

Whitecrook Primary School ELCC Day Care of Children

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Telephone: 01415 333 038

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
18 November 2022

Service provided by:
West Dunbartonshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003383

Service no:
CS2019377061

About the service

Whitecrook Primary Early Learning and Childcare Centre is located in Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire. It is attached to Whitecrook Primary School.

The service is registered to provide a children's daycare service for a maximum of 40 children aged from three years old to not yet attending primary school.

Children have access to a large, bright playroom and an attached secure outdoor space, children can freely move between indoors and outdoors.

The centre is located within a residential area with transport links to local shops and amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 9 November 2022 between 10:30 and 14:45. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with several children using the service
- sent out a family questionnaire and received four responses
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were having lots of fun, engaged, and enjoying the resources and experiences available for play and learning.
- The environment was calm, relaxed, clean, and well-maintained. Children had areas to explore, rest, and play. Playrooms were inviting with curious and interesting resources to stimulate play and learning.
- The whole staff team were fully committed to continuous improvement within the service.
- Staff worked well as a team and supported each other in providing positive outcomes for children.
- Families were encouraged to be part of nursery life.

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 evaluated this quality indicator as very good, as a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Staff demonstrated warmth, affection, care, and concern for children throughout our visit. Staff recognised the importance of helping to create a calm and relaxed atmosphere. Their interactions with children were nurturing, gentle, and kind.

Before starting the service, staff and families worked closely to gather children's personal preferences. One staff member said, "the child's keyworker will sit with the family to create the care plan, talk about the family and their child, discuss any worries, hopes, ambitions, wishes, and needs their child and family may have." This information was used by staff to support the overall wellbeing of children starting nursery. This approach places the child and their family at the centre of the process.

Children's care plans reflected GIRFEC; getting it right for every child wellbeing indicators. This considers children's wellbeing, which should be rights-based, strengths-based, holistic and adaptable. The plans clearly outlined their routines, preferences, and individual targets, and had been regularly reviewed and updated with families. This information is used by staff to promote consistency and continuity of care. Staff worked proactively with families and external agencies to ensure specific plans and strategies were in place to support the needs of children who required additional support. Staff spoke proudly of children's achievements and development journeys since starting nursery.

To meet the individual needs of children and families, staff used various methods to share information. This included Makaton, a language programme using signs and symbols, other visual and communication aids for children and an app, phone calls, emails, regular conversations and meetings with families. This ensured children and their parents were included, their views sought, and important information shared.

Staff discussed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children's emotional wellbeing and the need to provide a safe nurturing environment. They told us they used 'emotional check-ins' with children, enabling them to express and communicate how they are feeling.

Lunchtime was a pleasant, sociable, and relaxed experience for children. Most ate lunch in the school dining hall. Where children required a quieter environment, lunch was also served in the playroom. Staff sat alongside children providing support where required, interacting and engaging in conversation, there was lots of chatter and encouragement. Children had the opportunity to be independent and develop their self-help skills, they poured their water and cleared away their dishes. We did highlight some small areas for improvement, including children having the option to return to the playroom when they have finished lunch and not wait for all children. Food choices reflected children's dietary and cultural needs.

The setting's medication policy and procedures reflected children's health needs. Staff were very knowledgeable about children's medical conditions and requirements. Details included the type, strength, and dosage of medication. We found families had regularly reviewed, updated, and signed off this information.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children were settled, happy, and engaged in play experiences, both indoors and outdoors. All children had direct access to the outdoor learning environment and could freely access this area independently or with support.

Staff told us they used a balance between adult and child-led experiences and offered provocations (something that provokes and invites learning, interest, creativity, and thoughts) to support children's learning and development. Play zones including construction, house, arts and crafts, offered children resources to engage in a variety of play and learning. Children were having lots of fun and were deeply involved in their play. Staff observed and knew when to support and 'scaffold' the children's play or stand back.

Staff followed children's interests and used creative approaches to successfully engage children's imagination. This included transforming an outdoor hut into an art cave after children said they would like a place to draw outside. This approach enriches children's play and learning opportunities and also demonstrates that their views matter. We saw, and children told us, they had decorated the cave.

