Polbeth Nursery School
Day Care of Children

Polbeth Nursery
Polbeth Road
West Calder
EH55 8SR

Telephone: 01506 872511

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 September 2022

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Service no:
CS2003017499

About the service

Polbeth Nursery School is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 64 children aged from two years to those not yet of an age to attend primary school. Of those 64 children, no more than ten are aged two.

Children received care in a detached single storey property, located within the grounds of St. Mary's Polbeth Primary School, West Calder. Children had access to a large open plan playroom, quiet room, and enclosed garden. The service was close to transport links, parks and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between the 12 September 2022 and 14 September 2022. 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 since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with 10 children using the service and seven of their family members
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with a visiting professional.

Key messages

- Children enjoyed coming to nursery, and were settled, happy and confident.
- Personal plans supported meeting children's needs.
- Children participated in high quality play which was supporting them to progress their learning.
- Access to outdoors strengthened children's health and wellbeing.
- Self-evaluation led to improved outcomes for children.
- Staff needed to reflect on potential hazards outdoors, and take action to ensure children's safety.
- Auditing of accidents and incidents was needed to protect children from harm.

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?	4 - 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.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were settled and happy at nursery. They received nurturing care and support from staff who were kind, loving, and responsive to their needs. Parents commented positively on the staff caring for their children. One said, "my child absolutely loves the staff and the nursery".

Staff worked with families, involving them in decisions about their child's care and development. Children's personal plans reflected their needs, and were supporting children to be healthy, nurtured, included, and to achieve.

To ensure that all children were included and supported to understand routines, staff sang consistent songs at key times of the day. For example, jazz music was played at lunch time, and a handwashing song was in place. Children responded to these cue's, supporting them to feel settled.

The setting had made a positive start on welcoming parents back into the building following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. Stay and play sessions had been organised and were well received by families. One parent told us "I am looking forward to the stay and play visits". Increased opportunities for parents and carers to spend time in the nursery will strengthen relationships that support meeting children's needs.

Children had the opportunity to rest and sleep in response to their needs. A variety of cosy spaces were accessible throughout the playroom to support children's wellbeing. Sleeping children were monitored to ensure their safety.

Mealtimes were relaxed and unhurried. Children chose from a good selection of nutritious food that met their dietary requirements and preferences. One parent commented, "my child is a fussy eater, but there's always plenty options". Children enjoyed independently selecting their food and were developing skills for life. Water was always available to keep children hydrated and healthy.

Medication was stored and administered safely to ensure children's health needs were met.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children were having fun as they experienced high quality play and learning that met their interests and supported their development. Children excitedly told us about the experiences available to them. They said, "I like the garden", "its cool what you can do here", "you can make whatever you want in the water", and "we are creative".

A large selection of natural and open-ended materials challenged children's thinking and encouraged them to solve problems. For example, play with ladles, bowls, spoons, jugs, sieves, and water was supporting mathematical thinking.

Children were strengthening connections in their brain through sensory play. They used their whole bodies

to discover, and enjoyed exploring sand with their hands and feet. A range of other textured and light up materials supported children to be curious and helped secure good wellbeing.

Staff interacted skilfully during play, to support children's interests and curiosities. Children's ideas were enabled, to extend their sense of wonder about the world. For example, digging holes in the ground, and transporting water to make puddles.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's interests and life experiences. This meant that children were happy and confident during play, and were progressing their learning and development.

Staff tracked children's progress, and intervened when they identified that children needed extra support. This approach had helped children to achieve goals in literacy.

The service had plans to extend children's learning within the community. We agreed that this was needed. It would provide an opportunity for staff to utilise their forest schools training, and support children to connect with nature.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

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

The nursery was comfortable, spacious, well ventilated, and furnished to a good standard. This created a welcoming environment where children were valued.

Play spaces took account of children's stages of development and learning. The environment reflected children's interests and curiosities, and contained a wide variety of toys and materials that supported play.

Toys and equipment were easily accessible to children. They were stored within reach and labelled clearly, helping children make choices about their play, and find what they were looking for. The creative area was particularly well stocked, and children used a wide range of tools to express themselves. For example, printing in clay with shells, pretending to cook with sand, cutting to make models, painting, and printing.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and their families. For example, regular cleaning and handwashing.

Outdoor play strengthened children's health, wellbeing, and learning. Children had fun and participated in joyful play as they climbed, balanced, and explored. Some children took positive risks as they confidently managed challenging physical apparatus. However, staff should reflect on the support that younger children need when playing outdoors. Some apparatus was too difficult for them to manage independently, and had the potential to compromise their safety.

Children were protected from harm through a variety of safety measures. These included, secure entry to the premises, and safe storage of hazardous materials. Further reflection on potential hazards outdoors was necessary to reduce the number of accidents and incidents that children were involved in. We refer to this further under key questions three and four.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led

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

Leaders promoted a clear vision that helped staff understand the aspirations of children and their families. The nursery aims and objectives had been developed in consultation with staff, children, and families to ensure that the service met children's needs in a way that was right for them.

Staff were initiating well informed change by taking on lead roles at the service. Staff spoke enthusiastically about their champion roles and how they had positively influenced the way that children received care. For example, leading workshops to strengthen family relationships with children.

Leaders were encouraging, supportive, and accessible. They were committed to improving outcomes for children, and worked with staff to identify any developments needed. Regular team meetings supported reflection against best practice guidance and led to well informed positive change.

The views of children, staff, and families were sought to support development of the service. For example, children's views and interests were recorded in floor books and were used to inform play, learning and changes to the environment.

Parents and carers were well informed about changes to the setting, and when these were happening. A large outdoor notice board, daily chats, and online communications were useful tools for involving families in their child's care.

Monitoring had contributed to improvements for children and their families. This included enhancing children's play experiences and developing children's mealtimes. However, closer monitoring of accidents and incidents were needed to ensure children's safety. The management team should continue strengthening quality assurance processes to ensure that they are responsive to significant incidents at the nursery. This should include full and regular audits of accidents and incidents, to prevent repetition.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

4.3 Staff deployment

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

Staff were respectful and supportive of one another. This created a positive and predictable environment for children, within which they felt safe and secure.

There was a mixture of skills and abilities amongst the team. All staff had undertaken training that had developed their skills, and mentoring systems helped staff understand their responsibilities. This contributed to the good care and support of children.

Staff had formed positive relationships with parents and carers, and worked with them to meet children's needs. One parent described staff as being "so good", and another commented that staff were "really jolly people". Changes to staffing were communicated with families, ensuring they were aware of who was

caring for their child.

Team meetings provided regular opportunities for staff to discuss children's needs. Changes to practice were agreed, ensuring consistency for children across the team.

Staff absence was well managed to support minimum disruption to children. There was a positive ethos of attendance, but when cover was needed, it was provided quickly to meet children's needs.

Overall, staff were deployed in a way that promoted positive experiences for children across the day. Staff mostly had time to listen to, respond to, and care for children, helping them feel loved. However, to ensure children's safety, more staff were needed to supervise children in the garden, and when eating.

We asked the service to reflect on the rota system in place for nappy changing. A more flexible approach to providing children's personal care would take account of their wellbeing, supporting existing connections with particular staff.

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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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