Mount Pleasant Nursery
Day Care of Children
Mount Pleasant Primary School
Castletown Road
Thurso
KW14 8HL
Telephone: 01847 893419

Inspected by: Jacque Fee
Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 24 September 2013
Contents

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Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Care service number:
CS2003013517

Contact details for the inspector who inspected this service:
Jacque Fee
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Email enquiries@careinspectorate.com
Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

- Quality of Care and Support  4  Good
- Quality of Environment  4  Good
- Quality of Staffing  4  Good
- Quality of Management and Leadership  4  Good

What the service does well

The staff of Mount Pleasant Nursery had established lots of ways for children to take the lead. This had helped create an inclusive environment where everyone felt their contribution was valued.

What the service could do better

The service had identified the following areas for improvement and should continue with those plans:

* To continue to explore ways of obtaining feedback from children and parents, including parent/carer questionnaires
* To review policies on a regular basis, including the nursery aims
* To work with staff on a calendar of staff development and review
* To develop ways for staff to be more involved in the audit process

What the service has done since the last inspection

There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection.
Conclusion

Mount Pleasant Nursery is a happy place for children to thrive, learn and play. Children were encouraged to make decisions about the next steps in their learning. Management should now work together with staff and families to address the areas for improvement identified within this report.

Who did this inspection

Jacque Fee
1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website www.careinspectorate.com. This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it needs to do more to improve, we may make a recommendation or requirement.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service or provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service based on best practice or the National Care Standards.

- A requirement is a statement, which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the Act") and secondary legislation made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of Regulations, Orders or Conditions, a requirement may be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Care Inspectorate.

Mount Pleasant Nursery is a service provided by The Highland Council. The service is part of Mount Pleasant Primary School in Thurso, Caithness. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 30 children aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

The service operates a morning and afternoon session, Monday to Friday during term time.

"Mount Pleasant Primary and Nursery School aims to be a happy and dynamic learning environment in which pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Every member of our school community should be treated equally and with respect."

A full copy of the aims and objectives can be obtained from the service.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 4 - Good
Quality of Environment - Grade 4 - Good
Quality of Staffing - Grade 4 - Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 4 - Good
This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.
2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out
In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection
We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection. This was carried out by Inspector, Jacqué Fee. The inspection took place on Tuesday 24 September 2013 between 9.30 am and 3.30 pm. We gave feedback to the Headteacher on the same day.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed annual return and self assessment forms that we had asked the provider to complete and submit to us.

We sent 10 Care Standard questionnaires to parents/carers who use the service and received 6 completed questionnaires before the inspection visit. We also issued 2 questionnaires to staff that were completed and returned.

During this inspection process we gathered evidence from various sources, including the following -

We spoke with:

* The Headteacher
* Two members of staff
* Groups of children
* Five parents/carers

We looked at:

* Registration certificate
* Insurance certificate
* Evidence from the provider’s self assessment
* Policies and procedures
* Observations of how staff work with children
* Registration information and children’s learning journeys
* Parent information displays and handbook
* Staff files and training records
* Administration and storage of medication
* Audit of accidents and incidents
* Risk assessments

**Grading the service against quality themes and statements**

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call ‘quality themes’. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is ‘Quality of care and support’. Under each quality theme are ‘quality statements’ which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

**Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)**

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

**Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services’ responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org
The annual return
Every year all care services must complete an ‘annual return’ form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment
Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self-assessment document from the service. We were satisfied with the way the service completed this and with the relevant information included for each heading that we grade services under.

The service identified what it thought they did well, some areas for development and any changes it had planned. The service told us how their users had taken part in the self assessment process.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account
There were 16 children present during the morning session and 9 in the afternoon. At the beginning of their session children came together for circle time. Whiteboards were used to encourage children to share their news and talk about plans for the day. Children were curious about our presence and keen to share their own achievements, such as:

"I need to help you with your work - what is it you are doing?"

"Look how big this is!"

