Invergarry Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Invergarry Primary School
Invergarry
PH35 4HG

Telephone: 01809 501 317

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 June 2023

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003017219

About the service

Invergarry Primary Nursery is a day care of children service in Invergarry, within the Ross, Skye and Lochaber area of Highland. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 10 children at any one time aged from three years to those attending primary school.

The nursery is located within a purpose-built accommodation adjoined to the school building comprising of an entrance area, bright playroom, toilet provision, cloakroom and an enclosed, tarred outdoor space. Children also have access to the adjoining school playground.

The service is provided by Highland Council and managed by the primary school head teacher.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 June 2023. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. There was one child present in the service on the day of 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 since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with a child using the service;
- reviewed email feedback from one parent;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff supported children's care and learning routines with kindness and compassion which contributed to the development of strong and trusting relationships.
- Children benefited from high quality snack and lunchtime experiences which promoted opportunities to develop their independence and skills for life.
- Play experiences across the nursery supported the development of children's language, literacy and numeracy.
- The continuous provision indoors had been well considered to include a wide variety of open ended and natural resources, enabling children to explore opportunities which promoted their curiosity and imagination.
- Children benefitted from continuous free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor area. This enabled children to have choice, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy.
- Effective quality assurance and self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service.
- Effective systems were in place to ensure staff deployment met the individual care and support needs of children.

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?	4 - 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

Staff supported children's care and learning routines with kindness and compassion which contributed to the development of strong and trusting relationships. Personal care was provided in a sensitive and supportive way which promoted children's independence, privacy and dignity. Staff interactions at these times were warm and caring and nurtured children's security, confidence and positive relationships with staff.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning. This was carried out in collaboration with families and partners to promote consistency and continuity in care. One parent commented: "The staff have continued to develop approaches for learning and have proactively also visited our child's other nursery placement to learn about the different approaches and ensure the best integration between the two nurseries." Personal planning information contained relevant information and strategies, linked to the wellbeing indicators, to support the development needs of children. Staff spoke confidently and knowledgeably about the care needs of children and implemented strategies to support them. As a result, all children received well-planned care and support to meet their individual needs.

Children benefited from high quality snack and lunchtime experiences which promoted opportunities to develop independence and skills for life. For example, the child in the service poured their own milk, prepared and served their own snack and had choice around healthy and nutritious foods to eat. Staff had used best practice guidance to review their mealtime provision and implemented changes to improve experiences for children. This included, developing aspects of the snack environment to make the experience more nurturing for children. The addition of a tablecloth, flowers, real crockery and cutlery as well as individualised placemats supported a homely and relaxed atmosphere. At snack and lunchtimes, staff sat with the child which provided opportunities to promote close attachments and develop language skills.

Staff worked in partnership with outside professionals to improve outcomes for children when they needed additional help. Appropriate strategies had been identified and put in place to support children, for example with making healthy food choices and managing transitions. As a result, children were supported to reach their potential. The management team and staff were knowledgeable about the potential impacts of poverty and other adverse childhood experiences on children in their care. They worked closely with other professionals to signpost entitlements for families. This strengthened family resilience and the partnerships between the service, families and the wider community.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Play experiences across the nursery supported the development of children's language, literacy and numeracy. The child in the service was able to practice and develop their emerging writing skills through painting, cutting, gluing and mark making across the indoor and outdoor spaces. Examples of children's mark making were valued, displayed within the service and used to support aspects of the day-to-day routine, such as planning learning.

Regular sharing of stories, songs and rhymes ensured the child had the opportunity to revisit familiar texts and consolidate their learning. This supported the development of their talking and listening skills.

Children's access to a range of loose parts supported opportunities to develop key numeracy skills. For example, the availability of water and sand afforded opportunities for the child to explore capacity and weight. We observed the child developing counting and information handling skills through everyday routines and play experiences. The child confidently used tally marks to record, count and share the number of goals scored in a game of football. Staff scaffolded learning at this time, encouraging the child to work out how many more they would need to win. The child commented: "You'd need three!." These experiences supported the child to learn key numeracy skills through their everyday play and learning.

