Kinlochleven Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Kinlochleven Primary School
Riverside Road
Kinlochleven
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Telephone: 01855 832 040

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 April 2023

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003017229

About the service

Kinlochleven Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 22 children aged from 2 years to those not yet attending primary school, of those 22 no more than 2 are aged 2 to under 3.

The nursery operates from its own dedicated space within Kinlochleven 3 - 18 Campus located in the village of Kinlochleven. The nursery has a separate entrance away from the main school reception. The premises consist of a playroom with kitchen facilities, toilets and reception area. The children have lunch in the main school canteen. The playroom has direct access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery also makes good use of resources in the local community.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 26 April 2923 between 9:45 and 16:45. 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 seven children attending the nursery
- reviewed feedback from parents
- spoke with two staff and the manager
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children were very happy and engaged and having lots of fun taking part in various activities both indoors and outdoors.

Positive relationships with families supported continuity of care and effective partnerships.

Children experienced very warm, caring and nurturing support from staff who knew them very well.

Sensitive and skilled interactions were used to expand children's play and learning.

The service had established very good working relationships with other agencies to support children's care and support needs.

Quality assurance systems were in place and the service had developed a quality assurance calendar.

Staff had worked hard to develop both the indoor and outdoor environments and had introduced a wide range of loose parts, open ended and natural resources.

The staff were continuing to develop the outdoor environment.

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

1.1 Nurturing Care and Support

Children were very happy, settled and having fun as they played alongside or with friends. We observed that positive attachments had been formed between staff and the children which contributed to children developing a sense of belonging. Children experienced warm, kind nurturing approaches to their personal care and learning needs. This contributed to children feeling happy and secure and promoted an inclusive care setting where all children mattered.

Staff were welcoming and friendly with an enabling attitude and knew children very well. To support children to be happy and confident, staff had effectively used several documents, including 'Being me' personal plans and support plans, to ensure children's needs were captured and considered. These documents ensured that everyone had a clear understanding of children's individual needs and how to support them to reach their full potential. This meant that all children were respected and valued as individuals. We reminded the service to ensure that they regularly reviewed and updated personal plans.

Children and families benefitted from a service that recognised the importance of establishing strong working relationships with families 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, via an online platform, and there were opportunities for parents to spend time in the nursery.

The service had also forged very good working relationships with other professionals to support children with additional support needs. Staff used the expertise of others, such as speech and language therapists, pre-school home teaching service and education psychologist, to inform their approach to children's care.

Children experienced positive snack experiences which were relaxed, sociable and unhurried. Staff were aware of any allergies or dietary needs which helped them to keep children safe. The nursery children had their lunch in the main school canteen. Staff sat with children, chatting and modelling healthy eating, creating opportunities for children to develop their language and social skills. We spoke with the manager about reviewing arrangements for lunch time to improve the experience for children and to encourage children's independence skills. We advised where some procedures could be improved to provide a more homely, sociable mealtime experience for all children.

Staff were all very aware of their role and responsibility to safeguard children. They had completed child protection training and fully understood the procedure to follow should the need arise. The staff had a knowledge and understanding of the Care Inspectorate SIMOA project - Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act. This contributed towards children health, safety and wellbeing.

We reviewed the setting's medication policy and procedures. We found medication was stored securely and out of reach of children. We identified some areas where the management of medicines could be enhanced to avoid the potential for errors in administering medication.

The manager recognised the importance and was taking steps to address their approach to the management of medication.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children actively led their play and learning and were very happy and engaged. They moved freely between the indoor and outdoor environments to explore and develop their imaginations. Being outdoors was particularly popular with all the children. They enjoyed building racing cars with a range of loose parts, digging in the sand pit, as well as water play and painting. For the majority of the time, children benefitted from uninterrupted play, allowing them to become absorbed in their play and have fun, at times inviting staff into their play. This increased children's happiness and engagement.

Planning approaches were child led and followed children's interests and needs. Play spaces were well resourced and promoted learning through real life experiences. There was a good mix of spontaneous and planned experiences. Children were offered rich, stimulating and interesting experiences which promoted curiosity, imagination, problem solving and collaborative play. Staff were adding further value to children's play and learning through their carefully considered interactions. Staff were skilful in their interactions and engaged effectively with children to extend their learning. Questioning by staff encouraged children to think independently and to reflect which contributed to children feeling respected, valued and achieving.

We recognised high quality play, learning and development was taking place throughout the inspection. Numeracy and literacy were naturally incorporated into most play areas within the nursery. Children had the opportunity to develop their numeracy and literacy skills and mathematical language while taking part in cooking activities, playing with real life resources in the home corner as well as taking part in outdoor learning sessions. Books were available throughout the nursery as were mark making materials. The children also attended regular Bookbug sessions at the local library. This promoted and encouraged language and literacy skills in a fun and playful way. It also provided opportunities for nursery children to be actively involved in their community.