"Can I write about it in my book?"

Taking carers' views into account
Ten Care Standards Questionnaires were sent out by the Care Inspectorate and six were returned before the inspection. Written comments from parents/carers included:
“Ms Malcolm and Mrs Boulton are great with the kids both my youngest kids have attended this nursery and have a great relationship with them and they get to know each child as individuals as well.”

“I am very happy and feel my child is safe and being looked after it is an excellent nursery.”

“There are occasions where staff have seemed overwhelmed with their workload. My child has had ongoing issues with one certain issue and staff simply haven’t had time to deal with it.”

We spoke with five parents on the day of the inspection and their comments have been incorporated in the relevant sections of this report.
3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service strengths

At the inspection we found the performance of the service was good for this statement.

There was a reception area with a parents’ notice board that had information on all aspects of the service, including a copy of their registration certificate and most recent Inspection Reports from the Care Inspectorate. There were advice leaflets from other organisations and community events. For example information about Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC). GIRFEC is the national approach promoted by Scottish Government for everyone to work together to meet children’s all round needs.

This written information kept families informed of the child’s immediate and wider world however photographs, children’s artwork and comments was a key feature of the service and were used as tool for involvement, allowing parents to see what children had been experiencing, to stimulate discussion and to help children choose what they would like to do. For example, there was a graffiti wall where parents and carers could add their suggestions and comments.

Children were encouraged to be independent. They had their own coat pegs in the cloakroom area and a drawer in the playroom where they kept personal belongings, including their Learning Journey folder. We could see that children were used to taking these out to look at individually, with their peers or with staff and took pride in their achievements. On child had recently overcome a phobia about stairs, a goal she had set herself.

“I went up the stairs I think I should move up the rocket!”
The ‘rocket’ was a chart on the wall with children’s photos. Children moved up and down the rocket according to achievements and good behaviour. Other tools used by the service to promote children’s participation included:

* whiteboards for children and staff to talk about the day’s events and make plans
* smiley face chart to record when children had achieved a task
* volume monitor where children rated how they were feeling
* floorbooks, which was a method of planning activities based around children’s own ideas.

Parents/carers were represented on the wider school’s Parent and Staff Association and also regularly attended parent evenings and play dates that let them know how the service was provided and to share ideas for activities that would support their child’s learning and development. We looked at parents’ comments on response sheets about their child’s annual report. These included:

“I am really pleased with **’s report. It can be really difficult to find out what she has been doing in nursery - typical 3 year old! The report provides me with lots of information and she always talks fondly with her teachers so I know she has a good relationship with them.”

All of the parents who returned questionnaires to the Care Inspectorate confirmed that they received clear information about the service before their child started. They also agreed that they continued to receive information through the noticeboards and newsletters. Parents either agreed or strongly agreed that staff shared information about their child’s learning and development.

**Areas for improvement**

One of the parents who responded to our questionnaires disagreed that staff had worked with them and their child to develop an education and support programme. They also disagreed that staff regularly assessed their child’s learning and development or that they asked child’s views in order to help with planning. The respondent had added:

“There are occasions where staff have seemed overwhelmed with their workload. My child has had ongoing issues with one certain issue and staff simply haven’t had time to deal with it.”

At feedback we talked to management about ways of promoting parent involvement in service improvement. For example, in this case, by focusing on specific quality themes, such as care and support or staffing, they would help people understand how they could contribute to the planning process.
In their self-assessment the service had identified the need to explore ways of obtaining feedback from parents, such as reviewing the questionnaires. Findings from previous questionnaires had not been collated in a way that highlighted for families how their views and contributions were taken account of in service improvement. Please see Recommendation 1.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 4 - Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 1

**Recommendations**

1. The service should consult with children, parents and carers to assess their performance against all four Care Standard quality themes, analyse the findings and publish them.

