Newtown Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Sprouston Road
Newtown St. Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0QP

Telephone: 01835 822 263

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 October 2022

Service provided by:
Scottish Borders Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001976

Service no:
CS2003017377

About the service

Newtown Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children not yet attending primary school at any one time. No more than 10 children are aged 2 years to under 3 years.

The nursery is situated within Newtown Primary School. There is a good sized playroom, kitchen area, toilets and cloakroom. There is an enclosed outdoor play area which has direct access from the playroom. The nursery has use of the school gym hall and school playground.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 October between the hours of 8:30 and 15:40, and on 27 October between the hours of 10:00 and 14:15. 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 most of the children using the service and seven parents and carers
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed document
- spoke with a visiting professional.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from staff who knew them well.
- Children were happy in their play.
- Staff worked well together and have built trusting relationships with children and families.
- Further strategies should be added to care plans and medication records in order to ensure safety and wellbeing of 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?	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? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator 1.1 Nurturing and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good.

Staff had developed a nurturing and inclusive ethos evidenced through their kind and caring approach towards children. Children's wellbeing was important to them and embedded in practice, for example giving cuddles and reassurance when appropriate. Staff were compassionate and friendly and had built meaningful relationships with children and their families. This enabled them to build positive attachments with the children which supported them to feel loved, valued and respected. Children and their development were well known to all staff through effective communication skills. They spoke confidently about how they supported children's independence, privacy and dignity. A parent told us "you can see how much they know each child" and that was important to them.

Personal planning was in place for each child and highlighted care and support needs in relation to the care of the child, for example speech and language. This ensured care was right for each child. Children and families were central to this process ensuring effective communication and regular review of information. This enabled staff to respond quickly and sensitively to changes in a child's life. A parent told us their child had a "key worker" who had been a "wonderful support". Care 'planning plus' had been developed in order to keep written records of needs. However these needed to be expanded to include further strategies in order to promote consistency in approach. Staff agreed to put this in place.

Children experienced warm, unhurried and caring support at meal and snack times. Children and staff enjoyed eating together in a relaxed manner and staff recognised daily routines as a rich opportunity to promote attachment. Children were involved in snack preparation and self service, encouraging them to build positive relationships with food. A parent told us "there is always a huge amount of fruit available". Lunches were served in the school hall. Staff made it a positive experience for children as they sat in their keyworker groups and enjoyed conversations around the table. Staff worked in partnership with parents to promote choice and encouraged children to try new foods while taking account of cultural and dietary needs. For example, working with a parent and child to promote a lunch time routine. To promote well being fresh water was available throughout the day and children were encouraged to remain hydrated.

Medications records ensured children's safety, However, long term medication records should include further details in procedures, for example, what time would it be appropriate to alert parents if medication was not working as it should. Staff agreed to do this.

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Play was highly valued in the nursery and staff carried out significant amount of work with parents to help them understand the value of playing with their children. Stay and play sessions for parents were in place.

This supported parents by helping them to form an understanding of development, give ideas for play and observe staff modelling interactions to support
learning.

Play and learning was planned and based on high quality experiences for children. Staff provided resources to develop understanding of subjects like seasons, weather or events. They also made very good use of responsive planning, which took account of what children were interested in. This meant children had fun has they experienced quality play, learning and development opportunities.

Children's numeracy and literacy was promoted with a good selection of resources available throughout the setting. This was promoted through written signs and pictures, children's stories on the learning wall and numbers being embedded in play experiences. Children had fun being creative, using their imagination, and building confidence. For example, using large soft shapes to make surf boards. One child told us they were "going to the end of the sea". Staff extended play to support children to reach their full potential by suggesting additional resources, listening to and engaging with children. For example, the addition of winter boots and necklaces in the home corner.

Staff made effective use of a key word signing system and pictorial aids to enhance communication and inclusion in songs and stories for children. Children benefitted from the 'talking box', a box where they had to pick an item, talk about it and discover what it is used for.

