Tarland School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Tarland School
School Road
Tarland
Aboyne
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Telephone: 01339 267 720

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 November 2023

Service provided by:
Aberdeenshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000029

Service no:
CS2003016335

About the service

Tarland Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 40 children, aged from three years to those not yet attending primary school. The service is based within Tarland Primary School. 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. The service is within easy access to the local amenities such as the parks, woodland area, shop and tearooms.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 November 2023 between 09:30 and 17:00. 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:

- observed children using the service
- received feedback from nine families from our online questionnaire
- received feedback from four staff from our online questionnaire
- spoke with the staff and management team
- observed practice
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and settled.
- Children were leaders of their own play and learning and could transport resources to meet their interests.
- The staff team worked well together to meet children's needs.
- Partnership working with parents was a key strength in the service delivery.
- Strong leadership ensured a culture of continuous improvement.
- Staff used their skills and knowledge to ensure high quality outcomes for children.
- Handwashing procedures should be reviewed to prevent cross contamination.

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

Interactions between staff and children were warm, kind, and caring. Children were seen to engage well with staff and were seen to be inviting them into their play. Staff knew children well and showed a genuine interest in their individual needs and preferences. Parents told us, "The staff at Tarland Nursery are very caring, nurturing and kind," and "Tarland nursery is very child centred and the staff know my child well. My child feels safe and happy at nursery."

The service had personal planning documents including all about me, registration and learning information for children. Plans contained information to help staff meet the needs of children and support them whilst in their care. Parents were involved in personal planning processes and these were being reviewed at least every six months. All parents contacted 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' they were involved in developing and reviewing their child's personal plan.

Children benefitted from unhurried mealtimes. Children's independence was supported with some opportunities to self-serve their food and tidy away their plates when finished. Staff used mealtimes as an opportunity to role model good table manners. Children were relaxed as they chatted with staff and friends whilst eating. Children enjoyed mealtimes and they benefitted from healthy and plentiful food and fresh drinks. This supported them to be healthy and nourished.

Nappy changing maintained children's privacy and dignity as they were changed in an area protected by a screen. Children's rights were respected as staff asked for their permission before carrying out tasks and spoke with the child throughout. This promoted a nurturing experience. We discussed infection control procedures with staff to reduce risk of the spread of infection.

Children were supported to understand their rights as staff used creative and fun ways to promote these. For example, the wellbeing indicators known as SHANARRI, (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) were promoted through everyday conversations and celebrating children's successes. Children were encouraged to display their achievements using stickers on their individual 'SHANARRI Calamari's.' For example, after tidying up, children were given a 'responsible sticker' and were seen to be adding these to their octopus. As a result, children were learning about their rights in meaningful ways.'

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children were leading their own play and learning and benefitted from the wide range of loose parts and natural materials. Life skills and independence were promoted, as staff encouraged children to try for themselves, for example, when getting dressed for outside play. Children were given roles and responsibilities and were keen to tell us what the 'tidy up inspector' does. This further developed children's sense of responsibility and independence.

Language, literacy, and numeracy experiences were woven throughout the provision. Staff had a good

understanding and creative approach to promoting these. For example, a variety of interesting objects promoted children's curiosity and sparked their imagination. Staff used some open-ended questioning to support children's problem-solving skills. There was some scope for this to be developed, further supporting children to achieve and reach their full potential.

Opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to their community. The service had established regular visits with a local care service providing adults and children with opportunities to strengthen intergenerational links. Weekly visits to local woodlands offered children opportunities to spend time playing and learning in natural outdoor spaces. This supported children to be active and healthy as well as learn more about their local environment and sense of place.

Planning was responsive to children's interests and next steps. Regular observations were used to highlight children's progress, achievements and to identify next steps. However, some observations did not highlight the learning or skill being developed and next steps did not always provide children with depth of learning. The service had plans in place to develop this and staff were aware of the planned improvements. Children and parents were involved in setting goals and next steps and as a result, were valued and respected. Staff shared that they met regularly to discuss, plan and reflect on children's current interests, progress and needs.

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

The setting was well furnished, cosy and comfortable. It was well ventilated and benefitted from lots of natural light. There was ample space indoors and outdoors for children to play and explore together or alone if they chose to do so. The playroom was spacious and reflected children's interests and planned learning experiences. Children's artwork and drawings were displayed around the setting, giving children the strong message that they matter. Parents all agreed with the statement 'The setting is well furnished, comfortable and homely' and one parent commented, "The nursery setting has been made homely, warm and inviting for the children. Ensuring their artwork, photos from home and pictures are visible for them in various areas, giving them lots points of familiar interest."

Play spaces both indoors and outdoors reflected current interests and were well-resourced to support individual learning and to offer challenge. There were opportunities for children's curiosity, enquiry and creativity that encouraged them to explore using real, natural and open-ended resources. Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with daily opportunities for free flow access between the indoor and outdoor areas. A parent told us, "The children have free access to the garden areas where they can build, explore and challenge themselves through play, with the resources provided." Another parent commented, "The play and learning opportunities are great, my daughter always loves going to nursery and has varied play experiences which I have observed myself". This enabled children to be independent, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy.

