

Robert Douglas Memorial Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Robert Douglas Memorial Primary School
Spoutswell Road
Scone
Perth
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Telephone: 01738 454 455

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
18 November 2022

Service provided by:
Perth & Kinross Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003370

Service no:
CS2003016086

About the service

Robert Douglas Memorial Primary School Nursery operates from within Robert Douglas Memorial Primary School within the village of Scone, Perth and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 54 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school at any one time.

Nursery children are cared for from two large, connected classrooms within Robert Douglas Memorial Primary School that have direct access to a secure garden area. The service is provided by Perth and Kinross council.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 16 November 2022. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with six people using the service and seven of their family members
- spoke with eleven staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Children were listened to and loved which nurtured their sense of security and confidence
- Staff were inspiring, empowering, warm and friendly and had high aspirations for all the children in their care
- Staff had a holistic overview of each child as families and children had meaningful ownership of their personal plans.
- Children were provided with mealtimes that were a homely, sociable and a rich learning experience
- Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to individual children's wishes and interests
- Positive working relationships between staff provided children with very good outcomes
- Staff confidently spoke about their role within the service's improvement agenda and the work they were doing to support continuous improvement

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, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality theme as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children's overall wellbeing was supported and enhanced through excellent use of a personal planning approach that was 'in the moment' on the nursery's digital platform. Linked to the wellbeing indicators and the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence, care and support was tailored to each child's age and stage of development. Staff had a holistic overview of each child as changes, updates, achievements, and successes were meaningfully shared as they occurred. Through this enabling process families and children had meaningful ownership of their personal plans.

Staff had thoughtfully developed processes where they had worked inspirationally and inclusively with all families, valuing them as key partners in their children's play and learning. Families had embraced the online personal planning approach and their excellent engagement with it ensured their contributions were highly valued by the service. As a result, all children were happy and confident in their learning and being supported uniquely to flourish and achieve. We found that individualised care and support was outstanding and provided children with experiences that were right for them at the right time, which supported them to thrive and develop.

High-quality engagement with parents was evident through the effective use of a 'ThingLink' app on the nursery's digital platform. For example, families could move around the digital virtual classroom accessing information which supported their understanding of quality mealtimes. We found the range of explained strategies and programmes available to families enabled them to meaningfully engage in their child's play. Combined with 'in the moment personal planning' these approaches resulted in children that were confident, successful, and achieving well in their learning both at home and at nursery. We found the positive relationships with families and the informative communication processes was a real strength of the service and resulted in excellent outcomes. One parent told us, 'I feel fully informed daily on my child's experiences, there is always someone at the end of the app, I can't speak highly enough of them.'

Children were cared for by staff who had high aspirations for the children to reach their full potential. Their warm, loving, compassionate and consistent interactions ensured children were respected and listened to and demonstrated staff had a sound knowledge and awareness of each child. They skilfully read children's cues which enabled them to successfully support children's wellbeing and nurture their sense of security and confidence. It was evident staff wanted the very best for the children in their care, which resulted in children that felt loved and provided them with a safe, secure environment.

Children were very well supported by staff during mealtimes. A wealth of opportunities to promote choice, responsibility and develop independence provided them with excellent opportunities to develop their language and social skills. Children were included in the planning and preparation of their snack time and were welcomed to the area by friendly staff that were pleased to see them, encouraging them to sign in. Children confidently set the table, poured their own drinks, cleared, and enthusiastically washed their own plates. Staff sat with children, initiating discussions around healthy eating and sensitively encouraged them to try new foods. These approaches ensured children experienced mealtime's that strengthened attachments, were unhurried, sociable and a rich learning experience.

1.3. Play and learning

Play and learning was of an extremely high quality, and we found play experiences successfully fostered children's imagination, creativity, enquiry, and investigative skills. Children were very engaged in experiences. One child told us, 'I play with my friends we have so much fun.'

Staff had high aspirations to empower children to be successful. They had a very good understanding of child development, relevant theory and practice which supported the high-quality play and learning experiences offered to children. Children's voice was highly valued as staff skilfully questioned children's thinking and curiosity which widened their skills and supported their learning. As a result children were happy, confident, and motivated to learn.

Planning approaches were centred around children's thoughts, wishes and ideas, which resulted in staff providing experiences that supported children to flourish, develop and progress. Floor books evidenced that children were enabled to make informed choices and lead their own play and learning. QR codes within the floor books provided children with opportunities to revisit their past experiences which deepened their understanding and demonstrated progression in their play and learning.

Observations of learning were uploaded as they happened onto the nursery digital platform and provided families with informative information on their child's progress. This provided families with the opportunity to be included and contribute to their child's next steps in learning and their contributions were highly valued by staff. We found this approach considered families as their child's first educators and effectively supported children to progress and achieve.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality key question as very good.

