

Auld Kirk Nursery Day Care of Children

Church Hall
Barrasgate Road
Fraserburgh
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Telephone: 01346 517352

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 April 2023

Service provided by:
Auld Kirk Nursery

Service provider number:
SP2003000442

Service no:
CS2003002567

About the service

Auld Kirk Nursery is situated in the church hall, in the coastal town of Fraserburgh. The areas of the building which may be used by the care service are the playroom and gym hall.

The service is provided by a committee of parents. It operates Monday to Friday during term time. In partnership with the local authority the service provides funded pre-school education sessions for children over three years in the morning and also provides two afternoon sessions for the younger children.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 24 children at any one time aged two years to those not yet attending primary school; of whom a maximum of ten will be aged two years to under three years.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 18 April between 08:30 and 14:00 and Thursday 20 April between 08:30 and 11:30. 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 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 seven children using the service
- Spoke with four family members of children using the service
- Received feedback via survey from 16 family members of children using the service
- Spoke with staff and the manager
- Observed practice and children's experiences
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff were warm, nurturing and kind. They had created a welcoming inclusive atmosphere that supported children to feel settled and secure
- Positive relationships with parents meant effective partnerships were well established
- Children were effectively supported by the staff who worked closely with other agencies, when appropriate, to further meet the needs of the children
- Children experienced high quality play opportunities that supported their learning and development
- Staff were improving how they planned for children's learning and developing observation skills
- The service was well led and quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans, was in place to support continuous improvement of the service.

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?	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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as there were a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children and families were warmly welcomed into the setting by caring, nurturing staff. Positive, trusting relationships had been built with parents where information was shared daily at drop off and pick up times. Discussions at these times ensured children's needs were met. For example, staff sensitively supported a child, who was tired on arrival and reluctant to leave their parent, with cuddles and reassurance. One parent commented, "it's very nurturing and staff help my child feel safe and secure." Another parent said, "the staff are thoughtful, caring and personalise care for all the children's needs." These positive interactions supported the development of children's confidence and positive attachments to staff. This supported children to feel loved, safe and secure.

Children benefitted from staff who were attentive to their needs. Staff respectfully listened, responded and communicated in a way that met children's individual needs and preferences. Staff used visual prompts and pictures to support children make choices. Children's artwork and family photos were displayed, promoting a sense of belonging. Children's confidence and self-esteem was supported through the praise and encouragement regularly given by staff. This contributed to an inclusive environment where all children and family's matter.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the effective use of personal plans. Parents were included in developing and reviewing these plans regularly to ensure information was current and relevant. Information included personalities, likes, dislikes and strategies used to support children. This allowed care and support to be tailored to children's individual needs, which supported them to feel safe and secure. Where children required additional support, we found that the manager had established positive links with external agencies, including health visitors and speech and language therapists. One parent commented, "my child has come on so much with his speech." Partnership working ensured children received the right care and support, resulting in positive outcomes.

Children were provided with an appetising and nutritious snack. Children were encouraged to develop life skills, such as, pouring their own drink and buttering their bagel. Staff sat with the children, supporting their knowledge on healthy foods, laughing and chatting, creating a calm, relaxed and unhurried experience. We suggested that more opportunities to be involved in the preparation and serving of food would build children's confidence and independence.

Staff were sensitive and respectful of children's dignity and privacy when supporting them with their personal care, always ensuring they were happy and comfortable. Children were discreetly taken to the toilet at regular intervals.

Children's safety and wellbeing was supported by staff's understanding of their role in identifying, recording and reporting any safeguarding concerns. Staff and management had undertaken relevant child protection training. Chronologies were used effectively to record significant events in a child's life.

Children's health and safety was promoted as all appropriate medication and accident paperwork followed best practice guidelines.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children were actively involved in leading their play and learning in a well organised and stimulating environment. There was a balance of spontaneous and planned activities which promoted children's choice and independence. Play spaces were set up to provoke children's natural curiosity and inquiry. There was a well-resourced woodwork area with real tools and natural open-ended resources, promoting creativity and problem-solving skills. Children told us how they hammered the nails in demonstrating, perseverance and resilience as they mastered the tools.

An understanding of the importance of play and learning experiences was embedded into practice. Staff had a good knowledge of child development and used this to support children in play experiences. Staff used open ended questions during interactions, encouraging children to extend their thinking and be creative. One parent commented "there are lots of play-based activities which is great for children to learn."

Children had fun and were engaged in a variety of play experiences and opportunities throughout the morning. Children could play on their own, with friends or have quiet relaxing time in the sensory tent or cosy areas. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of when to intervene in a child's play and when to step back, allowing children to freely explore their environment. This helped keep children safe and supported their resilience as independent learners.

Opportunities to explore literacy and numeracy were naturally embedded in play experiences. A variety of resources, including different sized containers, encouraged children to differentiate by size, capacity and volume as they poured water into the jugs. Staff's interactions supported children's mathematical and numeracy development as they sorted the animals into categories, exploring colour, shape and numbers. There were many opportunities for mark making with a range of resources incorporated in the play spaces. This included pens, white board, paint, crayons and pencils. Children participated in story time, sequencing the events of the Billy Goats Gruff, as they excitedly predicted what happened next. Children's literacy and language development was further supported spontaneously through songs, rhymes and storytelling.

