Carbost Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Carbost Primary School
Carbost
Isle of Skye
IV47 8SR

Telephone: 01478 640 237

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 November 2022

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003017184

About the service

Carbost Primary School Nursery is a day care of children service operated by Highland Council, and is situated in the village of Carbost on the Isle of Skye. The accommodation used by the nursery is situated to the side of the main school building. There is direct access to two large, secured outdoor areas. The nursery also has access to the school facilities, including a spacious gym hall. Very good use was also made of resources in the local community.

Carbost Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 15 children aged 2 years to those not yet attending primary school at any one time, of whom no more than 3 are aged 2 years to under 3 year. The manager is also the manager of Dunvegan Primary School Nursery and Struan Primary School Nursery.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 7 November 2022 between 9:45 and 14:45 and Thursday 10 November 2022 between 9:15 and 12:45. 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 one child using the service and their parent
- spoke with the manager and two staff
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced very warm, caring and nurturing support from staff who know them very well.
- Children were very happy and engaged and having fun taking part in various activities both indoors and outdoors.
- Children's choices were supported well through a balance of planned and spontaneous play experiences and resources.
- Positive relationships with families supported continuity of care and effective partnerships.
- The service were proposing to develop further the outdoor environment.
- Staff worked well as a team and were very motivated to provide a service of a high standard.

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?	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? 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 - Nurturing care & support

At the time of the inspection there was only one child attending the nursery. The child was happy, settled and having fun in the nursery. They had developed strong bonds with staff members and experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to their personal care and learning needs. This contributed to the child feeling safe and secure. There was a great deal of chatter and laughter between the child and the staff. We saw staff being very nurturing, taking time to listen to and respond to the child and offering comfort, cuddles and reassurance when needed. Children felt welcomed, valued and included.

Being a very small service meant that staff knew the individual care and support needs and interests of the child attending. Activities and experiences were responsive and planned to meet these needs and interests. This meant that the child was respected and valued as an individual. There was a personal plan in place which provided some information in relation to the child's individual care and support needs. However, it was not fully completed or reviewed with parents. Any recorded information should be reviewed every six months or sooner, whenever a change has been identified to reflect children's most current needs. We signposted the manager to the Care Inspectorate Hub where they could find 'A guide for providers on personal planning: early learning and childcare' and bitesize sessions to support the development of personal plans. This would ensure children receive consistent care that is right for them.

Children and families benefitted from a service that valued the importance of partnership working to support children. Staff worked in partnership with families when developing personal plans and support strategies. This ensured that children received appropriate levels of consistent care and support. There was daily communication with families at drop off and collection time and there were opportunities for stay and play sessions. The parent we spoke with commented very positively about how welcoming the staff were and how much she appreciated the level of information sharing at collection time. The nursery was in the early stages of introducing an online platform to share information with parents.

Children experienced positive snack and lunchtime experiences which were relaxed, sociable and unhurried. Children had opportunities to be independent at snack times. Children participated in snack preparation, cutting up fruit and pouring their own drinks. Staff sat with children, chatting and modelling healthy eating, creating opportunities for children to develop their language and social skills. This contributed to creating a homely, relaxed and enjoyable mealtime experience for children.

1.3 Play and Learning

The child was very happy and engaged in their play. They actively led their play and learning throughout the day. They benefited from a high quality play and learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. They were provided with play and learning opportunities that impacted positively on their development, health, wellbeing and happiness. The child benefitted from uninterrupted play, allowing them to become absorbed in their play and have fun. This increased children's happiness and engagement.

Planning approaches were child led and responsive. Play spaces were well resourced and promoted learning through real life experiences. There was a good balance of spontaneous and planned activities. Children were offered exciting, stimulating and interesting experiences which promoted curiosity, imagination and collaborative play. Staff were adding further value to children's play and learning through their carefully considered interactions. Questioning by staff encouraged children to think independently and to reflect, as a result children were respected, valued and achieving.

We recognised high quality play, learning and development was taking place throughout the inspection. However, there was scope to continue to develop the quality of written observations of children's experiences to ensure they were evaluative and focus on children's learning. We also suggested children begin to have more ownership of their learning profiles and floor books to support them in revisiting and evaluating their learning.