Staff made use of large floor books to record the learning which was already taking place and to identify possible future learning experiences. Children were actively involved in completing the books with the staff and engaging in discussion about what they would like to learn about next. Children could tell us about the photos and drawings in the books and took pride in their achievements. Staff ensured that parents were well informed of children's learning and progression.

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 safe, comfortable and inviting environment where they could play and learn. 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. Homely touches and natural resources helped children to feel valued and comfortable.

Wall displays were attractive and contained interesting information about children's learning, which gave children a sense of ownership in the space. Children were confident moving around the spaces available, both indoors and in the enclosed outdoor
play area.

There was a system to report any repairs and damaged items were promptly replaced. Suitable infection control procedures were in place such as embedded handwashing before mealtimes and after outdoor play. A secure entry system and close monitoring of visitors by staff contributed to children remaining safe. There were appropriate risk assessments in place which promoted the safety of the children as well as daily checks of the premises. As a result, children's health and wellbeing needs were prioritised.

Children enjoyed access to a well-resourced and well set out indoor play space which provided a rich learning environment. Quiet areas where children could rest, relax and be alone enabled them to set the pace of their play and further supported their emotional wellbeing. 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 children's current interests and curiosities, with appropriate materials, including natural and open ended resources, to support learning and offer challenge. Resources were easily accessible to children and supported independence, investigation and inquiry. We saw children comfortably explore indoors, select resources and lead their own play.

Staff had a very good understanding of the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing. Children benefitted from free flow access to the outdoor play area throughout their day. The outdoor play 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, numeracy and literacy skills as well as explore risky play. The children spent much of their day outdoors engaged in a range of activities either on their own or with their friends. Staff supported children to direct their own play and activities in the way they chose. There were lots of positive interactions by staff which supported children to develop their thinking and learning, and widened their skills while enjoying active play and fresh air.

Children's personal information was held securely as staff took steps to ensure their confidentiality. This included using discreet areas for more private conversations with parents, storage of information such as allergies and personal care needs was stored confidentially whilst still being accessible. This ensured that children's needs were met quickly whilst maintaining their privacy.

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

Children benefitted from a positive ethos and a culture of continuous improvement. The manager promoted a positive attitude to change and recognised the importance of including all relevant stakeholders in developing a shared vision. Effective policies, procedures and quality assurance processes were in place to support the development and improvement of the service. The manager and staff were all enthusiastic and committed to the continuous improvement of the service to secure high quality outcomes for the children.

The service recognised the importance of involving children and parental engagement in the evaluation process. Involving children and their families meaningfully in the continuous improvement of the service contributed to them feeling included. There was an improvement floor book in the nursery where the staff and children had recorded how the outdoor area had developed. The book documented the children's ideas and suggestions as to what they would like to see in the outdoor play area and the ongoing development of the space.

The service used parental feedback to develop experiences for children. This helped to promote a shared partnership in the delivery of high quality care for children. Regular communication with families took place through a variety of methods including email, online platforms, questionnaires and face to face discussion. Parents were also very welcome to spend time in the nursery. The service was looking forward to restarting regular stay and play sessions for parents.

Staff had opportunities to meaningfully contribute and be part of the evaluation process. There were regular team meetings where all staff were supported to reflect on the service provided, evaluate learning opportunities and resources available. They could also share any feedback or suggestions they might have about the service during the regular visits to the nursery by the manager.

The service had developed a quality assurance calendar to review aspects of practice and parental engagement throughout the year. There was a improvement plan in place which set out identified priority action points to support positive outcomes for children. A current priority for the service was to develop further the outdoor space to extend and enrich children's outdoor play and learning.

Evaluation within the service was underpinned by best practice guidance and supported high quality care and support. The service made use of quality assurance tools including 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare', Health and Social Care Standards and 'How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare' to support their improvement journey.

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 skilled, dedicated and nurturing. They were motivated and committed to provide an inclusive setting where all children mattered and were at the heart of the service. Staff were respectful and very supportive of each other. They were very warm, caring and sensitive in their approach and demonstrated positive team working, which promoted a happy and secure environment where children were encouraged to lead their own play and learning. They were responsive and respectful of children during interactions and play which supported children to feel safe, secure and happy.

Staff worked well together as a team and their differing skills and knowledge complemented one another and resulted in quality interactions with children. Children experienced continuity of care as staff deployed themselves effectively to ensure quality experiences. Deployment of staff across the setting and throughout the day supported children to lead their play and engage in free flow opportunities whilst remaining safe.

Staff communicated well with each other and worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day. They communicated sensitively with each other should a task take them away from their duties, for example when they had to support children with personal care and accessing toilet facilities which were located outwith the playroom. 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.

The staff knew the children well and secure relationships between them were evident in the kind and compassionate interactions we observed. They had also established positive relationships with the children's families and worked to ensure every family was welcomed and valued. 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. Parents were very positive in their comments about staff, their friendliness and how welcoming they were to both the children and their families.

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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