St. Ronan's Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

St. Ronans Road
Innerleithen
EH44 6PB

Telephone: 01896 830 349

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 November 2022

Service provided by:
Scottish Borders Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001976

Service no:
CS2003016096

About the service

St. Ronan's Primary School Nursery is a daycare of children's service. It is registered to provide a service to maximum of 95 children at any one time. No more than 15 children will be under 3 years. The adult:child ratios will be a minimum of: 2 years to under 3 years 1:5, 1:8 if the children attend more than 4 hours per day or 1:10 if the children attend for less than 4 hours per day

The manager is also the manager of Walkerburn Primary School Nursery.

The service is situated in a large purpose built extension within the primary school. There are a number of interconnecting playrooms all with direct access onto the enclosed outdoor space. The nursery has its own entrance, dedicated cloakroom, kitchen area and numerous toilets and changing areas.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 14 November between 10:30am and 15:30pm. A further visit and feedback took place on 22 November 2022 between 9:30am and 15:00pm. 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 seven people using the service
- spoke with seven staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals

Key messages

- Children experienced kind, nurturing care from staff who knew them well

- The staff and management team were committed to delivering a quality service

- ELC and catering staff had worked together to create a nurturing and positive mealtime experience.

- The staff team used their knowledge and experience to support positive 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?	4 - 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 key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good. Children were confident and appeared happy and secure within the service. They experienced warm and nurturing interactions from staff, and we observed children engaged in play and having fun throughout our visit.

Positive relationships had been formed between children and staff. Staff were responsive to children's requests and cues, offering individualised support and adapting care to meet needs. Comfort and reassurance were given when needed, contributing to positive attachments being formed. There was a relaxed pace that took good account of needs and routines. Throughout the day the atmosphere was calm, offering children a nurturing learning environment.

Mealtimes were sociable and calm. Nursery and catering staff had worked together to create a nurturing and positive experience. Children and staff ate lunch together, creating a very supportive, unhurried, and sociable environment. Children were encouraged to be independent and responsible, through setting the tables, tiding away their dishes, and keeping the dining hall tidy. Children were actively involved in choosing and preparing of snack, and this supported them in developing important life skills, for example cutting and peeling vegetables to make soup. They also poured their own drinks and enjoyed a sociable experience with their friends.

Staff had a good understanding of child development, allowing them to identify if extra support or intervention was needed, to allow children to reach their full potential. Staff were proactive in seeking guidance from other professionals to help children progress. The service should review personal plans to ensure the information recorded, reflects the care and support provided. Strategies should be clear and evaluated regularly to ensure they are relevant and up to date.

Children were safe and protected as staff understood their responsibilities in reporting protection concerns. Staff should be clear regarding information recording.

Accident and incident records were completed fully by staff and shared with families. Medication procedures supported safe storage and administration. Allergies were well documented. Staff were aware of children's health care needs and could confidently discuss procedures in place to keep children healthy and safe. These procedures were audited as part of the service's quality assurance procedures.

1.3 Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good. Children actively led their play and learning throughout the day. They were happy, confident and engaged. Children benefited from a high-quality play and learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. Children had opportunities for uninterrupted play, and this encouraged children to become absorbed in their learning and have fun.

Planning approaches were child centred with children being actively involved in planning. Learning walls

were used effectively to record children's progress, and by displaying these at children's level gave them a sense of ownership of their environment and play space. The resources and experiences enabled rich learning opportunities and most promoted challenge. Children were encouraged to explore resources and staff had a clear understanding of child development. Skilled staff interaction were adding further value to children's play and learning, as a result children were respected and valued. Children commented "I like playing with the other children. I like all the toys and playing in the block area" and "Playing at the outdoor sandpit and playhouse. Having lunch in the cafeteria. Drawing with pens and playing at the indoor water play".

Children benefitted from time spent in the woodland situated within the school grounds. This was an exciting space for children to play and have fun. They were gaining a deeper appreciation of nature and developing a sense of pride for their wider community. Children told us "I like woods days and mucking about outside".

Open-ended and loose part resources were available in both the indoor and outdoor environments. These promoted children's curiosity and encouraged them to be creative, problem solve and use their imagination. We discussed how these could be improved, particularly in the outdoor environment to offer more choice and enrich the play opportunities for children. Some children were at the age and stage of leading their own play. However, most children still needed support to do this. Therefore, consideration should now be paid to developing children's opportunities to scaffold their play by the choice of resources on offer.

Parents commented "the play and learning seems varied and engaging and I couldn't ask for more than what is on offer", "there is such a fantastic variety of outdoor and indoor activities for them to get involved in!" and "there is so much positivity, support and encouragement for both us the parents and our child".

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good with major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and families

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The nursery building is a large area with free flow access between the rooms. These areas had been thoughtfully arranged and children could access a range of resources. The amount of natural day light that flooded the areas and the range of lighting options ensured play spaces were calm and relaxed. The quieter rooms and large sofa allowed children the space to be calm, comfortable and relaxed.

