

St. Margaret of Scotland PS Nursery Class

Day Care of Children

Broomlands Road
South Carbrain
Cumbernauld
Glasgow
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Telephone: 01236 632 102

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 October 2023

Service provided by:
North Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000237

Service no:
CS2003020076

About the service

St. Margaret of Scotland Primary School Nursery Class is a local authority run nursery provided by North Lanarkshire Council. The service is situated in St. Margaret of Scotland Primary School and consists of one open plan playroom, an accessible outdoor garden and welcome area. In addition, they have access to a room within the school where children receive personalised support in small groups or one to one with their key workers.

St Margaret of Scotland Primary School Nursery Class is registered to provide early learning and childcare to a maximum of 44 children from three years to those not yet attending primary school.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 3 and 5 October 2023 and the service was given feedback on the outcome of the inspection on 6 October 2023. 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 a small number of children using the service
- gathered feedback from six families, members of children using the service
- spoke with staff and management present on the days we visited the service
- gathered the feedback from six staff using a questionnaire
- observed staff practice and children's experiences on the days of our visits
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Staff were skilled at identifying children's needs and knowing when to intervene. Their interactions were well planned and considered children's personal preferences and needs.
- Children were happy, settled and having fun playing and learning. Children were given the time and space to make choices, directing their own play and learning.
- Staff had a very good understanding of child development and how best to support children's needs. What matters to the child was at the centre of the care and support they provided.
- Improvements had been made to the premises, such as the playroom being painted, creating a more welcoming and inviting space. However, we have suggested some further areas where improvements could still be made.
- The staff worked well together, had a shared vision and understanding of the quality of service provided and the direction they want to go. We did suggest some areas where quality assurance systems could be further developed.

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?	4 - 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 key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy and settled. They were having fun playing and learning within the setting. Staff provided time and space, to support their personal preferences such as making choices about where they wanted to play and, if they wanted to play with peers or on their own. One parent shared 'My child loves learning with his key workers and learning how to play with other children sharing toys also loves playing outside activities with them as well'. Children had access to an additional space off the main nursery, which provided a smaller, calm and relaxed space. Staff were skilled at knowing when children would benefit visiting this area.

Staff were skilled at identifying children's needs and knowing when to intervene. Their interactions were well planned and considered the children's personal preferences and needs. They had a very good understanding of child development and how best to support children's needs. What mattered to the child was at the centre of care and support they provided. Parents agreed, with one parent sharing, 'The staff are all great and I get told on picking up my child how they have been that day and what they have done and had for lunch'.

Strong bonds and positive relationships had been formed between staff and children. Staff were skilled at listening and responding to the children's needs and wishes. We did discuss some suggestions to further enhance the transition for introducing families to the service and morning drop offs. The service agreed to consider this, including improved transitions for children to the service improvement plan.

Mealtimes were relaxed and unhurried, if needed, children could access a separate space away from the main playroom. The service informed us they had plans to further enhance children's involvement in mealtimes. For example, in the preparation and self-serving. We look forward to seeing how this develops.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and learning

The daily routine, pace of day worked well, most children transitioned smoothly, for example when being asked to tidy up for lunch or small group work. We asked the service to consider the number of times the children's play was stopped as a result. This is to ensure it supports children needs, as well as supporting transitions between tasks. The service agreed to this.

Staff were working hard to increase children's voice, providing opportunities for them to lead their own play and learning. They were making good progress in this area. Children were being regularly consulted on a variety of things. Staff told us they had plans to further increase children's opportunities to have a voice. For example, through further development of their input into personal plans.

Children were confident self-selecting resources and knew where to find resources. Staff were skilled at balancing observation and interactions to create the right experiences. They responded to children's needs and interests using a variety of planning tools from, in the moment, to focused observations. Staff communicated well to ensure they offered play at the appropriate level working closely together making in the moment adaptations when needed. One parent shared that 'My child really enjoys going to nursery every day and speaks fondly of the nursery'.