Throughout the inspection, staff used skilled interactions to support the child's learning and development. Staff carefully observed play and timed interactions to create a balance of opportunities which allowed the child to investigate for themselves and noticed the moments they were more receptive to support. While sharing a story together, staff posed questions which encouraged inquiry, such as "I wonder what they can do?", which extended the child's ability to verbalise their thoughts and actions. As a result the child was supported to widen their skills and consolidate their learning through play.

Planning approaches within the nursery were child centred and responsive to the children's interests. Children's words, pictures and ideas were captured within floor books which demonstrated their involvement in the planning process. Staff had implemented a new approach to planning and profiling children's learning. They commented this was working well and felt it was more responsive to the children's needs. Children's individual development and progress was recorded and shared with families through profile folders and an online app. One parent commented: "The staff always make time to discuss progress verbally during pick-ups/drop offs and also provide regular updates through the class Dojo app, either in relation to child specific targets or more widely with nursery posts and photos of activities." and "I feel that Invergarry go above and beyond in ensuring parents are involved and up to speed on their child's learning." Within the profile folders, staff gathered observations of children's development and learning and used best practice guidance to support planning for next steps. This ensured that children were progressing well and were happy and confident learners.

Opportunities for children's play and learning were enhanced through connections to the local community. Regular walks within the local area provided opportunities for the children to become familiar with their community and the facilities available. For example, they had visited the petrol station to buy items for snack and took part in the Invergarry produce show, sharing vegetables they had grown in nursery. As a result, children were enabled to develop an understanding of their community, sense of place and develop skills for life.

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 indoor playroom was welcoming, comfortable and homely with plenty of natural light and ventilation. As part of their ongoing improvement work, the staff team had used best practice guidance to carefully consider the experiences and spaces available within the learning environment.

As a result, the playroom and outdoor space were set out in a manner which provided ample space for children's needs and enabled them to access resources easily and lead their own play. This gave a strong message to children that they mattered.

Within the indoor space, children had access to resources that were clean, well-presented, and encouraged exploration, enquiry and fun. The continuous provision indoors had been well considered to include a wide variety of open ended and natural resources, enabling children to explore opportunities which promoted their curiosity and imagination. We observed the child following their own interests in the craft area, mark making with pens to create pictures and text for a book about animals. Children's interests had also been considered within the environment, with a recent interest in koala's and animals reflected in the provocations, resources and objects available to play with. This supported the child within the service to feel engaged and included in the nursery space. The service had recently purchased resources to support block play experiences. We signposted Education Scotland best practice guidance 'Being me through block play - a professional resource' to support the development of professional knowledge and skills in this area.

Children benefitted from free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor area. This enabled children to have choice, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy. Outdoors, there were opportunities for children to experience more physical play experiences, helping to extend their gross motor skills. We observed children having fun playing ball games, practising pedalling skills on the nursery bikes and engaging in imaginative role play, using the outdoor shed as an 'animal rescue hospital.' This contributed to children being confident when playing outdoors and creating imaginative play experiences for themselves.

Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection, for example children were confident in their hand washing routines at snack and lunchtimes and after returning from outdoor play. Risk assessments were in place and implemented effectively by staff to ensure that the environment was safe for the children attending. A lone worker risk assessment had been completed in collaboration with the manager and staff in the service. This was regularly reviewed and implemented effectively to ensure children were kept safe at all times.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The manager and staff team recognised the need to review the current service vision, values and aims to reflect the aspirations of their children, families, partners and the wider community. Plans were in place to implement this review to help the service identify, and understand more fully, what is important for children and their families as the service moves forward.

The service was actively seeking the views of families to support the improvement of the service. For example, families' views had been gathered to support the development of the outdoor space and parents had donated bikes to improve children's access to pedalling and bike play opportunities. The Parent Council had also supported the service to fundraise for new resources to improve the experiences for children indoors. As a result, collaborative partnerships with families were supporting positive outcomes for children.

Effective self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service. An improvement plan with identified actions and timescales was in place. Staff were familiar with current improvements and could describe the positive difference they were making for children and families. Planned improvements were realistic, with a focus on promoting positive outcomes for children and supported by best practice guidance. These had included implementing a refreshed approach to the snack and lunchtime experiences as well as reviewing and improving the continuous provision within the learning environment. The impact of these improvements had made a positive difference to children's experiences.