Children's learning was shared with parents through learning journals, photographs, floor books and displays. Showbie was an online resource used to share children's learning, observations, identified next steps and photographs. A grandparent commented on this resource being "Great. I can see what my grandchildren are doing in nursery".

The visiting teacher from the local authority was supportive of the learning undertaken in the service. They told us "staff worked very hard, were willing to try new ideas and had the confidence to reflect and change them to ensure they met the needs of their children".

Children benefitted from being able to choose between indoor and outdoor play as the free flow between spaces worked well for them. This encouraged children to be independent and able to move freely around the setting. Children could take resources between areas which promoted extended learning and curiosity. For example, taking snack outdoor to eat in the fresh air. Children spent a lot of time outdoors and we observed staff supported play well with good levels of reflective questioning, appropriate to the child's stage of development.

Children benefitted from visiting professional, for example Boogie Beats where they had fun listening to a story and participated in movement and music. This encouraged a feel good factor for the children.

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

The nursery setting welcomed and valued parents, professionals and visitors. The play and learning environments for children were arranged to take account of developmental stages. Two playrooms had been

opened into one larger room which was attractively laid out for children's play and provided a range of good quality learning resources. Children could independently access additional resources for their play. Displays to capture children's interests were used to good effect and there were wall displays of children's art and craft work, which helps make children feel that what they do is valued.

Throughout the nursery there were clear procedures to ensure that the environments indoors and outdoors were safe, and that resources and furniture were clean. Toilets and nappy changing facilities were clean and well maintained throughout the day. Infection prevention and control measures were in place and consistently followed to provide a safe environment for children, parents and visitors.

Information about children was kept securely on the Local Authority computer system. Paper information such as personal plans were kept securely in a locked cupboard. Sensitive information was only shared with those who needed the information to meet children's needs. Staff had a good understanding of confidentiality, and this was reflected in their communication with parents.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Management had worked with staff, children and families to develop a clear vision for the service. This involved collecting feedback and involved children in shaping the delivery of the service. Children and parents benefitted from a well organised service knowing they were included in the service developments.

A variety of parent communication methods were used in order to ensure everyone was included. For example, direct conversations and newsletters. A parent told us "communication is always good here".

Improvement planning was discussed with all staff and their input was encouraged. The service was committed to involving parents and children in their improvement agenda. They did this by consulting children at focused group times and from being involved in 'mind mapping' in floor books.

Quality assurance processes were in place including improvement plans with realistic targets. These were reviewed with progress being evaluated and recorded. There was a clear focus on continuous self-evaluation and staff gave examples of when they have acted responsively to improve experiences.

To ensure continued improved outcomes for children and families the service had started to make good use of best practice guidance such as 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare'. Management and staff read and discussed individual indicators as part of their team meetings. These opportunities for professional discussions enabled staff to reflect and implement their learning to improve practice and children received positive interactions and experiences.

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

Staffing levels in the nursery ensured that there were enough staff to carry out the vision and values of the service. All staff were qualified and most had significant childcare experience. Professional development was a high priority for the staff group. A number of core subjects such as first aid and child protection had been undertaken but also a wide range of training to help staff promote positive outcomes for children and their families.

The day was protected to ensure that, as far as possible, staff did not attend meetings or carry out recording during the time when children were in the nursery. This had ensured that there were always enough staff to focus on outcomes for children and for times such as lunch, welcoming children into the setting or when children went home.

Staff understood the need for continuity of care for children and used an effective keyworker system to promote the link between home and the nursery. For example, home visits during covid-19 lockdown periods. Effective communication between the staff group ensured that all the staff knew children they were caring for. This helped them to develop positive attachments with children and provide good levels of individual care and support.

There were very good systems in place for staff support and development. Regular support and supervision sessions were used for individual discussion regarding professional development and reflective practice. Management of the service were aware of staff skills and expertise and were making very good use of these to develop a motivated and enthusiastic team.

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?	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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