Kemnay Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Kemnay Primary School
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Kemnay
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
Aberdeenshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000029

Service no:
CS2003016314

About the service

Kemnay Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 32 children, aged from two years to those not yet attending primary school. The service is based within Kemnay Primary School in the village of Kemnay. The service provider is Aberdeenshire council. The setting consists of a large playroom and an enclosed outdoor area. Children also have access to school facilities and a local forest area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 16 March 2023. Two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection.

To prepare for 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:
- received feedback by email from six parents of children who attended;
- spoke with the children, staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

• Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing support from staff who knew them well.
• Planning approaches were responsive to children's interests.
• Improvements were needed to ensure medication processes and procedures were in line with best practice guidance.
• Positive links and relationships had been made with parents who felt well included and valued within the setting.
• Children's play and learning was enhanced through connections to their local community, including regular forest sessions.
• Routines of the day and staff deployment should be improved to ensure children have consistent support and positive experiences.
• Children and families benefitted from a staff team who engaged in evaluating the service.
• Some quality assurance processes need to be reviewed to secure sustained 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?	4 - 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 made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children.

Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were confident and relaxed in the service and had positive relationships with staff. Children were happy and having fun. Staff were kind, calm, and had a gentle manner which supported children to feel safe and secure. We found that overall interactions were responsive and respectful towards children which contributed positively to children's emotional wellbeing. The team should continue to develop this to ensure a whole team approach.

Children's care was supported with information that was gathered through a variety of personal planning tools, including all about me forms and learning documents. Some of this information was being used to support children's progress based on their interests and needs. Strategies could be more defined with clear actions to identify how staff are supporting children's next steps and development. This would ensure children received the correct care.

Mealtimes were an unhurried, positive social experience for children. A rolling snack supported children's choice in when they ate and ensured their play was not interrupted. Choice and preferences were respected by allowing children to choose where they sat. This enabled children to sit with friends, allowing them to develop social skills and friendships. Staff sat with children, enjoying mealtimes together. This provided opportunities to role model healthy eating habits and offered appropriate supervision to keep children safe. Children could develop self-help skills, with opportunities to prepare, serve and clear away. This allowed children to be responsible and have ownership of the routine. A café style environment provided a calm and nurturing experience.

We identified through a review of medication procedures that improvements were needed to ensure they were in line with best practice. Children's medication documents should be consistently completed and detailed with all the required information to support safe administration. The service should review its medication procedures and management to fully implement current national guidance associated with the recording and administration of children's medication. **(See area for improvement 1)**.

Children benefitted from a service that valued the importance of partnership working and good relationships had been formed with families, this was evident from the feedback we received. Families told us they felt welcomed, well informed and were confident their children were happy and well cared for by staff. One parent shared, "Staff are very caring and supportive of my child's needs and development". Staff warmly welcomed parents into the service during drop off and collections and families were invited to attend stay and play sessions which supported their inclusion in their child's experiences. A range of meetings were offered to allow parents the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss their child's progress. This ensured families felt informed and included in their child's learning. One parent shared, "Communication is excellent both via the online system and through email and verbally".

Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children could lead their own day by exploring the playroom and choosing where to play. Approaches to planning for activities were responsive to observations of children's ideas and interests. For example, a Starbuck's had been developed following children's interest in cafés. This approach highlighted that children's suggestions were valued and allowed children to experience learning that was meaningful.

Children could choose from a range of real life and natural resources which supported their imagination and curiosity. Children's creativity was promoted through the well-resourced craft area where we saw children independently choosing from a range of resources to develop their problem-solving and creativity skills.

Children's play was enhanced through the skilled interactions of some staff. There were some well-considered interactions which extended children's experiences and supported learning. However, a more consistent approach to using open-ended questioning would further promote children's curiosity and extend their thinking and problem-solving skills.

Some staff missed cues from children to support engaging them in their play and learning. This then led to some children becoming disengaged and wandering off to look for something else to do and on some occasions, this led to some boisterous and disruptive behaviour.

Children had access to a variety of resources and play experiences that helped develop their language, literacy and numeracy skills. Print and mark making resources encouraged children to develop reading and writing skills and children could explore number and mathematical concepts through play. Opportunities had been well considered to naturally embed literacy and numeracy throughout the environment.

Online learning profiles captured children's learning and progress and celebrated children's achievements. We observed that some next steps had been identified to support children's progress and offer them appropriate challenge. The team should continue to monitor children's next steps and targets to support children to reach their full potential.

Children contributed to planning through floor books, mind maps and daily discussions with staff. This supported their ideas to be documented and used to inform experiences. As a result, children influenced their play and learning.

Children were supported to form connections within the community through local walks and visits to wooded areas. These promoted a sense of wonder and excitement for children as they learned about the world around them. Learning experiences were enhanced through with visits from specialist agencies and community figures including the lollipop person and the critter keeper.

Areas for improvement

1. The service should review its medication procedures in order to fully implement current national guidance associated with the recording and administration of children's medication. This would ensure that medication is safely managed in line with best practice guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that
"Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective". (HSCS 1.24)

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children.

Quality indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was comfortable and furnished to a good standard. Children experienced a well maintained, clean environment, which supported their safety and wellbeing. Homely touches such as photographs of children's families and children's artwork created a welcoming feel. Each child had their own space they could access to store their personal items, which helped promote a sense of belonging. Children were supported to care for their resources and surroundings in a meaningful way, providing opportunities for children to be responsible for the setting.

Soft furnishings included sofas, cushions and rugs which provided space to rest and contributed to children's emotional wellbeing. The service could develop cosy areas further to offer calming, nurturing spaces for children to take time away from the busy playroom and relax.

