Inverlochy Primary Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

Inverlochy Primary Nursery School
Earl of Inverness Road
Fort William
PH33 6LS

Telephone: 01397 701 287

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 August 2022

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003017220

About the service

Inverlochy Primary Nursery Class registered with the Care Inspectorate in April 2002. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children at any one time aged from three years to those attending primary school.

The purpose built accommodation comprises of a large bright playroom, kitchen, toilet provision, office, reception, cloakroom and an enclosed outdoor area. Children also have access to an eco-garden situated within the school grounds.

The service is provided by Highland Council and managed by both the primary school head teacher and a peripatetic childcare manager.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 4 August 2022 between 08:30 and 17:00. 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 13 people using the service and two of their families
- Spoke with six staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

• Staff interactions were positive, kind and caring.

• Personal plans had clearly identified strategies to help children achieve their full potential.

• Children were having fun, actively leading their play and were fully engaged.

• There was a wide range of high quality resources, offering children opportunities for challenge, creativity and problem solving.

• Areas for improvement identified by the manager, tie in well with the whole school improvement plan.

• Staff training had a positive impact on practice and outcomes for children.

• Staff deployment effectively met the individual care and support needs of all children throughout the session.

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?	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? 4 - Good

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated key question 1 as good, important strengths which clearly outweigh areas for improvement.

QI- 1.1: Nurturing Care and Support

Staff knew the children well and could speak about their likes, dislikes and support needs. Children were happy and having fun during their time in the service. Interactions were kind and caring with staff offering children cuddles if they needed comfort or reassurance. This contributed to supporting a calm and nurturing atmosphere for children.

Children's wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning which was reviewed regularly. Parents commented positively that they felt included in the gathering and review of this information to support their child's needs. This partnership approach enabled staff to skilfully support children in a caring and responsive way according to their individual needs. Staff used the information effectively to develop strategies to contribute to children reaching their full potential. This included positive behaviour strategies and using visual timetables and Makaton hand signals. This enabled children to received care and support which effectively met their changing needs.

Staff were aware of children's allergies and medical needs, with medication stored safely and correctly with relevant important information. Clear protocols were in place for every child with an identified allergy or medical need with photos and emergency contact numbers if required. Staff had attended additional training to help them support children with specific medical needs. As a result, children's medical and allergy needs were being met safely and consistently.

Mealtimes were a sociable experience for children, they were able to choose when they wanted to come for snack and where to sit. The pace of mealtimes was unhurried and relaxed, children were able to return to their play once they had finished. We discussed with the manager to explore increasing opportunities for children to develop skills and independence, such as preparing their own snack and setting the table. Staff sat and ate with the children and spoke about the food they were eating offering help and support when appropriate. This supported mealtimes to be positive and social experiences for children with opportunities to develop social and language skills.

QI- 1.3: Play and Learning

Children directed their own play and were fully engaged in purposeful, fun experiences, through a mix of planned and spontaneous learning. Most staff used skilled open-ended questioning to extend children's curiosity, problem solving skills and promote development of imagination. We spoke with the manager about continuing positive role modelling for newer staff to enable them to gain more confidence in the pace and content of their questions, giving children time to consider and answer. Play experiences provided challenge and supported children to develop language, literacy, and numeracy skills. As a result of this responsive approach by staff, children were able to develop lifelong skills, feel valued and secure.

Planning floor books were in place to capture children's thoughts, interests and to plan play and learning experiences. There was some evidence of children's voices to help inform planning processes through quotes and drawings but this could be developed much further to show children's interests are consistently

being followed. The manager spoke about planning and the use of floor books being an area of improvement for the service. The staff team had been enrolled on an upcoming, dedicated training course, taking place in September 2022, to give them the skills and confidence to capture and record children's interests and learning. This would help support staff to use responsive planning approaches and enable children to learn and progress through their play and learning experiences.

Children were given access to outdoor play with opportunities for risky play and development of gross and fine motor skills. On the day of inspection, children were able to access both the school eco-garden and the outside garden area within the nursery grounds. They could climb and balance and had plenty of space to run and be active. Children were co-operating and using their imaginations with the majority of staff encouraging and extending play and learning experiences through skilled interactions. This supported children to assess risks and develop skills for lifelong learning.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated key question 2 as very good, major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

QI- 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The playroom and outdoor garden spaces were well thought out and planned to maximise children's play and learning experiences. Outdoors provided a balance of physical and creative opportunities. Children had contributed to creating a growing area with fruit trees and strawberry plants. There was a bug hotel area with posters to help children discover and identify different types of butterflies and ladybugs, while they actively searched for minibeasts using magnifying glasses provided. Indoors, the playroom was comfortable, welcoming and full of interesting areas and resources to explore. There were cozy and quiet areas for children to rest and relax with large comfortable armchairs and cushions. This supported children to feel valued and gave a strong message that they matter.

