Barnhill Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Falkland Crescent
Broughty Ferry
Dundee
DD5 3SQ

Telephone: 01382 436 993

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 November 2023

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2003016931

About the service

Barnhill Primary School Nursery provides a care service to a maximum of 64 children at any one time, aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

Barnhill Primary School Nursery is situated in a residential area of Broughty Ferry. The nursery is close to local amenities such as libraries, shops and parks. The nursery accommodation comprises of a large playroom, with a large secure outdoor play area. Toilets are situated off the main playroom. Children also have access to the school gym hall for active play. The nursery has a secure door entry system in place.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 and 16 November 2023 between 09:00 and 16:30. Two inspectors carried out the inspection.

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.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children and 14 parents using the service

- spoke with staff and management

- observed practice and children's experiences

- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children had fun and were empowered to lead their own play and learning. They were fully engaged in a range of stimulating activities that were a good mix of spontaneous and planned. Their progress and achievements were well recorded and shared with parents.

- Families were found to have a high level of involvement within the setting. Staff promoted very good communication with range of virtual and in-person approaches. Parents reflected that, "The communication via seesaw is regular and helpful and all staff are extremely approachable."

- Children benefitted from a setting that was well furnished, comfortable and homely. Soft lighting, children's framed artworks and size appropriate furniture created a warm and nurturing space where children could feel safe and ready to play and learn.

- The manager and staff clearly valued the views and opinions of the children and families' using the service. The majority of parents and carers felt that they and their child were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the setting and that their ideas and suggestions were used to influence change.

- Staff were warm, welcoming and engaged positively in the inspection process. It was evident through discussions that they were committed and enthusiastic professionals. As a result, children received high quality care, play and learning experiences.

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 benefitted from a respectful caring setting, where staff interactions were kind and warm. Mindfulness was promoted throughout the service to build children's self-esteem and support them explore and manage their emotions. For example, affirmations such as, "I am thankful," were shared with children and families to promote positive and loving ethos. All parents and carers strongly agreed that they were happy with the care and support their child receives. One parent commented, "It's friendly, inclusive, nurturing, educational and fun all rolled into one." As a result, children were consistently nurtured through daily experiences.

All parents commented that staff knew their child very well. One commented, "All staff seem very knowledgeable. Every member of staff can answer my questions or give me information about my child." This was a result of effective communication and personal planning. Tailored support was recorded, clear and included meaningful detailed strategies for children who required additional support. This ensured all staff could easily access information to provide consistent care that was right for that child. Each child was also part of a group, which celebrated their own identity as a group. Each group had their own area, colour and mascot, which children took great pride in. This promoted a sense of community and belonging within the service.

Families were found to have a high level of involvement within the setting. Staff promoted very good communication with range of virtual and in-person approaches. Parents reflected that, "The communication via seesaw is regular and helpful and all staff are extremely approachable." Another commented that, "The nursery staff make us feel so welcome and I see them as being part of our family. They always go above and beyond." They were given ownership of aspects of the nursery, for example, they could take part in a parent led lending library. Staff successfully promoted an open-door policy. Drop-offs and pick-ups were seen to be full of warmth and love. All staff, children and family members valued these parts of the day as an opportunity to reconnect, bond and share stories.

Mealtimes were an unhurried, calm and respectful experience for children. Staff sat with children to promote conversations whilst ensuring they were safe. One child asked when they would next have oranges because that was their favourite. The staff member's response was kind and thoughtful, letting the child know they would share this and see about having oranges added to the shopping list. Parents also told us this happened regularly for children, commenting that, "my child mentioned that they liked pears, so pears were then added to the snack list. My child helped to prepare them." This impacted on children's wellbeing as they were valued and respected.

Staff worked well with other agencies, such as Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) and Accessible Inclusion Support (AIS) to ensure children got the support they need to reach their full potential. Information was shared effectively between children, families and staff, to ensure everyone had a very good understanding of the children's individual needs. This enabled children to thrive.

Quality Indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children were fully engaged in their play and enjoyed a range of fun and stimulating activities that were a good mix of spontaneous and planned. For example, children were seen busy at the tinkering table, deconstructing and building a chair. At the playdough station children were given clear instructions to create a mixture. Staff were seen intervening when needed and providing children with valuable space to make their own mistakes and try again. In the construction area children were immersed in problem solving and worked together with their friends, to create a long train track. All parents and carers strongly agreed that their child had opportunities to be involved in meaningful, interesting and fun play experiences.

One parent commented that their child, "is always learning new things - even sign language which is just amazing. They are always busy playing and learning which is fantastic." Children were empowered in their play and learning through staff's skilled interactions. This was particularly evident during group times, which were led well by staff. Their contributions were valued and staff used a range of tools and theories to engage children to ensure they got the most from the activity. For example, staff skilfully used puppets, musical instruments and literacy bags to create a fun stimulating learning experience. As a result, children were fully engaged while exploring numeracy, literacy and language with their friends.

Children's progress and achievements were recorded within learning journals, a tracking system and personal plans. One parent shared that, "It is a testament to the staff how easily our child settled into nursery and how much they are thriving in their preschool year. They must work so hard to give their learners the best every day and we cannot thank them enough." We found that children were proud of their learning journals, as some chose to sit with inspectors and shared their memories of activities and experiences they had had. The management team added comments of praise and recognition within these journals, to celebrate children's achievements. This further promoted a respectful and caring ethos within the service that valued the individual learner. The management team had used self-evaluation, moderation and peer reviews to identify how they could enhance their planning approaches, to ensure it reflected the needs of children attending the service.

