Kirriemuir Nursery
Day Care of Children

Hairmyres Hospital
Eaglesham Road
East Kilbride
Glasgow
G75 8RG

Telephone: 01355 235 947

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 October 2023

Service provided by:
Kirriemuir Nursery School Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004006334

Service no:
CS2005110480

About the service

Kirriemuir Nursery is registered to provide care to 65 children. Of those 65 children no more than 15 are aged under two years, no more than 15 are aged two to under three years and no more than 35 are aged from aged 3 years to not yet of an age to attend primary school.

Care is provided within three playrooms at Kirriemuir Nursery, East Kilbride, South Lanarkshire. The service is close to local shops, schools, transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 18 and 19 October 2023. Feedback was provided on 20 October 2023. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with six people using the service and 14 families
- Spoke with 16 staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with visiting professionals

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and confident in the environment.
- Staff interactions with children were warm and nurturing.
- Overall personal planning was detailed and supported positive outcomes for children.
- Playrooms were clean and well-organised. Spaces created were homely and inviting for children.
- There were opportunities to further develop the outdoor play areas and experiences.
- Quality assurance and monitoring was an ongoing area of development.

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?	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? 4 - Good

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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

A parent told us "Staff at Kirriemuir are a real credit to the nursery and provide a brilliant level of care and support for my children" and another said "Kirriemuir provides a stable, friendly and caring environment for my children to grow and develop". Parents were involved in decisions about their child's care and learning. Each child had a personal plan that included family contact details, all about me information, significant events and details of individual needs and interests. Parents took part in regular reviews of progress and agreeing next steps for their children. Personal plans were created using the wellbeing indicators from Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) good practice guidance. This ensured there was a consistent approach to supporting children and was having a positive impact on improving outcomes.

Staff were committed to delivering a high standard of care through sensitive and nurturing approaches. Children's achievements and differences were shared and celebrated. For example, moments of success and family photos were displayed giving children and families a sense of belonging.

Visiting professional such as educational psychologist, health visitor and occupational health had been involved in providing support and strategies for individual children. Staged intervention and additional support plans were in place to support children to achieve. Strategies agreed such as visual cues and the use of Makaton were having a positive impact on communication overall. One parent told us the service was "Extremely supportive of our child and they went above and beyond to ensure they were included in nursery life in the best possible way" and another said, "The manager has liaised with us regarding our child's needs and taken on board any requirements".

Visiting professionals told us "During sessions for support the child's key worker would often be present and would continue with the child's programme throughout the week. This was essential and beneficial to the child in their progression of motor skills" and another said "Staff were happy to accept any guidance and advice and often sought it in order to enhance their work with the child. In turn they offered feedback and updates on the work they carried out between therapy visits which allowed us to measure success and set realistic goals".

Children were secure in their relationships with staff and respectful of each other. The nursery ethos was calm and supportive, children were content and happy and there was a sense of community in the service. Staff responded sensitively to children and supported their care needs. For example, one child was upset on arrival. A staff member spent time chatting, softly singing and reassured the child. This supported the child to settle and join in play with other children.

Suitable plans were in place to support the management of medication. Medication was stored safely out of the reach of children. We spoke with the service about a few minor adjustments needed to medication documentation and they understood the importance of this. One parent told us "The nursery has been helpful when giving prescription medicine on occasions as required" and another said they had been well supported when "Dealing with my child's medical diagnosis". This was supporting children's health and wellbeing.

Rest and sleep times were calm and cosy promoting a restful experience and supported wellbeing. Children were able to rest and sleep according to their individual needs. This responsive approach helped to meet their needs and promoted good sleep routines.

The manager and staff told us that they continued to reflect on the lunch experience for older children. They had worked hard to develop the lunchtime experience and this was having a positive impact. Children were supported to develop life skills, such as pouring their own drink and self-selecting food. Mealtimes were relaxed, unhurried and used as an opportunity to connect as part of a social experience. Children had access to water throughout the day and were encouraged to remain hydrated supporting their health.

Staff had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. Systems in place ensured they were confident in recognising and responding appropriately to any concerns. Staff had recently taken part in refresher training to support keeping children safe.

1.3 Play and learning

The staff team were committed to working and reflecting on the development of floor books and planning for learning systems that kept child led learning central to their approach. Most learning was based on children interests and needs. We discussed the importance of further strengthening this approach which would bring consistent depth and extension of learning to children's play and the manager agreed.

There were minimal interruptions to the flow of the day and children benefited from this. Children were busy and active both indoors and outdoors. A range of experiences were on offer and spontaneous play was happening. We saw some occasions where staff skilfully extended play to further support children in their learning. Children outdoors were playing jumping games, laughing and having fun. Staff provided encouragement and extended with discussions about height and distance. Other children were listening to the wind blowing through the leaves on a tree and sharing the experience of feeling the strong wind blow in their face and through their hair. Staff supported children in this fun and unique experience and spoke about the weather and how that made them feel.

We saw some examples of staff supporting children to lead their learning through creativity and challenge with loose parts. Children used blocks and cars to make different sized car parks to fit the various sized cars. Children were happy, chatting and problem solving themselves during this play.

A parent told us they would like to see more use of the outdoor area. The manager and staff also told us that developing the outdoor area to offer more challenging and spark learning experiences would help further children's love of learning in the outdoors and nature. Parents had been invited to stay and play sessions and visits to the local park and shops had taken place. The service had begun to re-connect with the local hospital and hospice in recent months and had been involved in fundraising and presenting volunteer awards. This meant that children were starting to have more regular opportunities to learn in their local community.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

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

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Staff had developed a homely environment using soft furnishings and materials to create spaces where children felt secure and welcomed. There were displays of children's creations, photos of their families and the experiences provided. This gave a clear message to children that they mattered.

