Keir Hardie Memorial Primary Nursery Class Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
1 February 2023

Service provided by:
North Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000237

Service no:
CS2010254476

About the service

Keir Hardie Memorial Primary Nursery Class is registered to provide care to a maximum of 32 children aged 3 to those not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time. Care is provided from a self-contained wing in the primary school, which is located in Newarthill in Motherwell, North Lanarkshire. The service is situated close to shops, parks and other amenities.

The primary school and nursery are both managed by the head teacher. Both the head teacher and principal teacher oversee the management, supervision and day to day running of the service.

The service is provided by North Lanarkshire Council.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 1 February 2023. One inspector carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included, previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with the children using the service and received feedback from five of their family members.
- Spoke with nursery staff, the manager and principal teacher.
- Observed practice.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and confident in the nursery environment.
- Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from staff.
- Children enjoyed spending time in their nursery and had fun playing with their friends.
- Staff worked well together.
- Mealtimes could be improved for children.
- Some areas of the nursery environment would benefit from more robust cleaning and maintenance.

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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, settled and secure in the setting. They confidently interacted with staff and each other. Children were treated with respect, were listened to and had some opportunities to make decisions about their nursery. It was clear staff valued them as individuals. Children who required additional support were well supported in the setting.

Staff were kind, calm, and had a gentle manner which supported children to feel safe and secure. Staff interactions were caring and responsive to children's needs. Children had developed positive relationships with staff and often sought them out for reassurance and affection throughout the day. This helped create a caring, nurturing environment where children felt safe, secure and loved.

Each child had a key worker who was responsible for their care and wellbeing. This consistent, caring relationship helped children to settle and feel safe in the setting. Staff knew children well and spoke confidently about how their care and development was being supported. A parent/carer commented, "my child has a wonderful relationship with her keyworker and the other members of staff also. They are always looking to set new targets for her so she will flourish to the best of her ability."

Important information about children's health and wellbeing and development needs was detailed in children's personal plans and learning journals. Where children required additional support, their plans detailed the clear strategies in place to support them. A parent/carer told us, "We have regular target setting meetings with my child's key worker, where we have the opportunity to set new targets and get an update on how he is getting on in his day to day play at the nursery. They have a learning journal which is updated regularly with photos and videos of his days and what skills he is developing. We also have the opportunity to upload updates while he is learning at home."

The service had identified that personal plans could more clearly demonstrate how children's needs are to be met, their progress and achievements and planned to take this forward.

Staff worked with a variety of external agencies to support children's development and identify next steps in their learning. This helped ensure children received the personalised support they required.

Snack time was a positive experience. This was enjoyable and unhurried, and children's independence was well promoted. Thoughtful touches, for example vases of flowers, child sized crockery and visual cues helped create a pleasant, sociable experience. A child told us, "I like this cereal. It's the best."

We made a recommendation at the last inspection relating to improving children's mealtime routines. We found food choices were nutritious and reflected current guidance. Children mostly enjoyed their lunch and special dietary and cultural needs were well catered for. Water was available throughout the day to ensure children remained hydrated. While we recognised the positive steps staff and management had taken to improve this experience, there was scope for further improvement. Staff and management had identified how this could be taken forward, (see area for improvement 1).

Children were safe and protected from harm, with clear safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Staff understood the role they played, and all staff had undertaken annual refresher child protection training. The manager was the child protection coordinator. They understood their responsibilities and the systems that were in place to report any concerns. We were confident any child protection matters would be responded to appropriately.

Medication was generally well managed in the service. It was stored appropriately and was easily accessible. Staff had a clear understanding about children's health needs and how this should be managed. The manager agreed to take forward our suggestions, which would further improve medication systems. This included, ensuring clear protocols are in place for children who have significant health needs.

1.3 Play and learning

Children benefitted from planning approaches that were child centred and responsive to their interests and experiences. Some played happily together with their friends, while others were content playing on their own or alongside others.

Children had opportunities to engage in child-initiated activities both indoors and out. They could independently choose where they wanted to play and engage in activities that were of interest to them. Children had fun, with many engaging in play for extended periods. Children were keen to learn and experiment with different materials. We observed staff praising and celebrating children's achievements.

