

Whitelees Primary School Nursery Class

Day Care of Children

Whitelees Road
Abronhill
Cumbernauld
Glasgow
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Telephone: 01236 794 814

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 April 2023

Service provided by:
North Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000237

Service no:
CS2020379270

About the service

Whitelees Primary School Nursery Class is registered to provide care to a maximum of 40 children aged from two years to those not yet attending primary school. Of those 40 children, no more than four should be aged two years to under three years old.

Care is provided from two adjoining classrooms located within Whitelees Primary School, Cumbernauld. Children have access to an outdoor space directly from the playroom and also use other areas within the school. The service is close to transport routes, parks and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 24 and 25 April 2023. 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 using the service and 18 of their family members
- spoke with all staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children attending the setting were confident, happy and settled.
- Staff interacted warmly and respectfully with children, helping them feel loved and valued.
- Play experiences were stimulating and supported children to progress their learning.
- Cosy spaces across the nursery supported children's mental wellbeing.
- Staff were committed to their professional development and used what they had learned to promote positive outcomes for children and their families.
- Self-evaluation led to developments in practice, improving experiences for children.

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 key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children attending the service were confident, happy and settled. They had positive relationships with staff who were nurturing and caring, helping children feel loved. Children said "I like my nursery school", "nursery is a great place" and "everyone who looks after me is kind".

Children's needs were well understood by staff and reflected in their personal plans. Parents agreed and one commented, "all staff know my child well". Individualised support was provided to ensure children were safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included.

Families were warmly welcomed into nursery. This included at drop off time, celebrations of learning and at information events. This strengthened connections between staff and parents and provided opportunities to share information that supported meeting children's needs. Parents told us "I like that we can go into the building and chat to our child's key worker", "the teddy bears picnic was great, I got a chance to get to know staff" and "I'm very happy to have the opportunity to talk with my child's key worker informally".

Children enjoyed eating in an unhurried atmosphere, ensuring a caring and supportive social experience. Calming music, table covers, flowers and dimmed lighting in the gym hall created a relaxed environment within which children were keen to eat. They told us "it's like the best restaurant in here" and "I love the lights at lunch time". Staff were in the early stages of developing an intimate eating experience in the nursery for some children. We agreed that this was a good idea to support the wellbeing of children who may be overwhelmed by a larger hall.

Water was accessible to children at all times, ensuring they were hydrated and healthy.

Children's medical needs were well understood by staff and reviewed regularly with parents and carers. Nearly all medication records were completed in a way that ensured safe administration of medicine to children. However, we did ask staff to review some children's health care plans to make sure they were aligned with administration records. This would reduce any potential confusion about children's medical needs.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children participated in freely chosen play that was fun, exciting and interesting. The very good range of toys and materials encouraged children to be creative, curious and solve problems. For example, pretending to make soup, modelling with dough, creating puddles and caring for baby dolls. Parents confirmed that play was high quality and one said "play is purposeful and well set up to challenge my child".

Outdoor experiences promoted children's right to health and play. They benefited from open access to the garden, choosing to be physically active, supporting good wellbeing. Children were learning how to ride a bike as part of the 'play on pedals' programme. This was a fun experience where children had physical freedom and were developing skills for life. Children told us in delight "look at me, I can turn a corner" and "I'm good at riding this bike now".

Responsive planning ensured that experiences offered to children met their development needs and interests. Observations of learning provided insight into children's skills and identified next steps and support needed to help children achieve.

Staff tracked children's learning progress. This helped to identify the specific needs of children, supporting staff to plan next steps in development.

Staff interacted with children sensitively during play. They encouraged them to lead their own learning whilst skilfully questioning children to extend their thinking.

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 key question as very good.

The nursery was bright, airy and well maintained. This created a welcoming space where children felt like they mattered.

Neutral décor, natural objects and cosy spaces created a homely environment where children could relax and rest. The use of dens, pods and soft furnishings supported children's overall wellbeing, helping them feel safe and secure. Parents and carers spoke positively about the playrooms stating "I love all the natural objects that are used" and "the nursery has a homely feel". Children added "these wee dens are where we chill".