Staff were extremely confident using tools to support continued improvement in relation to areas of the curriculum. Recently, they had introduced a tool to improve early numeracy opportunities. They were working closely with other agencies to further enhance children's opportunities to positive early literacy materials in the service and at home. Staff were extremely skilled in planning to support children needs, they used a very good balance of intentional and response planning to monitor children experiences. They kept what matters to the child at the centre of the care and support they provided, whilst maintaining high quality play and learning experiences that supported children's wellbeing, early literacy and numeracy development.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Since our last inspection, the premises had been redecorated. All internal walls and radiators had been cleaned and repainted. This created a more welcoming and presentable environment for children, families and staff. Staff told us that the space feels so much better, more welcoming and pleasant to work in.

In addition, a new space had been designated within the school, closer to the nursery than the previous space used. The space was well used by the children, it was more inviting, welcoming and suitable for the needs of the children. Staff shared that the room being closer to the main playroom, was more suited and accessible for the children. We discussed that it would be good if it could be connected or contained within the main play area, so children could self-select to go and reduce the impact of transition further. The service agreed this maybe something they could consider in the future.

Improvements had been made to the children's toilet and changing facilities. A designated space for a changing unit and new sink unit had been installed. However, further work was still needed to ensure it meets the needs and rights of the children. For example, better privacy, not used for storage and some areas were in need of a deep clean. We advised that bins used to dispose of paper towels could be a lined bin that children can operate easily, open lidded waste bins in indoor areas can be used for non-hazardous waste only. We have also asked the service to ensure the ventilation in the area is suitable. The service agreed to share these points with the provider.

Between the play room and staff and kitchen area, a new purpose-built room divide has been installed. This has created a safe barrier reducing children's ability to enter without staff supervision. We suggested the service keeps the surfaces in the food preparation area clean and clear of unnecessary items. If they go ahead with plans for children to access this area in the future, we would advise all unnecessary items are stored out of reach of the children.

Overall, the standard of the premises had improved. Staff were working hard to keep the resources clean and well maintained. Systems were in place to ensure a secure entrance, staff were very vigilant at collection and drop off times. Windows were open, providing good ventilation in the main playrooms. Children had direct access to outdoors from the playrooms. We did discuss having an outdoor hand washing facility, which would support better hand hygiene. Staff worked hard to create a calm and nurturing space for the children. This included reducing the use of the overhead lights, we advised the service to consider use of some lamps, as some areas, as we move into the autumn and winter, may become dark and it would be good to continue with the nurturing atmosphere, as sessions changed.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Overall, the service had good quality assurance systems in place and were making good progress in this area. The service had recently attended development sessions on planning for improvement. They found these to be very helpful and were keen to get started using these. They were at the early stages of implementing the new learning to support some small tests of change. For example to further enhance children's participation in mealtimes.

The Senior Management Team worked well together, and had a shared vision and understanding of the high quality of service they provided. They knew the service strengths and areas for further improvement, and were fully aware of the direction they want to go and were committed to achieving this. Parents were very happy with how well the service was being led. Parents told us 'Manager of the childcare is brilliant with support of the learning of my child as she has helped me with other learning that I can do at home' and another shared 'The manager is extremely kind and caring, and this also filters through to the other staff and the children. The environment is very positive as a result of the leadership'.

Systems were in place to monitor the quality of the service, which included how well they were doing delivering the curriculum, good practice guidance, staff deployment and meeting children's needs. They worked closely with other services and professionals sharing and learning good practice.

Parental involvement had always been a strong part of the service, with parents being welcomed in every day. The service had continued to encourage parents and families to get involved. Staff have worked hard to get families involved using a variety of various parental initiatives including early literacy initiatives and supporting learning at home.

We did discuss with the service areas which would benefit from more meaningful self evaluation being undertaken. This included further implementation of good practice nappy changing facilities guidance, the timings of mealtimes and the type of food being offered. The manager has agreed to discuss these areas with the provider.

We identified an area improvement was needed to how the service managed the storage of medication (see area for improvement one).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure the service has a robust management of medication procedure. This should include, but not be limited to good practice guidance being followed for the storage and disposal of children's medication.

