Auchterhouse Nursery
Day Care of Children

Auchterhouse Primary School
Auchterhouse
Dundee
DD3 0QS

Telephone: 01382 346 173

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 April 2022

Service provided by:
Angus Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000043

Service no:
CS2019376242

About the service

Auchterhouse nursery is a service provided by Angus council and is situated in Auchterhouse primary school in the village of Auchterhouse. The nursery is within the main school building. The nursery consists of a playroom which offers a variety of opportunities for play and learning. Toilets and changing facilities are located off the main playroom. Free flow access to a secure outdoor area provided children with daily access to fresh air and active play experiences. The school gym and dining hall are also used to allow children opportunities to participate in school community experiences and focus learning activities. Local amenities including a community garden, library bus and parks provided learning experiences beyond the nursery environment.

Auchterhouse nursery registered with the Care Inspectorate on 12 August 2019. The service is registered to provide an early learning and childcare service to a maximum of 24 children at any one time from age 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

The service leadership team consist of the head teacher and senior early years practitioner.

What people told us

On the day of inspection ten children were in attendance. We spoke to several children about their experiences and observed all children during our visit. Children were engaged in their play and appeared confident and happy in their surroundings. Children were leading their play and appeared to have established strong relationships with staff.

Three families shared feedback with us about the service. Feedback received was positive. Families told us they felt the service kept them well informed about their child's learning and progress, with information sharing carried out in a variety of ways. Families felt that their views were sought which supported them feel included in the development of the service.

"Communication is excellent. I am sad that I haven't gone into the service yet due to Covid restrictions but the staff ensure I am kept in the know. Folios are so detailed, so I feel part of my child's day and know what my child is learning. Daily dojo updates support information sharing. Always striving to ensure parents are informed."

"Daily dojo posts with photos and information are a great way to let parents know what their child is doing. Staff have a chat daily and give a summary of my child's day and we get the folio sent home. Really friendly and approachable staff so I know I can always have chats with them about my child. I can also message direct on dojo if I have any questions."

"Questionnaires are used to allow us to share feedback. Nice to know they value my views."

Self assessment

The service was not asked to submit a self assessment prior to inspection. We reviewed their quality assurance systems and improvement plan and found these to reflect the service well. These demonstrated the service priorities for development, detailing how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

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

Children were seen to be engaged through a range of quality experiences, which supported children's progress within their learning. Resources promoted creativity, problem solving and offered challenge. Children appeared to be confident, relaxed and having fun within their play and learning. Play was child led, with children being empowered to make choices in where they played and what they played with. Through skilled interactions staff supported to extend children's learning, encouraging children to develop creativity and problem-solving skills. We observed staff to be respectful in their interactions with children, offering kindness and warmth, which supported developing strong relationships. Staff used a restorative approach to enable children to develop an understanding of both their own feelings and those of their peers. This supported children to manage any conflict and develop team working skills.

Children's information documents were reviewed during our visit and found to be in line with best practice. Information contained was individualised and supported staff to extend children's interests and support development. These were reviewed with parents to ensure information was current and to provide a continuity of care to children. Staff told us that they found documents to be valuable in supporting children's transition into the service, providing key information to allow staff to effectively plan experiences based on children's needs

Children and staff sat together during mealtimes which created a positive social experience. We observed children being independent and developing self help skills. For example, snack was self-service, allowing children the opportunity to use utensils which supported the development of motor skills. We asked the service to continue to develop ways in which children's independence is promoted throughout all mealtime experiences offered, for example, support for children to serve their food during lunch and clear dishes away.

Planning for children's learning considered children's interests, ideas and needs. This supported the team to deliver a child led approach to learning experiences and opportunities. Planning was reviewed daily which allowed staff to identify current interests of children and gaps in provision. This enabled learning experiences to be adapted to support meeting the individual needs of children.

Learning folios and floor books captured significant learning and identified next steps, to support children's progression within their learning. Children's involvement in documenting their learning was encouraged, with children's photos, drawings and marks included. Folios and floor books were accessible, which allowed

children to revisit learning and take part in discussions, celebrating their achievements.

All staff had a clear understanding of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and protected. Child protection training had been completed, supporting staff keep their knowledge up to date. Staff were clear on reporting and recording procedures.

