# Saoghal Beag Sgoil Àraich Uibhist a' Tuath
# Day Care of Children

Sgoil Uibhist a Tuath
Bayhead
Isle of North Uist
HS6 5DX

Telephone: 01870604883

**Type of inspection:**
Unannounced

**Completed on:**
1 May 2024

**Service provided by:**
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar

**Service provider number:**
SP2003002104

**Service no:**
CS2022000243

## About the service

Saoghal Beag Sgoil Àraich Uibhist a' Tuath is based within a primary school on North Uist, Sgoil Uibhist a Tuath. The service is provided by Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar and is registered to provide care to a maximum of 58 children of whom a maximum of 10 children are of primary school age. Parents have a choice of placing their children in either Gaelic or English provision within the setting.

The service is close to a local play park, shops and beaches. Children have access to some of the school facilities.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 1 May 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. There were 20 children present during our inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered. This was the service's first registration since registering in August 2022.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- spoke with a representative of Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Staff knew children very well and responded to their individual needs and wishes.
- Strong relationships had been established with families, which resulted in positive outcomes for children.
- Children were supported to lead their own play and have fun.
- The Sgoil Araich environment was safe, clean, homely and well-maintained.
- Management and staff had a clear vision for the development of the service and were passionate and committed to drive forward improvement.
- Staff worked together as a team and communicated well to ensure children's need were met.

## 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? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 5 - Very 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 both key questions as very good.

**Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support**

Staff were warm and caring in their interactions with children. They cared for children sensitively and in line with their parents, and carers personal preferences. Personal preferences as well as other important information about children was recorded within their personal plans. We looked at some children's personal plans and found them to be a useful tool to support staff care for children. Personal plans highlighted what children needed and showed the progress they were making. This resulted in robust personal planning being in place which took into account the wellbeing indicators and were updated in line with guidance and in partnership with families.

Staff were aware of children's medical and dietary requirements. We identified some areas where the management of medication could be improved for example, consent forms needed to be signed by member of staff accepting medication, signs, and symptoms of how a child may present when "when required" medicine should be administered. In addition to this, staff need to be more vigilant when accepting medication. They should ensure that they read prescribing label thoroughly and adhere to storage instructions.

We observed staff reassuring and welcoming a child and parent during a settling visit. Both the child and the parent were reassured by staff who explained nursery routines and took time to ask questions about the child's routine. Where children required comfort and reassurance they received it from staff quickly. We observed children receiving warm, reassuring cuddles from staff when they were upset.

We observed children's lunchtime experience. Older children went over to the school hall for lunch. The manager told us this supported their transition to the school, enabling them to become familiar with the environment and build positive relationships. Children had some opportunities to develop their independence. They ordered their own lunch and carried it to their chosen seat. In addition to this children were confident pouring their own drinks and helping clear away after lunch. Children enjoyed a sociable lunch time experience where they interacted and had fun with their peers and staff. Younger children had lunch in their own rooms, this minimised transitions for the youngest children, and help them feel secure. Younger children had less opportunity to be independent as their lunch was delivered on plates. The staff team should look at how they could support children to become more independent at lunchtime.

Staff had a very good understanding of their role in keeping children safe and protected. All staff had taken part in child protection and whistleblowing training and were aware of the service's policies and procedures. This kept children safe.

**Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning**

Children were having lots of fun playing and learning indoors and outdoors. Most children were confident in leading their own learning and choosing what they wanted to do. High quality resources and provocations encouraged children to explore and be curious. Staff were skilled at recognising when children needed support, they knew when to intervene to extend children's learning.

We observed staff talking with children and using effective questioning to support their language development and understanding.

We could see how staff valued children's opinions and considered their ideas and interests when planning resources and experiences. Big books of children's learning showed us the types of experiences children had been involved in. Mind maps within big books highlighted how children's interests had been considered, explored, and taken forward. We looked at a mind map where children had expressed an interest in dinosaurs. Evidence within the big book showed us how staff had extended this interest across several curricular areas including, science and technology, numeracy, maths, and literacy. This demonstrated staff's skills in adding breadth and depth to children's learning.

Staff recorded children's learning and progress on an online platform "Seesaw". We looked at children's learning profiles and found that observations were linked to national guidance documents "Curriculum for excellence " and " Realising the ambition". On the whole observations analysed learning and highlighted progress children had made. We highlighted some inconsistencies within children's learning profiles, for example, not all observations recorded potential next steps or possible lines of enquiry. The manager agreed that not all staff were at the same stage in recording observations and agreed to support all staff in this area.

Parents and carers who provided feedback spoke positively about their children's online learning journals and about the experiences and learning their children engaged in. Some of their comments included:

"I love getting seesaw updates about my child. I'm always amazed by how the staff turn my child's interest into educational activities. Staff adapt so quickly to my child's ever-changing likes and dislikes."

"Such a range of fun, creative activities allowing for learning. Art & crafts - so creative! Favourite topic recently was planets and space, we parents were impressed with the signs of the zodiac artwork, the wee spacemen and the papier-mâché planets. Numeracy is well covered by a range of activities."

"Via seesaw app I can see how varied, and child led the play is. Excellent creativity and good to get frequent updates with photos and videos".

## 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 areas for improvement.

**Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities**

Children were cared for in an environment that was warm, bright, and well maintained. The Sgoil Ariach had their own dedicated space within Sgoil Uibhist a Tuath. The Sgoil Ariach at times shared space with the Sgoil such as the dining hall and office space. Children benefitted from the smooth transition they experienced between the Sgoil Araich and the Sgoil.