This is to ensure the quality of care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that as a child, I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes (HSCS 4.19) and I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice (HSCS 4.11).

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 key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.3 staff deployment

The staff team provided a wide range of skills and experience to the service. They worked extremely well as a team, working hard to provide a high quality service. Staff told us they were very happy in their roles and, through shared leadership, they worked together to ensure they met the needs of the children and families. Parents all agreed staff were a key strength in the service. Parents comments included 'Great staff and management. Their keyworker is brilliant with them and understanding. She is also willing to answer any questions I have at any time.' and 'The staff are brilliant with the children and the support they give you is unbelievable good'

Staff meet regularly to reflect on what works well and discussed where positive changes could be made. Staff told us that 'That our team work collaboratively together to give the children the best experience' and 'The staff are very in tune with the children and can listen and read the needs or wishes of our children'.

The service had ample staff to meet the recommended adult to child ratio. The ratio had been adapted to meet the needs of the children. For example, for children with higher dependency levels, with some children having one to one support. Staff were positioned well throughout the service and were able to appropriately respond to children's needs and provide high quality care and support. The staff communicated well to ensure daily tasks were undertaken without interrupting children's play. However, as previously mentioned early in the report, we have asked them to consider how the daily routine may be unintentionally be interrupting children's play.

Staff were committed to providing the right care and support. They attended various further development events and courses. They shared new thinking and approaches and, together, made improvements to the service delivery. This had led to the development of a well-balanced child and adult initiated curriculum. One member of staff shared 'The staff team are a major strength. Each member of staff brings their own skills and qualities together and this gives our children fantastic opportunities'. Whilst another told us 'As a team we are fully committed to providing the best care that we can for our children'.

Staff were extremely caring, kind and respected the children and families' rights. They listen to the children's voice which showed them that their views were valued and important. One member of staff shared that they work hard to provide a 'Welcoming environment that actively embraces diversity and inclusion. Positive relationships and nurture are at the heart of practice'. We agreed.

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 support children's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure that the areas used to care for the children are clean, well maintained and decorated providing a welcoming and pleasant environment.

This is to ensure the quality of the environment is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that as a child, I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishing and equipment. and my environment is relaxed, welcoming, peaceful and free from avoidable and intrusive noise and smells. (HSCS 5.22 & 5.18)

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2023.

Action taken since then

Since our last inspection the premises had been redecorated. All internal walls and radiators have been cleaned and repainted. This created a more welcoming and presentable environment for children, families and staff.

We did see some areas of walls where plaster was starting to crumble, the service agreed to raise this with provider.

The previous classroom used for communication and language unit was no longer in use. A new space was being used closer to the service. This space is well used, it was more inviting, welcoming and suitable for needs of the children.

Improvements had been made to the toilets. Designated space for changing unit and new sinks unit had been installed. However, further work is still needed to ensure it meets the needs and rights of the children.

Overall, significant changes had been made to the premises. **This area for improvement has been met.**

However, some areas within the premises would benefit from further improvement. We have detailed these in the body of the report. The service has agreed to inform the provider and ask for these to be addressed.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure that the kitchen area with the main play area is made safe and secure. This should include but not be limited to:

- If needed, having an appropriate safety barrier to reduce the likelihood of children accessing areas without adult supervision.
- ensuring all possible hazards to children are stored securely out of children's reach
- items stored in this area are stored appropriately

This is to ensure the quality of the environment is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that as a child, my environment is secure and safe (HSCS 5.16)

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2023.

Action taken since then

A new purpose-built room divide has been installed. This has created a safe barrier to reduce children's ability to enter the staff and kitchen area thus reducing the likely hood of them being in contact with hazardous materials stored with this area. **This area for improvement has been met.**

However, some areas within the premises would benefit from further improvement.

The service should consider keeping the surfaces clear, this creates an easier environment to keep clean and well maintained. As this area is used for preparing food, this would reduce the likelihood of cross contamination.

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?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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