Drumlanrig St. Cuthbert's Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

The Loan
Hawick
TD9 0AU

Telephone: 01450 373 521

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 March 2023

Service provided by:
Scottish Borders Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001976

Service no:
CS2003017367

About the service

Drumlanrig St. Cuthbert's Primary School Nursery is referred to as the nursery in this report. The nursery is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 64 children at any one time aged from 3 years to not yet attending primary school full time.

The service operates from within Drumlanrig St. Cuthbert's Primary School which is situated in Hawick, Scottish Borders. The nursery has two rooms, benefits from enclosed garden areas and use of the school grounds. There is an office area, a large entrance space, toilets and nappy changing facilities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 February 2023 with a further short notice inspection visit on 13 March 2023. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate on each day.

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 15 children using the service and seven of their parents/carers
- spoke with 10 staff, the head teacher and the depute head teacher
- observed practice and daily routines
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from staff who knew them well.
- Effective communication with parents meant children's needs were supported and parents felt included in the child's care and learning.
- Staff worked well together and had built trusting relationships with children and families.
- Children benefitted from high quality play experiences.
- Children's health and wellbeing was promoted with daily access to the outdoors.
- We asked management and staff to continue to monitor and reflect on the nursery environment.
- We asked management and staff to review medication records to ensure the well being of each child.

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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this key question as good.

Staff had developed a nurturing and inclusive ethos evidenced through their warm and caring approach towards children and their families. Interactions between staff and children were responsive and engaging. Children's wellbeing was important to staff and embedded throughout their practice. All staff knew children well and this was evident when we spoke with staff. One parent told us "This is a great nursery and my child loves it".

Staff promoted children's independence, privacy and dignity in a thoughtful manner. For example, when helping children with their toileting needs, when changing outdoor clothing and encouraging self-service at snack and lunch times. Children benefitted from warm
attachments which supported them to feel loved, valued and respected. The keyworker system worked well and allowed parents to know who they could speak to should they have any concerns about their child. One parent told us "Staff know my child very well and their needs are constantly met by lovely staff".

Children benefitted from effective personal planning which was reviewed on a regular basis to ensure information held was current. Personal plans highlighted children's care and support needs ensuring care was right for each child. Home to nursery transition information ensured children received continuity of care.

Children and their families were central to the process of effective communication and information reviews. Good use of chronologies highlighted significant events in the children's/families lives and enabled staff to respond quickly and sensitively to any changes. At the end of the day staff chatted about how the day had been and any significant observations they had made. One parent told us "I always get information about my child's day from staff and it's great we now get to see photographs instantly when staff put them on Showbie."

Children experienced warm, unhurried and caring support at meal and snack times. Staff recognised daily routines as a rich opportunity to promote attachment. Children were involved in snack and encouraging them to be independent and develop life skills. Flowers on the table and other homely touches helped provide a homely atmosphere in the snack area. Lunches were served in the school dining hall where we saw children were comfortable with this routine. Lunches were served earlier on a Friday which meant by home time staff were aware some children were hungry again. Parents chose lunches with their child through an online system. Parents told us they were happy with the choices available. This meant children got foods they liked to eat and encouraged at home and in nursery to try new foods. This meant children were able to build positive relationships with food.

Medication was stored safely and administration of medication records were securely kept. However, some strategies for the administration of long-term medication needed to be expanded. The head teacher agreed to action this.

1.3 Play and Learning

We evaluated this key question as very good.

Play was highly valued in the nursery. We observed children having fun, building friendships and confidently taking ownership of their play and learning. For example, choosing to make and design mask and fairy wings. Staff were attuned to children's individual learning styles and had a very good knowledge of child development. A balance of spontaneous and planned quality experiences promoted children's choice and independence. This supported children to explore their own ideas and build on their interests and creativity.

Staff were skilled and confident when introducing additional materials to extend children's play and learning. For example, books and resources relating to Springtime, lambs and frog lifecycles.

Numeracy and literacy were promoted with a very good selection of resources available across the nursery. Staff were supported by an early years teacher with targets for improvement. This meant children benefitted from staff broadening their skills in relating to tracking children's progress. Written signs, pictures and numbers were embedded in play experiences which meant children's understanding of what they were doing was reinforced. We heard children counting when brushing their teeth.

Parents told us they took part in play dates where they could spend time in the nursery and observe what went on. One parent told us "It's great spending time in the nursery with my child. I learn so much". Parents and carers were encouraged to share skills and special interests they may have in the nursery setting. The feedback we saw from this was evident both families and children enjoyed this.

Effective use of loose parts play materials across the nursery meant children's creativity was promoted as they were able to develop their problem-solving skills. Some children were learning about floating, sinking and what made the biggest splashes as they threw sticks, other loose parts and themselves into puddles. Children had fun finding out about the world around them.

Showbie was an online resource used to share children's learning, observations, identified next steps, voice notes from children and photographs. This ensured parents were well-informed of children's learning and progress. All parents agreed this was a very good resource as it meant they could access information at any time. Parents shared information with the nursery for example, children's achievements at home.