Children benefitted from a safe and secure setting with a range of safety measures in place to help ensure children didn't come to harm. This included secure entry systems, boundary fencing and secure gates. Staff carried out regular headcounts and had good communication which contributed to children's safety.

The playroom was spacious, providing children with opportunities to play on their own and in small or larger groups. Spaces were thoughtfully laid out and offered a range of areas for children to make choices and develop their ideas. Resources were attractively displayed and easily accessible within the playroom and the garden, promoting children's curiosity, independence and choice.

At times during the day children benefitted from free flow access between the indoor and outdoor area which enabled them to be independent, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy. The service could extend the time free flow is offered to allow children choice in where they play and to further opportunities for outdoor learning.

Outdoor areas provided children daily opportunities to access fresh air and active play. Children were highly engaged when learning outdoors with a variety of high-quality resources and experiences to develop their creativity, problem solving and physical skills. Opportunities for risky play encouraged children to assess their own risks. Children used natural resources including wooden structures and trees to climb, helping to develop balance and coordination skills. This was supported well by staff who used effective questions to encourage children to problem solve and explore in a safe way.

Staff demonstrated good practice in infection prevention and control. For example, handwashing practices were well supported and embedded into the daily routine. Rooms were well ventilated and regular cleaning took place which supported to minimise risk of infection and promoted children's health and wellbeing.

Effective risk assessments ensured children's safety was always maintained. Staff were given responsibility for monitoring the environment and for reporting any areas that needed attention. This helped ensure children's safety as they played. Accidents and incidents were documented well, and information shared with parents. An audit of these would support the team to identify recurring trends and issues which could be actioned if needed.

Storage of children and families' personal information complied with best practice. Confidential information was stored securely within the office but readily accessible to staff. This meant that they had access to the relevant information to support them to meet children's needs.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children.

Quality indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The service values and aims set out a clear vision for the setting, with children's wellbeing and right to play at the heart of the service provided. Staff, families and children were consulted when these had been recently reviewed, resulting in shared aspirations for the service and capturing what was important to all using and working there.

Children and families were involved in directing change in the setting. Children's ideas and interests were included in developments of the environment and play experiences. Questionnaires encouraged families to share their thoughts and allowed them to evaluate provision. These provided good opportunities for their views and suggestions to influence improvements.

A self-evaluation floor book had been created to support the service evaluate provision and identify areas for development. This was inclusive of staff ideas, reflections and views allowing the team to document identified developments and progress made. This was a highly effective self-evaluation tool which supported continuous improvement and enabled the team to carry out developments in a manageable and meaningful way, resulting in positive outcomes for children. The team should continue to embed this to support ongoing improvements.

We identified some issues which had not been picked up by the service. For example, audits of aspects of service delivery, such as management of medicines. This meant children's overall care, health and wellbeing were not always supported by quality assurance processes. The service should develop quality assurance measures to support plan and organise tasks such a reviews and audits to ensure systems are robust and embedded. This would allow the team to plan, monitor and complete tasks in line with best practice guidance and would support improvements.

Policies were current and relevant. The service should consider developing a nappy changing and sleep/rest policy as these are part of provision and would provide clarity of procedures for staff.

Staff were given the opportunity to lead areas of practice through champion roles which enhanced provision and children's experiences, for example, an arts and crafts champion. As a result, staff were supported to influence and drive change, with their expertise valued which impacted positively on outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a

significant positive impact on children.

Quality indicator 4.3 Staff deployment

A good mix of skills, knowledge, and experience within the staff team contributed to a range of positive experiences for children and their families. Children benefitted from a staff team who were committed to continuous professional learning. Staff had engaged in a variety of training opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills and were proactive in sourcing learning to support them in their role. Training had inspired developments within the service and contributed to positive outcomes for children. For example, staff shared that following recent training the team felt confident and skilled in delivering responsive planning and promoting play that reflected children's needs and interests.

The service had ample staff to meet the recommended adult to child ratio and staff were flexible in their approach. However, we did at times observe staff to be task focussed which resulted in children not receiving the care and support they needed. For example, following children's lunch several staff were responsible for cleaning and setting up the playroom which took a sustained period to complete. This resulted in missed opportunities to support children in their play and their needs not being effectively met. The team should review provision following lunch and discuss how they will deploy themselves to promote positive outcomes for all children and ensure consistency and continuity of care and ensure children's needs are prioritised. **(See area for improvement 1**).

Staff absence was managed well, with shift patterns allowing team members to be flexible or using staff from services within the authority cluster. This ensured ratios were met and consistency maintained for children and families. Overall, staff worked well as a team and were supportive of colleagues. Staff were enthusiastic about their role and spoke very positively about their work. This contributed to a positive ethos with children and their families benefitting from a welcoming environment.

Children were kept safe and protected by staff who were safely recruited. An effective induction program supported new staff team members in their role, providing opportunities to share key information of children's needs and offering shadowing experiences to develop their knowledge and skills.

Children's transitions were well planned and supported by the team. Extended transitions had been identified for some children and these were carried out with the allocation of extra hours, allowing a member of staff to support children during visits to the school. Staff recognised that change could impact on children's emotional wellbeing and effectively planned transitions to support meeting children's needs in a sensitive and nurturing way.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children receive consistent care the service should ensure staff are deployed effectively so that they can provide individualised support for all children in a flexible way.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:
"My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well" (HSCS 3.19).

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

To help children achieve and progress, staff should ensure effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 6: Support and Development

This area for improvement was made on 18 December 2017.

Action taken since then

Effective use was made of observations to inform experiences and learning with the team using a responsive approach to support children's play and extend experiences. Staff should continue to embed this approach and continue to identify next steps in children's learning to support progression and offer appropriate challenge.

This area for improvement is met.

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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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