Scalloway Nursery
Day Care of Children

Scalloway Primary School
New Road
Scalloway
Shetland
ZE1 0TN

Telephone: 01595 743 777

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 September 2023

Service provided by:
Shetland Islands Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002063

Service no:
CS2003017388

About the service

Scalloway Nursery is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 48 children aged three years and over.

The service operates from a spacious playroom within Scalloway Primary School, in the village of Scalloway, on the west coast of Shetland. The children have access to their own outdoor play area and can use areas within the school including the library and games hall.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 13 and 15 September 2023 between 08:40 and 16:30 and 09:00 and 11:30. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:
- Spoke with children during their play
- Spoke with parent/carers
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and children's experiences
- Reviewed documentation.

Key messages

• Children were supported with warm, caring and nurturing approaches that promoted their overall wellbeing.

• Children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their play and learning.

• Children experienced an environment which was welcoming and comfortable.

• Quality assurance processes could be developed further to support the continual improvement of the service.

• Staff were well deployed and worked well together to meet children's needs.

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?	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? 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 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children and their families were warmly welcomed, helping to build positive relationships. Parents were kept informed through discussion at drop-off and pick-up times, emails and the online learning application. This supported working together and a continuity of care. Parents told us they were given good quality information about their child's day.

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from staff. For example, staff comforted a child who wasn't feeling well, giving lots of cuddles and talking using a soft voice to calm and reassure them. Staff shared laughter and fun with the children, supporting them to feel secure and form positive relationships. Children were familiar with the daily routine and staff consistently worked with children to support their wellbeing. As a result, children felt safe and secure.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the effective use of personal planning. Prior to children starting nursery, parents provided key information about their personalities and interests and staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the children. Support plans with clear strategies which were used in practice by staff, meant children with additional support needs were well supported to achieve their full potential. Information was updated and shared regularly with the staff team to make them aware of children's changing needs. Personal plan details were spread over several forms which made information more difficult to find and identify when it was last reviewed. We discussed this with the manager who agreed to review the format.

Mealtimes were an unhurried, positive social experience. Children's choice and preferences were respected by allowing children to choose where they sat. This provided good opportunities to develop friendships and social skills. Children developed their life skills through preparing and serving food and clearing away dishes. This allowed children to have ownership of mealtime routines and provided opportunities to be independent and responsible.

Children's safety and wellbeing was promoted as staff showed a good understanding in their role of identifying, recording and referring any safeguarding concerns. This meant children and their families were provided with the support and help they needed.

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 1.3 Play and learning

Children were well supported to lead their own play, develop their curiosity and have fun by knowledgeable and motivated staff. Staff used effective questioning to extend children's thinking, widen their skills and consolidate learning, supporting children to follow their own interests. There were many positive examples of this including creating models, collecting and making a home for insects and making vegetable soup. This meant children were engaged in sustained play experiences throughout the day.

Children were confident in the daily nursery routines. They benefitted from uninterrupted free flow indoor-outdoor play opportunities. Staff utilised learning they had gained about the unhurried child to develop the nursery routine. They used knowledge gained to create a relaxed pace of day, ensuring children had plenty time to play, learn and relax.

Planning approaches were child centred and Floorbooks were used to record children's experiences and capture their voices. This supported staff to identify and plan future learning. Children's observations and progression of learning were shared with families though paper journals and an online platform. This meant families felt valued and included in their child's learning and development.

Opportunities for literacy and numeracy were embedded across all experiences. For example, mathematical language was used as children and staff counted the letters in their name and discussed their ages on the number chart. Early mark making and early reading skills were promoted through the recognition of environmental print and books. Children enjoyed reading stories and singing songs with staff in the comfortable and attractive reading areas.

Children's experiences were enhanced through good links with the community. During the inspection some children went on a community walk and met some farm animals and local wildlife. Staff told us about other visits to local amenities, including shops, museum, castle and harbour. This developed children's connections and sense of belonging within the local environment.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where strengths had a positive effect on the outcomes for children and these outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a setting that was welcoming, attractive and well furnished. One parent described the setting as 'a lovely place to play and learn.' The layout of spaces had been well considered and thought out to meet children's needs and ensure they could explore and learn comfortably. Children had fun playing in the home corner. The addition of many interesting real life resources, such as crockery, measuring scales and cookery books, helped sustain their play and extend their ideas. A range of natural, open ended resources supported children's curiosity and creativity. The homely, quiet area offered a space for quieter play, rest and relaxation.