Responsive planning was in the early stages of development. The manager was supporting staff in using observations to plan experiences following children's interests to enhance and extend learning. This could be developed further to support breadth and depth in children's learning. Individual learning journals documented learning through observations, photos and children's work. We discussed the planning cycle and continuing to use Realising the Ambition to provide further support to embed planning approaches into practice. This will ensure children are provided with rich learning opportunities and experiences to show progression in learning and reach their full potential.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported by good opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Children benefitted from regular outings to the park, woodland area and weekly trips to the school park and grounds. Children excitedly told us they liked to play in the woods at the park and we saw photos of children building dens, balancing and climbing on the wooden beams. This supported children's physical development and helped them to feel included in their local community.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as there were a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

There was a welcoming, nurturing ethos on arrival to the service. The nursery had an open-door policy where families were warmly welcomed. Children were kept safe through various systems that the nursery had in place, such as, a secure playroom door. Staff escorted children to the toilet and gym hall, ensuring they were always accounted for. The building was well maintained, with good quality furnishings and equipment. Risk assessments were in place to identify any hazards and help keep children safe and well.

Children were motivated to play in a stimulating indoor environment, where play and learning opportunities were enhanced through thoughtfully set up spaces. These spaces were inviting and promoted natural curiosity, imagination and creativity. The large construction area gave children sufficient space to build, experiment and problem solve. The woodwork area provided further opportunities for children to problem solve, investigate and develop perseverance. Children had a good understanding of safety and told us they wear goggles and helmets to keep them safe. There were many opportunities for children to explore their creativity and engage in sensory activities, such as, large art area, water, sand and role play area. Cosy areas were available, which ensured children could have quiet time to rest and relax and there was sensory tent available for alone time. This meant children had positive play experiences.

There was no direct access to outdoors and outings to the park, woods and secret garden were planned in advance. Children travelled weekly by bus to explore the outdoor area at the school park. Parents commented "unfortunately, they don't have access to outdoors every day, but they love their weekly trip." Another parent said, "they do outdoor walks and play when weather allows, my child loves going to the school park and grounds every week for outdoor learning." We discussed the importance for children's health and wellbeing to have access to fresh air daily. Management are in discussions with the local council to secure a green space to develop for the nursery.

Children's health was promoted by staff's understanding of infection, prevention and control. The setting was clean and tidy, and staff encouraged children to wash their hands at key points of the day to minimise the potential spread of infection, creating a safe environment for children.

Children and staff's personal information was stored securely in a locked filing cabinet to ensure their privacy and maintain confidentiality.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

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

The manager was in the process of refreshing the settings vision, values and aims to reflect the provision provided. Staff and parents were consulted through the process as they completed questionnaires to gather their views and opinions. Children's voices were collated using "Cal" the Octopus mind map. This was a familiar character used to support the children's understanding of the wellbeing indicators, which are, safe, healthy, achieving, respected, responsible and included. This demonstrated effective partnership with families, as their views were respected, and promoted a shared ethos within the setting.

Staff were supported by a manager who was committed to initiating change and promoting a culture of continuous improvement. The manager valued staff's contributions and distributed leadership roles within the team. For example, a member of staff took a lead role in promoting healthy eating and another in developing policies. Leadership roles developed staff's confidence and understanding of the impact of improvements on outcomes for children. This positive mindset meant staff shared responsibility for change. Therefore, children and families benefitted from a team who were motivated and responsive to meeting their needs.

Staff valued parents' feedback to continually develop the service. Questionnaires were sent out to gather views on the introduction of learning journals.

Stay and play sessions were planned and parents completed an evaluation form of their experience in the setting. Information was gathered to support the development of the service. This promoted partnership working to improve outcomes for children and families. A variety of communication methods kept parents informed of any changes to the setting. One parent told us, "Facebook is a great way for daily contact." Monthly newsletters are shared using a format to suit parents individual needs. These were shared digitally or translated into their spoken language. Parents told us, they "were very happy with the service provided, staff are very approachable and friendly." This contributed to parents feeling valued and included.

Self-evaluation was embedded into practice and staff regularly met as a team to evaluate the quality of the service and identify any improvements needed. Best practice documents were used as benchmarks during this process. These improvements were reflected in the service improvement plan, which focused on developing learning journals and refreshing the settings vision, values and aims. Children benefited from a staff team who reflected on their practice and used current documents to promote a high-quality service.

Quality assurance arrangements made a positive impact in maintaining and improving high quality care for children. A calendar supported this process as tasks, such as, monitoring staff training, audits and Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration were evidenced. Monthly tasks were identified, and appropriate action was taken, for example, updating staff core training. This promoted positive outcomes for children and families.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

4.3 Staff deployment (day care services)

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

Children benefited from a kind, nurturing, enthusiastic team who were committed to providing a positive experience for children in their care. Staff were recruited safely with the relevant checks in place before they started their role. A suitable induction process ensured staff received guidance and support from the onset. The National Induction Resource was used as an effective tool to ensure staff had the relevant information to carry out their role. A member of staff started on the day of our visit, and we observed how supportive and welcoming the team were. Good communication supported staff in using consistent approaches. This supported the creation of a calm, relaxing environment where children received quality care and support.

The staff team were caring and nurturing in their interactions with children and families. One parent commented, "staff are wonderful, thoughtful and caring, they go the extra mile for children." Another

parent told us, "staff know my child well, they are very supportive." Staff were knowledgeable and confident in their roles and communicated well when required to ensure children's play was not disrupted when tasks had to be carried out. For example, preparing snack or taking children to the toilet. They worked well together to maintain quality engagement with children throughout the session. This provided a consistency and continuity of care, as their individual needs were met.

Staff deployment throughout the session was well managed. Enhanced staffing levels above the standard ratio ensured children received individual support when required. For example, children received one to one support when going to the gym hall or out for a walk. This supported children's safety and wellbeing.

Staff were committed to professional development and used training and best practice guidance to support their practice. They were enthusiastic and passionate about recent training courses and how these had impacted positively on their practice and children's experiences. Staff shared ideas to improve provision and outcomes for children, for example, sharing strategies to support individual children. This meant children were given opportunities and experiences to reach their full potential.

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?	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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