

Maisondieu Townhead Pre School Class Day Care of Children

Maisondieu Primary School
St. Andrew Street
Brechin
DD9 6JJ

Telephone: 01356 627444

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

15 February 2019

Service provided by:

Angus Council

Service provider number:

SP2003000043

Service no:

CS2003015778

About the service

Maisondieu Townhead Pre School Class is an integral part of Maisondieu Primary School, serving a local catchment area in the Angus town of Brechin. The nursery is managed by the primary school head teacher and the deputy head, who has delegated responsibility for the management of the nursery. The nursery is staffed by a senior early years practitioner, who has delegated responsibility for the day to day running of the nursery, early years practitioners and a modern apprentice. The nursery's conditions of registration state:

"To provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 36 children aged from three years to those not attending primary school. Extended daycare may be provided to a maximum of 16 children aged from three years to eight years".

The service aims:

- "To provide a warm, friendly, safe environment."
- "To create an inclusive setting that meets the needs of the children."
- "To provide a curriculum that caters for the needs of individual children."

What people told us

We spoke with children throughout the inspection, who were observed to be confident and settled in the nursery. We saw that they were happy, secure and enjoying their nursery experiences. Children's comments included:

'We're going to gym'

'I'm sorting the kitchen - it's a tip'

'My baby's just hungry - that's why she's crying - I need to make her bottle'

'She's sleeping in here - it's nice and cosy for her'

'Lets pretend there's a gran - and she's come to see us - and the baby.'

'It's bath time - baby - is that ok? Is it nice and warm?'

'The video is working now - they're making boats - just toy ones.'

'I'm going to drive the fastest boat - which one do you want?'

'We need get a stand for this iPad - so it doesn't fall over and I can see it.'

'Wow this is a really big house - how can we make the roof?'

'We had ten before - now there are eight'

'I got stuck in the door - we need to make it bigger.'

'I love seeing my friends at nursery'

'We just play'

We spoke with five parents and carers during the inspection, who all spoke very highly of the staff and the care and support that their child received. Parents told us:

'The staff are great - I have never had any problems.'

'He loves coming - he is always talking about the staff at home.'

'The children seem to do lots of different things - plenty for them to do.'

'The staff are all friendly - am very happy with everything.'

We also received six completed Care Standards Questionnaires from parents and carers who spoke highly of the service. Five of the parents who returned questionnaires to us 'strongly agreed' and one 'agreed' that they were overall happy with the quality of care that their child receives in the service. Their comments included:

'Very pleased with the service that myself and my children are getting from this nursery. I am always aware of what they are doing, learning, eating and of their progress. The staff are friendly and always able to help when needed.'

'The staff have been great with my son, ensuring that he is involved and encouraged with all activities.'

'My child is always happy and keen to go to nursery. He talks fondly about his experiences. I enjoyed the stay-and-play and PEEP sessions. I am kept very well informed through the Seesaw app. Friendly and helpful staff.'

One parent commented less favourably on the quality of food since it was being provided by Tayside Contracts. She was also critical of the work undertaken in the nursery garden by Angus Council, finding that plants and the willow arch had been cut back too severely. She felt that this had damaged and spoilt some of the hard work developing the garden area by staff, children and parents.

One parent was also concerned about road safety in the roads surrounding the school. These comments were shared with senior staff at the inspection feedback meeting whilst noting that these issues were largely out of the direct control of the early years service.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance systems. These demonstrated the service priorities for improvement and detailed how they were monitoring the quality of the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

During the inspection we considered the quality of care and support, from the evidence gathered during our inspection we evaluated this theme as excellent. We also looked at the quality of the environment which we evaluated as very good.

This enthusiastic team had created a most welcoming and supportive atmosphere, where children were seen to be happy, confident and secure. Children were inquisitive and focused at play throughout the inspection. They were motivated by the rich learning environment and skilled staff engagement that effectively supported them at play. Children were thoroughly enjoying their nursery experiences and developing a range of skills and knowledge through broad play opportunities. Staff had great fun with the children, they smiled, laughed and were always warm and approachable. Excellent teamwork was observed that ensured that children's needs were met and that all areas of the nursery were well supervised.