Two adjoined indoor playrooms provided a welcoming, comfortable and homely space with plenty of natural light and ventilation. As part of their ongoing improvement work, the staff team had used best practice guidance and thoughtfully considered the experiences and spaces available within the learning environment. As a result, the playrooms were set out in a manner which enabled children to access resources easily which supported them to lead their own play. This demonstrated the value of children's ownership and autonomy within the service.

Children had access to resources that were clean, well-presented, and encouraged exploration, enquiry, and fun. The continuous provision indoors had been well considered to include a wide variety of interesting open ended and natural resources, enabling children to explore opportunities which promoted and challenged their curiosity and imagination. We observed children following their own interests within the play spaces. For example, children were transporting loose parts across the playroom to support their role play within the home corner. Another child showed a curiosity in the human body and staff had reflected this through books and objects of interest. This supported children to feel engaged and included in their nursery environment.

There were cosy and quiet areas for children to rest and relax which supported their emotional security.

These areas were well used by staff and children for reading stories and singing songs. We observed strong, nurturing attachments between staff and children during these experiences. This resulted in children's language development and their wellbeing being very well supported.

Children benefitted from free flow play between the indoor and outdoor area. This enabled children to have choice, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy. Outdoors, children were having fun investigating and enthusiastically jumping in puddles. They worked cooperatively with larger loose parts to further develop their balancing skills and practised pedalling on the nursery bikes. This contributed to children being confident when playing outdoors and creating imaginative play experiences for themselves. We discussed with staff the benefits of extending the range of loose parts and creating additional opportunities for children to further develop their gross motor skills while playing outside.

Children were provided with an outdoor classroom which was well thought out and replicated the indoor experiences, it was well resourced and provided a cosy, homely area for children to rest and shelter from the weather.

Robust Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection. For example, children were confident in their hand washing routines before, during and after mealtimes and when returning to the playroom from outdoor play.

Children were learning about positive risk. For example, children used a toy elephant named 'SIMOA' to count the number of children in the group before leaving the playroom. This approach supported children to develop an awareness and sense of responsibility in keeping themselves and others safe while moving around the school. One child told us, 'SIMOA, keeps us safe'.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality theme as very good.

Strong leadership resulted in staff who had high aspirations and confidence in their ability to support children and families to reach their full potential. Staff told us they were included and fully supported by the manager and senior staff.

Children benefitted from quality care and support as improving outcomes for children and their families was at the heart of the centre improvement plan. Key improvement priorities were measurable, realistic, and developments were monitored through effective quality assurance processes. Monthly staff meetings empowered staff to take part in professional discussions, share responsibility and evaluate the development of key improvement priorities. We found this resulted in a staff team who were fully involved in the improvement journey of the service. They worked very well together which contributed to the shared aspirations of the whole team and provided high quality play experiences and positive outcomes for children and their families.

The views of families and children were valued in the development of the service. Staff had worked very hard at developing ways in which families could feedback on areas of the service. For example, during parent contact meetings families could access QR codes which enabled them to evaluate and contribute to play spaces. This supported a shared vision of play and learning. We discussed with the leadership team how providing clearer feedback to families would ensure they felt that their views mattered and how they

had influenced positive change. At the time of the inspection the service had consulted with staff on the aims and values of the service and as part of their improvement agenda intended to consult with the children and their families.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

4.3 Staff deployment

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality theme as very good.

We found the staff team were inspiring, ambitious, enthusiastic, and accountable for their roles and responsibilities in providing positive outcomes. It was evident there was an ongoing commitment to professional development and as a result staff had a very good understanding of current guidance and how they used this to enhance children's experiences. Staff confidently told us how they used the 'ThingLink' app to enhance their knowledge, skills and expertise. This contributed to a professional, motivated workforce who were passionate about providing quality care and support and improving outcomes for all children enabling them to flourish and achieve.

We found that very positive working relationships had been formed between staff which meant they were all meaningfully contributing to the inclusive and positive ethos of mutual trust and respect. Fortnightly, support and supervision meetings with senior staff engaged staff very well with a process of reflection on their practice which enabled learning to be identified. This resulted in staff that felt valued and empowered to grow both personally and professional and provided children with a happy, secure and supportive environment.

Effective staff deployment across the service meant that the right number of staff was meeting children's individual needs, consistently throughout the day. For example, at lunchtime, more staff joined the team. These staff members knew the children very well and provided very good support to key staff during this busier time. This enabled key staff to remain at lunch tables which ensured the children's experience remained a homely, nurturing, rich learning experience.

A thorough and robust induction supported recently appointed staff to meet children's needs. Mentoring strategies and processes were in place which ensured staff who were training learned from committed, passionate and knowledgeable staff members. They shadowed key staff, who challenged them and provided them with opportunities for reflection on their practice and skills. All staff we spoke with told us how they were treated as equals and that they could reach out to any staff member for support and advice. These collaborative approaches enabled all staff to effectively be active members of a highly skilled workforce.

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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