Regular staff meetings and visits to nursery from the manager and nursery support teacher provided opportunities for the staff team to reflect together to bring about positive change. For example, the service had used best practice guidance to review and develop the opportunities for numeracy provision within the learning environment. New resources had been added, such as large outdoor weighing scales as well as a wide selection of loose parts and containers to increase opportunities for counting, sorting and matching. The staff team also reflected on and improved the opportunities for including counting, ordering and number recognition experiences into everyday play and routines. As a result, children were developing confidence with number sense which they could apply to other aspects of their play. Opportunities to look outwards and reflect on practice with colleagues from other settings provided staff with valuable time for professional dialogue and peer support. This demonstrated the commitment of staff to the ongoing development of the service and improving outcomes for children.

Quality assurance processes had been developed to support the continuous improvement of the service. A quality assurance calendar was in place and used effectively to monitor important aspects of service delivery. For example, monitoring of children's profiles had highlighted the need to improve the identification of next steps and progression within learning observations. Staff are now using best practice guidance to plan and implement appropriate next steps for children within literacy and numeracy. As a result, children are making very good progress in many aspects of their learning. The previous inspection identified a requirement related to quality assurance which has now been met.

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 child in the nursery was supported throughout the day by staff who were caring, nurturing and who worked very well together to support their needs. At lunchtime, staff breaks were well planned to minimise the impact on the child whilst enabling staff to rest and be refreshed. Continuity of care for the child was consistent throughout the day with minimal changes to staffing. This ensured positive transitions and very good communication with families at pick up and drop of times. One parent commented: "Invergarry although small provides a safe, caring environment that is incredibly child led and focussed. There is fantastic integration with the smaller primary school class and as well as the bigger class who act as buddies. The staff know the pupils so well and do a fantastic job of providing feedback for parents."

The importance of ensuring the service was appropriately staffed was recognised by the manager as essential to the wellbeing of children. Sufficient numbers of staff were deployed to meet the child's needs across the day both indoors and outdoors. A lone worker risk assessment has been completed by the manager and implemented effectively by nursery staff to ensure appropriate measures were in place to support nursery staff when they were working with children alone. As a result, children were kept safe and received the care and support they needed.

Arrangements for unplanned absence were supported by effective systems. For example, the manager tried to use the same staff within the adjoining school for supply work to minimise disruption to children's routines. Detailed personal plans and a folder with key information was available to all staff. This ensured that staff working in the service understood the needs of individual children and how to support them.

Regular visits to a neighbouring nursery had taken place to support children's overall development and wellbeing. Staff were flexible in the change of routine at this time and worked proactively to ensure these experiences could be facilitated. As a result, children were provided with enhanced social experiences and opportunities to be meaningfully connected to their local community.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 7 December 2022, the provider must ensure improved outcomes for children by implementing regular, effective and robust systems of quality assurance. To do this the provider must, at a minimum, ensure:

a) Regular and effective support and supervision for all staff is implemented.

b) Regular and effective monitoring of staff practice and quality of children's play and learning experiences.

c) Staff are supported to develop their knowledge and understanding around self-evaluation processes and are involved in the systematic evaluation of their work and the work of the service.

d) Clear and effective plans are in place for maintaining and improving the service.

e) Staff, children, and families are consulted, and their feedback used to inform, plan and action improvements for the service.

This is to comply with the - Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/210.

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).

This requirement was made on 5 September 2022.

Action taken on previous requirement

Since the last inspection, quality assurance processes have continued to develop to ensure important aspects of the service are routinely monitored. The manager and nursery management teacher have used a quality assurance calendar to plan and undertake monitoring of the service and provide more effective support and supervision for all staff. Regular formalised monitoring of staff practice and children's experiences has been planned, implemented and linked to the service improvement priorities. As a result, staff are now receiving regular feedback to understand how to make changes to increase the quality of children's experiences.

An improvement plan had been developed in collaboration with staff, which identified key areas for improvement, to ensure there was a shared vision and understanding of the identified areas for action within the service. Most actions from the plan had now been met and the impact of changes were clearly evident. For example, the actions taken this session to improve the lunchtime experience and the learning environment had improved experiences for children.

The service had actively sought the views of children and families to support the improvement of the service. Staff had created a self-evaluation floorbook to document their improvement journey and review aspects of practice identified for development. This floorbook included the views and feedback from children, staff and families which demonstrated the voice of all partners was valued and included within the improvement process.

Met - outwith timescales

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

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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