Duloch Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Duloch Primary School
Duloch Community Campus
Nightingale Place
Dunfermline
KY11 8LW

Telephone: 01383 602 457

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 March 2023

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2007153451

About the service

Duloch Nursery is located within Duloch Primary School community campus in Dunfermline, Fife. It is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 104 children at any one time aged from 3 years to an age to attend primary school. The nursery operates a dispersed service in CaliasWood. No more than 16 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is close to local amenities, schools, and green spaces. It can be reached by transport links.

Children have access to designated playrooms, enclosed garden, toilet facilities, an outdoor dispersed service and other areas within the school campus permitted by the headteacher.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 March 2023 between 08:45 and 18:00. 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 children and observed their play
- spoke with families and received feedback by email
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced positive relationships with staff as they knew their individual needs and preferences.
- Children were engaged, happy and confident in the service.
- Resources were of a high standard.
- Gathering the views of families, children and staff were important to the service to support improvements.
- Children benefitted from a mealtime experience that promoted independence.
- The service should look at ways to ensure all children have regular access to outdoors to support their wellbeing.
- The service should review plans to reflect how they support positive outcomes for 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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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 key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1-Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing and warm approaches from a team that knew their needs and interests. Positive relationships had been made between staff and children. Staff offered cuddles and reassurance to support children's emotional wellbeing. Children were able to tell us who would help them if they needed support. Parents felt staff were nurturing, caring and kind. As a result, children were happy, confident, and engaged.

Personal learning journals (PLJ's) were in place for children and were updated regularly. Staff valued the importance of these and encouraged children to have ownership by ensuring they were accessible and reflected learning. For example, children added their pictures and staff documented children's thoughts and learning. This gave a message that children mattered. Families were involved in reviewing children's learning and agreeing next steps. This meant that staff were able to plan and support next steps in learning that reflected families' preferences. Parents told us they enjoyed seeing their children's journals and were able to add learning from home.

Staff spoke confidently about how they supported children's individuals needs through individualised strategies. At times this included signposting families to specialist services. This was evidenced in children's plans. We asked the service to review the plan format to ensure they are outcome focussed and in keeping with the nursery nurturing approach.

Children developed skills for life through a variety of activities on offer across all play spaces. For example, children had opportunities to make playdough, experiment with paints and lead their learning and interests through the activities offered indoors and outdoors. Staff should ensure these experiences continue to be available for the session. This would allow children to engage with the provision at a time that is right for them.

Staff had created a mealtime experience that promoted independence and choice. For example, a café style set up in the vestibule allowed children to use real crockery, self-select food, pour drinks and sit with friends. Some staff sat with children during mealtimes and used the opportunity to chat and promote healthy food habits. We recognised the mealtime experience was an area the team continued to reflect on to ensure children have a relaxed, unhurried, and calm experience.

Families benefitted from a service that promoted engagement through stay and play sessions and other family learning opportunities. This allowed families to build positive relationships with the team and for children to share what they enjoyed learning about at nursery.

Children developed an understanding of their emotional wellbeing through resources and strategies used by the staff. For example, children asked for story massage. This involved staff telling stories in a calm manner and using gentle touch. Other staff spoke about this as a strategy used to de-escalate big emotions. This helped children relax and engage with their friends.

Children's health routines were supported in line with parent's preferences. Staff supported children in a sensitive way to ensure they received medication as instructed. The service had a system in place to manage, record and monitor medication. This meant that children received care and support to ensure their health and wellbeing needs were met.

Quality indicator 1.3-Play and learning

Children experienced play spaces indoors and outdoors that promoted learning and engagement. Planning approaches offered some balance of responsive learning and planned activities. Staff extended interests through the use of effective questioning, engaging children's imagination and curiosity. The service had recognised planning for children's learning needed reviewed to ensure it was child led, meaningful and consistent.

Play spaces were well resourced and promoted learning through a varied core provision. For example, children had opportunities to use real materials at the woodwork bench to inspire their creativity. One parent commented "there is a wide variety of resources, the staff do well to cover a broad curriculum". Children told us they liked to dress up, play in the woods, and paint.

Staff interacted with children at their level to support their play. They recognised and praised children's achievements and celebrated these on their wellbeing wall, in floor books and journals. For example, a child had created the life cycle of a reptile and spoke confidently about the detail in their drawing. Staff praised them and asked if they would like to display their creation. This meant that children could re-visit their learning and share their experience with friends and family.

Children had opportunities to develop important early literacy skills through fine motor activities, stories, and songs. For example, children were encouraged to mark make throughout the environment, engage with activities that developed hand eye coordination and enjoy books and songs with staff. This supported children's physical development and understanding of print and communication.

