Kiltearn Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Drummond Road
Evanton
Dingwall
IV16 9UT

Telephone: 01349 830 568

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 May 2025

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003017225

About the service

Kiltearn Primary School Nursery is a day care of children service situated in the semi-rural village of Evanton.

The service is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of 25 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school.

The service is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of the village centre, with shops, woods and other amenities near by. The children are cared for in a playroom in the main school building. They have access to a small, enclosed outdoor area at the rear of the school, and a larger enclosed outdoor area to the front of the school.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 7 May 2025. 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 three children using the service;
- spoke with three parents/carers;
- reviewed responses from three families responding to our MS forms survey;
- spoke with two staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents;
- received online feedback from one family.

As part of this inspection, we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning.

This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors

- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with the service.

Key messages

- Children benefited from warm and nurturing care from the staff team.
- Staff knew children well and had developed positive relationships with them.
- Children were happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Children enjoyed a lovely calming mealtime experience.
- The manager had clear overview of the service and improvement priorities were being actioned.
- Effective staff deployment supported positive outcomes for 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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - 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

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's overall wellbeing was supported through effective use of personal planning. Staff spoke knowledgably and confidently about children's individual care needs and what they did to support them. We saw staff responding throughout the day, offering kindness, reassurance and cuddles. As a result, individual children experienced care and support that was right for them. Staff were proactive in seeking additional support when children needed it, working with other professionals such as the speech and language therapist and health visitor to identify appropriate strategies and support. As a result, children received the care and support that was
right for them. Parents were overall happy with the care their child received.

Some comments include;
"I have had children in the nursery for the last 4 years and have always experienced positive caring interactions".

"Staff are great at communicating and are always asking for anything ideas or parents to come in and share an interest with the children related to their learning".

Snack and lunch times were positive, relaxing and sociable times for children where they were provided with a range of opportunities to develop their independence. The management team and staff had been working on improving lunchtimes as a key improvement area.
Children experienced a strong sense of pride as they helped to organise and serve the snack. They prepared fruit items, poured their own milk and water and cleared away their own plates and dishes. As a result, children had opportunities to take responsibility and learn key life skills. At snack and lunchtimes, staff sat with children, which provided opportunities to promote close attachments and develop their social skills. Food choices were healthy and
nutritious, family requests for specific food items at lunchtime were accommodated and children had access to fresh water throughout the day to support hydration. This supported children to be nurtured through their daily experiences.

Medication was stored safely and securely and was easily accessible in case of an emergency. Medication consent forms were in place and were detailed to ensure staff had all the required information to maintain children's health and wellbeing.

Staff understood their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and protected from harm. They could confidently tell us how they would respond if they had any child protection concerns. This contributed to keeping children safe.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Overall, children were engaged and observed to be busy and happy in their play. They had opportunities to lead their own play which supported them to develop their confidence and sense of wellbeing. They were able to choose from a range of real life and natural resources which supported their imagination and curiosity. Most staff supported children through the use of high quality, open ended questioning which

encouraged problem solving. This also contributed to children developing skills in literacy and numeracy. However, we identified missed opportunities to extend and enrich children's play and learning through creative approaches

Staff used floorbooks and responsive planning was beginning to support children's emerging interests, enhancing and extending children's learning. Children's comments, ideas and learning were evidenced within these, which demonstrated their voice was included within the planning process. Planning should continue to be developed to make consistent links to personal learning journals and planning for individual needs.

Personal learning journals were in place for all children which captured some of their achievements and progress. These contained observations and photographs demonstrating children's breadth of learning experiences. The service had identified this as an area for improvement. Staff were currently being supported by the manager and the local authority to develop their skills in writing quality observations. This is to ensure the information supports planning of relevant play and learning experiences. This would enable provision of activities tailored to the needs and abilities of individual children and support them to be successful learners.

Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with good opportunities to be outside. Children told us that they enjoyed playing outside which promoted physical energetic play to keep them active and healthy. We saw nice interactions between staff and children, with staff responsive to the individual needs of each child. For example, children were listening to a story in the garden while sitting with staff and also enjoying some arts and crafts activities. This experience provided opportunities to promote literacy, imagination and creativity.

Connections within the community enhanced children's experiences. For example, children went to visit their local woodland area as well as planned trips to the beach. Staff highlighted how beneficial these trips were and children really enjoyed their time within their community.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 2:2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a welcoming and homely nursery with plenty of natural light and good ventilation. It was a clean, tidy and well-maintained space for children to play, learn and relax in. Children were able to independently choose where they wanted to play for most of the day, accessing the small outdoor area with ease. Even though there was no free flow, children had the choice to stay in or go outside to the larger, more inviting, enclosed garden area to the front of the school playground.

There was a range of resources available indoors which included natural and open-ended resources. Most areas were well resourced and staff had made changes in the playroom to make it become stimulating and fun. Children were having fun and playing with the building blocks, lego and Knexs. This experience provided opportunities to promote mathematical thinking, imagination and creativity.

