Woodlands Nursery School
Day Care of Children

Harburn Avenue
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 October 2024

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Service no:
CS2003017504

About the service

Woodlands nursery school is a day care of children service provided by West Lothian Council. The service is situated within St John Ogilvie primary school. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 35 children between the ages of two to those not yet attending primary school. The service offers morning and afternoon sessions throughout the year and full day sessions during term time.

The service benefits from a playroom with kitchen facilities, a spacious outdoor area on two levels and a separate dinning room.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 23 October 2024 from 10:00 until 16:30 and Thursday 24 October 2024 from 10:00 until 13:30. Feedback was provided on Friday 25 October 2024. 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 children using the service
- spoke with staff and management and reviewed staff feedback
- observed practice and daily life • reviewed documents
- reviewed feedback from 15 families.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing, warm and kind interactions from staff.
- Children had access to indoors and outdoors throughout the day, enabling them to make choices in their play.
- Staff ensured children were safe and secure in the setting.
- Children benefitted from the approaches to parental engagement, enabling them to share special moments with their families.

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 major strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children with very few areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm and nurturing interactions from staff. Children were genuinely cared for by staff who checked in on them, asking how they were feeling and showed affection in the form of cuddles.

Children were supported through effective use of personal planning. Strategies of support were developed and shared with parents, this enabled a consistent approach to supporting children. Personal plans were updated regularly and reviewed in line with current guidance. A parent commented that 'the staff are aware of my child's needs and they go above and beyond to meet these'.

Medication was effectively managed ensuring children were cared for safely. Child health care plans were in place and regularly updated to reflect current support and medical care. Medication audits were managed as part of the school audit process. In addition to first aid training, identified staff had received training on how to care for children with complex needs. This meant that children were cared for by staff who were knowledgeable.

Children experienced mealtimes that were unhurried with the same staff being present throughout. As a result children had the opportunity to share their mealtime with the same staff, allowing for conversations to develop, and a homely environment to be created. Children were sensitively supported to use cutlery and crockery. For example, a child found it difficult to cut their food, a member of staff sensitively guided them using hand over hand and allowed the child to complete the final cut of food on their own giving the child with a sense of achievement.

Parental engagement was supported through well attended stay and play sessions, including a grandparent session. A summer festival was planned in consultation with children and provided them with the opportunity to share a fun experience with their family and staff.

The children benefited from the contributions made by the school parent council who have provided some resources, fund raising and enhanced the links between school and nursery. Children experienced excursions to the local supermarket, providing them with real life experiences of shopping and handling money, and visits to the local library. This meant that children could participate in real life experiences in their local community.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Consideration had been given to the layout and resources available to support children in their play. As a result, core provision including, play dough, water, mark making and block play was readily available, and created the foundations of children's everyday play.

Planning approaches were child led, following their interests and supported by seasonal changes and cultural celebrations. Learning intentions were planned for across the curriculum, with attractively presented resources and displays. Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing were enhanced and represented across the nursery with interactive resources for children to learn through play at their own pace. A child spent time selecting the magnetic letters to spell his name, and was proud to show everyone their achievement. As a result other children followed and tried to spell their own names, helping each other to find the correct letters using their name tags.

Learning experiences were documented in floor books and included children's experiences, photographs and their comments. There was a connection between floor books, intentional and responsive planning. For example children were learning about life cycles and cared for real baby chicks. Children shared their knowledge of 'its an egg first then it cracks' another child could explain that 'the chicks need the lamp on to keep them warm'. This experience was intentionally planned for, and children's voices and knowledge was recorded in the floor books. We suggested that having floor books out and accessible to children could enable them to revisit previous experiences and support their consolidation of learning.

Children had the opportunity to share learning and experiences with their families at home through 'Cooking with Cookie', a toy chef that went home with recipes and ingredients for families to share and enjoy at home. A parent commented that 'we had such a fantastic day' in reference to making soup. Similarly, children took home 'Adventures with Woody' a toy squirrel that children could share daily experiences with. Experiences were recorded in floor books and provided a relaxed and fun way for children and their families to spend time together and connect with the service.

Seesaw was a newer digital system replacing learning journals and staff had been working on developing their observations of children. Staff captured meaningful observations that showed children's progression and next steps. This could be strengthened further by observations aligning with targets and strategies within children's personal plans.

Children benefitted from continuous access to the garden outdoors. This enabled children the freedom to make their own choices about the environment they wanted to play and learn in. There was a broad range of resources available to children outdoors. Children were confident to transport resources to and from the outdoor area as part of their play. Staff supported children's learning by being engaged in their play and asking thought provoking questions. For example a group of children had made a bus from tyres to go on an adventure. Staff asked what they would need before they left and children replied tickets, lunches and money. This enabled children to recall any similar experiences that they had going on an adventure by bus and apply them to their play and new situations.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children with very few areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefitted from an environment that was clean, comfortable and inviting. Natural light and ventilation created a calming atmosphere for children to play and spend time in. Children's belongings were respected with coats hung on pegs and space for children to remove or put on their coats easily. This provided children and their families with a sense of belonging and value.

Informative displays shared information about the service, including staff photographs and information about services in the local community. This enabled children and their families to be connected to the setting and wider community.

