Uphall Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Crossgreen Drive
Uphall
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Type of inspection:
Announced

Completed on:
19 January 2024

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Service no:
CS2003016159

About the service

Uphall Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 56 children aged from 3 years to not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time.

The service operates within Uphall Primary School which is located in West Lothian and has local amenities and transport links nearby. The accommodation consists of an entrance foyer, a large open plan playroom, toilet and nappy changing facilities, kitchen space and a staff meeting space. There is also direct access via the foyer to the fully enclosed outdoor garden space.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 17 January 2024 between the hours of 9:35 and 16:25. We returned on Thursday 18 January 2024 between the hours of 9:00 and 16:35 to continue with 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 to and interacted with children using the service
- spoke with staff, the head teacher and the early learning and childcare area support manager
- observed practice, daily routines and children's experiences
- reviewed documents relating to children's care and the management of the service
- took into account feedback we received from 15 families via an online survey we issued.

We provided feedback to the head teacher, early years officer, early learning and childcare area support manager and quality improvement officer - early years for West Lothian Council on Friday 19 January 2024.

Key messages

- Staff demonstrated a professional, caring and supportive approach during their engagement with children. As a result positive relationships had been built.
- Children's wellbeing was supported as staff knew the children in their care well and made effective use of personal plan information. Ongoing enhancements to the personal plan systems could support an overview of other additional information including dates of meetings held with families or other professionals.
- Daily access to fresh air and outdoor experiences supported children's health and wellbeing.
- Quality assurance processes were supporting a continuous culture of improvement which promoted positive outcomes for children.
- The deployment of staff was continually assessed by the head teacher to ensure children's care and support needs are consistently and effectively supported 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 key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff which resulted in positive relationships being established.

Staff were respectful in their approach and took into account children's individual needs and preferences. For example, when children did not want to come for lunch, this was acknowledged and supported. Staff knew the children in their care well. This meant that when children were unsettled or needed additional help, staff were skilled to sensitively support them throughout the day.

Feedback from families about what they liked about the service included, "It's a very welcoming environment for the children. The staff are all very caring and tuned into the children's needs", "Great feedback on (child's) day at the ELC. The teachers are very supportive of (child's) development. They help (child) to feel safe to be himself and to gain confidence and make new friends". Some families also shared which staff were their children's favourite and that they liked giving and getting hugs.

Mealtimes had been audited and improved by staff to enhance children's experiences. This had helped to support an unhurried and relaxed experience. This included children having a choice of when to eat and opportunities to learn new skills to encourage their independence. For example, self serving their food and drinks. Staff sat with children at mealtimes and this supported social interactions and meant they could provide children with help or assistance when needed. Staff were knowledgeable of how to keep children safe and this included minimising the potential of choking and ensuring any dietary requirements were met. Lunchtime routines were to continue to be audited by staff to further enhance children's experiences. For example, to support further self serving opportunities and help assess the varied lunchtime sittings which took into account children's pattern of attendance.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported by their personal plan information. This included information about children's individual care and support needs, strategies of support and their goals. This meant that their individual needs were planned for by staff and this supported children to reach their full potential. Children's personal plans were reviewed with families regularly to share information and ensure information was kept up to date. This along with discussions and consultation meetings helped support a consistent approach enabled staff to respond quickly and sensitively to any changes. Whilst there were systems to document updated information and telephone communications with families, enhancing this to include information of key dates or meetings held could be beneficial. For example, links with other professionals or consultation meetings with families. This would help all staff to have an overview of additional key information.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children benefited from a variety of play and learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors throughout the day. For example, construction, water play, story telling, play dough and other sensory experiences. This meant that they could lead their own play and make choices from a range of experiences. Effective use of questions and discussions by staff helped extend children's learning experiences. For example, about how to keep safe in the the icy weather and experimenting together with the ice they found outdoors.

Feedback we received from families about what their children liked included, "I love it, especially the sandpit and Play-Doh", "I like cosmic yoga and I like playing with the blocks" and "I like outdoors, I like bikes". Other feedback outlined that to make the nursery better, they would like "More external trips if possible" and "Go on more walks to learn things", "I'd like a seesaw". The nursery responded positively to the suggestions received and their future plans. For example, how they might make a seesaw with the children using loose parts equipment.

Children's skills in literacy and numeracy were supported and developed through a variety of opportunities and skilled interactions by staff. For example, group time activities, learning rhymes, discussions with children about their experiences during their play, story telling, and technology experiences. Staff skills and their planning approaches meant that children's play and learning experiences were responsive to their interests and life experiences. This included taking on board children's comments, feedback and ideas. As a result, children were engaged and focused during their play. Staff responded positively to children's requests to engage with them during their play or to help them to access additional resources. This helped to enrich children's creativity and supported them to learn new skills. For example, staff regularly supported with songs, rhymes, using the smart board technology, musical instruments and participating in matching and number games.