The large outdoor play area was safe and secure and provided a variety of areas and resources to support play and learning. We saw nice interactions between staff and children, with staff responsive to the

individual needs of each child. For example, children were happily engaged in the water play in the garden as well as building dens with pallets of wood. However, there was no outside tap for children to use for digging/mud kitchen area. This space would benefit from further development and further resources being made available to create a more inviting and challenging space to enhance children's learning.

Children's safety, emotional security and wellbeing were supported through sensitive arrangements for rest and relaxation. Staff supported children in the quiet area which they currently developed where children relaxed on the soft seating and cushions as well as the cosy tent. The quiet area provided a space for children to rest and read stories, if required.

The manager told us that plans for a new early learning and childcare facility were at an early stage. Infection prevention control procedures followed best practice guidance. Even though children had access to the same toilets as the primary one children, management had a risk assessment in place so the risk of cross infection was minimised. The setting was kept clean and tidy which contributed to reducing the potential spread of infection. The toilets and nappy changing area were clean and checked regularly. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack and mealtimes. This meant that children were able to play and learn in a safe, clean environment.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of keeping children safe, supporting them to identify and address risks, and ensuring that children were accounted for throughout the day. As a result, children were able to enjoy fun play experiences.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The staff and management team engaged well during the inspection process, taking on advice and support, which demonstrated a commitment for improvement to ensure positive outcomes for children. The management team were open and honest throughout the inspection and promoted a shared vision along with staff in delivering a quality service to all children and families.

The head teacher was new in her role and effective self-evaluation and quality assurances were in the early stages of development. Management had a clear overview of where the service was in terms of their improvement cycle. Key improvement priorities which would create positive impacts on children's experiences and outcomes had been identified. There was a detailed action plan in place which broke down improvement priorities into actions which were relevant, realistic and manageable. Regular input from the service's Early Years Education Support Officer and Childcare Manager supported this improvement plan. Systems were in place to ensure that improvement and change continued to progress at a time of change within the staff team.

Children and families' views were actively sought to inform the development of the setting. Successes and achievements were shared with children, families and partners and were used as a starting point for future improvements. Parents and carers were invited into the nursery for coffee mornings, stay and play sessions as well as lunch time visits. One parent commented "The new head has made a huge difference, since she has joined we are so involved. There has been so much parent engagement which I feel has made such a

positive impact as we can voice ideas/concerns". This supported parents to feel included and their views been listened to.

The head teacher worked collaboratively with staff to use effective self evaluation with a focus on improving outcomes for children. Staff told us they felt fully supported and valued by the management team. The positive team relationships helped support children to feel nurtured and secured.

Regular, whole team meetings with the manager provided an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice and self-evaluate against best practice guidance, such as 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare'. As a result, areas for improvement were identified and a focus on making improvements to children's experiences was evident. This resulted in improved outcomes for children and their families.

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
Children experienced nurturing interactions from a staff team who had differing skills and experience in the role. They knew children's preferences and wishes. Staff knew children well and secure relationships between them had been established. We witnessed children being supported by staff in ways which were appropriate to meet their needs. This meant that children felt safe, secure and happy in a service where a caring staff team nurtured and supported them. The care and support they received had a positive impact on their overall wellbeing. Parents were overall happy with the staff and the communication they received.

Some commented;
"The staff are great and really attentive. They do a lot of activities with the nursery it's great to see. My son has absolutely thrived this past year at Kiltearn".

"Friendly staff team, good communication, feel like they care about my child, plenty time outside, know they care safe".

Staff knew children well and secure relationships between them had been established. We witnessed children being supported by staff in ways which were appropriate to meet their needs. This meant that children felt safe, secure and happy in a service where a caring staff team nurtured and supported them. Busier times of the day, such as pickups/drops off were well managed. Staff were fully aware of the measures in place to keep children safe at these times.

Staff worked well together as a team throughout the day, communicating clearly when they were moving from one area to another, or when children had individual needs. This was very evident over the lunchtime period when staff were focused on children, and children's experiences were not compromised.

The staff team provided a range of skills and experience to the service. Key working arrangements ensured there was consistency in individual children's care across the day. Staff had clear roles, were flexible and moved with children dependant on their interests and needs.
As a result, children benefitted from a very calm and positive experience.

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 children's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure that appropriate measures are in place to minimise the risk of cross infection. This should include, but is not limited to, the use of shared toilet facilities and general cleanliness of items used in children's care and play.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with good practice guidance in the documents:

'Space to Grow 'and 'Infection prevention and control in childcare settings (daycare and childminding settings).'

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:
'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

This area for improvement was made on 7 May 2025.

Action taken since then

Infection prevention control procedures followed best practice guidance. Even though children had access to the same toilets as the primary one children, management had a risk assessment in place so the risk of cross infection was minimised. The setting was kept clean and tidy which contributed to reducing the potential spread of infection. The toilets and nappy changing area were clean and checked regularly. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack and mealtimes. This meant that children were able to play and learn in a safe, clean environment.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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