

Alyth Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

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Alyth
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 June 2023

Service provided by:
Perth & Kinross Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003370

Service no:
CS2003017330

About the service

Alyth Primary School Nursery is a daycare for children provided by Perth and Kinross Council. The service is registered to provide care to 50 children aged two years to those not attending primary school.

The service operates from a purpose built facility, within Alyth Primary School. Accommodation consists of one large play space, large cloakroom area, children's toileting facilities and a garden area. The nursery is close to local amenities within the village.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 June 2023 between 09:30 and 16:30 and 23 June 2023 between 09:30 and 13:00. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed children using the service
- received feedback from six families from our online questionnaire
- spoke with the staff and management team
- observed practice
- reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children experienced genuine warmth, caring and nurturing approaches to support their wellbeing.
- Children's language, literacy and numeracy was well supported across the nursery. The literacy and numeracy rich environment provided a variety of experiences which supported children to learn and progress.
- Staff contributed effectively to the ongoing improvements within the nursery, as they were encouraged to critically review their own practice, identifying strengths and next steps. This demonstrated a reflective and considered approach to the development of the service.
- Staff and management should now review how children and families are involved in progress and development of the service.
- Staff were skilled, dedicated and nurturing. They were motivated and committed to providing a happy and supportive environment 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?	4 - 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 quality key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced genuine warmth, caring and nurturing approaches to support their wellbeing. We observed staff to be compassionate and responsive in their interactions. This contributed to children feeling safe and secure and as a result all children were confident, happy and engaged in their play experiences.

Staff knew children very well and were responsive to their individual needs. Staff cuddled and comforted children to support transition and were quick to respond if a child became upset. Staff were very good at following cues from children and were quick to recognise if a child needed support. This supported children to form attachments with staff and feel secure in their care.

Children enjoyed a positive lunch time experience which was sociable, relaxed and unhurried. Staff and children sat together eating lunch and chatting, promoting good eating habits. Children ate lunch in the school dining area. They used trays to collect their lunch and return to the table. This was managed well, with children doing so with confidence. Opportunities for choice and independence were offered at each table with children serving their own side dishes such as bread and salad. Children used real crockery and cutlery which contributed to the family meal time experience. The day of our inspection visit was very hot and we noted that fresh drinking water was easily accessible for children to ensure they remained hydrated.

Children's wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning which was reviewed regularly with families and children. Staff knew children well and were aware of their individual needs. They spoke knowledgeably about the children, describing their individual characteristics and any sensitivities they may have. This contributed positively to children's self-esteem and sense of wellbeing. As a result, they were confident in approaching staff for help or reassurance.

Partnership working with families had been well established. Staff recognised the importance of engaging with children and their families at the earliest possible stage. Ongoing opportunities such as 'book bug', and 'eat well, play well' sessions provided meaningful experiences for families to engage in. This contributed to supporting the holistic needs of each child and their family to improve their wellbeing.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were engaged in their play as they played happily independently or cooperatively in small groups. Staff played with the children and supported learning through exciting and interesting play opportunities. The free flow nature of the play space meant that children could choose where to play which supported children's choice and independence in leading their play.

Children's language, literacy and numeracy was well supported across the nursery. Opportunities for early numeracy experiences such as counting, sorting and matching were available indoors and outdoors, supporting children to learn key skills through play. Staff facilitated opportunities for sharing stories, songs and rhymes with children through their day to day experiences. This supported children's enjoyment of literacy and the development of their talking and listening skills. A range of mark making resources available across the indoor spaces and outdoors supported children to engage in early writing through their play experiences.

Opportunities for risky play were well-supported. Children made good use of the loose parts provided, to create obstacle courses and challenge themselves. Staff used open ended questions to support children to consider how to keep themselves safe when taking risks.

Children's voice was valued in the service. Opportunities for children to share their ideas and influence their learning was part of daily experiences. Through observations of play and daily discussions, staff responded to children's interests and suggestions. Children were supported to share and record their ideas in floor books. This resulted in children being empowered, valued and allowed them to drive change.

Children under three years were provided with interesting opportunities to promote their sensory play. This ensured younger children were engaged in experiences that were developmentally appropriate for them. Older children accessed resources which reflected their current interests and promoted children's curiosity and imaginative play experiences.

