

Danderhall Primary School Early Learning and Childcare Centre Day Care of Children

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Unannounced

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Service provided by:
Midlothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002602

Service no:
CS2003016396

About the service

Danderhall Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 144 children aged from three years to not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time. Until the landscaping and increase in space of the outdoors is complete and approved, as shown on the plans sent to the Care Inspectorate on 7 January 2021, the service can only provide care for a maximum of 90 children aged from three years to not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time.

The aims of service included:

- To offer a stimulating and varied curriculum with breadth and balance, providing inclusive learning for all.
- To encourage each individual to realise their full potential through the promotion and recognition of achievement.
- To promote the development of learning and teaching to ensure a quality curriculum which motivates children to become responsible learners.
- To foster positive relationships between school, home and community by providing a welcoming environment and promoting an ethos of achievement and high expectations.
- To provide effective support which enables all young people to achieve their full potential.

The nursery had recently moved to the new school premises. The nursery class was provided across three large playrooms, each with direct access to outdoor play areas.

Two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate undertook an on-site visit to the service. The views of parents were sought and the management team provided a range of evidence to support the inspection.

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

What people told us

We observed children as they played and found that they were relaxed and settled within the environment. A few children were keen to chat to the inspectors and show them what they liked to do at nursery. Comments from children included:

- "I like all the snacks."
- "We found a bee. He's not feeling well. He's having a rest."
- "We gave the bee some sugar water."
- "We're playing a school game. I have my backpack on."
- "I like football, there's football on today."

We requested feedback from parents about their experiences of the nursery. We spoke to six parents who spoke highly of the care offered by staff. They felt their children benefitted from attending the nursery and that staff were approachable and helpful. A few parents felt that it would be helpful to have more communication about staff changes and children's learning. Comments from parents included:

- "My child is happy there. Staff are really approachable and always get back to me if I have a question."
- "We've been kept up to date about Covid-19 and had lots of information."
- "It would be useful to revisit the information to make sure everyone understands."

"My child has a real bond with their key worker."

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

5.1 Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We found the service was operating to an adequate level in this area of practice.

Children appeared relaxed and settled at nursery. Most children enjoyed playing with their peers and made friendships which enhanced their wellbeing. Children were confident to ask staff for help or reassurance. Staff interactions were kind as they chatted with children about their play and ideas. This helped children to feel included. Staff also worked with children to begin to explore their understanding of the Covid-19 pandemic. They printed photos of children's home learning and experiences of lockdowns to share and discuss. This encouraged children to explore emotions and understand their changed experiences.

Staff kept in contact with families through regular telephone calls and digital technology during periods of closure or restrictions. This helped to maintain a sense of connection and support children's learning at home. Where needed, staff also provided support to families to help meet children's wellbeing needs. Transitions back to nursery were discussed with parents and new children attended for visits in the garden area. These approaches allowed children to settle at their own pace.

The environment provided children with opportunity to be independent and shape their learning. They enjoyed cycling, active games and sensory play. These activities helped develop children's physical skills and contributed to their overall wellbeing. A small group of children showed interest in a bee from the garden, demonstrating curiosity about the world around them. Staff should now improve their use of skilled questioning and modelling to support children's play. This will help support more purposeful play and children's engagement in learning.

Children's personal plans were being developed by the nursery team. Staff gathered a range of information about children's needs in consultation with parents. However, plans did not consistently record support strategies for children or show regular review. This had the potential to impact children's experiences and progress. We have asked the team to continue to improve approaches to documenting children's personal plans, ensuring a consistently nurturing approach. Agreed support strategies should be regularly reviewed to achieve the best possible outcomes for children. (See area for improvement 1)

We reviewed procedures for documenting children's medication and allergy needs and found that areas of practice required improvement. We have asked the management team to ensure that all required information is available to staff and regularly reviewed. A clear and personalised plan for children with medical or allergy needs should be developed and understood by all staff.

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

During Covid-19, the application of strict infection control procedures are important to keep people safe. We found the service was operating to an adequate level in this area of practice.

Overall, we found that the nursery environment was clean and pleasant for children. Resources were well-maintained and consideration had been given to using equipment that could be easily cleaned. Staff undertook cleaning and review of the environment as part of their daily routines and checks. Good ventilation was maintained with regular use of the outdoor area to minimise the potential risk of infection.

Arrangements for arrival and departure of children also supported physical distancing measures for staff and parents.

The nursery's Covid-19 risk assessment reflected national guidance and was understood and implemented by staff. They maintained a safe physical distance from each other and wore face coverings at appropriate times. Staff wore PPE when attending to children's personal care. At times, face coverings were not worn correctly which had the potential to reduce their effectiveness. We have asked the management team to revisit the correct use of PPE with the staff team.

Most staff were clear about when children should wash hands to help minimise the potential risk of infection. For example, they often reminded children to wash their hands as they returned from playing outdoors. However, children required significantly more support to follow best practice guidance and wash their hands well. For example, a few children did not use soap and most did not wash for the recommended amount of time. Hand sanitiser gel was routinely used when children could have accessed hand washing facilities. Staff should ensure children are supervised and supported to embed effective hand washing procedures in an enjoyable way.

Staff shared information with families to help them understand how they had responded to Covid-19 and the procedures in place to help minimise the risk of infection. This included use of the nursery newsletters and the school website. As a result, parents were kept informed about how they could help support the nursery in minimising the risks of infection.

5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during Covid-19.

We found that the service was operating to a good level in this area of practice.

The nursery was appropriately staffed to meet children's care needs and most staff knew children well. The nursery had managed staffing challenges well throughout the pandemic, ensuring continuity of care for children wherever possible.

Staff told us that they felt well supported by the management team and prepared effectively for their return to work. They dedicated time as a team to discuss concerns related to Covid-19. This good practice allowed staff to express their thoughts which helped to alleviate any anxieties. They supported each other well, responding to challenges and creating a positive team ethos. This in turn, helped create a welcoming atmosphere for children. Room meetings each morning allowed the management team and staff to effectively share information and keep up to date with important guidance. Individual staff circumstances were also taken into account to support a safe return to work.

Staff had developed relationships with children and they showed care towards their wellbeing. On occasion, required tasks and routines of the day began to compete with children's experiences. These routines required additional consideration to achieve consistently high quality experiences for children. For example, although most children enjoyed their meal, lunch time was challenging for staff to manage alongside the tasks required. Children needed additional support to achieve a more relaxed and sociable mealtime.

Staff had accessed a range of training opportunities and professional learning to provide them with confidence in their roles. The management team had considered the balance of staff knowledge and experience when deploying staff. This good practice meant that children benefitted from a range of skills across the teams. It will be important to review the impact of professional learning opportunities on outcomes for children over time. As planned, we have asked the management team to develop further the

quality assurance and self-evaluation processes to build a culture of improvement and secure the best possible outcomes for children.

Areas for improvement

1. To effectively support children's care, development and learning, processes for documenting personal plans and medical needs should be improved. Agreed strategies for supporting children should be understood by all staff, regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure the best outcomes for children. This is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 1.15 – My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.

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	3 - Adequate
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	4 - Good

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