum of 74 children aged from two years to those not yet attending primary school. The nursery is accommodated within the primary school. Children are cared for across three play spaces. 15 children aged two to three have their own dedicated space, with a family room and secure garden. Toilets, changing facilities and cloakroom areas are located out with the room and nearby. 59 children from age three years have access to two play spaces with free flow access to a large garden area. Children have opportunities for outings within the community to local shops and parks.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 & 20 November 2024 between 09:30 and 16.00. We provided feedback on 20 November 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration and any complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service
- spoke with families using the service
- reviewed feedback from seven families using MS forms
- reviewed feedback from 12 staff members employed in the service using MS forms
- spoke with senior management, and staff
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children were happy, settled and having fun.

Staff interactions were kind, warm and nurturing, helping children feel loved, safe and secure.

Daily access to fresh air and outdoor experiences supported children's health and wellbeing.

Staff supported children in their play and were being supported to further develop their skills in planning for, and extending, learning opportunities for children.

The views of children and families were valued and actively sought to inform the ongoing development of the service.

Management and staff had a clear vision for the development of the service and were passionate and committed to driving forward improvement.

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?	4 - 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 key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children benefitted from a staff team who knew them well and were committed to providing warm, and nurturing care. Staff had developed positive connections with children and their families. We found that staff were kind, caring and supportive of children's emotional needs and their overall wellbeing. We saw staff give children reassurance and comfort when needed. As a result, children were secure, happy, and settled within the nursery environment. Most families who completed our online questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that they have a strong connection with the staff caring for my child. Some comments included:

"All the nursery teachers in my child's class are super lovely and can't fault any of them. They're so understanding and kind."

"The staff are brilliant. They take time each day to give a detailed explanation about how your child's day has been. They are very approachable, and my child is comfortable around them."

"Nursery staff are always friendly and take the time to answer our questions or discuss anything that needs discussed. Communication is very good with the nursery."

Since the last inspection personal plans had been further developed. They were in place for all children across the service. Personal plans contained key information about children's health, wellbeing, development, and progress. They were created with families to respect family preferences and individual routines. Most families agreed or strongly agreed that they were fully involved in their child's care, including developing and reviewing their personal plan. Some comments included:

"The staff are amazing at allowing my child to lead with their learning they really enjoy numbers and staff take time to sit with them when they have a peak interest."

"We are committed to our child's experience at nursery being the best it can be and are more than happy to work with the nursery staff to ensure our child gains the most they can from it. So that we understand what is needed from our end."

"I am fully involved in all aspects of my child's care at nursery. Staff really take time to discuss this with me and my child and any new information is noted down."

Families were involved in nursery life. Planned events such as stay and play days had been well received by families and contributed to strengthened relationships that supported meeting children's needs. Families were being consulted with to plan regular Book Bug and PEEP (Learning Together Programme) sessions. This further supported families to feel valued and included in the life of the service.

Children benefitted from relaxed mealtime experiences. Children could choose to have snack when they were ready to, this approach supported their independence and choice. Staff sat with children during mealtimes.

This carefully considered approach supported positive social interactions and meant staff could help children when needed.

We asked the service to further consider their lunchtime experience in order to enhance the existing opportunities for children. Management and staff were keen to implement some small changes to this routine to further enhance the lunchtime experience for all children.

Staff understood their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. They spoke confidently of the steps they would take should a concern or a support need arise for a child or family.

Children's health and wellbeing needs were carefully considered through the correct and well organised storage of medication. All consent forms were completed with families, and were regularly reviewed to ensure information was current.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were happy, confident and having fun in their play. Both the indoor and outdoor environments promoted spontaneous play and learning opportunities. Children could make choices and lead their own play and learning. Sensory play such as sand, water and playdough encouraged curiosity, creativity and exploration. This meant that children were developing a range of skills.

Literacy and numeracy were supported through a range of experiences. Staff understood the importance of language development and provided a variety of activities to support this. Children in the two to threes room were engaged in songs and stories throughout their day, helping to support their literacy development and supporting children's interests. Children were developing confidence in learning early numeracy skills, counting aloud as they played, and recognising some numbers in the environment.

Planning approaches were developing across the service. Staff had identified strengths and areas for development in each room. Staff in the two to three room were working collaboratively with another service in their local area to further support planning approaches. The service was keen to build on these approaches by sharing the good practice across the service and to develop a consistent approach. Floor books highlighted children's experiences and were beginning to be used effectively to represent their voice, thoughts and opinions.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to their own and wider communities. These included trips to the local supermarket to buy snacks, and visits to green spaces. This helped children to feel part of their community.

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 comfortable and homely environment. Play spaces provided a variety of learning opportunities and areas were inviting and spacious to support small groups of children. Resources were developmentally appropriate. Staff regularly reflected on the opportunities provided.

This resulted in continual development of the environment and helped to ensure that it supported positive experiences for children.