Some interests led by children were reflected in the play spaces and staff provided provocations to inspire curiosity and inquiry. We have encouraged the nursery to support some staff in further developing their skills in extending child led play through the quality of observation, interactions and effective questioning. This would ensure children were learning and having fun through activities that were meaningful to them.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2 -Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a setting that had three designated playrooms and a dispersed service in the local woods. The service operated two models of attendance that included full day and morning or afternoon sessions. Playrooms were well maintained, inviting, ventilated, comfortable and furnished to a high standard. There were cosy areas for children to relax which supported their wellbeing.

Staff carried out informal daily risk assessments of the environments. Any maintenance issues were reported to the management team and were dealt with promptly. This meant that children experienced a setting that was safe and secure.

On the day of the visit, the dispersed service was not operating, however, a group of staff and children took us to the site and children were able to tell us about their play space, what they enjoyed and how to keep themselves safe if they identified risks.

Most children benefitted from being able to access the outdoors freely during their session. This free flow access was not possible for one room due to the location within the building. We encouraged the service to look at how this can be managed to allow all children the opportunity to access the nursery garden throughout their session. This will ensure they experience regular learning outdoors to promote their health and wellbeing".

Children's safety and wellbeing was promoted through embedded infection prevention and control measures. Children were encouraged to wash their hands at key times. For example, before meals and after personal care routines.

Secure entry doors ensured children were safe as they accessed the play spaces and cloakrooms. Children were accounted for at all times as staff had systems in place to monitor and record the number of children in each play space.

How good is our leadership? 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 3.1 -Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Children and families experienced a welcoming ethos within the service. Clear aims, visions, and values reflected the services aspirations for their nursery community. Families were extremely happy with the nursery. As a result, they felt valued and included in children's learning.

Regular communication with families took place through a variety of methods such as, email, online platforms, face to face discussions and regular progress meetings. Families told us they received regular communication and staff always made time to share what children had been learning. This contributed to the positive relationship's families had built with staff.

Children, families, and staff were regularly consulted to influence improvements within the service. This was done through online questionnaires, family feedback books and nursery events. The service used this feedback and responded to suggestions. For example, staff had said they would like to improve communication between the teams. As a result, regular team meetings were arranged, and minutes were recorded to ensure all staff were informed and included.

We asked children and families if there was anything they would like to see improved in the service. One child said "better snacks". One parent told us they would like to see more learning shared online. We shared this with the service who have agreed to review this.

Room observations and quality assurance systems ensured the ongoing monitoring of children's experiences and personal learning journals. This meant that children made progress across the curriculum as staff tracked their learning and identified next steps. Audits of the core provision ensured children had access to resources that were rich and high quality. As a result, they engaged with a breath of provision.

The service used best practice guidance 'How good is our early learning and childcare' to continually evaluate their provision and improvement journey. For example, they used challenge questions to gather evidence and evaluate experiences for children and families.

Working closely with other services was important to the service. For example, links with 'The Big House Project allowed children and families to be actively involved in reducing waste, caring for their environment.

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.

Quality indicator 4.3 -Staff deployment

Staffing levels were within ratio across all playrooms. There was a balanced skill mix of staff which meant that children were supported. Transitions were well managed as children moved around the service. For example, children who attended for the full day walked to the area where meals were served. Staff supported this, ensuring children were safe and they understood what was happening. We could see this routine was well established.

Staff spoke confidently about their role and how they worked as a team. They told us they felt supported and enjoyed working in the setting. New staff benefitted from the support and guidance from a mentor and an induction programme that guided them at a pace that was right for them. As a result, they felt confident to share ideas and contribute towards planning for children's experiences.

Room leaders met with staff monthly to identify training interests and development needs. Management met with room leaders to ensure they received the support they needed in their role. As a result, everyone felt valued as they developed their skills, experience and knowledge in their role.

Regular team meetings provided opportunities for staff to come together and discuss information about the service. For example, information on individual children, best practice documents and planning for a breadth of experiences. This created opportunities for staff to connect and plan for children's needs. As a result, children experienced continuity of care and support.

The deployment of staff within the service during our visit could have been improved to ensure staff breaks did not impact on children's experiences. We asked the service to look at how the wider team could support at key times. This would allow children the opportunity to access outdoor play earlier in their session.

Staff had recently undertaken training in child protection and safeguarding. We were confident staff understood and could respond to concerns to ensure children were safe. Staff had also taken part in training to enhance their knowledge of the importance of quality interactions and documenting children's learning through learning walls. Staff should continue to reflect on training to deepen their knowledge and understanding of how these impact on positive outcomes for children.

Staff had taken on leadership roles to support further development across the learning community. This included a Rights Respecting Nursery group that promoted children's rights. We encouraged the service to ensure all staff are fully aware of the developments in each group and how these support practice and positive outcomes for children.

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	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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