Medication procedures were reviewed during our visit. Documents reviewed were historical and no current medication was required. However, we discussed ensuring a robust system is in place to ensure consistency in documenting medical information to support safe administration. By the time of this report being written the service had actioned this.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We made an evaluation of good for this theme, 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 playroom offered a range of open-ended resources, which promoted challenge, curiosity and creativity. Children were seen to be engaged in a variety of learning experiences, with opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and imaginative skills. The layout of the room allowed children to move freely between activities, supporting children's choice in where they played. To maximise the spaces used for learning, the service should consider, where possible, minimising the space used to store staff resources and equipment. Children were able to transport resources between activities which supported extending learning experiences. We found that some learning resources were stored on higher shelving which did not allow children to access independently. We asked that the service develop some of its storage to further enhance children's choice and access.

Free flow to outdoors provided children with access throughout the day and ensured children had choice in where they played. The outdoor area was well-maintained and provided a variety of high-quality resources and learning experiences. Children were confident in exploring outdoors. We observed children engaged in a wide range of activities, developing a range of skills. Children were seen running, climbing and creating large structures using loose part materials. A forest area provided opportunities to explore nature and engage in learning using natural resources.

Cosy spaces had been developed in both indoor and outdoor environments. These provided areas for

children to rest, time to reflect and quieter space for focussed learning.

Children were given opportunities to explore and learn within the local community. Trips to the local woodland areas supported children to experience nature activities and develop very good awareness of managing risk.

Children's toilets were situated off the main playroom and were easily accessed by children. We found that due to one cubicle being used for the storage of resources space was restricted, and could impact how personal care was carried out. We asked that the service address this to ensure this space is available to children and used only for toileting and personal care.

We reviewed accident and incident procedures during our visit. These were documented and information shared with parents. We discussed ensuring all significant information is captured within documents to support and inform quality assurance. The service carried out audits to identify any recurring issues and trends, which supported addressing potential safety issues. Risk assessments were carried out as necessary to support staff to create a safe learning environment for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

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

Staff were recruited following local authority procedures and were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The leadership team within the nursery was made up of the head teacher and senior early years practitioner. Staff spoke positively about their induction into the service. They were supported by the leadership team through a range of support meetings and discussions, which enabled them to gain an understanding of their role and responsibilities.

We observed staff to be caring, kind and nurturing in their interactions with children. Staff knew the needs of the children in their care, which allowed them to support children to progress within their learning. Interactions were at a child's pace, which allowed children time to think and respond. Children's views were respected and valued. The service had developed a range of ways in which children's voices were captured and their ideas acted upon. This supported to create a culture in which children's rights were embedded into practice. For example, staff documented children's suggestions and thinking in floor books, which supported plan experiences that were meaningful to children.

Team meetings provided opportunities for staff to meet to discuss observations of children, evaluate children's experiences and plan developments within the service. Staff told us they valued opportunities to come together to share information and reflect upon practice. Staff felt that their ideas were valued and encouraged, which offered a whole team approach to developments within the service.

We observed that recent training opportunities had a positive impact on changes within the service and outcomes for children. For example, following recent nurture training, the team were developing a cosy corner to provide opportunities to offer nurture groups. We found staff to be motivated about their professional development. Staff were reflective in their practice, allowing them to identify strengths and areas for improvement, which informed future training plans. Leadership roles were being developed, providing staff with ownership and responsibility. Staff spoke about these positively and felt they played a key role within improvements in the service.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

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

The service was well led by the head teacher and senior practitioner, and staff told us they felt well supported and informed. Support visits and appraisals were carried out by the head teacher. These contributed to the quality assurance of procedures and supervision of staff practice, ensuring best practice was being followed. As part of the core service team, the senior practitioner worked with staff and families daily. This provided opportunities to model best practice and support quality assurance.

The service had established strong relationships with families, which supported information on children's progress to be effectively shared between home and the service. A variety of ways to share information with families had been developed. 'My world' meetings offered the opportunity for staff and families to discuss children's developmental needs and interests, which supported offer a continuity of care for children. Families we spoke to told us they valued class dojo, which provided them with service information and allowed them to view learning experiences. One family told us, "We receive class dojo updates every day. These provide us with information and the nursery shares learning experiences. A great way to share nursery news". Families' views and suggestions were sought through daily discussions and questionnaires. This supported family involvement in improvements within the service.

A whole team approach was applied to developing the service improvement plan. This ensured all staff were aware of identified areas for improvement, and contributed to their involvement in developments and reviewing progress. The improvement plan had been well considered and reflected throughout daily practice and provision. A focus on child-led learning and children's progress was identified within the plan, and we saw that children's experiences reflected these.

Quality assurance systems were of a good standard and supported improvements within the service, which ensured that best practice observed was maintained and well monitored. Self-evaluation was carried out regularly to support the team to measure the impact that changes made were having on outcomes for children. This allowed the team to reflect on practice, identify strengths and successes, and plan for future developments.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very 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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