Staff interactions were carefully considered and were used to extend and enhance learning opportunities. We saw staff asking open ended questions to help widen children's thinking.

Younger and older children had separate gardens, these spaces were currently being developed through consultation with children, families and staff. Children had free flow access to outdoors and this supported them to be make choices and be active across their day. Families told us that their child always had the opportunity to play outdoors. Some comments included:

"The door is always open at the nursery and children wear the appropriate clothes such has wet suits and wellies when it rains and wrapped up when it's cold."

"There's a great secured outdoor area, play areas such as sand pit, music area, building and bikes. She is outside every day."

Children's health, wellbeing and safety were effectively supported by staff. A variety of measures were in place to help keep children safe. Risk benefit assessments helped staff to reduce risk and enhanced children's safety. Benefits were considered alongside these to support risky play and resilience. Children were actively involved in developing their understanding of safety. Staff and children were engaging very well with the Care Inspectorate SIMOA (Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) campaign, which enhanced their daily practice and kept children safe. Large purple elephants were found in each room. These were used creatively by staff and this carefully considered approach helped bring this to life for children across the service. For example, children were involved in regular head counts and SIMOA wore the number of children who were present around its neck. This actively involved children in keeping themselves and their friends safe in nursery.

Infection prevention and control measures were in place, and this contributed towards a safe environment for children. For example, children were encouraged to wash their hands at key points throughout the day including before and after meals.

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 key question as very good.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children were cared for in a service with clear vision, values and aims. These were displayed and shared with families. This supported everyone in recognising what was important for the service to meet the individual needs of children and their families. This contributed to a very positive and nurturing ethos. Strong and effective leadership supported staff to have confidence in their capacity to support children to thrive and flourish.

Effective quality assurance systems were in place to help support the delivery of the service and to drive forward improvements. For example, a clear and detailed improvement plan was in place and staff confidently spoke about the improvement priorities. The management team had a very good overview of the service's strengths and areas for development. Improvements that had been identified were well planned.

This approach supported children's play and learning across the service. This also highlighted that a culture of continuous improvement was embedded within the service.

The management and staff valued feedback from children and families. This approach ensured that children and families wishes and choices were fully considered. This also demonstrated a reflective and considered approach to the development of the service. This further encouraged leaders and staff to be reflective and supported children and families to feel included. Families confirmed they felt involved, one parent commented that "we are happy to participate in any feedback such as this based on our experiences with the nursery."

Shared leadership roles across the team were being developed. Staff had undertaken specific roles, and training to develop specific areas of the service. For example, outdoor provision, parental engagement, STEM and communication. This was in the early stages and staff were committed to improving outcomes for children and enhancing opportunities for families to be included and valued.

Regular team meetings gave staff the opportunities to talk about any successes and achievements, discuss any individual children's needs or next steps and reflect on practice. This resulted in a positive ethos across the team and service.

How good is our staff team? 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 4.3: Staff deployment

Children were cared for by staff with a range of experience, knowledge and skills. They recognised that continuity of care was important for children.

Following some staffing changes and instability within the team, they were now settled with permanent staff and were observed to work well together. All families were welcomed into the service each day, this approach supported effective communication and built trusting relationships with families. The large staff team had a mix of skills, experience, and knowledge. Staff understood their individual and collective roles, were flexible and supported each other. Experienced staff role modelled and supported their team. This encouraged a positive ethos where staff were courteous, supportive, and respectful to each other.

All staff we spoke with told us they felt well-supported in their roles. There was a relaxed, comfortable working environment where people felt confident to make suggestions and initiate improvements. One member of staff told us that "management are always there to offer support to staff when needed whether it be regarding needs within the setting or our individual wellbeing needs."

Support strategies were in place for most children. These strategies considered individual needs. We asked the service to ensure that support strategies were used consistently to provide children with continuity of care. This approach would support children to feel safe, secure, and happy.

Staff training and development was a priority. The service supported staff to identify training needs and to reflect on priorities and plan for ongoing improvements. Staff had completed a variety of training opportunities for example, child protection and quality interactions. Staff confidently told us about how these opportunities impacted their daily practice.

They were also encouraged to build further skills and knowledge in areas of individual interests, these had included outdoor play and Book Bug training.

Overall, staff deployment was well planned to meet the needs of children. Staff worked well together to ensure children's individual care needs were met. We saw effective communication between staff members, especially when a task took them away from their responsibilities. This helped to maintain supervision of children and ensure they were safe.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

1. To ensure children receive the support they need the provider should ensure personal plans are further developed. This should include, but not be limited to, next steps, progress and children's sleep routines.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as my care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

This area for improvement was made on 14 November 2023.

Action taken since then

Personal plans have been further developed to include children's next steps in learning and their overall progress. Personal plans are regularly reviewed with families to ensure this information is current and up to date.

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	4 - 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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