

St. Francis' Nursery Class Day Care of Children

East Barmoss Avenue
Port Glasgow
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Telephone: 01475 715 725

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
18 November 2022

Service provided by:
Inverclyde Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000212

Service no:
CS2018363842

About the service

The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 20 December 2018.

St. Francis' Nursery Class is provided by Inverclyde council and is situated within St. Francis' Primary School. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 15 children aged from 2 years up to 3 years and 24 children aged from 3 years to not yet attending primary school.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 15 November 2022 and Wednesday 16 November 2022. The inspection was carried out by two early learning and childcare 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 service registered.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with and observed children using the service
- contacted families through email to gather their views
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Staff were warm and nurturing in their interactions and we observed children that were happy, confident and having fun with their friends.

Staff spoke knowledgably and confidently about children's individual care needs and routines and what they did to support them.

Planning approaches were child led and responsive. Children experienced both spontaneous and planned opportunities.

We could see that there were strong foundations in the newly formed team and are confident that the setting will continue to grow and move forward.

Access to the wider community continues to be progressed, management have discussed developing this further in the new year.

The service has plans in place to support free flow outdoors with a new secure area being developed. We would ask the service to consider developing areas to engage children in challenging activities that develop their problem-solving skills and spark curiosity.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Throughout the inspection we observed children that were happy, confident and having fun with their friends. We observed interactions between staff and children to be friendly and warm, staff were caring and responding to children at their level, which resulted in children approaching staff for help and support.

Staff were nurturing in their interactions and we observed children receiving praise, encouragement, cuddles and reassurance when needed. Children were spoken to gently and with affection and were familiar with the routines of the nursery. We saw staff supporting children well encouraging them to develop life skills through sharing resources, being kind to each other and taking turns. One parent told us; 'The staff are welcoming, my child gets excited when they see them, makes me feel good to know he feels safe with them'.

Personal Plans were in place for each child and updated with parents regularly. We found the Information that was gathered supported individual children's needs. Partnership working with parents, carers and other agencies supported information sharing, if children had additional needs, strategies and techniques were agreed, which supported their development. Staff spoke knowledgeably and confidently about children's individual care needs and routines and what they did to support them. As a result, individual children experienced care and support that was right for them. Parents told us; 'The service supports parents by letting them know everything that's happening in the nursery. There is always good communication, and they have days you can go in and visit and see how your child is getting on'. 'We complete care plans so I can tell the staff what I would like them to focus on to help my child be happy at the nursery and they always share observations with me'.

If children required medication, we confirmed it was safely stored. Appropriate information was recorded which ensured it was administered in line with best practice guidance. Accident and incident records were completed fully by the staff and shared with parents in a timely manner.

Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They had attended child protection training and knew how to address any concerns appropriately.

Children enjoyed a sociable, relaxed snack and lunch with a range of nutritious food options. Staff sat with children and encouraged friendly social interactions. This helped children to feel included, develop conversations and learn about healthy choices. One parent told us; 'I feel my child has come on great at this nursery, especially with lunchtimes'.

Management should now continue to develop lunch with more opportunities to encourage children's independence for example; supporting children to cut up their own food and develop opportunities to self-serve. Management agreed they were continuing to review snack and lunch experience and were supporting children who were slower at eating and also developing opportunities for children to prepare and serve snack.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Children were supported to learn and develop through their play and engaged throughout the session. Planning approaches were child led and responsive. Children experienced both spontaneous and planned opportunities.

Children were chatting and laughing as they took part in a wide range of activities, including outdoor play, especially playing in the large muddy puddle and on the muga pitch, as well as painting, messy play, arts and craft. Play experiences provided some challenge and fun and supported children to develop language, literacy, creativity and numeracy skills. Staff members supported play through effective questioning on their interests and providing resources of interest for example a chess board, dinosaurs and cameras. As a result of this responsive approach by staff, children were able to develop and connect their early learning skills, feel valued and secure. Parents told us; 'My child gets so excited everyday knowing she is going somewhere for lots of fun and learning. I am at peace knowing she is well cared for and loved by all the staff'.

Children's learning was recorded and shared with parents through e-learning journals, some families told us they would like more regular updates and more details regarding their children's development. We would encourage management to consider documenting further examples of play and learning out with children being the focus child. Management should continue to monitor children's online learning profiles, big books, observations and planning evaluations. This will ensure a consistent approach to tracking developments, recording achievements and identifying next steps in learning, through quality assessments that are used effectively to promote all aspects of children's development and wellbeing. Parents told us; 'The only improvement I could suggest would be more content on my child's learning journal as I love to see what my child's been doing'.

Access to the wider community continues to be progressed, management have discussed developing this further in the new year. Families have been able to attend the setting for stay and play sessions and staff and the leadership team are continuing to plan further opportunities to engage families in children's play and learning within the setting.

How good is our setting?**4 - Good****Quality indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities**

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

The service was clean, comfortably furnished and welcoming with good natural light and ventilation. Natural furniture and resources helped create a calming space for children. The layout of the playrooms were well considered containing easily accessible resources which helped create environments that motivated children to make choices and enable them to engage in a wide variety of play activities on their own, in small or larger groups.

Children had opportunities to rest and relax in some cosy areas. In the two-year-old room staff supported

children well who required to nap while at the service this supported children's individual needs. Staff and children also used this area for reading stories. We observed nurturing attachments between staff during these experiences.

The outdoor play spaces provided some opportunities for children to be physical and develop their gross motor skills. Children were appropriately supported by staff to climb, jump and use resources for example tools when experimenting with building materials and support with the bikes. A small range of loose parts such as boards and small crates, cable drums and vegetables allowed children to be creative in their play. Access to outdoors had improved since the last inspection and staff were responding well to children's wishes when they wanted to go outside.