Risk assessments were in place for the environment and resources. These identified possible hazards and how to reduce the level of risk to children. Children were encouraged to assess day to day risks contributing to their safety. For example, when using tools to peel and chop vegetables, using the indoor climbing frame and creating an obstacle course outdoors. This supported their understanding of how to manage risk.

The outdoor play space was fully enclosed. Staff completed checks to make sure it was safe before children were able to venture outdoors. However, the gate was child height with a bolt on the inside. This meant there was the potential for children to leave the garden unsupervised. In another area a wooden gate in disrepair blocked off access to the boiler area causing a potential risk to children's safety. One parent told us they would like to see 'a new higher gate with a lock at the top' fitted. We discussed these concerns with the manager who explained these areas had been reported to maintenance. We were satisfied that the service had a plan to progress this to ensure children's safety.

Children experienced an environment that smelt fresh and was clean as staff undertook regular cleaning throughout the day which helped support children's wellbeing. We saw staff and children wash their hands regularly which minimised the spread of infection. However, there were a few occasions when hand washing was not effectively supervised. As a result, children did not always wash their hands effectively. To ensure consistency, the manager should undertake some quality assurance to embed best practice. Staff were unsure when to take gloves off when nappy changing. We asked that the service ensure all staff are aware and familiar with current nappy changing guidance to support best practice.

Children and their family's privacy was protected by the safe storage of personal information, including paper and electronic files.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where strengths had a positive effect on the outcomes for children and these outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The vision, values and aims of the service had recently been updated and were displayed and shared with families. The aims and values included, 'for children to feel safe, nurtured and respected' and to 'support independence and confidence.' These were evident within the ethos of the service.

Positive experiences for children were supported by a realistic, relevant and achievable improvement plan. These included parental engagement and numeracy attainment. A positive ethos helped to ensure that staff were working towards the same goals and progress was seen to be contributing to improved experiences for children. The previous priority of improving observations of children's experiences supported staff to plan effectively to meet children's needs and progress their learning. Staff told us ongoing support in this area had led to increased confidence, this was evident in children's learning journals.

The service recognised the importance of parental involvement. Parental views were sought using questionnaires, stay and play visits and daily opportunities at drop off and pick up for parents to come into the setting. Staff told us this was an ongoing area for development to further support partnership working.

Staff told us they felt 'well supported' by the 'approachable' leadership team. Regular team meetings provided opportunities for staff to reflect on children's individual needs, share learning and discuss planning and developments within the service. To further evaluate performance, the manager and staff should continue to familiarise themselves with 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare.' To support continued improvement within the service and positive outcomes for children.

Quality assurance processes had been developed to support the continuous improvement of the service. A quality assurance calendar was in place and had identified priorities to support developments. For example, monitoring of attendance had supported children and families to access support when needed. We discussed with the manager how quality assurance processes could be further improved by carrying out regular audits of areas such as infection prevention and control and personal plans. Policies and procedures were in place. We discussed ensuring these were regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect current guidance and were regularly audited to ensure they remain relevant to the setting.

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

Children were supported by motivated and enthusiastic staff. A supportive induction process for new members of staff helped them grow in confidence and become competent in their role. A mix of staff skills and experience helped to ensure children's experiences across the day were positive.

Children were allocated a key worker who maintained records of their development and was a point of contact for parents. Parents told us staff were approachable and felt they knew them and their children well. One parent shared, 'the staff have a really good manner and are great at building relationships with children.'

Staff communicated well with each other, they showed respect and consideration in their interactions with each other as well as with the children. This promoted a happy atmosphere for children to enjoy. Staff confirmed they felt supported within the nursery team, 'everyone works well together' and 'we support each other.'

The service was well staffed throughout the day. Rotas were well organised, and staff were clear where they should be and what tasks they had to do. Staff breaks did not impact on the children's play or learning. They communicated clearly with each other when leaving areas or taking children to other parts of the setting. As a result, children were effectively and safely supervised.

A variety of training and professional development opportunities allowed staff to develop their skills and knowledge to meet the needs of children. Staff understood the benefits of training in furthering outcomes for children and were motivated and keen to further their development. In addition to core training, such as child protection and food hygiene, staff had attended training on topics such as outdoor learning, emerging literacy and numeracy. Staff provided training feedback at regular team meetings to share knowledge and ensure consistent practice within the 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?	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?	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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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