

Braehead PS ELCC Day Care of Children

Braehead Primary School
Meadow Road
Dumbarton
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 March 2023

Service provided by:
West Dunbartonshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003383

Service no:
CS2003014738

About the service

Braehead Primary Early Learning and Childcare Centre is incorporated within Braehead Primary School in Dumbarton. The service is provided by West Dunbartonshire Council.

The service is located in Dumbarton, West Dunbartonshire, children have access to three playrooms of varying size, school lunch hall and secure outdoor spaces. The service is located near to Dumbarton town centre and local amenities.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 100 children not yet attending primary school at any one time;

- of whom no more than 40 are aged 2 years to under 3 years of whom no more than 9 are aged under 2 years.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 28 and 29 March 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 registration information, intelligence gathered and information submitted by the service.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

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

Key messages

- We observed warm, caring and nurturing interactions between staff and children.
- Children were having fun and could access a range of interesting resources both inside and out which stimulated their play and learning.
- The environment was bright, spacious, furnished to a very high standard, and designed to maximise children's opportunity for play and learning.
- Quality assurance including self-evaluation and improvement planning was in place which supported improved outcomes for children and families.
- Family engagement was actively encouraged and families were welcomed into 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - 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 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.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing Care and Support

Staff interaction with children was warm, nurturing and supportive. Staff told us they worked closely with families before starting the service, this enabled them to develop meaningful personal plans which reflected children's individual needs and preferences. One staff member said, "When children start at nursery, they are assigned a keyworker who spends time with their parent/carer filling out their care plan and talking to the parent/carer about their child's needs & interests."

Families told us they had regular contact with the nursery at pick up and drop off, daily diary updates and regularly reviewed their children's personal plans. This meant staff could adapt their care and support to reflect changes in children and family circumstances. We could see strong relationships had been established between children, staff and families. One parent said, "Nursery goes above and beyond to support our child."

Where children required additional nurture, care and support we found robust plans in place. Children's needs were met through individual targeted support and specific intervention. Various external health professionals were involved in supporting children such as educational psychologists, health visitors and specialist support teachers. Staff told us they worked in partnership with families and external health professionals to make sure children got the support they needed from the right person at the right time.

We observed children experience mealtimes in environments suited to their development stage. Younger children had lunch in their playrooms, the layout, furniture design and comfortable environment enabled them to enjoy a relaxed and unhurried lunch experience. We saw attentive, encouraging staff attuned to children's verbal and non-verbal communication; lots of eye contact, smiles and cuddles. Staff were on hand to support children's independence skills, encouraging them to self-feed and drink.

Older children had lunch in the school dinner hall, we observed staff and children sit together, laugh and chat. Staff encouraged children to be independent; pouring drinks and clearing their dishes away. Children enjoyed their lunch with some giving it thumbs up. We did find that noise levels could be excessive, however, staff told us they had reviewed the lunchtime environment and were in the process of relocating to the older children's playroom. This offered a calmer and more relaxing environment where they had better opportunities to engage in high-quality interactions with children.

We found children's sleep routines and environments; mood lighting, music and comforters from home offered safe, warm and secure opportunities for children to rest and sleep. Children's routines were reviewed with families as part of their individual personal plans, however, we did highlight further opportunities for staff to review children's sleep routines would be beneficial. This included incorporating safe sleep guidance as part of family welcome packs.

Where children had any medication needs, a copy of the strategies of support was stored with their medication. This meant that staff had access to the relevant information to help support children's needs quickly and effectively.

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and Learning

Children had good opportunities to lead and initiate their play, a range of interesting resources and spaces allowed them to explore and inquire. Learning stations were inviting and offered curious, creative and interesting resources, they included the investigation station; magnifying glasses, magnets and coloured shapes.

We observed and spoke with children who were deeply engaged in their imaginary play, they told us they were builders and were using the tools at the 'work bench' to unscrew nails. This type of play develops children's social, emotional and language skills.

Numeracy and literacy opportunities were available throughout the environment, they included traditional resources; dice, numbered discs and blocks. We observed the lead practitioner of attainment working with children in a fun and encouraging way to identify letters. We did discuss developing further opportunities to role model 'best practice', including staff shadowing the lead practitioner. This would support all staff in developing meaningful numeracy and literacy opportunities for children.

