Balcurvie Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Balcurvie Road
Windygates
Leven
KY8 5DY

Telephone: 01334 659 449

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 June 2024

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2003015972

About the service

Balcurvie Primary School Nursery is a daycare of children provided by Fife council. The service is registered to provide a care to a maximum of 50 children from three years of age up to an age to attend primary school. Children must have access to the outdoor space at all times.

The service is provided from a building within the grounds of Balcurvie Primary School in Windygates, Leven, Fife. Accommodation consists of one large play space, children's toileting facilities and an enclosed garden area. The nursery is close to local amenities within the village.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 19 June 2024 between 09:30 and 15:30 and 20 June 2024 between 09:30 and 12:00. 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 eight families from our online questionnaire
- spoke with the staff and management team
- observed practice
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to support their overall wellbeing
- The children were happy and engaged in their play and they experienced uninterrupted play which enabled them to become focused and engaged in their play experiences.
- The nursery was welcoming and inviting for children and families.
- Children benefitted from a culture of continuous improvement, strong leadership supported staff to develop their confidence and skills within their roles. There was a clear focus on improving outcomes for all children and their families.
- Staff worked well together to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for children to support the shared vision and a positive working ethos.
- Effective staff deployment across the service meant that the right number of staff were meeting children's individual needs, consistently throughout the session.

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 experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to support their overall wellbeing. They were happy, settled and having fun. Children were supported to make choices as staff were attuned to their routines and what was important to them. This contributed to children feeling safe and secure and as a result all children were confident and engaged in their play experiences.

Children's wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning which was reviewed regularly with families and children. Staff knew children well and were aware of their individual needs. Effective partnerships had been formed with external agencies to help assess children's developmental needs. Children requiring additional support had individualised strategies in place, which were reflected in practice. This resulted in them being fully included in nursery experiences. This ensured positive outcomes for children and supported them to achieve their potential.

Snack time was a sociable, nurturing experience for children. A rolling snack time meant children could eat at a time that was right for them. There were opportunities for children to be responsible and independent as they helped prepare, poured their own drinks, self-served from dishes in the centre of the table and responsibly cleared away their dishes before they returned to play. This relaxed and unhurried atmosphere meant children were happy, confident, and learning important life skills. Allergies and dietary requirements were managed well which contributed to keeping children safe.

Children and families were valued and respected. 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. One parent commented, 'The staff know my child and our family well. They are always welcoming every day. I have a built a good relationship with the staff in the room and can have lots of informal chats at pick and drop off'.

1.3 Play and learning

The children were happy and engaged in their play and actively led their play and learning throughout the day. They independently chose where they played and moved confidently between the indoor and outdoor play spaces. They experienced uninterrupted play which enabled them to become focused and engaged in their play experiences.

Staff were responsive to children's requests in their play and intervened at appropriate times. This contributed to children feeling valued and having the ability to lead their own learning by following their interests. Staff used effective questioning to extend and develop children's individual learning. This supported children to be independent and confident in their play and learning.

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 problem solving with large loose parts creating obstacle courses, being creative in the mud kitchen. The outdoor area had various exciting play opportunities for children, including a well-resourced literacy shed with materials to extend their play, areas to plant and grow vegetables and various nooks and crannies to play and explore. As a result, children were happy and engaged in play outdoors.

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 were shared on an online platform. Observations detailed significant learning that was relevant to individual children. All parents strongly agreed and agreed they felt fully involved in their child's care and development, comments included, 'I have had frequent progress meetings with [child's] key worker and have looked through her PLJ a number of times. It has been thorough and very reflective of their learning', and 'I have seen their personal learning journey folder and understand [child's] learning goals. Learning is shared regularly on Seesaw'.

Children's learning experiences were carefully tracked, gaps were effectively identified, and staff planned specific learning experiences for children's overall development. This approach ensured that staff provided various opportunities to extend individual learning. Children were supported to reach their full potential and were appropriately challenged.

