

Dysart Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Normand Road
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 February 2023

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003015885

About the service

Dysart Nursery is in the school building of Dysart Primary School, Dysart, Fife. The nursery operates from two playrooms and an outdoor service at Ravenscraig Park. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 50 children at any one time from 2 years to an age to attend primary school, of whom no more than 10 may be 2-3 years and no more than 16 may attend the outdoor service.

Children in the school building have access to playrooms, direct garden spaces and other areas within the school. The outdoor service has access to the park, wooded area, beach, and a designated building in the grounds of Ravenscraig park. The service is close to local amenities and can be accessed by transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 February 2023 between 9:00 and 16:30. 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 children and observed their play and learning.
- spoke with families to gather their views
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm and supportive attachments to staff who knew their needs and preferences.
- Staff worked well together to ensure children's needs were met.
- Children were happy, confident and motivated to play and learn.
- Children benefitted from regular access to learning in their community.
- Staff were reflective in their approach and were committed to improving outcomes for children.
- Children benefitted from staff working closely with other professionals.
- Staff valued the importance of learning outdoors and the positive impact this had on children's overall wellbeing.
- Children were regularly asked for their views, and this influenced their learning experiences.

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 key question as very good where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 1.1-Nurturing care and support

Children experienced kind, nurturing, care and support from a team that knew their needs and preferences. Positive attachments had been made and staff had taken the time to get to know children and families. Parents felt staff knew children well and were confident children were well cared for.

Involving families in the life of the nursery was important to the team. Families were welcomed into the nursery, and the outdoor setting, spent time talking with staff and finding out what their child had been interested in. This supported positive, trusting relationships to be formed. As a result, children were supported to make progress in their learning and play.

Staff were skilled at supporting children's interests. For example, younger children enjoyed playing in the water, filling, and emptying buckets. Staff were mindful that this was an important stage of children's development and facilitated this interest. This meant that children were supported to have fun and explore patterns of play.

The service had personal plans in place that detailed children's learning journey, preferences, and next steps in learning and development. Staff updated these regularly to ensure children's needs were fully met and they were supported to make progress at a pace that was right for them. For some children, this included details of close working with other agencies. This meant that children received the right support and interventions in a timely manner.

Children experienced relaxed, calm, and unhurried mealtimes. The team had recognised this was an important part of the day and made this a priority in their improvement plan. Children had opportunities to develop important independence skills. They set the table, served themselves vegetables and poured their drinks. Staff sat with children and engaged in conversation, using this time to promote language and communication skills. We suggested the team could further develop this experience by supporting children to independently choose all foods. Staff were aware of and referred to best practice guidance to support mealtimes. For example, they had discussed the choking guidance and had individual plans in place to support children when required.

Personal care was carried out with dignity and respect. For example, children were asked if they were ready to be changed. Staff had given time for them to complete their activity then supported with care and reassurance. This meant that children's rights were valued.

The service had systems in place for the close monitoring of medication and accidents. This meant that children's health and wellbeing was supported as they received care and support that was right for them.

Children and families benefitted from a service that valued the importance of partnership working to support children. This included referring to specialist services. Interventions and support strategies were detailed and reviewed regularly. This meant that everyone who worked with children was included in supporting positive outcomes.

Quality indicator 1.3-Play and learning

Children had fun as they experienced high quality play and learning in stimulating environments. Staff demonstrated a genuine interest in supporting play across all settings. They valued the importance of connecting with children through meaningful interactions and skilful questioning that supported children's curiosities. This meant that interests were responded to in the moment as staff engaged with children to deepen learning. Children told us they enjoyed playing outside, making playdough and digging in the garden. As a result, children were happy and confident and were making progress.

Planning approaches were responsive to meet children's needs and wishes. For example, children who attended the outdoor nursery told us they chose each day where they played. This meant that they were leading their play and had ownership of their learning.

Children accessed indoors and outdoors freely, taking part in a wide range of high-quality experiences supported by skilled staff. Staff recorded observations to highlight specific learning and interests and planned how to extend children's knowledge and understanding. For example, children had been learning about birds and confidently shared new language they had learned from their 'wow words' wall. Skilful approaches such as introducing words to extend children's learning, helped develop vocabulary relating to real life experiences.

Staff used creative approaches to support mark making in the outdoor provision. For example, children found charcoal on the beach and begun to learn about this, making their own charcoal and recording their ideas in their floor book. This meant that children were supported to make progress and experiences were tracked across the curriculum.

Children were supported to assess and manage risk during their play. For example, children carried out daily risk assessments of the outdoor areas and in the woods. As a result, they were developing an awareness of risk in their environment and how to minimise these in their play.

Children benefitted from learning within the local community. This enhanced their experiences and provided opportunities to learn and have fun in different environments. As a result, children's wellbeing was improved as they connected with nature and developed an appreciation of their world.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 2.2 -Children experience high quality facilities

The service operated from spaces within a designated area of the school. The outdoor service operated from the local park. Children benefitted from play spaces that were well furnished, calm, and ventilated. Staff had been creative in their approach to organising spaces to ensure there was a breadth of provision that met children's needs. This meant they had space to develop their ideas, extend their learning and work with their peers on bigger projects.