Responsive planning was in place which supported and extended children's interests and play through a balance of planned and spontaneous learning opportunities. As a result, children were happy, engaged in their play and progressing well. Staff recorded observations of play and learning which were displayed in the children's online learning portfolios and shared with families. These were enhanced by the effective use of digital technology. For example, children were confident and competent at recording their voice to describe their learning. This supported children to take ownership of their play and learning.

Opportunities for children's play and learning were enhanced through connections to the local community. Regular walks within the local area provided opportunities for the children to become familiar with their community and the facilities available. For example, visiting the local library. As a result, children were enabled to develop an understanding of their community, sense of place and develop skills for life.

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 quality key question as very good.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefitted from a service that was safe and secure. This included a clear boundary fencing. Spaces were welcoming and nurturing for children and families. The playroom was comfortable, well ventilated, and furnished to a high standard. Homely touches, natural resources and child centred displays helped children to feel welcomed and included. This created an ethos that children mattered. One parent told us "The nursery environment is warm and welcoming. The variety of toys and facilities for inside and outside play is fantastic".

Children were engaged in their play on the day of inspection. Play opportunities supported children's curiosity, enquiry, and creativity. The playroom was laid out in a manner which helped develop children's independence, resources were easily accessible to enable children to self-select resources of their choice. Additionally, children had free flow access to an outdoor area which provided further opportunities for active energetic play and enabled children to direct their play and learning.

Health and well-being was promoted through outdoor play experiences. The garden provided a range of spaces for development of physical skills and exploration. Opportunities for children to explore on larger scale were provided with the use of loose parts and the small climbing frame.

Staff implemented infection, prevention, and control routines to minimise the potential spread of infection. We observed children being supported by staff to understand the need for good hygiene and hand washing throughout the session. This included the use of songs and rhyme to encourage and engage younger children in hand washing routines. This contributed to keeping children safe and healthy.

Staff were aware of the 'Keeping Children Safe - Look, Think, Act Campaign' to support awareness raising of potential risks in their setting. Staff used this knowledge to effectively engage with children to identify and managing risks. Children were supported to sign in independently each day, and were actively encouraged throughout the nursery day or, during transition times, to take head counts and use 'SIMOA' the elephant to identify risks in their play. This supported children to develop an awareness of safety and build self-confidence in identifying and managing risk.

How good is our leadership?**4 - Good**

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvements are led well

The manager and staff team recognised the need to review the current service vision, values and aims to reflect the aspirations of their children, families, partners and the wider community. Plans were in place to implement this review to help the service identify, and understand more fully, what is important for children and their families as the service moves forward.

Families had not yet been involved in a meaningful way to inform change. The service should now consider reviewing processes to consult with families. This would result in the views of families and children being valued in the development of the service.

Effective self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service. An improvement plan with identified actions and timescales was in place. Planned improvements were realistic, with a focus on promoting positive outcomes for children and were supported by best practice guidance. Staff were familiar with current improvements and could describe the positive difference they were making for children and families. Staff contributed effectively to the ongoing improvements within the nursery, as they were encouraged to critically review their own practice, identifying strengths and next steps. This demonstrated a reflective and considered approach to the development of the service.

A quality assurance calendar was in place that ensured purposeful audits of various aspects of the nursery were routinely carried out. We saw these to be outcome focused and detailed the impact they had on children. This contributed positively to the team continually reflecting on the experiences of care and learning children were receiving.

How good is our staff team?

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 quality key question as very good.

4.3 Staff deployment

Children were cared for by staff who were warm, compassionate and nurturing. Staff provided individualised support by effectively engaging with children throughout the inspection. Parents told us staff are, "always friendly, approachable and caring to my children", and "the staff are brilliant. They are very nurturing towards my child". Staff demonstrated an awareness of when and how to effectively intervene, picking up on cues to support children's wellbeing and extend their play experiences. This resulted in children who felt respected within the service.

Staff were skilled, dedicated and nurturing. They were motivated and committed to providing a happy and supportive environment for children. Staff were respectful and supportive of each other. They were warm, caring and sensitive in their approach and demonstrated positive team working. This promoted a happy and secure environment where children were encouraged to lead their own play and learning. They were responsive and respectful of children during interactions and play which supported children to feel safe, secure and happy.

Staff worked well as a team and their differing skills and knowledge complemented one another, resulting in quality interactions with children. For the majority of the time staff were positioned well within the nursery, ensuring children were supervised and supported.

Staff communicated extremely well with each other and worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day. They communicated sensitively with each other should a task take them away from their duties, for example when they had to support children with personal care and accessing toilet facilities.

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

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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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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