   National Care Standards early education and childcare up to age 16: Standard 13: Improving the Service.
Statement 3
We ensure that service users’ health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service strengths
At the inspection we found the performance of the service was good for this statement. We considered children’s learning journeys under this quality statement along with the policies and procedures that were in place to help staff promote children’s health, wellbeing and safety.

We looked at children’s registration information and learning journeys for evidence to support how children’s health, wellbeing and safety needs were being met. Personal information, consent forms and observations of children linked to the national curriculum guidance had been documented.

Staff had asked parents to complete ‘all about me’ sheets with their child before the child started nursery. This had pointers for children to discuss such as ‘what my family want me to learn’ and ‘what my family thinks I’m good at’. Children had determined the steps in their learning journey in a format that had been designed to be child friendly. Some children had added drawings to the stepping stones and staff had written what the child said:

“I am not scared of stairs anymore and I am big so not scared of heights.”

In this way children were self-assessing their own learning and development. This was in keeping with the service values about supporting children and their families to feel part of a community of learners.

The caring ethos was evident in staff interactions with children throughout the day. We observed circle time being used for shared planning at the beginning of the session and then at the end for children to talk about their experiences. Children were encouraged to voice their feelings by a teddy being passed round the circle while children were asked individually by staff what made them happy. This also helped children to learn to listen to and respect the needs of others. Children had chosen their own pictorial ‘golden rules’ and these were displayed on the playroom and cloakroom walls.

Staff knew children well. Children were offered an appropriate range of activities throughout that met their individual needs and stage of development. This included outdoor experiences and staff were flexible as to when they were timetabled so that they could be responsive to children’s interests. The service provided a secure outdoor play area and we observed children participating in energetic free play in the fresh air that contributed to their sense of wellbeing. Staff modelled healthy lifestyles through modelling good hygiene routines, such as encouraging children to wash their hands after playing outside and before handling food.
We sent out 10 care standard questionnaires and 6 were returned by parents/carers, all of who were happy with the overall quality of care provided by the service. This was confirmed by the parents we spoke to on the day of inspection. For example they commented on the caring nature of staff: “They all know what they are doing.”

Areas for improvement

The service had identified the need to review their policies and should continue with the plans. We saw that a policy and written procedures were in place for the storage and administration of prescribed medication. However on the day of inspection, we found medication in the cupboard that was not labelled with the child’s name. Paperwork also needed to expand on the information about when the medication should be administered. At feedback we recommended to management that they review existing procedures in line with good practice. Please refer to the Care Inspectorate’s publication: ‘Management of Medication in Daycare and Childminding Services’ (see Recommendation 1).

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 1

Recommendations

1. The service should review the policy and procedures for administration and storage of medication and incorporate best practice. Staff should refer to the Care Inspectorate’s publication: Management of Medication in Daycare and Childminding Services.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service strengths
Please refer to Quality Theme 1 Standard 1.1 Service Strengths for approaches used by the service to promote participation.

We observed that staff took account of children’s wishes and suggestions.

During one session a child was keen to go out to play - “You said we could get to go outside” and staff swapped their plans to make this happen.

Children were allocated tasks to help with tidying up their environment. Staff respected one child’s wish to delay tidying up as he wanted to complete an activity.

Areas for improvement
Please refer to Quality Theme 1 Standard 1.1 Areas for Improvement and related recommendation.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0
Number of recommendations: 0
Statement 2

We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected.

Service strengths

At the inspection we found the performance of the service was good for this statement.

A secure entry system was in place. There was a visitors’ book and we also observed children self registering. Staff took a written register and this was transferred to an electronic register on the whole school’s database. This ensured that management were aware who was in the building and could account for children’s presence and safety.

The premises were bright, attractive and clean. The playrooms and outdoor area were organised in a way that allowed children to move around freely and choose from a range of activities and resources. Children had additional access to a soft play and sensory room within the school where they could exercise and explore their feelings. The service had a Health and Safety Policy which made sure that risk assessments had been carried out for all areas used by the children.