Infection control practices helped minimise the potential spread of infection, for example, children were confident in their handwashing routines before eating and after using the bathroom. To prevent cross contamination, we advised handwashing after eating and wiping noses. Risk assessments were in place and implemented effectively by staff to ensure that the environment was safe for the children attending.

Children were encouraged to consider risks and staff were seen to support their understanding of potential risks within the environment. As a result, children's safety was maintained.

Children and family's information was kept securely on computer systems or locked in cabinets. Sensitive information was only shared with those who needed the information to meet children's needs. As a result, children's information was protected, and storage complied with relevant best practice.

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The vision and values of the setting were consistent with a welcoming and supportive ethos. They were child centred and embedded into practice. Children and families had been thoroughly consulted in the recent development of the vision, value and aims, allowing them to feel valued and included.

Partnership working with parents was a key strength of the service. Children and families were being consulted through a variety of methods, for example, questionnaires, formal consultations and informal methods such as conversations with staff and yes/no questionnaires at the entrance. As a result, their opinions were valued and respected.

Communication with families had been well considered. The staff team were using an online platform to communicate key messages to parents as well as handovers at the end of the session. Newsletters were shared regularly with parents via a closed Facebook page and in the hallway. A noticeboard in the hallway communicated key information, shared photos and information about the people involved in their child's day at nursery. These included the staff team and visiting professionals such as Speech and Language Therapist. As a result, parents were well informed. One parent commented, "All staff are approachable and give meaningful feedback about my child and their development. They have observed and reported behaviours which I think show a very good attention towards my child." Another commented, "The staff's ability to engage with the children and include the parents in the nursery day is absolutely brilliant and had created a wonderful space for both the children and the parents."

Quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement planning processes were developed and resulted in a cycle of continuous improvement, for example, since the last inspection there had been improvements made to the quality assurance and improvement cycle. The current improvement plan was well considered, relevant and had been developed through self-evaluation processes. All staff were aware of the key areas for development and the impact of progress made. The staff team were committed to embedding a culture of self-reflection and evaluation into their practice. This was resulting in children and their families experiencing positive outcomes. Parents' comments included, "When I think they could not get any better, they introduce something new that makes the service even better," and "I really can't think of anything the staff could do to make the nursery better. They have made such a wonderful success of Tarland Nursery."

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

A well-managed and organised staff team supported children's health and wellbeing. Staff worked well as a team and were motivated and committed to ensure continuity in children's care. Staff were clear on their rules at busier times of the day ensuring effective supervision and transitions. This ensured there was no disruption to children's care, play and learning. Staff were respectful in their interactions with each other which created a positive ethos. Parents' comments were positive about staff and included, "All staff are passionate, knowledgeable, friendly and approachable."

Children were supported by a staff team who had a range of knowledge, experience and skills. Their sound knowledge of child development, GIRFEC (getting it right for every child) and the wellbeing indicators resulted in children's individual needs being met. They were committed and enthusiastic in their role which meant children were supported to reach their potential. They talked knowledgeably about children as individuals, their care needs and how they were being met. A parent told us, "SHANARI calamari was introduced last year and this has given the children a great understanding and ownership of them." Another commented, "Tarland nursery is a fantastic, nurturing, happy environment for my child who attends it, and this has been all down to the fantastic work, efforts and attitudes of the lovely staff who work there. I always know when I drop my child off there each day, that they are going to the best nursery environment possible."

Regular 'stay and play' and 'tea and toast' sessions were offered to families throughout the year. Staff told us parents could access a stay and play session at any time of the year but that they offer three formal sessions where children make invitations to invite parents into the service. A parent told us, "The nursery staff are good at providing opportunities for parents to come and join the class in their activities but due to work commitments I find it difficult to participate in these at times." Another told us, "The nursery is very inviting for parents to visit and both me and Granny have enjoyed our 'stay and play' sessions."

Procedures were in place to ensure staff were well supported by management. Regular one to one meetings ensured opportunities to share developments, concerns and plan for further development and training. All staff had accessed basic training and a range of other training opportunities. Staff were able to reflect on their training and how this had positively impacted service delivery. The staff team regularly completed peer monitoring exercises which allowed them to share successes and identify areas that could be developed. All staff told us they felt well supported by management and other team members. An induction programme was completed by all new staff members, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and help ensure children access high quality play, care and learning.

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 support improved outcomes for children and families the provider, manager and staff to ensure they develop and effectively implement quality assurance strategies which regularly and comprehensively assess and improve the overall quality of the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19); and

'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 20 May 2019.

Action taken since then

There are now robust quality assurance procedures in place that are supporting evaluation of the service and staff practices. Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes are highlighting relevant areas for development and these are being planned for appropriately. This is supporting children to access a high quality facility.

This area for improvement has been 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?	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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