

Newfield Primary School Nursery Class Day Care of Children

Muirhead
Stonehouse
Larkhall
ML9 3HG

Telephone: 01698 792 084

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
19 March 2021

Service provided by:
South Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003481

Service no:
CS2003015323

About the service

Newfield Primary School Nursery Class registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

The service is provided from Newfield Primary School in Stonehouse, Larkhall, South Lanarkshire. The nursery are currently using the gym hall as a temporary measure while an extension of the nursery is underway. There are designated outdoor play areas accessible to the children. The service is close to the town centre, main roads and public transport links.

The service is provided by South Lanarkshire Council and is registered to provide an early learning and childcare service to a maximum of 32 children at any one time aged from 3 years to those not yet attending Primary School.

The aims of the service had recently been reviewed and updated in consultation with children, families and staff. These stated:

'Hopeful - to provide nurture and support to ensure children are hopeful for their future.
Awesome - to showcase children's talents and achievements and make them feel valued and included.
Proud - to encourage children to respect themselves and others, allowing them to reach their full potential.
Playful - to enrich the learning across all areas of the curriculum through indoor and outdoor play.
Yourself - to celebrate every child's uniqueness and cater for all needs. (HAPPY)'

This was a short notice announced inspection which began using virtual methodology. This includes the use of technology to inspect services. Due to online connection issues within the service, we visited the service for observations. We requested any required documentation to be emailed to us over the course of the week.

This was a focussed inspection to evaluate how well children were being supported during the COVID-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on the key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of children experiencing care during the pandemic.

The inspection visit took place on 17 March 2021. Feedback was shared with the service on 19 March 2021.

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

What people told us

We observed children to be happy and settled within the service as they participated in various activities, both indoors and outdoors. Individual and small groups of children engaged in conversation with us. They were keen to discuss their drawings and tell us about their favourite activities and experiences at nursery.

We shared our contact details with families to invite parents to speak with us. Ten parents contacted us by telephone or email to share their views. All parents highlighted the high quality of support from staff over the course of the pandemic which had supported both their children and their family. They told us about the benefits of the online learning experiences which had been offered during the lockdown periods and the regular communications with staff. This had contributed to children's health and wellbeing, their play and learning experiences and assisted the children in maintaining relationships with staff and other 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 and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	3 - Adequate
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

3 - Adequate

Quality Indicator 5.1: Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19.

Management and staff were aware of national and local authority guidance in relation to COVID-19 for early learning and childcare settings. Emphasis had been placed on supporting children's emotional health and wellbeing while they were attending nursery or at home during periods of lockdown. We observed children taking an active part in discussions and activities which enabled them to share their thoughts, feelings and emotions through language, visuals, role play and drawings. This contributed to children feeling safe and secure.

Children were generally confident in the new routines and procedures and participated in play and learning experiences within their designated groups, both indoors and outdoors. They were supported and reminded of new routines sensitively by staff when required. All staff were caring and nurturing in their interactions and most children were engaged in the activities and the resources accessible to them. However, as the choice of resources was limited within each area, this meant some opportunities to meet children's interests and extend their play and learning were missed. (See Area for Improvement 1).

The majority of children had an opportunity to play outside on the day of the inspection. We asked the service to consider how they could maximise the use of the outdoors in line with current guidance, as evidence suggests being outdoors limits transmission of the virus. As the gym hall had no windows, ensuring all children had daily access to fresh air and natural light would contribute to children's general wellbeing and promote active, healthy lifestyles.

Regular and effective communication with families had continued throughout lockdown and holiday periods. This had enabled staff to update children's personal plans with parents, maintain and build relationships and be responsive to children's changing care and support needs prior to their return. Consent forms for the administration of medication should be part of this regular review. This would ensure all medication records were accurate.

Staff were knowledgeable about child protection procedures and their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. They had maintained relationships with external agencies over the pandemic to support children and families, where required.

Quality Indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff.

There was clear signage and markers on the ground to assist adults in physically distancing when dropping off or collecting their children. Procedures had recently been reviewed to stagger drop off and pick up times for different groups of children after consultation with families. This limited numbers of people arriving at the same time and included families in decision-making.

The nursery class was utilising the gym hall while a planned extension of the nursery playroom was undertaken. The layout had been planned to ensure only one group of children used each space on a rotational basis. We acknowledged efforts had been made to ensure effective hand hygiene practices and infection prevention and control procedures continued within the temporary accommodation. Portable handwashing sinks and revised cleaning procedures for areas and resources had been introduced.

However, these changes had an impact on children's play and routines as an adult was required to pump the water for each child. After discussions, the management team agreed to review the procedures to ensure less waiting times and better outcomes for children.

We sampled the risk assessments for the areas now accessible to the nursery children and staff, both indoors and outdoors. These had not been reviewed and updated to take account of the nursery using these areas full time at present. We highlighted the risks related to the storage of cleaning materials and some resources and particular cleaning routines which should be improved. These improvements would contribute to children's overall health, safety and wellbeing. (See Area for Improvement 2).

Staff were aware of the when to use PPE (personal protective equipment) and the hygienic storage of this. We observed staff and other adults wearing PPE where required in the school grounds and communal areas of the building. Systems were in place for isolation should a child become symptomatic while at nursery and the relevant information was shared regularly with families. This ensured families were informed and included which helped to minimise the potential transmission of the virus.

Quality Indicator 5.3: Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19

Staff were committed to their work and felt supported both professionally and personally by the local authority and the management team. They shared particular examples of training they had undertaken which had increased their knowledge and understanding of child development and the potential impact of COVID-19 on children. This had enabled them to recognise the changing needs of children and families over the pandemic. As a result, relevant support and information had been shared with parents. This had assisted some families in recognising and supporting children's changed behaviour at home.

Staff were confident and worked well together as a team. This created a happy, welcoming ethos within the service. Continuity of care for children was maintained where possible, with supernumerary members of staff available to assist where needed. We advised that the deployment of supernumerary staff should continue to be reviewed to ensure additional tasks could be carried out without compromising the quality of care, play and learning experiences for children.

Team meetings, discussions of practice and monitoring systems were in place to examine how the nursery were meeting the changing needs of children during COVID-19. Now that the nursery are settled in the temporary environment, further monitoring should take place. Observations of staff practice, routines and the outcomes for children would identify actions to be taken. This would contribute to the provision of high quality play and learning experiences for children, both indoors and outdoors.

Areas for improvement

1. The service should review the resources available to each group of children during their session. Increasing the types and variety of resources within each area would enable children to make wider choices of what to play with, offer more opportunities to lead their own play and extend children's learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors.

This would ensure that care and support is in line with the Health and Social Care Standards which state 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HSCS 2.27)

2. We advised the service to review and update the risk assessments for all areas the children accessed throughout their session, both indoors and outdoors to ensure their health and safety at all times. This would contribute to the provision of a safe environment for children and staff.

This would ensure that care and support is in line with the Health and Social Care Standards which state 'My environment is secure and safe.' (HSCS 5.17) and 'My environment has plenty of natural light and fresh air, and the lighting, ventilation and heating can be adjusted to meet my needs and wishes.' (HSCS 5.19)

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	3 - Adequate
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	4 - Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	3 - Adequate
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	3 - Adequate

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