Polton Green Nursery
Day Care of Children

Polton Green Nursery
Eskdale Drive
Bonnyrigg
EH19 2JT

Telephone: 07704 917 103

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 March 2023

Service provided by:
Bonnyrigg After School Club

Service provider number:
SP2003002903

Service no:
CS2016351472

About the service

Polton Green Nursery is an early learning and childcare setting in a residential area of Bonnyrigg, Midlothian, close to local primary school, parks, shops and other amenities. The setting is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 29 children at any one time aged from 2 years to not yet attending primary school. Of those 29 no more than 10 are aged from 2 years to under 3 years.

The setting consists of a playroom, with toilets leading off, a kitchen and an office for staff. Children have direct access to the nursery gardens which are safe and enclosed.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 23 March 2023 between 09:00 and 13:30. We made an announced visit on 27 March 2023 between 11:00 and 15:00 to complete the inspection and give feedback. 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 and one of their representatives
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled, and having fun playing with their friends.
- Staff were kind and caring towards the children, which created a welcoming and nurturing environment.
- The setting provided a comfortable and inviting environment for children which was important to children's overall wellbeing.
- Management worked hard to create a shared approach to self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

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 made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Staff were kind and caring towards the children, which created a welcoming and nurturing environment that supported children's emotional wellbeing and development. Children showed kindness towards each other, and took on a supportive role, such as helping their younger friends to navigate the balance beams. Children brought toys and comforters from home, which promoted a sense of security, familiarity and comfort particularly during times of transition or change. A parent told us, "the nursery has been great helping our child settle in, our child was two when they started but they integrated them well with the older kids as well as children their age. We were assigned a key worker and she has been great in keeping us informed with our child's development and her play with frequent observations and pictures".

All children had a personal plan, which were a combination of an online app, individual 'busy books' and paper forms. This demonstrated a thoughtful and flexible approach from staff, who recognized the importance of tailoring their approach to meet the individual needs of each child. A parent told us, "the nursery gave us booklets to fill out and return with details of our home life, family and friends etc so they could incorporate that into our child's play/learning. Through the Famly app they frequently ask for our input and ideas on how to better the nursery and learning/play for the kids".

Staff spoke about how they met children's needs and they knew them well. We suggested that the recording of strategies is streamlined for a more consistent and easy access process for all staff to refer to. This would further support staff to record progress and adapt their approach as necessary.

Children were friendly and curious about the purpose of our visit. They showed familiarity with the daily routines and told us about recent developments, such as new toys in the garden, the arrival of a new staff member, whose name they knew and that the dance teacher was coming that day. Children gave us a tour of their playroom and garden, demonstrating their knowledge of the environment and a sense of belonging in the setting.

During mealtimes, the atmosphere was relaxed and enjoyable for everyone. Tables were set with flowers, cutlery, and napkins, which allowed for a pleasant dining experience. Children eagerly participated in the table setting process, which added to the social and interactive nature of mealtimes. The unhurried and sociable mealtime experiences fostered a sense of belonging.

1.3 Play and Learning

An initiative to invite families into the setting to plant a tree had resulted in fostering a sense of community and encouraging environmental awareness among children and families. A child told us, "these are our trees". The community ethos was further enhanced as assistance with the garden was provided by a group of high school students and other members of the community.

Staff had been working towards introducing more provocations in play spaces and experiences. These invitations to explore a particular theme or interest would further encourage children's creativity, support

language development and promote problem-solving. Staff used signs, pictures, letters, numbers and mark making materials in play experiences and displays to support children's numeracy and literacy skills. A parent told us "we are extremely happy with the care provided, there was a noticeable improvement in our child's vocabulary and social skills from the moment she started that we attribute to playing in her peer group and the encouragement the staff have provided".

Staff provided children with engaging and enjoyable play spaces that offered opportunities for choice and independence. However, there was room for improvement in certain areas. For example, the containers in the play dough making station were not easily accessible, which meant that the self-service aspect was not functioning as intended. By addressing these issues, staff could further enhance play experiences and promote greater levels of independence and self-confidence.