Staff made very good use of the community. For example, they created opportunities for children to visit a local care home, museum and the theatre. Furthermore, staff were open and welcoming to families and regularly promoted stay and play opportunities to involve parents and carers. One such event was 'Bedtime Bookbug' whereby children came along to the service after hours, in their pyjamas to hear a story before bed. This was well received by families as they were able to attend after their own workday and felt more included as a result. This positively impacted the wider sense of community and belonging within the nursery.

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 setting that was well furnished, comfortable and homely. Soft lighting, children's framed artworks and size appropriate furniture, created a warm and nurturing space where children could feel safe and ready to play and learn. Parents shared that it was a, "home away from home - the pictures on the walls make it lovely to visit and have a nosey at what they have been doing."

Spaces throughout the nursery had children's care, play and learning needs at the heart of the design. Areas promoted skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving. One parent told us, "The set up of the nursery is very attractive with engaging play provocations set up. My child always seems to be busy and talks about lots of different areas." Staff skilfully used the outdoors as an extension of the indoor learning environment. Children benefitted from free flow access to enable them to lead through their own interests. As a result, the setting's indoor and outdoor environments provided developmentally appropriate spaces.

All parents strongly agreed that their children were safe whilst in this setting. We found the environment and equipment to be safe, secure and well-maintained. Staff encouraged children to share their thoughts and opinions when completing risk assessments. This enabled staff to have a deeper understanding to the safety of the environment from the child's perspective.

A few whiteboards and fire registers were used to record how many children were in the building or play outside and this was regularly updated as children left the service. Staff communicated well with one another as children moved areas and ensured they deployed themselves, to meet the needs of the different nursery areas effectively. As a result, children's safety was maintained.

Cleanliness of the service was of a high standard. Handwashing routines were well established by both children and staff. This ensured any risks in relation to spread of infection was minimised. The management team undertook prompt action to reduce risks of cross contamination in the toilets and nappy changing area. This ensured children, families and staff accessed a safe environment that promoted good health.

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

A shared vision, values, aims and objectives, positively informed practice. The nursery worked alongside the school to create consistent values that were reflective of the children's care, play and learning needs. The manager used parental views, asking questions such as, "do you feel connected to us?" and "are we promoting a positive, warm and welcoming environment for you all?" Their responses were carefully considered and used to identify strengths and areas for improvement. A display had been made to showcase what was shared and what the service had done in response. This included revisiting their vision, values and aims. This ensured the vision, values, aims and objectives remained supportive of children's and families' expectations and needs.

The manager and staff clearly valued the views and opinions of the children and families' using the service. The majority of parents and carers felt that they and their child were involved in a meaningful way, to help develop the setting and that their ideas and suggestions were used to influence change. One parent told us, "We are regularly asked for inputs, for example, our children's likes, interests and asked for photos to develop the setting and inform the planning of areas." It was evident that the service actively listened and acted upon everyone's views. Events such as 'Nursery Natters' happened regularly to welcome everyone into the service. These were facilitated well and used as an opportunity to build positive relationships with families.

Children's views were continually shaping their service. Cameras were available to children in all areas, including the outdoors, so children could capture their experiences and learning. A photo album was then created to collate all the photographs and provided opportunities for everyone to take part in reflections and discussions. As a result, children and families were meaningfully involved and were able to influence change within the setting.

Quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans, were in place and led to continuous improvement. The manager had a very good system in place that supported effective audits and monitoring of children's outcomes. Evaluations were found to be honest and practical. The current improvement plan focussed on three main priorities, enhancing digital technologies, effective planning and promoting children rights. Champions were appointed to lead on these areas and drive improvement. Updates were regularly shared with parents, for example, post-its were added to the wall in the foyer as a way to quickly share progress with parents. This ensured everyone felt included in the developments within the service and were able to work collectively towards a shared vision.

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

Staff were warm, welcoming and engaged positively in the inspection process. It was evident through discussions that they were committed and enthusiastic professionals. A staff member told us that there was, "a feeling of great respect and fulfilling relationships between the children and staff." We found evidence of this throughout the nursery. As a result, children received high quality care, play and learning experiences.

The majority of parents and carers strongly agreed that they felt confident that staff had the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to care for their child and support their learning. We found staff to be confident in their roles and aware of how they could best support children. Staff were able to lead on changes in the service, using their own interests and research to drive positive change. Parents consistently described staff as nurturing, welcoming, passionate and enthusiastic.

Levels of staff were effective. One parent commented, "I think the staff are brilliant, they have made my child's and I's transition into nursery very good. My child is so comfortable in the setting and with all the staff." The deployment of the staff team enabled them to be fully engaged and present in children's care, play and learning. We observed staff maintaining very good supervision through effective and respectful communication. This enabled staff to follow a child's needs and interests without comprising other children's experiences.

There were clear processes in place for mentoring and supporting temporary agency staff. All staff told us they felt well supported in their roles. This enabled them to build confidence and influence positive change within the service. For example, break times were changed to support positive attachments between children and staff, following one member of the team's suggestion.

Parents knew staff within the team and were able to share the positive impact staff had had on their children's experience and outcomes. A parent told us, "My child seems to have a very close bond with their key worker. I feel like the nursery staff always go above and beyond and I appreciate all their efforts."

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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