The service had four playrooms, one Gaelic medium and one Gaelic learners 3-5 room, and one Gaelic medium and one Gaelic learners 1-3 room. We found each of the playrooms to be welcoming, well-resourced and comfortable for all children. Each room had direct access to outdoor play and learning.

During our inspection visit we observed children playing and learning outdoors for extended periods of time. Staff supported this well if children wanted to come inside staff facilitated this. This showed us that children had the freedom to play outdoors whenever they wanted. Children were excited outdoors. They had lots to do to support their physical development and well-being. Children had opportunities to explore and be curious about a wide range of natural resources outdoors.

Children benefitted from opportunities to learn about and be part of their local community. Children told us about the types of outings they went on and how much they enjoyed them. We found further evidence of this in photographs contained within big floor books. These opportunities enabled children to feel secure and part of the local community. Parents who provided feedback valued the opportunities their children had to be part of their local community. Some of their comments included:

"Our child has loved outdoor play in the nursery garden, experienced beach trips, a trip to the agricultural show and also to the airport to watch the planes. All of these outdoor experiences are so rewarding for our son's development, and we can tell he absolutely loves them."

"The children are taken out to the beach, community garden and park close by to the building which is great for them and allows them to explore."

"My child has the opportunity to play outdoors every day in the garden. They are also always out at the nearby play park, community garden at the shop or on the beach. I am so grateful my child gets these wonderful experiences as it's not always easy to find time to get outdoors after we get home."

Overall effective systems were in place to minimise the potential risk of the spread of infection. Staff were vigilant in supporting children to wash their hands effectively. We observed hand wash taking place at key points such as after personal care, after playing outdoors and before and after mealtimes. The manager highlighted to us that she was aware that nappy changing facilities did not meet best practice guidance. Guidance states that children under two years of age should not be changed in the same facilities as children over two years. This is because children under two years are more vulnerable and potentially more prone to infection. After discussion, the manager provided a temporary solution and has confirmed with the Care Inspectorate since our inspection that children under two years of age are being changed separately. This change will help to minimise the spread of infection and support children's health and well-being.

## How good is our leadership? 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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

Children and families benefitted from a skilled and motivated manager who was committed to supporting children, families and staff. The manager who was appointed in January 2023, had invested time getting to know children, families and staff. Staff who provided feedback told us that they felt cared for and supported both personally and professionally by the new manager. As a result of the managers support staff motivation was high, and they were eager to support the manager in the service's planned improvement journey.

The manager recognised the value of involving parents and carers in the child's learning and in the life of the setting. Throughout the setting we saw opportunities where families could give suggestions and provide feedback. Most of the families who provided feedback to the Care Inspectorate confirmed that they and their child were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service, some disagreed. Some of their comments included:

"Answering surveys and good communication with the nursery management."

"We have been given opportunities for stay and play sessions and fundraising events. Staff are always asking if there is anything we would like to see them implement in the room. Any suggestions we have made in the past have been followed through."

"We joined the nursery in August 2023 which is recent so haven't been involved in anything like this as of yet but more than happy to contribute when the time comes."

"Aware we can add comments to comment section on wall displays at times. Seesaw also. Staff are approachable and wonderful. Not sure how else we have been involved or invited to be involved in the development of the service."

In order to involve all parents to have the opportunity to contribute to the ongoing development of the service the manager should ensure that all parents are made aware of the systems in place to gather their ideas and opinions on the service and how it could be improved.

The manager had a good understanding of self evaluation and improvement planning. She had been careful not to overwhelm staff when sharing self evaluation documents and tools. As a result of this staff had a clear understanding of what the service's improvement priorities were and how they could be part of and included in the improvement journey. Because staff understood and were involved in the improvement journey they felt empowered and motivated to support and work with the manager to achieve desired outcomes for children and families.

## 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**

Children benefitted from a nurturing, caring and dedicated staff team, who were focused on the individual needs of children attending the setting. Staff were warm, welcoming and engaged positively in the inspection process. Parents and carers who provided feedback about the staff team were very positive. Some of their comments included:

"The staff are lovely! So kind and caring towards the children, e.g. allow them to sit on their lap if tired, always supportive and kind. Always an interesting selection of activities planned. Impressed with the creativity, nice art work comes home. Feel confident I can approach staff with a query or concern."

"We know them very well. They are always friendly and give us verbal updates on our son at pick up which is much appreciated. They always have time for you. Our son knows the staff in his nursery room best, but you can tell how much the rooms mix (which is great) as he is also very confident and familiar with other staff members."

During our inspection there were enough staff to meet minimum staffing ratios and meet the individual needs of children. Staff understood that continuity of care was important for children and communicated well with each other when tasks took them away from their responsibilities. Staff worked well to ensure children were supervised throughout the day and there was minimal disruption to their play. As a result, children experienced a calm,
nurturing experience.

The manager and staff team were supported by the local authority early years team. The manager told us that she valued this support. In addition to this, the manager and staff benefitted from team exchange meetings and networking with staff and managers from other local authority services. This meant that staff were able to share best practice and ideas with each other. This improved 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? | 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? | 4 - Good |
|---|---|
| 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities | 4 - Good |

| How good is our leadership? | 5 - Very Good |
|---|---|
| 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well | 5 - Very Good |

| How good is our staff team? | 5 - Very Good |
|---|---|
| 4.3 Staff deployment | 5 - Very Good |

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