Play spaces were developmentally appropriate to meet children's needs. Toys and materials were stored within reach, supporting children to make decisions about their play. They led their own learning, transporting resources to develop their ideas.

Children were protected from harm through a variety of safety measures. These included, safe storage of hazardous materials, good supervision, secure entry to the premises and applying sun cream on warm days.

Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection, creating a safe environment for children and their families. For example, regular cleaning and handwashing.

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 key question as very good.

Leaders promoted a clear vision for high quality early learning and childcare. This meant that staff were highly motivated and committed to working together on common goals that impacted on improved outcomes for children. Leaders recognised that the written vision and values needed to be developed to align with the aspirations of children and families. This piece of work was underway and there were plans for parents to help shape it.

Staff were fully supported to carry out their roles. They received regular feedback on their work and participated in improvement conversations. Staff told us this was carried out sensitively and respectfully with children's care and learning being the focus of all improvements.

Staff at all levels were given an opportunity to lead projects. For example, leading initiatives such as 'play on pedals'. This provided an opportunity to build on their skills and knowledge, developing new and stimulating experiences for children.

The views of children were sought to support all developments of the setting. Children had the autonomy to plan the day to day running of the service, including what experiences were offered and choosing where to play. They told us "we can just ask for fun things, then we get to do them, like putting coriander in the playdough". This ensured that children felt valued and included.

The service worked alongside families, valuing their contributions to develop a greater understanding of children's needs. Their views were requested and used positively to develop the quality of children's care. One parent told us "the nursery is forever making improvements and are very open with parents in shaping changes" and another added, "the management team have encouraged feedback from parents and carers and have taken any feedback on board and made changes".

Staff reflected well together to bring about positive changes for children. They met regularly to evaluate the quality of the service, using best practice guidance to identify improvements needed to support better outcomes for children. Audits and discussions about the environment and planning had led to increased engagement and learning for children.

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 key question as very good.

Staff were respectful towards one another, working well together. This created a positive and predictive environment for children in which they felt safe and secure. Staff were happy, caring and enthusiastic, placing children at the heart of their work. Families praised the team and one commented "the staff are kind and caring and truly make a difference to our young peoples lives".

Staff worked as a team communicating about children's needs. They met regularly to plan play, learning and care, sharing important information which helped them support children.

The service was appropriately staffed to meet the needs of children. Staff responded to children and were available to play, offer help and comfort when needed. This supported children's overall wellbeing. Busier times of the day were recognised and planned for, ensuring staff could focus on children when needed most. For example, lunch time. We discussed with the service how the same planning should be considered for snack time.

Deployment of staff ensured children's safety. Staff communicated well with colleagues when a task took them away from their area, ensuring very good supervision across the day.

Staff were committed to their professional development and had participated in learning that had improved children's experiences. For example, growth mindset training had developed the use of language that built children's confidence and resilience. We observed staff encouraging children to reach their goals, solve problems and attempt challenges.

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

To ensure that children are supported to develop their learning, the provider should make sure staff access training on providing high quality play and learning, and apply it in practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states: 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including, using open ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31).

This area for improvement was made on 10 June 2022.

Action taken since then

Staff had engaged in a wide variety of learning that provided them with the knowledge and confidence to facilitate high quality play. This meant that children were stimulated and progressing their learning.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure that children can direct their play in a way that develops their curiosity, learning and creativity, a wider range of resources should be accessible. This should include but is not limited to the inclusion of more open-ended materials.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'As a child, 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).

This area for improvement was made on 10 June 2022.

Action taken since then

Children could access a wide range of toys and materials that supported their play. The addition of open ended materials such as guttering, pots, blocks and sand were helping children to be creative and curious about their world.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure that quality assurance processes impact positively on outcomes for children, they should be developed to become more robust, helping to identify and prioritise improvements needed.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: '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 10 June 2022.

Action taken since then

Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes supported improvements at the service. They identified any gaps and practice and staff worked to address these, ensuring positive outcomes for children.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 4

The provider must ensure that staffing levels support meeting the needs of children attending the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15) and 'People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me' (HSCS 3.16).

This area for improvement was made on 10 June 2022.

Action taken since then

Staff were sufficient in numbers and deployed in a way that met children's needs.

This area for improvement is 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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