We were able to see that appropriate records were kept for children’s accidents and incidents. Management told us that staff regularly updated their training on First Aid and Child Protection. The Child Protection Policy was based on the local authority guidelines and was on display so that parents were aware of staff responsibilities for safeguarding children. Other policies and procedures were in place to prevent the spread of infection and to keep children and staff healthy.

All of the parents/carers who returned questionnaires to the Care Inspectorate strongly agreed or agreed that the service provided an environment that was safe, secure, hygienic, smoke free, pleasant and stimulating. They also believed there was enough space for their children to play and get involved in a range of activities.

Areas for improvement

We saw that the fridge where food for children’s snacks was stored was dirty which could promote the spread of infection and that there was no thermometer to monitor the temperature. We also noted that there were no paper towels in the children’s toilet or at the playroom sink where children washed their hands prior to snack time. Children were using a communal towel in both areas which was contrary to national guidance on the prevention and control of infection. At feedback we advised management to make staff aware of the Health Protection Scotland (HPS) publication: Infection ‘Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings’ (2011). Please refer to Recommendation 1.
Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 1

Recommendations

1. Management should monitor the measures that are in place to prevent the spread of infection within the service. For example this should include how cleaning checklists and hygiene routines are followed by people who use the service. This is to prevent the spread of infection and keep children and staff healthy. They should refer to HPS guidance: 'Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings'.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to age 16 Standard 2: A safe environment and Standard 14: Well-managed service.
Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service strengths
Please refer to Quality Theme 1 Standard 1.1 Service Strengths for approaches used by the service to promote participation.

Families could get to know all the people who were part of the school community by looking at the photo boards. On this were displayed photographs of the staff and their roles.

One of the parents that we spoke to was a member of the Parents and Staff Association for the primary school. She told us that they discussed nursery issues at their meetings. This meant that parents were working in partnership with staff in making decisions about the service provided to their children.

Areas for improvement
Please refer to Quality Theme 1 Standard 1.1 Areas for Improvement and related recommendation.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0
Statement 3
We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service strengths
At this inspection we found that the performance of this service was good for this statement. Staff records showed that Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration was documented. The SSSC is responsible for registering people who work in social services and regulating their education and training. The service supported staff in meeting the requirements of SSSC, such as offering annual staff development reviews (SDR) where they could talk about their work, identify gaps in training and look at areas for personal development. Families were given the contact details and information about the SSSC in the nursery handbook so that they could be confident that their child was cared for by competent staff that had gone through a careful selection procedure.

The staff we spoke to were very motivated and felt supported in their work with children. A peripatetic early years teacher from the local authority undertook regular observations of practice within the service to support best practice and identify areas for improvement. The staff had completed and returned our questionnaires. These confirmed that the service had relevant policies and procedures in place to support the safe recruitment of staff and their ongoing training and development. Staff also agreed that the service asked for their opinion on how it could improve.

We saw from wall displays and children’s portfolios that staff were using national curriculum guidance to support their planning and offer children appropriate experiences. There were children attending the service who had additional support needs. We could see, from sampling individualised plans that staff had worked in partnership with other professionals and specialist services to ensure the child’s all round needs were being supported.

In the Care Standard questionnaires returned, all parents/carers agreed or strongly agreed that staff had the skills and experience to care for their child. They also believed that the staff treated their child fairly and with respect and that they would protect them from harm, abuse, bullying and neglect.

Areas for improvement
Two of the six parents who responded to our questionnaire disagreed that there was always enough staff to provide good quality of care. Management confirmed that staffing ratios were maintained at all times within regulations and the service had additional access to support staff. On the day of inspection we observed that staff had no time off the floor for breaks or planning. At feedback we talked to management about whether use could be made of the peripatetic teacher or Headteacher’s time or planning and she agreed to look at this possibility.
Staff had told us that while they were supported as a team, they did not receive one-to-one supervision. At feedback we spoke to management about the benefits of individual supervision so that staff could be supported to identify areas for development as well as strengths in their individual practice. In their self-assessment the service had identified the need to work with staff on a calendar of staff development and review (SDR). They should continue with these plans.

