Stoneyburn Primary School Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

Stoneyburn Primary School
2 Main Street
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BATHGATE
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Telephone: 01501762253

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 April 2023

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Service no:
CS2021000172

About the service

Stoneyburn Primary School Nursery Class is a day care of children service situated within the building of Stoneyburn Primary School in the residential area of Stoneyburn, Bathgate.

The service provider for Stoneyburn Primary School Nursery Class is West Lothian Council. The setting is managed by the headteacher for Stoneyburn Primary School and was registered on 26 July 2021.

The nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 24 children from age 3 years to not yet attending primary school at any one time. From 13 July 2023 until 29 October 2023 one child aged 2 years may be cared for within the maximum number of 24 children.

The children are cared for in the dedicated playroom. Children also have access to an enclosed garden which is easily accessible from the indoor playroom. There is one set of toilets and a large cloakroom.

The service is close to local amenities, such as shops and a health care centre.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 18 April 2023 between the hours of 09:00 and 16:15. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. This was the first inspection of the service. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:
- spoke with 12 children using the service and 12 of their family members
- spoke with three staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

We provided virtual feedback to the service on 20 April 2023 between the hours of 14:00 and 15:30. Attendees were the registered manager and headteacher, one senior practitioner, the area manager and a representative from West Lothian's central early year's team.

Key messages

- Staff built positive, nurturing relationships with children.
- The service worked effectively with external agencies to meet children's needs.
- Children's health and wellbeing was promoted through regular access to the outdoors.
- Children benefitted from engagement with facilities within their community.
- Planning centred around children's needs and ideas.
- Quality assurance systems needed strengthened to help demonstrate the impact of positive experiences on outcomes for children.

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

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions with adults. Staff were present and attentive to children's needs. Children comfortably approached staff and shared close affection in the form of cuddles. Children were praised for their efforts, supporting them to develop self-belief and confidence to try out ideas. Parent feedback strengthened our findings; all parents strongly agreed with the statement 'I am confident staff are nurturing and responsive to my child's needs'. One parent commented: "I love how friendly the teachers are, they are all so happy to help and support no matter what the situation is". These positive relationships contributed to children feeling loved, safe and secure. This led to children feeling empowered to independently explore the environment with increasing confidence.

Systems were in place to ensure personal plans reflected children's needs and were regularly reviewed. We recognised the extensive investment the service had made in developing strong partnerships with external services, such as occupational therapy. This meant that support strategies were tailored to meet children's individual needs and staff were confident in their approach as this had been guided by specialist skills and knowledge. While each child had a key worker, effective communication systems ensured that all staff had an awareness of children's needs. This resulted in staff being able to fulfil their shared responsibility in contributing to positive outcomes for children. In addition, children experienced consistent care from all adults. Robust risk assessments were completed and regularly reviewed for individual children to promote their safety. While staff reflections and practice highlighted staff's sound knowledge of child development, children's personal plans could better reflect staff understanding of children's sensory needs. This would strengthen positive outcomes for children.

Children benefitted from a dedicated, passionate staff team who wanted the best for children. Staff reflected on the significant, positive difference they had made to children's development. For example, successful strategies and skilled approaches had resulted in children feeling calmer and able to engage in more meaningful play for sustained periods of time. These reflections from staff were strengthened by our own observations. This investment in Getting it Right for Children resulted in children making developmental progress.

We recognised the service had worked hard to make snack time an enjoyable occasion for children, with a relaxed pace. Independence skills were fully promoted and children knew the routine well. Children were offered a choice of foods, contributing to a well-balanced diet. Enabling approaches were used to promote independence so children could self-serve their own food and drink. There were lots of moments of celebration which contributed to building children's self-esteem and confidence. The service was keen to use the successes of snack time to enhance the lunchtime experience for children.

1.3: Play and learning

Children experienced a rich environment that empowered them to steer their own learning. Opportunities to develop children's language, literacy and numeracy skills were reflected in all areas of the well-planned indoor and outdoor spaces. Children engaged in a healthy balance of child led and adult facilitated activities.

For example, developing mathematical skills through water play that was part of the continuous provision, and engaging with adult supported baking experiences. This meant that children's choices were respected. Children purposefully followed their own agenda naturally through play, whilst developing skills linked to all areas of the curriculum.

Effective observation and assessment skills were used by the team to notice that several children required support with communication and language skills. Support strategies were successfully incorporated into daily routines. For example, staff used 'sign along' to communicate that snack was available, and to offer praise. As a result, children benefited from consistent approaches and repetition which then led to positive outcomes in the progression of children's communication skills.

Staff actively listened to children and extended their learning in a way that was meaningful and valued the child's voice. An example of this was when a child commented on birds finding it hard to get food when it's cold. Children developed their empathy by making bird food and expanded their knowledge of different types of birds. In this way, child centred planning contributed to children recognising that their views mattered. Children benefited from input from adults who promoted a strong value base and helped them to progress well. The service was keen to develop ways in which they consulted with children to ascertain what they know and what they would like to find out.

Whilst attentively supervising, staff skilfully provided children with space and respect to follow their own agenda. Staff expressed interest in children's play using thought provoking questions. This meant that children's rights to play and respect were upheld whilst offering children challenge to develop their thinking skills.