Children were respected and valued and their emotional wellbeing was very well supported, with a nurturing and restorative approach firmly embedded into practice. Staff valued children's ideas, achievements and contributions. They praised and encouraged which was developing confidence and positive self-esteem in children. Staff had formed strong relationships with children, they knew them very well and were highly attentive. Pedagogical principles were well understood and reflected in all aspects of practice. Children took active roles in leading their own play and confidently made choices and suggested ideas, which staff willingly facilitated. Responsive planning that took very good account of children's ideas and interests was well established.

The nursery was calm and settled. Staff used gentle and kind voices to communicate with children. They added value to children's learning through use of open-ended questions that challenged children and supported them to problem solve and think creatively. Literacy and numeracy were very well supported in a manner that was naturally woven into play. Children used wide vocabulary, expressed themselves well and engaged in meaningful conversations with adults and peers. They counted confidently and were developing their understanding of number, shape and size.

We saw that children had excellent opportunities to be independent and responsible. They approached staff readily for help and confidently carried out nursery tasks with minimal adult direction. They took active roles in accessing and managing risk within their play.

Children were sociable and had made good friendships. They played cooperatively, supported each other kindly, they shared, took turns and developed ideas together. The mostly free-flow sessions provided children with great scope to develop their interests and revisit and consolidate their learning. Play was not interrupted and the sessions flowed with ease. Group times were focused and age appropriate, retaining children's interest and reinforcing the shared bonds of being part of a group. The observed gym session with children was excellent, children were active and developing a range of physical skills and awareness of space, speed and musical rhythm. They were supported very well to learn about their bodies, feeling their heart beat and being aware of their breathing and the impact of physical exercise on their bodies.

Staff were clear about their roles and responsibilities for keeping children safe and protected and worked effectively with other agencies when required to support individual families.

Children's health was well supported through the varied and healthy snack menu, daily fresh air and active play, good approach to hand washing and the routine discussions that reinforced healthy habits and safe behaviours.

Parents and carers had opportunities to join the nursery session during stay-and-play days and to be part of a supportive PEEP group that worked together with children and their parents. These opportunities enabled parents to actively contribute to the development of the nursery. Staff worked in a supportive, respectful and collaborative manner that established open and trusting relationships with parents.

The environment was spacious, comfortable and inviting. The neutral decor and furniture contributed to creating the calm and relaxed atmosphere. There was a real pride in this well cared for early years environment, with staff and children taking responsibility for keeping the nursery tidy. Areas were well organised and provided ample space and well organised resources for children to play. For example, children were very creative and worked well together as a team building with large wooden blocks in a spacious construction area. The designated space enabled children to explore, investigate and safely test a range of ideas without curtailing other children at play.

There was a spacious and well presented home corner that had a wealth of resources, including many real world and natural materials that supported learning. A clock, cookery books, measuring jugs, weighing scales and materials to sort, match and count were supporting numeracy and literacy in this aspect of play.

Children had very good access to the inviting outside play area, where they were seen to be enjoying a range of resources and experiences. This included access to some natural and open-ended materials that promoted creativity and imagination. Children confidently ran, climbed, jumped and balanced. They were happy and active in the fresh air and developing very good awareness of managing risk.

Outcomes for children were found to be excellent. They were happy, thriving and enthusiastic for learning. We concluded that this was a very well organised service that met children's needs extremely well.

What the service could do better

This service was operating to a very high standard and we identified very few areas for improvement. We did suggest that staff continue to develop children's learning journals, placing greater emphasis on revisiting and tracking those identified next steps and challenges for children.

We also suggested that staff continue to develop the outside play space to offer broader opportunity and more materials to support creativity, including expanding 'loose parts' materials. This was an area also identified by staff and highlighted as a key priority in their improvement plan. There was a reflective and professional culture throughout the service with a continuous and well embedded approach to review and improvement. Staff discussed their improvement plan and shared their ideas and plans for further service development during the inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

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

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.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
13 Jan 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent
22 Feb 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent
15 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 5 - Very good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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