Younger children had a range of play and learning opportunities which suited their stage of development. Their play spaces offered physical challenge and explorative and sensory resources, including climbing bridge, treasure baskets and wooden shapes, these supported children in exploring the world around them.

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. We evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high-quality facilities

We found the environment enabled children to play, have fun, learn and explore. The indoor learning environment was extended and areas were replicated outdoors. The layout and design of play spaces were sensitively structured and enabled children to freely move between indoors and out. Play equipment furniture and resources were clean, well maintained and easily accessible. This gives children a strong message that they matter and belong.

Staff told us observations and conversations with children and families enabled them to identify children's current interests. We found play spaces were meaningfully resourced to reflect these; the construction area's play and learning opportunities had been extended to reflect children's interest in building, including graph paper, rulers, pencils and protractors. One staff member said, "We also implemented a system with observations slips where if we've witnessed significant learning from someone else's key child, we write it on the observation sheet and hand it to keyworker."

The settings outdoor environments offered children rich, varied and exciting opportunities to enjoy physical and explorative play; tyres, large bobbins, art/crafts, pyramid frames.

We observed the youngest children in their outdoor area excitedly climbing, balancing and building using wood and crates; two children were happily mirroring each other climbing. We saw staff warmly respond to their gestures and encourage their play, this helps children feel safe, secure and builds confidence.

Younger children had access to their own sensory room, it offered a calming and nurturing space, soft furnishings, materials, mood lighting and cosy woven pods offered spaces where they could relax, rest, explore and have quiet time. We observed staff use these spaces to nurture and care for children who required some additional care and support.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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.

3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children and families benefitted from the service's culture of continuous improvement. Quality assurance processes supported the management team to assess what worked well and identify areas for development within the service. The site improvement plan outlined areas which would further improve outcomes for children, they included increasing opportunities for outdoor learning and community involvement.

Regular meetings and staff training opportunities helped staff to reflect on their practice, learning and development. 'Be the best' meetings also helped identify areas of success, challenges and training that may be needed to support staff in their role. Staff told us they had access to training and development opportunities that enhanced their practice, they included forest school and outdoor learning. One staff member said, "We are regularly told of any relevant training opportunities and we are offered to go on different courses."

The senior management team, acting head teacher, depute and lead practitioners work closely with staff to support the wellbeing of children. Staff told us that keeping communication open was extremely important to them, weekly meetings, playroom discussions meant they were well-informed and could respond to changes in children and family circumstances.

Staff welcomed families into the setting, family sessions, play and stay, informal and formal meetings and chats enabled staff to build strong relationships with families. We had the opportunity to participate with staff and families in their weekly family sessions. We saw caring, warm and nurturing relationships had been built. Families said they enjoyed and valued these sessions. One staff member said, "Parents are an integral part of Braehead."

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

We observed staff communicating and working well together to support children at key times throughout the day. This included during lunch; supporting set-up and sitting with children and being outdoors; keeping children safe observing adult/child ratio's and supporting children moving outside.

The management team recognised the importance of the service being appropriately staffed throughout the day. We observed sufficient numbers of staff were available in each playroom to support children's needs and wishes. Staff worked with specific groups of children; over or under three's which meant strong, consistent and nurturing relationships could be built between children and families. Families told us staff knew their children extremely well, one parent said, "Nursery staff go above and beyond to support our child."

Staff were flexible and supported each other when additional activities meant a change to the daily routine., this included when some staff undertook parent meetings and participated in parental engagement sessions during the nursery day. The remaining staff were available in sufficient numbers to meet the wellbeing needs of the children.

We found staff used their varied skills and knowledge to support the development of their practice. They undertook additional leadership roles within the setting, including family engagement training and supporting the Gaelic practitioner, one staff member said, "I attended PEEP (Parents as Early Education Partners) training recently and I am looking forward to bringing those sessions to nursery for our families." Staff told us they welcomed these opportunities to develop their practice and work with colleagues to 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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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