St. Margaret's RC Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

St. Margaret's RC Primary School
Livingstone Place
Galashiels
TD1 1DQ

Telephone: 01896 752 096

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
18 March 2022

Service provided by:
Scottish Borders Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001976

Service no:
CS2018364842

About the service

The nursery is an integral part of St. Margaret's RC Primary School, based in the Scottish Borders town of Galashiels. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 32 children, aged from two years to not yet attending primary school, at any one time. Of those 32 no more than five are aged two to not yet ythreeears at any one time.

The nursery premises includes a playroom with toilet facilities and kitchen area. Children can access the outdoor play area directly from the playroom. Children use facilities within the school for meals and indoor physical activities.

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 March 2022 between 09:30 and 14:45. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service and received feedback from three parents
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19 with a specific focus on Quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator in Theme 1 Quality Care and Support.

What people told us

Most children were settled in the nursery and confidently approached the inspector to chat about nursery and what they liked to do there. We observed children who were comfortable with staff and interacted well with them.

We gathered comments from parents through e-mails. Three parents gave comments about the service. Parents commented on how much their child appeared to enjoy nursery and
the overall positive communication that they had with staff.

Some comments are noted below:

"My child loves attending the ELC, she had not spent much time socialising due to restrictions, but has developed friendships, always come home messy in paint etc, loves being creative and being outdoors. The team are amazing, they are welcoming and supportive. Being a hub also helps my husband and I to work, my child is developing her confidence and is supported in a variety of experiences. Daily feedback at the door although somewhat limited at current times, notice board, Facebook page email and Xpressions app. My child loves the outdoors, the ELC garden and walks within the community, woodlands and play park. I hope you had a great visit the team are amazing, the children all appear happy and secure in their daily routines (from pictures shared etc with parents) we love this setting".

"My child love attending nursery. She enjoys baking, stories and dancing and anything messy. The staff make learning fun for the children. The positives of the service is the elc participates in school events such as

fundraising and assemblies etc. The staff are consistent and there isn't a high turnover. It is obvious to see that the staff enjoy their job, they nurture the children. My daughter has a keyworker who I meet with to discuss her progress and who I can approach with any concerns, although all the staff are approachable. I have just received a written report on my daughters progress which is detailed. The elc is open in the school holidays which helps with childcare.

There is such a great variety of activities for the children each day and these are written on a white board and placed at window for parents to see as well as what the children are having for snacks and lunch. The children recently visited the sensory hub and great tapestry in Galashiels.
Staff regularly correspond through email and the expressions app. The elc Facebook page is updated daily with photos and videos of what the children have been doing.

The staff take the children to the local woods and park on a weekly basis. They walk the children to the library regularly too, teaching them road safety at the same time. There is a great outdoor space within the nursery too, which is safe and children can play in all weathers.
There is nothing that I can fault or say is negative about the service. It is absolutely fantastic".

"Our child really enjoys nursery and our experience has been extremely positive. We are very impressed by the variety of activities and experiences that are provided by the nursery. Our daughter enjoys going everyday and has very good relationships with the staff. I feel very confident that the staff are caring for her and I know if I have concerns I can go to them and I also know they will inform me if there are any problems. Obviously covid has had a huge impact on how the nursery has been able to inform parents about what they are doing but I feel that the nursery has made an amazing effort to keep us well informed about activities, we usually get photos and videos each week so we know what they are doing as well as a notice board which is updated daily. We are kept informed about our daughters progress with meetings and the chance to look through folders.

My daughter loves the outdoor play that is provided by the nursery. She seems to really enjoy the mud kitchen. I am very happy that the children are able to go out in all weather and that they are provided with all in one suits so that they can make the most of the outdoor opportunities provided. Now that the covid restrictions are easing the nursery is making every effort to get the children out and about, getting to know their local environment and town which is brilliant.

I feel very lucky that we were able to send our daughter to such a lovely nursery where she has had a lovely nursery experience".

Self assessment

An up to date self-assessment was not requested as part of this inspection. We looked at self-evaluation and monitoring and report on this in our report.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

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

Most children benefitted from a caring learning environment where they were supported to reach their potential. Children received care from staff who were kind, caring and knew children and their families well. Children were happy and active throughout the inspection, enjoying a balance of adult directed and freely chosen activities which were supporting them to develop. Staff respected children and they were spoken to and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included. However, at times during the inspection some children wondered around the room with limited staff interaction. We have asked the service to ensure all children are supported and to audit aspects of the nursery routine to allow children to get the attention they need.

Children were supported to eat well and enjoyed their food during snack and meal times. Staff sat with children at lunch time and encouraged independence and socializing skills. Lunch was served in the school dining hall, which did not offer children a nurturing experience. The management team have agreed to monitor the lunch time routine and review to ensure positive outcomes are experienced by all children.