Effective measures were in place to ensure children's health and safety. The secure door entry system at the main entrance ensured children's safety, this was monitored further by staff during busier periods including pick up and drop of times. Effective infection prevention control measures were in place, including regular hand washing and cleaning of resources and equipment. This minimised the spread of infection. As a result of the systems in place children were kept safe throughout their daily interactions and play.

Children benefited from having a separate room to have lunch. This allowed children to have a space to enjoy their meal and to return to the playroom that was set up and ready for them afterwards.

Staff role modelled respectful approaches to resources, such as looking after resources and toys. Children were observed returning items after they had been played with, and a few children reminded others to tidy up. This gave children a sense of ownership of their environment and the resources in it.

The indoor and outdoor spaces were well maintained. Children had enough resources to be engaged in sustained play. For example the block area had ample space for children to build and create constructions, as a result children's creativity was not restricted. Consideration had been given to the flow of play for children through the development of defined areas. For example the art and mark making areas indoors and outdoors were positioned closely, allowing children to gradually move from indoors and outdoors at a pace that suited them.

The outdoor area was on two levels and provided children with a variety of play experiences including, large physical play and the use of wheeled toys. There was a quiet cosy space to enjoy a book in the wooden house and shelter was provided under the canopy. Children had access to a garden area that provided opportunities to care for the environment including, planting, growing and observing nature through the bug hotel.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children with very few areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

There was a shared vision across the service that created a nurturing and caring environment that aimed to empower children, parents and staff. Staff shared their interpretation of this throughout the inspection process and from their feedback in questionnaires. For example, staff shared the importance of having relationships with children, parents and each other, and having a shared responsibility to deliver and shape the service.

The depute head teacher modelled a fun and engaged approach, by being present in the nursery and available to staff, children and families throughout each day. This was further supported by the wider management team. As a result, the ethos of the service was promoted through daily interactions and strengthened the relationship between nursery and school.

Established quality assurance systems were implemented across the service. The leadership team spoke confidently about these and used national and local guidance to inform and support quality assurance and self evaluation. Staff practice and development was supported through regular and meaningful observations and constructive feedback with leaders. As a result, staff had the opportunity to reflect and develop practice. Staff commented, that their perspective had changed on children's experiences following wellbeing training. They were now more aware and mindful of children as individuals.

A comprehensive improvement plan was in place and used by the team to inform improvements across the service. Improvement areas were discussed as part of team meetings. All staff were aware of the improvement plan and their role and responsibilities within it. Time was allocated for staff to be part of improvement planning and team meetings. Minutes of meetings were shared with the team, this ensured all staff were included and had the opportunity to contribute and share information. A comment from a member of staff was that they felt their contributions were valued to the life and work of the service.

Parent consultations and views were sought through questionnaires, emails, seesaw and newsletters. A parent commented that 'I'm aware of the development plan and get some updates via see saw'. Approaches to gathering parents views have been adjusted in order to gather more specific feedback to inform service development. For example, plans for stay and play sessions will have a focus and will include the areas from the improvement plan. This demonstrated that parents contributions were valued by the service.

Children were consulted with through daily interactions, offered choices and their preferences were respected. For example, children were included in purchasing resources and deciding on themes for fun days. We made suggestions on how consultations with children could be strengthened, for example incorporating consultation with the current emotions work that children are familiar with.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children with very few areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff were effectively deployed across the service ensuring there were enough staff in each area. Staff communicated well with each other ensuring that busier areas were supported by enough staff. For example, outdoors was accessible throughout the day to children and can at times be a busier area. Staff were responsive to adjusting where they were positioned to ensure children were supported by the right staff to meet their needs.

Absences were managed effectively with the deployment of school and nursery staff providing additional cover. As a result, temporary staff were often not required and this ensured that children were cared for by familiar adults.

Inductions and mentoring approaches were in place for new staff, which supported the shared ethos of the service and expectations of practice. As a result practice was consistent across the staff team who were confident in supporting children.

Staff took ownership and responsibility for their own learning, identifying areas for development at annual reviews. Staff spoke enthusiastically about training and improvement as part of their role. This meant that children were cared for by staff who were committed to the service and provided positive experiences for children. Staff could reflect on how training had influenced their practice, one member of staff shared that training had ignited their interest in expanding the opportunities in block play for children. This resulted in children using the space and resources for different types of play including role play. This enabled children to develop their creativity and imagination using blocks.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

We recommended that the service develops an effective system to record when medication has been given in the service in line with current best practice guidance. They should ensure that forms are reviewed in line with best practice timescales and stocks are checked regularly to ensure they have the medicine children need.

This should include:
- confirmation the parent or carer has given the first ever dose and sign to confirm there were no adverse reactions
- a parent or carer's signature giving permission for the service to give the medication
- the signature of the person who gave the medication
- a parent or carer's signature to evidence they have been told the medication has been given
- the child's name should be clearly written on the medication/or a pharmacist's label should be on prescribed medication.

More information can be found under the publications section of our website in the document named 'The management of medication in daycare and childminding services, Publication code:HCR-0514-087'. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3 - Health and wellbeing.

This area for improvement was made on 26 February 2018.

Action taken since then

The service has developed a system to review and audit medication and paperwork in line with current practice guidance. Local authority paperwork and permission forms are being used, which provided a consistent approach across the service. Policies have been updated to reflect current guidance regarding the administration of medication. This area for improvement has been met.

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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