Children moved around the setting with confidence and had choice in where they played. The play environment was organised with defined, yet flexible areas. This allowed children to move unhindered and access a range of resources and activities of their choice. This supported a variety of play and learning. The environment had been recently evaluated using best practice guidelines and an environmental audit compiled by the local authority. The staff were engaged in creating positive changes to the environment to support children's development and learning needs.

Outdoor play was an established part of the day. Staff saw the benefits of having the children outdoors to support their health and wellbeing, and the learning spaces provided children with opportunities to be active and healthy. Children were confident moving around the rooms and outdoors. This showed us children felt safe and secure in the nursery. Parents told us the children enjoyed playing indoors and in the outdoor space.

Staff had carried out a safety audit and used the Care Inspectorate SIMOA campaign to ensure children, were kept safe when using the outdoor area. The fence around the outdoor area did cause issues and some anxiety within the staff team and some parents. One parent commented "I am concerned about the fence height in the back garden. Feel it should be a bit higher with little kids able to climb!". This issue has been highlighted to the local authority who have agreed that work should be completed as soon as possible, to ensure the safety of the children.

Infection prevention and control measures were in place in line with current guidelines. Children and staff regularly washed their hands throughout the day. Toilets and changing areas were clean and accessible for children. We discussed the storage of nappies and personal protective equipment and reminded the service to ensure they were kept in lidded boxes.

Parents commented: "the nursery environment and all who work within it are fabulous! The facilities are fantastic. My child absolutely loves attending St Ronan's nursery" , "the nursery is always clean and inviting at the end of each day when we enter to collect our children. There is a really lovely atmosphere and every child seems happy & relaxed" and "the environment is excellent and allows children to explore and play freely. My only concern is because my child is still very young that she might feel a bit overwhelmed by the size/freedom".

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led

The service had vision, values and aims that reflected the ethos of the service. These were being used effectively by the management team to positively inform practice and reflect as a team. This resulted in staff that knew what was important to the setting but also met the needs of the children and families. A parent commented that "the ethos" was a strength of the nursery.

The senior management team were supporting staff to develop their leadership skills throughout the setting. This meant that staff felt valued and able to contribute to improvements. Although one to one meetings had been undertaken with staff, they had not received a professional review for sometime. To ensure staff are supported to develop their skills, knowledge and expertise a review meeting should take place as soon as possible.

Positive relationships had been formed with children and their families. Their views and ideas were valued and regularly sought to support in evaluating the service and shaping improvements. The service used a variety of formal and informal methods to gather suggestions and include families in influencing change. Most parents told us they felt well informed of plans and that staff were always approachable and created a welcoming environment. This allowed parents to share information with confidence.
A parent told us that they appreciated that the senior practitioner was visible and were able to talk to the leadership team if needed. However one parent commented that they didn't know who was part of the leadership team. This was discussed at feedback.

Staff were able to meet and reflect as a team. They felt supported to discuss, identify and take forward areas for improvement. Staff understood their role in improving the service and were confident to initiate

change when required. Minutes of the team meetings should be formalised, and staff identified to take forward any changes or improvements within the setting.

Plans for development were in place to ensure a quality service was provided. The key priorities had been identified and were beginning to influence change and have some impact on the service. Self evaluation work was at an early stage, but the leadership team were working alongside the staff, to develop and strengthen approaches, to ensure improvements were embedded into daily practice.

To comply with the regulations set out by the Care Inspectorate, the service should submit relevant notifications.

Comments from parents included "Our child loves going to nursery. The staff are friendly and helpful. They always look after our child in a kind manner" and "it appears to be extremely good". Other comments included "Being able to see them in nursery more. The open day was great. Also maybe seeing how lunches go and how its organised" and "more books" and more comfortable nap space". A child stated "I don't like the curry with vegetables in it. I don't like nursery because I'm away from my mummy and daddy". These comments were shared with the service who agreed to review and make changes if possible.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good with major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and families

4.3 Staff deployment

Children benefited from a nurturing and caring staff team that knew the children well. Staff had clear roles and responsibilities and communicated well together, especially when tasks took them away from their areas of responsibility. Staff breaks were planned to minimise disruption and provide support for children, at busy times of the day, such as mealtimes. They were flexible and responsive whilst working well as a team. This contributed to effective supervision and continuity of care in meeting the needs of each child. Parents commented positively about the staff team and their comments include " GREAT with the children, so caring and attentive!", "they all try so hard to make our sons time at nursery full of fun, "they are warm, friendly, caring and professional" and "great team".

The management team were keen for staff to build up their leadership skills, roles and responsibilities within the setting. Team meetings were used to provide opportunities to share knowledge from recent training. Staff told us they were supported in their role and an open management structure was in place.

Routines were established which promoted children's safety. Staff were proactive during busier times of the day, such as at arrival time, to ensure there was good supervision. The staff team worked effectively together to ensure that children's needs were met, and routine tasks were carried out with little or no impact to children. Transitions were seamless and well planned with children being comfortable about what was happening next. Children were encouraged to feel included, respected and valued as they understood the routines of the day. A parent commented "they have supported us both with this big transition exceptionally well. Always approachable and welcoming" and "they are all excellent. They have been great at addressing any issues that have arisen both competently and effectively and they really seem to care about each and every child".

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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