Staff were aware of children and their individual needs. Information was stored in a personal plan and contained registration details and was used to help the children settle into the nursery. Records of conversation with parents and other professionals were recorded and some strategies to support children had been identified. We have asked the service to review the recording of these strategies. This would allow staff to understand the how the support was to be delivered and monitored to assess progress.

Children were kept safe because staff were confident in a range of procedures. This included safeguarding children's wellbeing, the safe storage of medication, accident and incident reporting. Policies, procedures and children's information was regularly reviewed and updated as required. We have signposted the service to the HUB for up-to-date guidance and the bite size sessions.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

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

The premises provided a welcoming environment and evidence of children's learning was displayed throughout. We found the play room to be bright and well ventilated ensuring a comfortable environment for children and staff. We observed most children playing confidently, choosing from a range of resources and materials. For example, the art area was well used and we saw children playing imaginatively in the home corner. They also enjoyed the small world and construction areas. Resources were displayed and organised to allow children space to learn and move freely between activities. Children had opportunities to support their creativity, curiosity, independence and problem solve during play.

Children's health and wellbeing was promoted as they played outdoors every day. They had access to the secure outdoor play area and could independently move between indoors and out. The outdoor area had been developed since the nursery opened and it was now provided a range of natural spaces and resources. Children confidently explored the outdoor areas, experimenting with the mud kitchen, singing songs and taking part in group games. A range of loose parts were available and fixed structures were used to support emerging literacy and numeracy. Children played with their friends, laughing, chatting and having fun. We observed children engaging in elements of risky play to continue to build up their development and resilience.

The local community was well used by the service. Children were beginning to develop their interests in sustainability by composting their food waste. Throughout the year the children have been engaged in opportunities for weekly walks within the community. Staff were enthusiastic to further develop the children's outdoor experiences by using the local woods to offer some forest school sessions once staff were fully trained.

To further support children's experience at the nursery, we have asked the service to revisit sleep/quiet time. Reviewing this time of the day would ensure the team are providing a time of the day for children to relax and sleep if required.

To keep children safe and healthy staff should ensure they are checking the toilet and nappy changing area regularly and cleaning if required. Clutter should be removed from kitchen area to allow for enhanced cleaning to take place.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

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

Staff had a warm and caring manner toward children, which contributed to a happy ambience within the setting. We could see that staff were committed to a child centred approach within their practice. Staff worked well together, and they were respectful in their interactions with each other, creating a positive ethos within the service. There was a good sense of teamwork and positive working relationships had been established which meant that children and families experienced a warm, caring atmosphere.

Staff recognised the value of a partnership approach with parents and told us they worked hard to build trusting relationships. This helped them to get to know the children and their families. We found good working relationships with parents and all parents commented positively on the staff team and the care and support their children received. We observed responsive caregiving from staff who were committed to providing the best experience for children.

Systems were in place to carry out professional development reviews and supervision meetings. These supported staff to share feelings, ideas, and suggestions around the service's developments. This helped identify targets for their own training and learning needs. Staff had engaged in a range of training over the last two years, some of which was remotely accessed during Covid-19 lockdown. Staff were enthusiastic, keen to develop their skills and could describe the impact of training on outcomes for children. Moving forward staff should evaluate the impact of training on their own practice and management should continue to assess the impact that it has on the overall outcomes for children.

Staff meetings were held, this allowed valuable time for staff to come together and discuss aspects of the service including planning, activities, concerns or issues. Minutes should now be formalised and include individual staff responsibilities. This should include the impact of staff training and any improvement made to the outcomes experienced by the children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

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

There was an inclusive ethos and a focus on working with parents. The service communicated daily with parents at handover times. Parents also confirmed that they were kept up to date by information sharing via social media, notice board, email and Xpressions app. This meant parents were well informed and involved in their children's care. Staff also worked effectively with external professionals and in partnership with parents to ensure children received the right support. This contributed to children being included in nursery life.

Throughout this inspection we found the management team to be responsive and committed to improving outcomes for children. We saw effective leadership with management team. Staff told us that communication between them and the management team was good and this helped staff to feel more confident and valued. The nursery team engaged with the inspection process and accepted any advice or support given. This demonstrated their commitment for improvement to ensure positive outcomes for children.

The processes for auditing and monitoring the work and quality of the nursery were in place. The school improvement plan included improvement priorities for the nursery. Meetings between senior staff in the nursery were held to check progress and identify where further work was needed. To further support improvements across the setting a more formal monitoring and auditing process had been started and the management team were keen to develop this to support good outcomes for children. We have asked the service to include different aspects of the setting in this monitoring process. Particular attention should be given to mealtimes, tracking a child, personal plans, purpose of gather times and the impact of staff training on outcomes for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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