Children's play and learning was enhanced through strong connections to the wider community. Regular visits to Kennoway Den and local beach provided further opportunities for children to play, learn and explore. Opportunities had been developed to support intergenerational learning between the service and a local care home, and visits into the nursery from the local guild group. This supported children to build valuable connections with members of their wider community. Parents comments included, 'The woods at Kennoway den on a regular basis. [Child] also has some walks to the local park and shops. They recently took part in a beach experiences which [child] loved!'

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, learn and relax.

The nursery was welcoming and inviting for children and families. Children's artwork and photographs from home were displayed to ensure children felt valued and respected. Natural furnishings and resources provided a calming and nurturing environment for children to play and learn. Furniture was all of an appropriate size to support the age and stage of development of children. The environment was well considered and supported quality play and learning experiences.

Children had access to resources that were clean, well-organised, which encouraged exploration, enquiry and fun. The continuous provision indoors and outdoors had been well considered to include age and stage appropriate resources, and interesting, open ended and natural resources. As a result, children were able to choose where to play, moving freely between indoor and outdoor play areas. One parent told us, 'The nursery garden is well established and provides a great extension of the learning environment. The garden is used all year round'.

The committed 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 and challenged their curiosity and imagination. We observed children following their own interests within the play spaces and staff supported this very well. All parents agreed their child's development is supported through interesting and fun play experiences, comments included, 'My child loves to come in and see what is the in the tuff tray daily, there is usually something different for them to explore,' and, 'The nursery are great at changing areas frequently to suit interests and what's going on in the world.'

Staff implemented infection, prevention and control routines to minimise the potential spread of infection. Children were encouraged to wash hands frequently and at appropriate times. Established routines meant children were supported to be healthy.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvements are led well

A shared vision across the nursery and school created a happy and inclusive ethos. This promoted a happy atmosphere for children to play and learn. Children benefitted from a culture of continuous improvement. Effective policies, procedures and quality assurance processes were in place to support the development and improvement of the service. This supported positive outcomes for children and their families.

Children and families were regularly consulted, and their views gathered. They did this with questionnaires 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.

Quality assurance and an ethos of continuous improvement were evident throughout the setting with the management team and staff working hard to develop children's experiences. A quality assurance calendar was in place that ensured audits of various aspects of the nursery were routinely carried out.

A range of effective systems were in place for the nursery which supported a culture of continuous improvement. For example, an improvement plan that was realistic, achievable and measurable was in place and supported positive outcomes for children. Conceptual numeracy had been a priority for this year and this was evident in the environment, and staffs practice throughout the inspection. An environmental audit had provided a review of the nursery to ensure children experienced exciting play and learning opportunities that met their needs.

Staff said that they felt well supported by management. Staff 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that their wellbeing needs were recognised and supported by leaders. One staff member told us, 'Management have proven to be very supportive whenever the need has arisen, providing an open door policy to provide support whenever required'.

Strong leadership supported staff to develop their confidence and skills within their roles. Regular staff meetings supported staff to reflect together and self-evaluate the quality of care and support provided. There was a strong focus on improving outcomes for all children and their families, using relevant evidence and best practice guidance. As a result, children and families benefited from a culture of continuous improvement.

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 were supported by motivated and enthusiastic staff who were committed to their role. Staff worked well together to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for children to support the shared vision and a positive working ethos. Parents told us staff were friendly and welcoming, parents comments included, 'The staff have been exceptional in nurturing my [child] and getting them prepared for school' and 'The staff are excellent. All of them have taken the time to get to know the children in their care and genuinely care about them all'.

Effective staff deployment across the service meant that the right number of staff were meeting children's individual needs, consistently throughout the session. Staff were proactive in recognising any gaps and ensuring effective supervision and quality engagement with children. As a result, children benefitted from a very calm and positive experience. Families told us that there were always enough staff in this service to meet their child's needs. One parent told us, 'The children always seem to be well engaged with activities and there is always a member of staff supporting in each of the areas of the nursery and outdoor areas.' This supported children to thrive and flourish.

Staff across the service worked well as a team, communicating effectively with each other to ensure the service ran well and children's needs were consistently met. For example, children were able to make choices about where they wanted to play this was managed well by staff. This contributed to children being respected, kept safe and created a positive ethos.

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

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànain eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.