Children spoke positively of their nursery experiences and were keen to share their learning, for example, making soup in the mud kitchen and informing us that caterpillars turned into butterflies. Children demonstrated depth to their knowledge by engaging with challenge questions, for example sharing their knowledge of life-cycles and cocoons. We concluded that staff's passion and high aspirations for children lead to children becoming active, enthusiastic learners. Children were effectively supported by the skilled staff team to help them achieve their full potential.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children's wellbeing was promoted through the pleasant design of the indoor space. High quality, wooden furnishings, natural light and free flow access to the outdoor environment contributed to a sense of calm. Feedback from parents echoed this; "The nursery environment is always calm and relaxed, allowing the children to fully engage with activities". This supported children to regulate their emotions well and developed their concentration so they became deeply involved in purposeful play. Children had their own space to store their belongings and artwork, which showed that they mattered and were valued.

Areas had been carefully considered in terms of their learning value and potential. Following a local authority quality assurance visit, the nursery had embraced feedback to reduce the amount of resources within their indoor environment.

These positive changes contributed to the creation of an environment that was well-planned and where everyone took pride in the space. Real life resources were available which enabled children to develop their imaginary play by drawing upon real life experiences. To complement these, loose parts (open ended resources) empowered children to use their initiative and be resourceful.

Robust infection control measures contributed to children experiencing a hygienic and clean environment. Pictorial routines and timers supported children's understanding of how to wash their hands properly. This minimised the risk of spreading infection and helped to keep children healthy.

Children were supported to effectively assess and managed risks in their play. Comprehensive risk assessments had been created relating to specific parts of the environment. Areas were adapted to reflect children's different stages of development and individual needs. Children moved around the indoor and outdoor spaces freely, laughing and having fun. This meant that children's safety was prioritised whilst supporting their independence.

The service promoted a culture of reflective practice and had put effective measures in place to reduce the likelihood of a child leaving the nursery unattended. For example, regular head counting of children was observed and alarms were activated on doors when opened. These measures contributed to ensuring children's safety. We were confident that the management and leadership team were committed to strengthening these measures further; for example, with plans to explore options to install an additional secure gate within the nursery entrance area.

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 areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The aims and values of the service reflected the work of the staff and the outcomes that children experienced. One of the service's main statements is "shine like the star you are". Staff's strong commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for children contributed to children believing in themselves and being motivated to learn.

Staff showed commitment to increase both children and parents' participation in influencing improvements to the setting. Staff took ownership for developing key areas of the nursery. One staff member was keen to share their plans for developing spaces to grow vegetables in the garden. These foods would then be used to enhance cooking experiences and mealtimes for children. We were encouraged to see that the setting had started to seek the views of parents in these plans to improve the outdoor space. This would strengthen children's sense of ownership of the nursery and ensure it reflects their preferences and wishes.

The setting's improvement plan and self-evaluation system were comprehensive and effective. These were meaningful documents because the contents of these were reflected in practice. For example, the creative approaches taken by the setting to develop stronger links within the community. In their play, children had shown an interest in cafes. Staff extended this by providing the children with the opportunity to select and purchase food from a local larder. The children used the ingredients to create fruit salad and cakes. Grandparents were invited into the nursery to share these as part of a special grandparents' day. The staff observed how children's role play was enhanced through these valuable first hand experiences.

To help demonstrate the impact of such positive experiences on outcomes for children, staff could consider using the PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) cycle.

Staff received constructive feedback following observations on their practice . Staff reflected on how the feedback had increased their self-awareness and led to them improving their practice to make this even more child centred. An example included promoting a slow pace to the way in which staff facilitated a playdough activity with children. This enabled children to explore their creative ideas extensively with minimal adult interruption.

Children benefited from staff who felt well supported in their role. One staff member shared: "I feel well supported by all leaders, each one is approachable, supportive and encouraging and always available if required. I feel informed and valued". We heard how staff were committed to undertaking continuous professional development opportunities, often this was within their own time. The setting were very receptive to our suggestion to introduce regular support and supervision sessions for staff. This would support reflective practice and provide opportunities to consider the impact of any training on outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

The passion and dedication of the staff team shone. Team members gelled well together. Staff inspired each other's practice and had a shared value base. Staff were able to express the positive difference they made to children's lives.

All staff, from members of the management team to staff working directly with children on a daily basis, consistently shared the same opinion of what they believe their setting does well; at the heart of this was building strong, nurturing relationships with children and families. Most importantly, our inspection findings demonstrated that this ethos and vision was effectively translated and embedded into practice. This benefitted children's development.

The staff team showed that they knew children within their own key worker group well, but also children outwith this. This highlighted effective communication and ultimately continuity for children so care was predictable. In turn, this provided children with a strong sense of security.

Children consistently benefited from skilled and knowledgeable staff throughout the day who supported their care, play and learning. We could not differentiate between the early years officer, practitioner, pupil support worker and student; they were all skilled and worked well together. Flexibility meant that children did not experience unnecessary disruption to their play as staff moved to areas to accommodate children's flow of play.

The staff: child numbers was in ratio during our visit. One additional member of staff attended several days each week to offer support. Recruitment was in place to appoint one to one support to help meet a child's individual needs. As a result, the setting was staffed in relation to the needs of the children. Flexibility was evident in that management were available to support as required.

This meant that children were cared for by staff who devoted their attention to extensively meeting their needs and ensuring developmental achievements were achieved.

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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