

# Achiltibuie Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Achiltibuie Primary School  
Achiltibuie  
Ullapool  
IV26 2YG

Telephone: 01854 622 267

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
18 June 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Highland Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001693

**Service no:**  
CS2013314960

## About the service

We wrote this report following an unannounced, focused inspection which evaluated 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.

The inspection was carried out using a blended approach of virtual and onsite scrutiny. We started the inspection on 2 June 2021 and gave feedback to the manager on 18 June 2021.

Achiltibuie Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 10 children, from the age of three years to those not yet attending primary school. The staffing ratio of one qualified staff member for up to the maximum of four children was approved at the time of registration due to the size and location of the nursery.

The nursery is operated by Highland Council. The head teacher manages the nursery. The nursery operates term time only. The nursery is located in a classroom within Achiltibuie Primary School. The children have access to a bright playroom with kitchen area and shared toilet facilities with the primary school children. The children had full access to the school grounds.

## What people told us

During the inspection, we found all the children to be very happy and relaxed in the care of the staff. They were outdoors making very good use of the loose parts and having lots of fun taking part in a range of physical activities, investigative play and learning. The children were able to tell us what they enjoyed doing at nursery.

As part of the inspection parents and carers were invited to give feedback. Parents were very positive in their comments about the quality of the service provided and the approachability of the staff. Parents were very happy with the levels of communication and appreciated the service's use of Seesaw to share photos of the children taking part in various activities. One parent describe the staff as doing an "incredible" job.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
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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?

5 - Very Good

### 5.1 Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during Covid-19

Children are nurtured and supported throughout their changed experience in their early learning and childcare setting.

Effective communication with families enables responsive care to support children through changing circumstances.

From the evidence gathered we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

It was a very small nursery with only four children, one full time early years practitioner, one member of staff who worked with the children one morning a week and the manager who was the headteacher for the primary school. We found children to be extremely happy, confident and settled within the nursery where they were part of a warm, caring and nurturing environment. We saw children had strong attachments with staff who were very responsive to their individual needs.

The nursery was considered very much part of the school and staff were included in full school meetings, especially before the reopening of the service after lockdown. Prior to the children returning to the setting, they had met as a team to consider how the pandemic and resulting lockdown may have impacted on the children's emotional wellbeing. They then put in place appropriate strategies, including emotional check-ins, which they periodically reviewed to ensure that they continued to meet the needs of the individual children. As a small service, the children were given the space to freely talk about how they were feeling.

There was a written personal plan in place for each of the children. These plans were updated following lockdown to ensure that they reflected the current individual needs of the children.

While the children were unable to attend the setting, the staff were very proactive in maintaining contact, both formally and informally, with the children and their families. As a nursery serving a small community, the manager and staff were able to put in place a good system to share information and offer activities for the children and their families to complete. During contact, staff also explained to parents any changes which would have to be put in place in response to government guidance. The parents who participated in this inspection, expressed their satisfaction with the level of communication and appreciated the information provided by the nursery.

The service had robust processes in place to protect children from harm. Staff were fully aware of and confident in their roles and responsibilities to protect children. Prior to the children returning to the setting, the manager and staff had revisited their child protection policy and procedure and had reflected on how the pandemic may have impacted on the children and their families.

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

Children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

From the evidence gathered we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

The service was proactive in relation to putting in place all the appropriate precautions to ensure the safety of the children and to prevent the spread of infection whilst still encouraging the children's natural curiosity, imaginative play and resilience. There were clear risk assessments in place which were routinely reviewed to ensure they reflected government Covid-19 guidance. Staff had access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning materials such as aprons, gloves and sprays as required.

Given the rural location of the nursery, accessing the local area and providing opportunities for high quality outdoor learning for children attending was a priority for the service. Spending lots of time outdoors significantly reduced the spread of infection. The service made very good use of the surrounding natural environment and was making greater use of loose parts to offer the children a rich learning experience full of challenge, fun and exploration.

There were clear cleaning schedules in place. The toilets were regularly checked and cleaned throughout the day. Any additional cleaning did not impact on children's experiences during the session as this was completed by the school cleaner. At the end of each day after the children had left, enhanced cleaning took place.

The service had very good resources and systems in place to encourage and support good hand hygiene. Staff regularly cleaned their hands throughout the session in line with Covid-19 guidance. As well as using the warm running water and soap at the kitchen area and toilets to thoroughly wash their hands, the staff had access to hand sanitizer.

The children were all very confident in washing their hands. The staff had spoken to them in a child friendly way about the need for regular handwashing and had made it a fun experience. The children could confidently tell us why it was important to regularly wash their hands. We discussed with the service the benefits of introducing handwashing facilities outdoors.

The service had put in place a system for the safe drop off and collection of children. Parents had to wear face masks, maintain social distancing and wait at the outdoor collection point while staff accompanied their children out. This arrangement allowed for staff to safely provide parents with some feedback each day.