Children's early literacy and numeracy skills were supported through opportunities to lead their own play and through a balance of planned and spontaneous play experiences. This was further supported by a range of learning programmes which promoted literacy and numeracy.

Staff understood the importance of outdoor play to children's health, wellbeing and development. Children could access the outdoor space independently in all weathers. They had fun playing with a range of loose parts materials and particularly enjoyed the water play opportunities. Children used outdoors to engage in more risky play.

We encouraged management and staff to continue to ensure children have access to high quality natural open-ended resources that support creativity and curiosity indoors.

While staff played alongside children, supporting them during their play, there were missed opportunities for some children to take the lead, extend their play and support the development of key skills. Staff would benefit from developing a deeper understanding about their role in supporting children's play, to ensure that children have opportunities to engage in stimulating experiences that challenge and excite them.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health, wellbeing and development, the provider should continue to improve the quality of lunch time experiences.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible' (HSCS 1.35).

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 any areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was comfortable, well ventilated, and furnished to a good standard. Some homely touches, such as displays, photographs and soft furnishings helped create a welcoming environment for children and their families. Each child had access to their own space to store their personal items, which helped promote a sense of belonging. A parent/carer told us, "The nursery and environment around it is always clean and safe with lots of things to keep them entertained and learning both indoors and out. The team are also amazing at working/playing with the kids and are highly thought of."

The playroom was decorated in neutral colours which helped create a calm, inviting space for children. Large windows ensured playrooms benefitted from lots of natural light. The playroom was sufficiently spacious, providing children with opportunities to play on their own and in small or larger groups, with space to extend their activities. Consideration had been given to children being able to access toys and equipment independently. A parent/carer commented, "The nursery itself has a lovely feel and is always clean and tidy. There is a warming atmosphere and all the staff are very friendly. My child knows exactly how to navigate the nursery which allows him more independence."

Staff engaged in good hand hygiene practices and ensured that children were supported to do this well at key times. This helped to minimise the risk of spread of infection and supported children to learn good hand hygiene habits.

While we recognised the positive steps management and staff had taken to improve the environment, we identified some further improvements that were still needed across the setting. These were discussed with the management team and some of these areas were actioned by the end of the inspection, (see area for improvement 1).

While risk assessments had been completed which demonstrated how staff identified and minimised risks to children, we suggested this process could be more robust to ensure that staff are identifying the issues similar to those highlighted during our visit.

Children had access to a large outdoor area from the cloakroom. This was well planned and provided an interesting space with various surfaces for children to play. We observed active children practising their skills in running, climbing, jumping and balancing. Children demonstrated a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe when playing outdoors.

Accidents and incidents were recorded with details shared with parents/carers. While these were being audited by management, we suggested ways in which this approach could be strengthened. This should support management and staff to identify any emerging patterns and any actions required to remedy this, which will contribute to keeping children safe and help prevent accidents occurring.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's safety, health and wellbeing, the provider, manager and staff should ensure all areas of the setting are safe, well maintained and cleaned to a high standard.

This should include, but not limited to:

- ensuring all areas used by children are clean.
- ensuring robust risk assessments are carried out for all areas, including security arrangements.
- improving handwashing facilities for children in the playroom.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24).

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 any areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Management were visible and promoted a clear vision that helped staff understand the aspirations of children and their families. Leaders were supportive, motivating, and had a positive attitude to change. They understood the importance of including others in achieving their vision.

Management valued staff and demonstrated a commitment to ensuring they were motivated and supported to carry out their role effectively. Management and staff had worked hard to address the areas for improvements made at the last inspection. These related to improving children's personal plans and mealtimes, and improving children's changing facilities. Good progress had been made in these areas with most aspects being fully addressed. The management team had a good understanding of the improvements that were still needed to improve the overall quality of the service.

Some effective quality assurance processes were in place, that were impacting positively on outcomes for children and families. This included the service's development plan and self-evaluation activities, which reflected key areas for improvement, including some of those we identified during our visit. Staff had a good understanding of the identified priorities and felt fully involved in taking these forward. Additionally,

management and staff were supported by the local authority improvement team. To ensure improved outcomes for children and families, the management team have agreed to further develop effective systems to monitor all aspects of the service.

