St. Andrews Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

St. Andrew's Primary School
Craigs Road
Dumfries
DG1 4EX

Telephone: 01387 273 001

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 October 2022

Service provided by:
Dumfries & Galloway Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003501

Service no:
CS2009195524

About the service

St. Andrews Nursery Class is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 48 children at any one time aged from 3 years to not yet attending primary school.

The nursery is located in a residential area in the town of Dumfries, Dumfries and Galloway. The service is close to local shops, parks and other amenities. Children are accommodated in two open plan play rooms and an enclosed outdoor play space.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 4 October 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 people using the service and five of their family.
- spoke with seven staff and management
- observed practice and daily life reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children were happy and settled at nursery; they had developed positive relationships with staff and their peers.
- Children benefited from an indoor environment that was fun, stimulating and supported their creativity.
- Children benefited from free flow access to the outdoor play area which provided lots of opportunities that stimulated curiosity, investigation and experimentation.
- The service should continue with plans to engage meaningfully with children and their families to gather feedback and help plan future improvements.
- The service should continue to review and update policies for the nursery.

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?	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 evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

On the day of inspection children were happy, settled and having fun with friends. We observed children experience nurturing and responsive care from staff which supported their health and wellbeing. Children we spoke to told us they enjoyed attending the nursery with their friends.

Children's physical and emotional wellbeing was promoted by warm and caring team, who knew the children and their individual personalities well. Staff were kind and respectful towards children, taking time to listen and respond to them which helped children to feel included and valued. One parent told us "I think the staff know my child very well. They meet her needs and she loves them all".

Children experienced an unhurried, sociable rolling lunchtime with friends as they could choose when they wanted to eat and who they wanted to sit beside. Children were able to self-serve snacks, food and drinks, which supported developing their independence skills and self-esteem. Children were confident in lunchtime routine and cleaning up after they had finished. Water was available from a dispenser throughout the day for children to ensure they remained hydrated.

Personal Learning Plans (PLP) were in place for each child and shared with families during reviews. Information was gathered within personal plans that supported meeting children's needs. Children's learning was recorded and shared with parents through e-learning journals, some families told us they would like more regular updates and more details regarding their children's development. We spoke to the leadership team who advised this was an area of priority for them this term. Management should continue to monitor children's PLP's to ensure a consistent approach to tracking developments, recording achievements and identifying next steps in learning.

We sampled the nurseries medication policy/consent forms and found these were in line with current guidance which ensured the health and wellbeing of the children accessing the setting.

Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They had attended child protection training and knew how to address any concerns appropriately.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children were actively involved in leading their play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality experiences that promoted children's choice and independence. Activities available indoors and outdoors supported children to explore their ideas, build on their interests and have fun. On the day of inspection, we observed children playing outdoors, engaging in imaginative play at the dress up corner, baking in the mud kitchen, playing traffic lights in the gym hall and reading stories in the cosy corner.

Child centred approaches were evident in the setting; children chose what they wanted to do, when they wanted to do it and used resources in their own way. Staff responded well to children's initiations of play. They were skilled at knowing when to supervise or get involved to enhance children's play and learning experiences. Staff knew children's interests and could easily chat to them which helped to extended their thinking and problem solving. One parent told us "The staff all seem to know my daughters likes and interests well".

Children's language, literacy and numeracy was developing with access to stimulating play experiences set out by staff around the nursery. For example, provocations tables, visual aids, posters and interactive activities.

Access to the wider community continues to be progressed, children currently access the forest school area on a weekly basis. Families have been able to attend the setting for stay and play sessions. Staff and the leadership team have plans to further extend families opportunities to engage and access the nursery.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children.

The setting indoors was comfortably furnished and inviting. The room had natural light and was well ventilated. The space was set up to ensure children could play and explore together or on their own if they chose to do so. There were cosy spaces for children to relax if they wished.

Children benefited from recently upgraded playrooms. We found the space and equipment welcoming and stimulating for children. The use of real objects in the dress up area and home corner enhanced children's imaginative play.

Toys and resource were laid out around the space to meet the needs and interests of children attending. Children led their play as they could easily access toys at their level. Natural, opened ended materials were available to stimulate children's curiosity and extended their play. Loose parts play was also supported by a variety of materials available indoors and outdoors.

Free flow access between the indoors and enclosed outdoor space further supported children's abilities to lead their play and learning. Children were confident moving around the rooms and free flowing between the spaces. This showed us children felt safe and secure in the nursery.

Children benefited from an outdoor space that provided lots of opportunities for curiosity, investigation, and experimentation. Access to the local forest area further supported children's health, wellbeing, and development by providing opportunities to play and learning outdoors with natural materials.

We were satisfied the service had the appropriate infection prevention and control measures in place. Children and staff washed their hands regularly and children could tell us they must wash their hands, with soap before lunch. Toilets were clean and accessible for children. The setting had an adequate supply of personal protective equipment which was stored appropriately.

Risk assessments were in place for all areas and activities within the setting. Mitigation measures were well considered and realistic.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

The service had experienced changes in leadership over recent months and were therefore at the beginning of their improvement journey.

The service had a vision, values and aims on display in the nursery. However, the leadership team advised they are going to review these with the children, families and staff, to ensure a shared understanding of the nursery ethos.

Staff were motivated about their roles within the nursery. Staff told us they worked well as a team by sharing ideas to achieve high quality care and play experiences for children in their care. Staff told us they were listened to, participated in the self-evaluation process and helped create the improvement plan for the year ahead. This supported a positive team ethos.

The manager had recently introduced quality assurance and monitoring systems to support the team to reflect on practice this will support sustained and continuous development for staff as individuals and the service. Aspirations for the service were shared by all staff and the manager, who had worked together to create the service improvement plan. This showed us the service has a good capacity for change.

The nursery had a complaints policy and procedure in place which followed good practice guidelines however the Care Inspectorate contact details should be updated.

We requested the manager review the child protection policy for the nursery to ensure roles, responsibilities and procedures are clear for families who access the setting.

We found the nursery provided positive experiences for children who were receiving nurturing and responsive care. However, the service should now continue with plans to develop a consistent approach to tracking developments, recording achievements and planning next steps. This was highlighted in the service's own improvement plan as a priority for the year ahead.

We suggested the service focus on developing methods to meaningfully engage with children and their families to support effective communication and the services improvement plan. We are confident the manager and team have the capacity and motivation to progress our suggestions effectiently.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children.

Children were supported in a nursery that was appropriately staffed to meet their individual health, wellbeing and safety needs. Staff lunch breaks were well managed to ensure continuity of care and minimised the impact of planned absences. Deployment around the nursery and effective communication between the team ensured children's play was not interrupted when staff left the room.

Staff were committed to their roles and talked warmly about supporting children to reach their full potential. Staff worked well together as a team and utilised their different skills and knowledge to complimented one another which resulted in quality interactions with children. One parent told us there child "has built good relationships with staff".

Children and their families experienced a warm, caring and nurturing setting as good working relationships and communication had been established with key workers. We found staff worked well together, and they were respectful in their interactions with each other, creating a positive ethos and role models for the 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?	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?	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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