However, children were still restricted due to the layout and access to outdoors and some parts of the garden area were closed off due to flooding. We acknowledge the service has plans in place to support free flow outdoors with a new secure area being developed. We would ask the service to consider developing areas to engage children in challenging activities that develop their problem-solving skills and spark curiosity. We look forward to seeing the progression of independence for children and how this will support children in exploring their environment further.

Children's personal information was stored in line with best practice guidance. Risk assessments were in place for all areas and activities within the setting and management updated and reviewed these regularly or when required.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and staff. This included supporting children with good hand hygiene practices to minimise the risk of spreading infection.

How good is our leadership?

4 – Good

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Since the last inspection, a new deputy manager had been appointed within the service. We found the newly formed management team and staff worked well together creating a culture of shared responsibility. We could see that there were strong foundations in the newly formed team and are confident that the setting will continue to grow and move forward. The management team were open and honest throughout the inspection and promoted a shared vision along with staff in delivering a quality service to all children and families. As a result, the newly appointed deputy was knowledgeable about what was happening within the service and where improvements were required. Staff spoke confidently about the changes that had been made and changes planned.

Staff were motivated about their roles and were encouraged to share their skills and knowledge with others in the team to promote good practice. Management and staff worked well as a team by sharing ideas to deliver quality care, play and learning experiences for children. Management had regular team meetings to reflect on what was working well, what the service could improve on as well as discussing individual children and planning. Staff told us they were listened to and supported well by the management team. The staff welcomed feedback and suggestions for improvement and were encouraged to be part of the service development and reflect on their practice together. This supported a positive team ethos and showed the

service were committed to improving outcomes for children.

Parents and carers were welcomed and encouraged into the playrooms to collect and drop off their child. Management and staff took time to talk and build relationships with parents and update them on how the child had spent their day. Parents commented that management were visible and available, and they had good communication. Parents told us; 'management are always at the door when dropping off and collecting my child and available for a chat'. 'I feel the nursery is well managed, the depute head is always there to greet you and always on hand if you need anything'.

We acknowledged that the service had plans in place to support improvement. We found management had developed an improvement plan and monitoring calendar identifying the service priorities. Quality assurance processes were beginning to be effective in evaluating the quality of the provision provided. The management team regularly undertook observations in the playrooms and monitored staff practice and children's engagement. Focused observations with feedback and actions given to staff helped influence improvements and developments. We asked the management team to continue with their quality assurance programme and begin to consider the new 'Quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged children' along with best practice guidance 'Realising the ambition' when identifying areas to assess. This would help to continue to drive forward improvement and support children's experiences further.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

The deployment of staff within the service was well managed and effective to meet children's needs. Staff worked well together and were supported by the wider management team. Effective communication between staff and their flexible approach meant children were supported in all areas. This ensured children's health wellbeing and safety needs as well as their play and learning were supported well.

At busier times, routines had been established which promoted children's safety. For example, staff had a staggered lunch time to ensure enough staff were available to support children. Staff also had a shared responsibility at pick up times, ensuring they supervised the entrance while children were able to still access areas inside the nursery uninterrupted.

Staff skills, knowledge and interests complimented one another and resulted in quality experiences for children. Staff told us they enjoyed working as part of the team at the nursery as they were committed to delivering the best outcomes for children and families.

Staff had regular opportunities for training and staff were able to talk about the impact this had on their practice for example; promoting alternative thinking strategies (PATHS), child protection, stages of early arithmetical learning (SEAL) training and word aware training. During the inspection we could see some evidence of training undertaken and how it was beginning to impact on best outcomes for children. Parents told us; 'I think the staff are well trained on how to deal with a child's needs'. 'The staff are all very well trained and good at what they do'. 'Overall, I think St. Francis Nursery is one of the best my child has gone to, it's quiet and the staff have time for all the children, the staff are always so welcoming'.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

Management and staff should continue to review children's opportunities to access the outdoor environment. Priority should be given to;

- a. Review the outdoor environment to provide further opportunities to inspire children's curiosity and imagination by further developing the use of loose parts play.
- b. Continue to review the pace and balance of the day providing opportunities for children to have free flow access to outdoor play.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: '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) 'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities everyday, both indoors and outdoors.' (HSCS 1.25).

This area for improvement was made on 3 November 2021.

Action taken since then

We evidenced that the service has started to progress with developing the outdoor area, and we are confident this will continue to develop. Although children did not have direct free flow access to outdoors staff were responding to children's requests. Therefore this area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The management team should further develop and implement systems for monitoring and evaluating the service. Robust quality assurance systems should be in place to support the service to develop and improve outcomes for children. In order to achieve this the management team should;

- (a) Develop a monitoring calendar to outline when specific monitoring tasks will be undertaken.
- (b) Ensure monitoring of staff practice and the implementation of organisational policies and procedures is carried out frequently and purposeful feedback is provided to support staff to make and sustain improvements.
- (c) Further develop self-evaluation processes to ensure this reflects the service strengths and areas for further improvement. The service would benefit from implementing the use of a self-evaluation framework such as Education Scotland's 'How good is our early learning and childcare.'
- (d) Consult with and involve all stakeholders including staff, children and parents in self-evaluation processes.

This is to ensure that management and leadership is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 3 November 2021.

Action taken since then

We evidenced during inspection that management had implemented a more robust quality assurance system and we can begin to see the impact this is having on the service and better outcomes for children and families. Therefor this area for improvement has been met.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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