Staff understood the service's policy and procedure should a child or a member of staff display Covid-19 symptoms while at the setting. They had completed online training prior to returning to the nursery and recognised the importance of promoting good infection prevention and control practice within the setting. Information and reminders in relation to the Test and Protect programme were regularly shared with parents.

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

### **Staffing arrangements meet the needs of children and families**

#### **Staff are well supported and confident.**

From the evidence gathered we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

The staff and the manager were very committed and motivated to provide children with the opportunity to have the freedom to play, investigate and learn in a safe environment. As a very small service, the children

were provided with a high standard of individualised care. The staff were very friendly, outgoing and offered a relaxed, happy and secure environment for the children.

As the nursery was part of the school, enhanced cleaning required to minimise the risk of infection was completed by the school cleaner and did not directly impact on children's play experiences. Staff told us that they had completed additional training on infection prevention and control to ensure that they met current guidance. We saw that staff had implemented and embedded this training during the inspection. This created a safe and clean environment for both children and staff.

Where appropriate, staff wore Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to reduce the risk of infection spreading. Staff were clear on expectations and procedures to follow if they or a family member became unwell and displayed symptoms for Covid-19. This reduced opportunities for cross contamination within the setting.

The nursery staff were included in whole school meetings which took place on a regular basis, even during lockdown. Nursery staff valued being part of these meetings. They provided an opportunity for the full staff team to be involved in reflective discussions, self evaluation of the service and updated staff on national guidance. As a result, staff were aware of why changes were made and were confident in implementing the required public health measures which helped reduce the risk of infection.

The manager recognised the potential impact of Covid-19 on the emotional well being of staff. As well as formal meetings, there were frequent informal opportunities to check in with staff and to offer them the time and space to discuss any concerns or anxieties they might have. Having staff who felt supported and valued had a positive impact on the quality of care and support the children received.

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

As a matter of priority, the service should put in place appropriate permanent measures to ensure the safety of the children while they are accessing the outdoor play area.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation, 2011 SSI 2011/210 - Regulation 4(1)(a) Welfare of Service Users.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'My environment is secure and safe'. (HSCS 5:17).

Timescale: by 19 August 2019.

**This requirement was made on 5 June 2019.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

Fencing had been erected to ensure the children were safe whilst playing outdoors.

Since the last inspection, nursery children have been free to access much more of the land surrounding the school building to expand their exploration and knowledge of their local environment.

**Met - within timescales**

#### Requirement 2

The manager should ensure that all staff receive regular support and supervision meetings and attend annual staff appraisal meetings to discuss their practice, identify agreed goals and training needs, and identify any action to be taken and by whom. Staff should receive clear written records of these meetings.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011, SSI 2011/210 - Regulation 15(b) Staffing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

Timescale: 11 October 2019.

This requirement was made on 22 March 2018.

#### Action taken on previous requirement

Since the last inspection, there had been a change in manager. This has had a positive impact on service provision and the opportunities for staff development.

The manager of the service now regularly met with staff both formally and informally. Staff had attended an annual appraisal where their practice was discussed, goals and training needs identified.

Staff now felt very much supported and encouraged to be fully involved in the evaluation and development of the service.

We reminded the manager and staff to maintain written records of these meetings.

#### Met - outwith timescales

### Requirement 3

The manager must identify training needs and ensure staff undertake training relevant to their role to ensure that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake their role and to meet the care, welfare and development needs of the children attending. Staff should use what they have learnt to improve practice and outcomes for children.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirement for Care Services) Regulation 2011/210 Regulation 4 (1)(a) and Welfare of Service Users and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

Timescale: 11 October 2019.

This requirement was made on 22 March 2018.

#### Action taken on previous requirement

As stated previously, there were now very regular opportunities for the staff to meet with the manager. The staff member explained that she had been supported to attend training to assist in her development as an early years practitioner. She was particularly enthusiastic about outdoor training which she was to attend later in the summer.

#### Met - outwith timescales

### Requirement 4

The manager should develop and implement an effective system of quality assurance to monitor and improve all areas of practice and improve outcomes for children.

In order to achieve this the provider must:

- a) develop and implement a rigorous quality assurance programme
- b) implement regular effective support and supervision for all staff
- c) involve staff in the systematic evaluation of their work and the work of the service
- d) put clear plans in place for maintaining and improving the service
- e) ensure the manager effectively monitors the work of each member of staff and the service as a whole.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation, 2011 SSI 2011/210 - Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing.

Timescale : 11 October 2019.

**This requirement was made on 22 March 2018.**

### **Action taken on previous requirement**

As stated under previous requirements, there has been a change of manager for this service which has had a positive impact on service provision and level of support offered to staff.

Staff and the manager regularly meet. There are systems in place in relation to quality assurance and self evaluation. Staff felt fully involved in these processes.

Observations of practice and comments made by parents confirm that improvements have been made which have had a positive impact on the outcomes for children.

**Met - outwith timescales**



## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	5 - Very Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	5 - Very Good
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	5 - Very Good

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