We looked at staff individual files and could not see any record of recent training although staff had told us about training on floor books that they had attended. We talked to management about how they could make clearer links between regular individual SDR, the service training plans and the wider school improvement plan. This would help demonstrate a strategic approach to developing staff and improving the service provided to children and families. Please see Recommendation 1.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 4 - Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 1

**Recommendations**

1. The provider should review their systems for identifying and monitoring staff training and development needs. This is to ensure that training and support is carefully planned and documented in line with national and local guidelines.

   National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 Standard 12: Confidence in staff and Standard 14: Well managed service.
Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service strengths
Please refer to Quality Theme 1 Standard 1.1 Service Strengths for approaches used by the service to promote participation.

Areas for improvement
Please refer to Quality Theme 1 Standard 1.1 Areas for Improvement and related recommendation.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good
Number of requirements: 0
Number of recommendations: 0
Statement 4

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide.

Service strengths

At the inspection we found the performance of the service was good for this statement.

On our inspection we could see from the quality assurance systems that the service used Child at the Centre 2 (a nationally recognised quality assurance tool) to identify areas for service improvement and plan next steps with staff. Management told us that they used the findings from this when preparing the Standards and Quality Report (SQR) for the local authority. We saw that the school had been working closely with older school pupils to make the language of the SQR more child-friendly. Management told us that the plan was to use the child-friendly version to help the nursery children be more involved in the future self-assessment of the service.

We saw that other policies and procedures were in place that had been informed by national and local guidance and were made available to parents/carers. The Standards and Quality and Care Inspectorate Reports were easily accessible to them. This helped parents/carers understand the systems in place to regulate and monitor the quality of the service.

The Complaints Policy for the local authority and Care Inspectorate were on display for people to read and appropriate procedures were in place to record complaints. This made it more likely that parents would voice their views knowing that they would be taken seriously.

Areas for improvement

The Care Inspectorate had not been notified of the Manager’s name change and there was other information for people who used the service that needed to be refreshed. For example the complaints procedure did not advise parents that they could raise a concern independently with the Care Inspectorate. There were outdated leaflets on working with children under three. The most recent national guidance produced by Scottish Government for this age group is: “Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland’s Children and Families”. Materials about this guidance are available for both parents/carers and staff from Education Scotland.
The service had identified the need to involve staff more in the audit process and at feedback we discussed with management about how this could be achieved. Management had made use of Child at the Centre 2 in the past but were not using this effectively to support staff and other stakeholder involvement in self-evaluation. We have already made a recommendation under Quality Theme 1, Statement 1.1 about collating the views of families.

The Care Standards are embedded in the Child at the Centre 2 therefore the performance indicators could help staff think about how the service is performing over the Care Standard quality themes (care and support, the environment, staffing and management and leadership) then plan their next steps. Making explicit reference to evidence from the Child at the Centre 2 would make the service more visible within the wider school’s development plan. Partnership with parents is a key component of Child at the Centre 2 therefore its use by staff would help demonstrate that everyone’s contribution was valued and had been taken forward by management. We have made a recommendation for management to review the existing quality assurance system to ensure that it is fit for purpose. See Recommendation 1.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 4 - Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 1

**Recommendations**

1. Management should continue to develop their quality assurance systems to ensure that they capture areas for improvement within the service and that all stakeholders have been involved in the process.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 Standard 13: Improving the service and Standard 14: Well-managed service.
4 Other information

Complaints
No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

Enforcements
We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

Additional Information
n/a

Action Plan
Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Inspectorate re-grading a Quality Statement within the Quality of Management and Leadership Theme (or for childminders, Quality of Staffing Theme) as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme being re-graded as unsatisfactory (1).
## 5 Summary of grades

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## 6 Inspection and grading history

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<td>Management and Leadership 4 - Good</td>
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All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.
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