Children benefitted from a wide variety of open ended and natural resources, enabling them to explore their creativity, imagination and problem-solving skills. They were actively using the environment to explore and have fun and were engaged in their play. The endless opportunities provided by the high quality resources supported children to be creative and use their imaginations. For example, a group of children had used large wooden blocks to recreate a trampoline park which they had visited with their families. This supported children to work together, problem solve and engage in turn taking using real life experiences as a reference. As a result, children's play and learning experiences were challenging and fun.

Children had direct access to the outdoor garden space giving them good opportunities for free flow play between indoors and outdoors. They moved freely between the play areas and engaged in a variety of outdoor play experiences, including playing in the mud kitchen, and engaging with natural and loose parts. There were opportunities for children to experience more physical play experiences, helping to extend children's gross motor skills. This contributed to children being confident when playing outdoors and creating imaginative play experiences for themselves.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated key question 3 as good, important strengths which clearly outweigh areas for improvement.

QI- 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Management encouraged staff to take the lead in effective self-evaluation with a focus on improving outcomes for children. Staff were supported to reflect on the planning and improvement of the service based on their own observations or through the views of the children and families. The team had recently reflected on the quality of the lunchtime experience for children eating in the school canteen. They had referred to best practice documents including the Health and Social Care Standards and the Setting The Table documents, available on the Care Inspectorate hub. Through this process, improvements had been made including children having more opportunities to engage with their key worker during this time. Children had been observed by staff to be eating more, trying new foods and engaging in more meaningful conversations. This effective approach supported continuous improvement tailored to the needs of the children in the service.

The manager had recently recruited some new members to the staff team. They had been given an induction prior to starting and the manager was using the National Induction Resource, available on the Care Inspectorate hub, to support new staff's development within their role. We spoke with the manager about the importance of regular and effective support and supervision for these new and inexperienced staff members to ensure they learn how to deliver quality play and learning experiences. Also to help staff to reflect on their practice to identify areas for improvement and training opportunities. This would contribute to staff feeling supported and confident in the responsibilities of their roles.

Quality assurance processes were in use with clear timescales and responsibilities, with a focus on outcomes for children. Through the use of effective quality assurance and monitoring, this had highlighted areas for improvement, which had informed whole team staff training to be delivered in August and September 2022. Monitoring of practice had highlighted a training need around recording of observations and the planning processes. Clear feedback had been given to staff along with signposting to relevant best practice documentation and upcoming training opportunities. These areas for improvement had been shared with parents and families to enable them to be clear and feel included with the settings improvement priorities. This supported the continuous development of the service with a clear, shared vision on improving outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated key question 4 as very good, major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

QI- 4.3: Staff deployment

Mealtimes were a relaxed and sociable experience with staff focused on the children. Staff sat and ate with the children during mealtimes, offering them support, praise and promoting social skills and language development. This ensured that children received care and support that was right for them.

Continuity of care for children was consistent throughout the day with minimal changes to staffing. Staffing levels were observed to be very good with sufficient numbers of staff to meet children's needs. Staff were flexible and moved around the service, with the children, to ensure highly effective supervision. In addition,

children who needed more adult support to help them achieve their full potential, received this for the duration of their time in the service. The flexibility of staff ensured that children's experiences were skilfully supported, including from newer, more inexperienced staff.

The staff team communicated well with each other when a task took them away from their designated area. They informed each other when leaving the room for something or attending to a child's needs. The ethos between team members was positive and interactions between staff were kind and respectful. This helped to create a positive atmosphere for both staff and children to feel comfortable and secure in.

Staff worked well together to ensure children were always accounted for. On several occasions, staff were observed to be carrying out checks to monitor the number of children in the setting. They made effective use of the range of skills, knowledge and experience within the team to ensure the wellbeing of children in the service. Routines, transitions and the use of the environment were planned well to support highly effective and quality experiences, whilst meeting individual children's needs. A detailed register was kept by staff to ensure they knew children were safe when accessing outdoor activities. Risk assessments had been carried out to ensure staff were confident in ensuring a safe environment for both themselves and the children. This supported children to enjoy challenging and fun play experiences whilst staying secure.

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	5 - Very 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?	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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