Children could move freely between indoors and out. The majority of children chose to play in the outdoor play spaces, which offered a range of stimulating and engaging activities. This demonstrated enthusiasm for outdoor play and the value placed on being in the outdoors for physical activity, social interaction and a sense of wellbeing. A parent told us, "we especially like the emphasis on incorporating outside play in the garden which my child loves".

Progress was being made to enhancing the approach to planning for children's play, achieving a better balance between spontaneous and planned experiences. Staff recognised the need to further improve their responsive planning, ensuring that they were fully attuned to the individual needs and interests of each child. By enhancing their responsive planning, the staff will provide more tailored and meaningful experiences for the children, resulting in increased engagement, motivation, and learning.

Staff spoke positively about recent training on schematic play. They described it as a "lightbulb moment" where they realised that children's play was an expression of their desire to play in a particular way, such as transportation of resources. This training helped staff better understand and appreciate the importance of children's play and their natural tendencies, leading to more effective and enriching interactions.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting provided an inviting environment which was important to children's overall wellbeing. The space was well-furnished with ample natural light and ventilation.

Spaces were designed to offer play experiences that promoted fun and learning. We suggested that staff review the location of the story corner, book accessibility and the overall cosiness of this space. Enhancing this area would lead to further children's engagement with books and overall wellbeing.

Staff and management demonstrated a commitment to providing a quality outdoor environment with various play opportunities. Children were observed enjoying activities such as riding bikes, imaginary play in the outdoor kitchen, climbing and balancing on play structures and loose parts materials. A poly tunnel provided a sheltered area that gave protection from adverse weather conditions while still allowing children to experience the outdoors. The staff's efforts had resulted in an ever improving rich and stimulating outdoor environment that supported children's overall development.

Staff adhered to infection, prevention and control procedures, including regular hand washing. This helped minimise the risk of spreading illness and infection among staff and children. Children were keen to show us how good they were at washing their hands.

Staff should keep the playroom kitchen area clear of resources and other items to ensure a safe and hygienic environment for food preparation. Maintaining a clear and designated area for meal and snack preparation will help prevent the risk of cross-contamination and support staff to adhere to food safety standards.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The management of the setting had recently changed. Whilst recruitment of a new manager was being carried out, a member of the senior management team was the named manager. A senior member of staff had taken on the role of supporting the named manager and we saw this individual was committed to ensuring the continued success of the team.

Management worked hard to create a shared approach to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. Through the use of observation and monitoring, they had identified the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. The setting had an ethos that promoted continuous improvement to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and families needs.

Staff felt supported by management, as they told us "(named manager) really cares about us", "having my senior has been a massive help in my job role" and "the guidance from the management enables us to do our job effectively". Management being hands on helped staff to continue to develop the quality of the service provided.

Management used a quality assurance system to ensure that the priorities outlined in the improvement plan were effectively implemented, and to identify and address areas of practice that required improvement. Plans were shared with parents, we were told "we are aware of the development plan we especially liked the idea of having parents come in and plant a tree in the garden with our child".

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

4.3 Staff deployment

The small nature of the setting allowed for effective supervision, with staff utilising walkie talkies to communicate children's movements between indoor and outdoor spaces. This approach not only ensured the safety and security of children but also promoted efficient use of time and resources, leading to a more positive experience for both staff and children.

Staff had defined roles and responsibilities in the playroom which helped them work together to ensure children's needs were met. A staff member reported the success of this, telling us "I think that the rota works well with staff knowing what they are on that day and for doing activities and group time with the children which I think allows the day to day go smoothly."

As a result of effective staff discussions and reflection time, staff felt their views and ideas were valued. Staff told us "having team meetings to go over everything that we could improve on and what we are doing that is good" and "we do team meetings weekly through zoom. These are effective as it allows us to discuss any changes in the setting, any changes with children or what everyone needs to know about individual children". Meetings of this nature were important because they provided an opportunity for team collaboration, reflection, and continuous improvement towards achieving better 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?	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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