Children's experiences and progress were assessed and evaluated by staff on an ongoing basis. Information about children's progress, achievements, photographs of experiences and their next steps for learning were discussed and agreed with families. For example, through consultation meetings and the use of online learning journals. This helped include families and ensured they were kept up to date with information about their child's play, learning and development. Feedback we received from families indicated "Great support from the team and fun learning activities" and "Staff clearly enjoy their jobs, they take the time get to know all the children and provide updates on their progress". Other feedback indicated that families would like more updates or photos on the online learning journal as well as more information about their child's day as feedback from staff could vary. The service was currently moving to a new online system and systems to share information with individual families would resume when this was completed. The nursery also agreed to ensure there was a consistent approach to information shared by staff at the end of the day with families.

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 key question as very good.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefitted from a welcoming environment which was warm, well furnished and comfortable. There was also plenty of natural light and ventilation to support children's wellbeing. Children's safety was maintained by a secure entry system to the building and the garden was fully enclosed.

Since the previous inspection, the environment had continued to be audited and assessed to support improvements to the layout and enhancement of resources. A variety of soft furnishings and seating had also been used to support quieter, cosy areas within the playroom. This meant children had access to well presented spaces to support their stage of development, current interests and learning.

Feedback we received from families included, "The nursery is always clean and tidy with well maintained furnishings", "There is a large variety of toys on offer with my children having the opportunity to choose how they play. They are offered outdoor play throughout the day and I have seen staff setting the outdoor area up with great resources that are different from inside" and "I love how the nursery has a lot of natural materials and toys on offer".

Staff worked together to ensure the environment was both safe and suitable for children through daily risk assessments. Systems were in place to report any issues or potential risks within the environment which meant that action was quickly taken to assess and address these. For example, as a result of effective risk assessments, the outdoor fencing had been extended to ensure the security of the space and further safeguard children. Further ongoing assessment and enhancement of the environment would help some areas to be more comfortable or inviting to children. For example, ensuring the temperature of areas of the playroom are not affected by the open door leading to the garden as well as further maintenance of the play shed in the garden.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported through regular handwashing routines throughout the day. Staff further supported and reminded children to do this when needed. As some children independently accessed toilet facilities, we discussed that staff should continue to monitor children's handwashing routines to ensure that this was consistently and effectively being carried out.

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.

There was a shared vision, values and aims for the service. This helped to inform staff practice and their understanding of the importance of meeting the needs of children and families. Children's views and opinions about their care, play and learning were valued by staff and this meant that children were respected and included. Families also had the opportunity to be able to be involved in the service through surveys, stay and play sessions and consultation meetings. An improvement plan identified the priorities to develop the service and this along with newsletter updates and online communications were also shared with families. This helped ensure that families were kept up to date and had the opportunity to influence change within the setting.

Feedback we received from families included, "Recently, we as parents were asked to give feedback on the ELC vision values and aims through a voting station". Other feedback received, included positive comments about the leadership of the setting, staff knowledge of documents, opportunities for discussion and friendliness of the team.

Robust quality assurance processes supported the head teacher and staff to assess and reflect on what worked well in the service and identify areas for development. For example, team meetings, leadership meetings, as well as regular audits of mealtimes, personal plans and staff practice. As a result, continuous improvements and the sharing of best practice information was supported. Individual review meetings with staff also helped identify areas of success or challenge and any training that might support them in their role. Keeping a record of the impact of any changes made as a result of the quality assurance processes, could help staff identify further action that may be needed to support outcomes for children.

Safe recruitment processes were completed for new staff prior to them starting in the service and this helped support children's safety. Staff inductions and training helped ensure staff knowledge and awareness of their role and responsibilities including the safeguarding of children in their care. This meant that staff knew who to contact in the event of any concerns.

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 key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

The head teacher fully recognised the importance of ensuring the service was appropriately staffed to support children's experiences throughout the day. Staff vacancies, absences as well as busy periods of the day were supported by the head teacher, designated staff from the school and some staff extending their hours. This demonstrated that staff in the setting worked hard to maintain quality experiences for children. For example, staff lunch breaks had been changed to support the quality of engagement with children. This helped ensure a continuity of care for children. Feedback we received from families included, "The staff team are very friendly and supportive", "The headteacher is always on hand to step in to help when there maybe be staffing issues and knows all the children. I feel that the ELC is very much a part of the school" and "The amazing staff, communication and the care time and effort given to each child is outstanding. They pay attention to every child's need".

There was a clear approach to identifying staff roles and responsibilities and this included leadership roles for staff. This meant that staff had responsibility for setting up and working within specific areas of the nursery. This helped support consistent practice and identify what was working well or any areas for improvement. When staff had to move to different designated areas of the nursery to support children, they communicated this effectively with their colleagues. This demonstrated staff understood the importance of their role and were flexible in their approach to team working to support positive outcomes for children.

Families were kept informed of changes to staffing and information was displayed in the foyer about who was in the setting to care for their child and staff shift patterns. Throughout the day, staff effectively supported individual children's care and support needs during their play and learning opportunities. The head teacher and staff team were to continue to reflect on the effectiveness of staff deployment throughout the day. This would help identify any potential gaps and further ensure continuity of care, positive transitions and relationship building for children. For example, to take into account the different staff shift patterns.

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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