How good is our setting?

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 key question as very good.

2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was designed to encourage children to play, learn, and have fun, it was bright, clean, and spacious. The large playroom was well furnished, with cosy corners which created a comfortable and homely environment. Children had ample space for their needs. Additional areas, rooms, and spaces were used effectively to provide quiet times, sensory play, and dining areas for individual or smaller groups of children.

The indoor and outdoor environments were sensitively structured and reflected children's stage of development and learning. Open ended resources including funnels and tubes enabled children develop their creativity and imaginative skills. We saw children move independently between indoors and outdoors throughout our visit. Children could freely access their outdoor wet suits and wellies which meant they could choose when they wanted to play outdoors.

Children's current interests, achievements, and successes were displayed on wallboards around the setting. One board told the story of the children's imaginative writing journey, which included their ideas, words, pictures, and thoughts; their creative story included monsters, zombies, and water. This approach enables children to take pride in their work, collaborate and present their ideas, and learning in different forms.

Robust risk assessment and infection prevention and control measures were in place across the setting. Staff spoke confidently about the arrangements to keep children safe and secure. Staff accounted for children during our visit, this included when leaving the the playroom to attend the lunch hall; children and staff sang a counting song to confirm their numbers against the register.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, as a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement.

3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The headteacher, depute, and lead practitioner worked closely with staff to provide quality outcomes for children and families. The services shared vision helped staff know what was important to meet these needs. One staff member said, "a close relationship with our senior leadership team and keeping the lines of communication open with each other are key to supporting the health, welfare and safety of the children."

Quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans were in place and effectively led to improvement to service provision. The improvement plan outlined plans to improve numeracy and literacy skills of children in the setting; baseline information was being gathered which would be used to track progress and achievements. We saw staff actively encourage children to become familiar with numbers with songs, measuring, and baking.

The senior leadership team understood the importance of seeking the views of children, families, and staff. Evaluation of this feedback helped inform practice and was used as a starting point to support continuous improvement. Feedback suggested further development of the outdoor area; children and staff are now actively engaged in its redesign.

Staff understood the importance of their role and regularly met to reflect and discuss practice, they reviewed care plans, what was working well, and areas for improvement. This meant all staff were up to date with any changes to the health and wellbeing of all children and families.

Staff told us they felt confident to share their ideas and lead change. This included requesting a bread maker to offer children the experience of making their own bread. This experience was further extended with children making and delivering loaves of bread to each classroom. This approach is fun and extends children's thinking and possibilities; on the day of our visit children excitedly served us warm bread they had made earlier.

We found professional learning was well planned, reviewed, and matched to the identified development needs of staff. Regular and meaningful 'be the best' conversations meant staff had the opportunity to review and reflect on their personal development and practice. Staff told us they value these discussions.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, as a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement

4.3: Staff deployment

The senior leadership team ensured the service was appropriately staffed with staffing levels in line with national guidance. We found plans were in place to cover absence, they included using staff from Whitecrook Primary School and West Dunbartonshire Council. This approach minimises disruption to children's routines and care.

We observed staff respond and support children in their transitions throughout the day, this included preparing for lunch, and moving between indoors and outdoors. Staff spoke gently and respectfully with children, with care, support, and encouragement being the main focus.

Staff were very aware and knowledgeable of children's unique needs. We found all staff demonstrated the nurturing approaches in place for children who required additional support, these included strategies to calm and engage children. Staff confidently shared this information between themselves which led to continuity of care and support across the day.

A key worker system was in place which supported children throughout their time in nursery. Staff worked closely to build trusting relationships at the earliest possible stage with children and families. Children spoke fondly about their key worker, and families told us they trusted staff. One parent said, "One of the areas where the service has been very helpful is that it allows my wife to attend college, while our son is at the nursery. We find that very helpful, knowing that he is in a good and safe place, and is being taken good care of."

We found the staff team used their differing knowledge, experience, and skills to support children and families. Staff led in different areas of the service which included forest schools and growth mindset. This ensures children and families benefit from staff who are eager to develop their practice and improve outcomes for children and families.

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	5 - Very Good
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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