Indoor playrooms took account of children's interests and needs. Toys and materials were easily accessible for children and they were confident in accessing resources with ease. A focus of improvement for the service was the introduction of loose parts and open-ended materials. These were supporting children to make choices about their play and were sometimes used to lead their own learning. The manager told us they were committed to further enhancing the provision of loose parts and open-ended materials in the long term. We agreed that this would be beneficial to create a more challenging and rich play space.

The outdoor areas had been identified as part of the service improvement plan for 2023/24. As part of our observations and discussions with the manager we could see that this was in the early stages. Some improvements had been made to the area used by younger children. We also saw some spells of time where older children were able to access free flow play between indoors and outdoors. We suggested that further development of the outdoor area would support a balanced approach to child led spontaneous and planned experiences by developing areas of curiosity, interests and provocations to spark learning.

Safety measures contributed to protecting children from harm. These included maintenance issues being addressed in a timely manner and a secure entry system. Risk assessments and room checks were in place and reviewed regularly. As part of a discussion with the manager about the importance of safety we were satisfied that action had been taken to address a few issues, such as the storage of hazardous materials before the inspection concluded.

Most infection control practices prevented the spread of infection. For example, handwashing was embedded for staff and children, areas within playrooms were kept clean, well-organised and staff used gloves and aprons for nappy changing. We discussed the importance of promoting a safe environment for children using robust cleaning procedures and suitable storage within nappy change areas and the manager agreed.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

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

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A parent told us "I have been using this nursery for a long time and cannot say enough nice things about it. The support they have given us over the years, especially in the past year has been invaluable". Staff were beginning to be more involved in improvement plan focus areas for the service and some staff had begun to lead on areas of improvement within rooms such as environment and the promotion of parental engagement. This provided staff opportunities to build on their skills and knowledge and created positive experiences for children and families.

Staff had regular opportunities to meet with the manager and team leaders. They received constructive feedback about their work which was delivered sensitively with children's needs being the focus of improvement conversations. Reflective discussions and staff training was helping to identify development needs for individual and the team.

The manager promoted a vision that supported staff to understand the needs of children and families. Staff were committed and motivated to working together to improve outcomes for children. Parents were happy with the leadership of the service and told us "I know if I raise an issue with the manager, it will be appropriately addressed" and another told us "I've had really good interactions with the management team. They are both kind and helpful".

The manager knew the importance of self-evaluation to support positive experiences and the delivery of a quality service. Reflections on staff training had led to changes in practice that improved children's experiences. For example, there were plans to use new learning from recent forest school training to extend children's learning in nature and outdoors.

A parent said "Currently the daily diary is paper books handwritten. An interactive solution would help" and a few others told us they would like to have more regular communication about their individual child's day and learning. We shared this feedback with the manager. The manager told us parental engagement was an important part of quality assurance at the service and they would further reflect on this with families. We agreed this would support effective communication with families.

Some quality assurance processes had contributed to positive outcomes for children. For example, improvements to the lunchtime experience for older children and the playroom environment for the youngest children. A parent told us "Staff and management genuinely care about the well-being of the children and families". As a result of promotions within the service the management team had changed in the past 12 months. The manager was committed to their role and had embraced new learning relating to quality assurance monitoring systems. This was helping to secure long lasting and meaningful improvements. Overall, action was taken or underway to address any gaps in practice. However, we discussed with the manager and they agreed that ongoing monitoring was needed across all areas.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

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

4.3 Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a warm and welcoming environment. A staff member told us they felt the service was "A nurturing and safe place where the children's interests and needs are our main priority" and a parent said, "My child's keyworker is approachable and has a lovely, friendly and welcoming manner. They know my child well and have built a significant bond with them and myself as a parent". Committed to their roles and happy to be at work staff told us they were on a journey on ongoing improvement and were working as a team to provide quality care and learning for children.

Staff participation in training had led to improvements in children's experiences. For example, training in staged intervention processes was helping to develop team leaders' knowledge and skills in supporting children and families where additional needs were identified.

Overall staff worked well to ensure there was clear communication about children's needs across the day and to ensure children were well supervised. We discussed how this could be further enhanced relating to free flow outdoor play and when information sharing at children's mealtimes. This would support the delivery of positive experiences across the whole day for children.

Almost all staff were well deployed throughout the day. We identified some occasions where a few staff were not clear on the expectations of their role within the room they were working in. The manager told us there was a mix of skills and experience within the staff team and we acknowledged the challenges in the social care sector relating to the recruitment and retention of staff. Supporting staff to enhance consistent practice had already been identified by the management team as part of the service 2023/24 improvement plan.

Staff caring for children were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. They are the regulatory body responsible for registering the social services workforce. They provide public protection by promoting high standards of conduct and practice and support the professional development of those registered with them.

Parents were thankful for the nurturing and caring approach used by all staff at the service telling us, "We are delighted at how our child has been cared for within the nursery and we see how attending the nursery has helped them progress and learn" and "Having been at the nursery for four years I have never had issues with any of the staff. Everyone is friendly and warm and they all seem to have close bonds with all the children. I know when I leave my child in Kirriemuir Nursery they are safe and well looked after".

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	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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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