Staff took pride in creating play spaces that were reflective of children's interests and sparked curiosity and creativity. For example, children created large, detailed models in the block area. They had space to extend this out onto the floor without causing obstruction. As a result, children were sustained in play for longer periods supported by staff who valued the importance of uninterrupted play.

Children benefitted from a staff team that promoted their health and wellbeing. Staff were creative in their approach to handwashing in the outdoor provision. For example, they used a large insulated container on a wheeled trolley that ensured children had access to warm running water at all times. This meant that a high standard of infection prevention and control practices were maintained.

The service had a risk management system in place that included daily discussions as a team to ensure environments were safe spaces for children. Children were included in assessing risks every day and could talk confidently about what might be a risk. This meant that they learned about keeping safe and had ownership of their learning environment. The service had begun to review their risk management system to focus on a risk benefit approach across the setting. We encouraged them to continue with this and include staff and children in the process.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 3.1 -Quality assurance and improvements are led well

The service had clear vision, values and aims that included nurturing, learning, and growing together. This promoted a shared vision for all and had contributed to the positive, welcoming ethos. Staff continually engaged in reflections which enhanced the delivery of a high-quality service, promoting rich experiences for children.

There was a culture of support and respect where staff and families felt valued and included. The management team were involved in the daily life of the nursery, supported staff's vision, and valued their commitment and contributions. This had created an inclusive approach where staff genuinely cared for each other, children and families.

Effective and meaningful self-evaluation systems were in place and having a positive impact across the provision. The service used best practice guidance such as 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged childcare', 'How good is our early learning and childcare' and 'national standards for early learning and childcare' to support them in this area. This meant that children benefitted from a staff team who were committed and focussed on their continuous improvement journey that promoted positive outcomes for children.

Children, parents, and staff were consulted to influence improvements within the service. This was done through informal discussions, online questionnaires, and nursery self-evaluation. Gathering the views of all was important to the service. They used this feedback to support their improvement journey and rich learning experiences for children. For example, children had been asked about the changes to the mealtime experience. Nearly all children said they preferred having their lunch in the playroom. One child liked going to the school dinner hall so they could see their siblings. Staff reflected on this and planned to support their preferences through the transition programme. This meant children mattered.

Regular communication with families took place through a variety of methods. For example, email, telephone, online platforms, face to face discussions and regular parents' meetings. Parents told us they received regular communication and staff always made time to share what children had been learning. This contributed to the positive relationship's families had built with staff. Parents told us they were very happy with the nursery and couldn't think of any improvements. As a result, families felt valued and included in children's learning.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 4.3 -Staff deployment

Staff were respectful and supportive of each other, children, and families. This created a positive environment where children were at the centre of the service. The deployment of staff was favourable and well managed to meet children's needs. Staff skills and knowledge complimented one another and resulted in high quality experiences for children. For example, staff were leading community engagement groups where families had the opportunity to take part in fun, learning sessions. Parents liked attending these groups as it helped them understand the value of play. The service also worked closely with local agencies through their community hub where families engaged with services in a familiar, supportive environment. This meant that children and families received support that was right for them to ensure children reached their full potential.

Children moved between play spaces indoors and outdoors confidently. This showed us they felt safe and secure. Staff communicated well when a task took them away from the play spaces. This meant that children were supervised as staff responded to meet children's needs.

The team were committed to continuous professional learning that included completing training on promoting learning outdoors, documenting children's learning, promoting language and communication and child protection and safeguarding. We were confident staff understood and could respond to concerns to ensure children were safe. This meant that children experienced care from a team that were dedicated to ensuring positive outcomes for all .

Regular team meetings provided opportunities for staff to come together and reflect on children's experiences. For example, staff had reviewed children's opportunities to develop important pre- writing skills. They carried out an audit of the provision and looked at how experiences and resources could further support this important stage of literacy development. As a result, children experienced high quality play and learning opportunities from a committed team.

The service used the national induction resource to support the mentoring of staff and some staff had completed training on the importance of the mentoring role. They found this a valuable resource that supported a consistent approach to understanding play and learning.

Staff had the opportunity to share their knowledge and experience of best practice with other settings on the successful start-up of their thriving outdoor provision. They spoke with enthusiasm which had influenced the team and raised awareness to how learning outdoors has positively impacted on children and staff overall wellbeing.

Children benefitted from a very good service that valued their rights to play and have fun through quality interactions, positive relationships, and high-quality provision. As a result, children, staff, and families were very happy at Dysart Nursery.

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

The main doors to the children's toilets were kept open during the session. The manager should take advice from the local Environmental Health Officer with regards to food safety regulations and infection prevention and control guidance. The manager should risk assess these doors in each of the playrooms to ensure children can open and close them safely.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2: A Safe Environment

This area for improvement was made on 29 September 2017.

Action taken since then

Headteacher had taken advice from the Environmental Health Officer who had advised the toilet windows should be opened during sessions if children's toilet doors are left open. This is an acceptable solution.

The only instance where this would not suffice would be if there is an infection outbreak. In this instance staff should accompany children to the toilet, opening and closing doors for them.

The playroom and toilets were ventilated. We recognised progress had been made and this area for improvement was 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?	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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