Children benefitted from being able to choose between indoor and outdoor play as the free flow between spaces worked well for them. Children could take resources between areas which promoted extended learning and curiosity. Children spent a lot of time outdoors and enjoyed the benefits of fresh air, physical exercise and uninterrupted use of open-ended materials.

We saw staff supported play well with very good levels of reflective questioning which promoted confidence and independence as they enjoyed risky play. Some children liked to play with sticks and mud up the banking and staff encouraged this and helped children to reflect on their safety.

Children were accessing the wider community as the nursery was an integral part of the wider school community. Where appropriate children sometimes took part in school assemblies. In the last assembly they shared their focus rhyme of the week using sign language. This promoted their self-esteem and a sense of belonging. Children enjoyed trips into town where they shopped for snack items, experienced visits to the different counters in the supermarket and operated the self service tills.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

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

The secure nursery setting welcomed parents, professionals and visitors. Information boards for parents shared staff photographs and qualifications, a blether board, the current focus of the week and the snack menu.

Resources were of a good quality and set up to meet the needs and interests of children. Homely touches, decoration and displays made by the children helped them to feel welcomed and included. Children were confident moving around the playrooms and between the indoor and outdoor spaces. This showed us children felt safe and secure in the nursery environment.

Children were involved in risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor spaces. This gave them a sense of responsibility in caring for their environment and themselves. One child told us "I have to make sure I clean the snack table well and wash our hands because we don't want to get germs".

Toilets and nappy changing facilities were kept clean throughout the day. Effective infection prevention and control measures were in place and in line with current guidance. This meant children, parents and staff experienced a hygienic and healthy environment.

On our first visit we had concerns over outdoor spaces being used as a thoroughfare by school aged children to the school playground. The vennel gate was left open and at this time staff had to monitor the gates to ensure children could not leave. This was highlighted at our visit to management and staff. Staff had recognised that while it was good for young children to see siblings and engage with older children they were not always able to interact with nursery children as they would like at this time. We spoke with the head teacher about this at our second visit and systems had been put in place to address this including a robust risk assessment. The gate was kept secure on our second visit. Management and staff should continue to monitor and reflect on the environment in order to maintain their good standard. The head teacher agreed this would be actioned.

Staff had a good understanding of confidentiality and this was reflected in their communication with parents. A parent commented "if I want to speak to staff in confidence they are always happy to do so". A separate room was available for such discussions. Children's information such as care plans and registration information were kept securely. Sensitive information was only shared with those who needed the information to meet children's needs. This meant, protection of children's information complied with relevant best practice.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed any areas for improvement.

Children and parents benefitted from a service whose vision, values and aims promoted a positive learning environment. We observed staff to be motivated, happy and an enthusiastic team who created high quality outcomes for children.

Improvement planning and quality assurance was good and involved collecting and acting on feedback from staff, parents and children. Children voted on their snack preferences was one example of this. This meant

everyone felt included and their views were listened to. One parent told us "staff always listen to what I have to tell them and I know they value what I have to say". Management agreed to further involve parents in their improvement agenda.

Staff were committed to their role and shared responsibility for the monitoring and development of the service. This included tracking systems, team discussions and completing on-line journals. Staff attended continuous development sessions to ensure they felt supported in their role.

We observed a motivated staff team using reflection to positively inform practice underpinned by strong consultative relationships between staff, head teacher and deputy head teacher. This told us the nursery had good capacity for change and improvement. To ensure continued improved outcomes for children and family's staff were proactive in making good use of best practice guidance. This enabled them to reflect and implement their learning to further meet the needs of children. We suggested more discussion and reflection around the quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare guidance would promote further self-evaluation and aid quality assurance.

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 quality indicator very good.

Staffing levels in the nursery ensured there were sufficient staff to carry out the vision and values of the service. We observed a confident and knowledgeable staff team who were respectful and supportive of each other. Positive role modelling between staff helped children develop positive and understand supportive relationships. Staff had drawn up a team charter and this reflected on the warm and professional relationships we observed.

Effective arrangements were in place to promote continuity of care across the day which ensured very good transitions. This ensured there was always enough staff to focus on children's needs. Staff breaks were planned to minimise impact on children whilst enabling staff to rest and be refreshed and lunch cover was in place.

The wellbeing of staff was of great importance to the head teacher and there was a good ethos of staff attendance in the nursery. This meant staff felt supported and valued and promoted positive experiences for children across the day.

Professional development was a high priority for staff. This was supported by sessions where staff were able to discuss their practice and learning. Core training, including first aid and child protection had been undertaken and updates were planned. Staff were encouraged to source specific training which related to leadership roles within the nursery. This meant the differing experiences, knowledge and skills of staff promoted positive outcomes and experiences for children.

An effective keyworker system promoted strong links between home and nursery. Families and children were kept informed of who would be caring for their child. This meant staff were able to develop positive attachments with children and their family and provide very good levels of individual care and support.

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	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very 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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