The service used some effective methods to communicate with parents/carers. They shared and gathered information about their child at the start and end of the day when meeting with staff. Electronic journals and face to face meetings helped keep them up to date on aspects of service delivery and enabled them to be involved in the life of the service. Parents/carers had opportunities to share their suggestions on how the service could be improved. The manager and staff welcomed their feedback and considered how their views could influence the service provided. The management team identified, and we agreed there was scope to further develop ways to involve children and parents/carers in developing the service. A parent/carer commented, "I cant think of anything I would change about this nursery. They make you feel welcome and involve where they can which is great. I think the staff do an amazing job."

There was a commitment to using staff's strengths, interests and skills to lead on specific areas of practice, and some progress had been made with this. This enabled staff to develop leadership skills and strengthen their knowledge of best practice. The service should continue to develop and embed this approach, with staff continuing to share their learning with each other. This will help support positive outcomes for children and their families.

Team meetings provided staff with opportunities to receive updates on the service and kept them informed about all aspects of nursery life. These opportunities enabled them to discuss individual children and share their ideas on what was working well in the playroom and what could be improved. Staff felt fully supported by the management team and felt that their views and suggestions were important.

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 any areas for improvement.

4.3 Staff deployment

Staff were enthusiastic about their role and spoke positively about their work. They valued the positive relationships that had developed within their team and felt very well supported in their work. Staff worked well together to create a positive and welcoming environment for children. They were kind, caring and nurturing in their interactions with the children. A parent/carer commented, "Overall, we have had a very positive experience of Keir Hardie Nursery. We have all developed a friendly relationship with the staff, they are all lovely."

Staff understood that continuity of care was important for children and communicated well with each other when task took them away from their responsibilities. The service was appropriately staffed to meet children's needs and they were mostly deployed effectively throughout the day. Staff worked well to ensure children were supervised throughout the day and there was minimal disruption to their play. Staff had time to listen, respond, and care for children, which helped them feel safe, secure and valued.

There were a good range of skills and experience across the team. Staff had engaged in a variety of training opportunities and professional reading to develop their knowledge and skills.

The management team were visible in the setting, and played a key role in supporting good practice. The manager discussed plans for all staff to attend paediatric first aid training. This will help develop confidence in dealing with emergency situations.

The manager was in the process of developing a more meaningful professional review and development programme to support staff to develop in their role. They were committed to using meaningful and supportive ways to develop staff individually and as a team.

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

Information within Personal (care) plans must be sufficiently detailed so it is clear about the support in place for individual children.

- Targets for children should be appropriate, with timescales attached, to enable them to be effectively monitored.

- Techniques and strategies that will be used to help children reach their potential should be detailed.

- At each review with parents and where appropriate children, there should be a record of children's progress so the effectiveness of the plan is assessed.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'My personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.' (HSCS 1.15); and
'I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me.' (HSCS 2.17).

This area for improvement was made on 19 August 2020.

Action taken since then

The management team and staff had taken positive steps to address this area for improvement. Children's personal plans and electronic learning journals were starting to demonstrate how children's wellbeing, learning and development needs were being met. Management recognised, and we agreed, that there was further development required and we were satisfied with their plans to take this forward.

This area for improvement had been addressed.

Previous area for improvement 2

Staff should review the current snack and mealtime routines so that they are positive experiences for children and help them develop healthy eating habits and self-help skills.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snack, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and participate in menu planning'. (HSCS 1.33);
'If I need help with eating and drinking, this is carried out in a dignified way and my personal preferences are respected'. (HSCS 1.34); and
'I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible'. (HSCS 1.35).

This area for improvement was made on 19 August 2020.

Action taken since then

While we acknowledged the improvements made in relation to this area, particularly with snack time, we recognised that mealtime experiences could be further improved. We have repeated this area for improvement in this inspection (see 1.1 Nurturing care and support).

Previous area for improvement 3

Consideration needs to be given to having a changing area nearer to the nursery so children can be changed in a timely manner.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'If I require intimate personal care, there is a suitable area for this, including a sink if needed'. (HSCS 5.4).

This area for improvement was made on 19 August 2020.

Action taken since then

Appropriate action had been taken to address this area for improvement. Children's changing facilities had been improved and were easily accessible.

This area for improvement had been addressed.

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?	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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