Kyleakin Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Kyleakin Primary School
Achmore Road
Kyleakin
Isle of Skye
IV41 8PH

Telephone: 01599 534 150

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 November 2022

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003017234

About the service

Kyleakin Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 12 children, from the age of three years to those not yet attending primary school. The head teacher for the primary school manages the nursery and is also the manager for Kyle (English) Nursery.

The children have access to a bright playroom with kitchen area and shared toilet facilities with the primary school children. The children have direct access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area as well as the school's playing field. The nursery also makes very good use of resources in the local community.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 21st November 2022 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 two people using the service
- took account of feedback from parents and carers
- spoke with three staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced extremely warm, caring and nurturing support from staff.
- Children were all very happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Outdoor play and learning was a strength of the service and was very popular with the children.
- Positive relationships with families supported continuity of care and effective partnerships.
- The indoor and outdoor environments were clean, bright and welcoming and of a high quality.
- Staff were flexible and worked well as a team which supported positive experiences for children.
- The manager and staff were committed to the ongoing development of the service.

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 question as very good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 - Nurturing care & support

Children were very happy, settled and having fun as they played alongside or with friends. We observed that positive relationships had been formed between staff and the children who had fun together. Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to their personal care and learning needs. This contributed to children feeling happy and secure. There was a great deal of chatter and laughter between the children and the staff. We saw staff being very nurturing, taking time to listen to and respond to children, and offering comfort, cuddles and reassurance when needed. This contributed to positive attachments being formed and children having a sense of belonging and feeling valued.

All children had a personal plan in place which provided detailed information, including strategies and next steps to support individual children. This information was used consistently and effectively by staff. When speaking with staff it was clear that they knew the children well and were able to discuss their personalities, likes/dislikes and what they were supporting the children to achieve. Activities and experiences were responsive and personalised to meet these needs and interests. This meant that all children were respected and valued as individuals. One parent commented 'There's a lovely ethos and rapport between staff and children. The children are provided with a range of learning experiences and resources.'

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 as well as online updates.

Children experienced positive snack and lunchtime experiences which were very relaxed, sociable and unhurried. Lunches were served in the school dining hall where we saw children were comfortable with this routine. Children were supported to develop important independence skills when pouring drinks and self serving food. Staff sat with children chatting and positively role modelling social skills. This contributed to creating a homely, relaxed and enjoyable mealtime experience for children.

1.3 Play and Learning

The children were very happy and engaged in their play and actively led their play and learning throughout the day. A balance of spontaneous and planned quality experiences promoted children's choice and independence. Children benefited from a high-quality play and learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, where they could access a very good range of age appropriate resources. These promoted children's curiosity and encouraged them to be creative, problem solve and use their imagination. Play and learning opportunities impacted positively on children's development, health, wellbeing and happiness. For the majority of the time children 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 to children's interests which supported children to feel involved and empowered. Children were given ownership of their play and encouraged to be independent.

There were opportunities for children to experiment and explore. 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.

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. Parents and carers were also invited to add comments in the floor books. Comments made included 'well done for following the children's interests' while another parent commented 'it looks like all the children were given a chance to follow their thoughts through (even if not wildly on topic) which is great.'

Each child also had their own learning journey book which celebrated their progress and learning. They included photographs and written observations of the children's individual learning. Next steps were identified to support children's progression and plan future learning.

Children benefitted from close links with the local community which enhanced play and learning opportunities and helped them to feel connected to their community. They had frequent walks and outings to the beach, local woodland and other local areas. We saw children all enjoying time outdoors exploring the surrounding area and saying hello to people in the community they knew.

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 benefited from a setting that was very welcoming, clean, and inviting. The playroom was comfortable and homely and benefitted from plenty of natural light and ventilation. Wall displays were attractive and contained interesting information about children's learning and included many of the children's comments. Although a small room, the playroom was well resourced and organised to support free flow pay indoors. Furniture and resources were of a high standard. This all promoted a strong sense that children matter.

There was a system to report any repairs and damaged items were promptly replaced. Clear infection prevention and control policies and procedures minimised the potential spread of infection. There were appropriate risk assessments in place which promoted the safety of the children as well as daily checks of the premises.

Staff had created a very positive learning environment. We saw children who explored happily and were engaged in their play. Consideration had been given to the variety of activities and experiences on offer to spark the children's curiosity and imagination. Children very much led their play and were able to independently select resources of their choice. 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. The staff explained that they were developing a cosy, nurturing area where children could go if needed.

The playroom opened directly onto the outdoor play area which 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. Although a very chilly day, the children all enthusiastically enjoyed spending time outdoors. They were fully engaged in a range of activities, either on their own or with their friends. Children were having fun playing imaginatively at the mud kitchen or investigating the water which had collected on a tarpaulin. We observed children taking turns, sharing, talking, negotiating and problem solving. Staff supported children to direct their own play and activities in the way they chose.

Given the rural location of the nursery, the opportunities for outdoor play and learning were plentiful and full advantage were made of these by the nursery. Staff had completed outdoor training and recognised all the benefits of children playing and learning outdoors. They made regular visits to The Plock, Balmacara Woods as well as frequent walks to the beach and the area surrounding the nursery. Parents commented that they particularly valued the opportunities their children had to explore their local community and to take part in very regular outdoor learning sessions.

Staff took a positive risk benefit approach, and this supported children to assess their own risks and understand their own safety. Robust risk assessments were in place. These were regularly reviewed and updated to ensure any risks were minimised for children, families, and staff.

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 children benefitted from a positive ethos and culture of continuous improvement. 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. 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 the children and their families was a priority for the manager and staff. Involving children and their families meaningfully in the ongoing development of the service contributed to them feeling valued, respected and included.

Regular communication with families took place through a variety of methods, including email, online platforms, questionnaires and face to face discussion. The service had reintroduced 'stay and play' sessions where parents and carers were welcomed into the service. 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.

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.

Evaluation within the service was underpinned by best practice guidance and supported high quality care and support. Management and staff had used 'How good is our early learning and childcare' and 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare' 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 about their role, spoke positively about their work and were 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.

Effective arrangements were in place to promote continuity of care across the day. Staff 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, knowledge and experience contributed to positive interactions and play and learning experiences for 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.

As a small service in a rural community, 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. Parents were routinely invited to 'stay and play' sessions which they very much appreciated. 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 and described them as being 'very friendly and approachable' and 'show natural care and compassion for the children.'

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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