Children benefitted from close links with the local community which enhanced play and learning opportunities for the children. There were very regular walks and outings to the beach and other local areas. Nursery children were also very much an integral part of the wider school community.

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.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a setting that was very welcoming, clean and inviting. The playroom was comfortable and homely and benefitted from plenty of natural light and ventilation. Furniture and resources were of a high standard and organised to support free flow play indoors. This all promoted a strong sense that children matter.

There was a system to report any repairs and damaged items were promptly replaced. Infection prevention and control practices minimised the potential spread of infection. There were risk assessments in place which promoted the safety of the children as well as daily checks of the premises. However, other risk assessments required to be reviewed and updated, especially those relating to outings and accessing resources in the local community.

Children enjoyed access to a well-resourced and carefully set out indoor play space. Developing the playroom had been part of the improvement plan for the nursery and staff had created a very positive learning environment. Consideration had been given to the variety of activities and experiences on offer to spark children's curiosity and imagination. Areas within the indoor play space had been set up to reflect the child's current interests and curiosities, with appropriate materials, including natural and open ended resources, to support learning and offer challenge. Children led their play and were able to independently select resources of their choice. We saw the child happily explore and be engaged in their play.

The manager and staff explained that they were now looking to develop the outdoor space further. The outdoor area offered children a fun and stimulating space where they could comfortably engage with a variety of creative, open ended and natural resources. The outdoor space supported children to develop their gross and fine motor skills, as well as their numeracy and literacy skills. The children had taken part in planting and growing activities.

Given the very rural location of the nursery on the Skye coast, the opportunities for outdoor play and learning were plentiful and full advantage were made of these by the nursery.

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.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

There were clear visions, values and aims for the service and the manager, staff and families were all included when these were reviewed. Children benefitted from a positive ethos and a culture of continuous improvement. The manager and staff were all enthusiastic and committed to the ongoing development of the service to secure positive outcomes for the children. Staff were reflective and keen to improve both their individual and organisational practice.

Parents and children were routinely involved in the ongoing evaluation of the service. Consulting and listening to them was a priority for the manager and staff. Involving children and their families meaningfully in the continuous improvement of the service contributed to them feeling included.

As a result of only one family using the service at the time of the inspection, there was very regular communication with the family, predominantly taking place informally during extended drop off and pick up times and during stay and play sessions. The service was also gradually introducing an online platform to increase the opportunities for information sharing and involving families in the evaluation process.

Staff were also very much involved in the evaluation process. They were supported to reflect on the service provided, evaluate learning opportunities and resources available. This resulted in children experiencing a rich learning environment which encouraged them to be creative and curious. There were regular staff meetings and staff were able to give any feedback or suggestions they might have about the service and outcomes for children.

The nursery staff felt valued and well supported by the manager. She was a frequent visitor to the nursery and completed monitoring of practice. Evaluation within the service was underpinned by best practice guidance and supported high quality care and support. Management and staff had a good understanding of 'How good is our early learning and childcare' and 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare' and used these to support assessment and evaluation within the service.

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.

4.3 Staff deployment

The staff were very caring and nurturing. They were enthusiastic and committed to providing a positive experience for the children in their care. Staff were respectful and supportive of each other.

They were warm, friendly and sensitive in their approach and demonstrated positive team working which promoted a happy and secure environment for children. They were responsive and respectful of children during interactions and play which supported children to feel safe and secure.

Children experienced continuity of care as staff deployed themselves effectively to ensure high quality experiences throughout the day. They were flexible in their deployment, which supported children to lead their play and engage in free flow opportunities whilst remaining safe. Staff worked very well together as a team and their differing skills and knowledge complemented one another and resulted in quality interactions with children. They communicated well with each other and worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day. 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.

As a very small service in a rural location, the staff knew the families well and worked to ensure every family was welcomed and valued. This contributed to creating a caring ethos with a strong sense of community and family within the setting. Staff had regular communication with parents and had established positive relationships which enhanced children's experiences and promoted a partnership approach. Having good communication with families contributed to parents feeling included in their child's experiences at nursery and assisted staff when identifying how best to meet children's needs.

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?	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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