

Stoneyhill Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Clayknowes Way
Stoneyhill
Musselburgh
EH21 6UL

Telephone: 01316 653 119

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 September 2023

Service provided by:
East Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002600

Service no:
CS2003016993

About the service

Stoneyhill Primary School Nursery is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 30 children during each session, aged 3 years to not yet attending primary school.

The service is provided by East Lothian Council in premises within Stoneyhill Primary School in the town of Musselburgh in East Lothian.

The nursery had access to one main playroom, toilets, and nappy change area. The enclosed outdoor area is accessed from the playroom.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 September 2023 between 09:15 and 16:15. A further visit took place on 27 September 2023 between 09:00 and 12:45. 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 several children
- reviewed the responses from nineteen parents using the nursery
- spoke staff and the management team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children were happy and having fun in the nursery.
- The environment had improved. Children had access to a stimulating environment that promoted good learning opportunities.
- Children were well cared for by a motivated and enthusiastic staff team.
- Staff deployment should be monitored to ensure there is sufficient staffing levels to be with and get involved in the play of children to extend their learning.
- The management team and staff were committed to making improvements. Quality assurance processes and self evaluation were at an early stage and should now be developed and embedded into practice to ensure they are meaningful and effective.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

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

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to support their wellbeing. Staff were proactive in supporting children with comfort and reassurance when needed which contributed to children feeling secure in their experience. Staff knew children well and were responsive to their individual needs and most recognised when a child needed support. This resulted in strong relationships between children and staff. However, due to competing demands placed on staff, there were occasions when staff could not consistently respond to individual children's needs at the right time. Parents confirmed they were happy with the service and in particular the friendly, helpful staff. Some comments included "The staff really care about the needs of the children" and " my child always likes to go in and I feel confident dropping her off that she is well looked after and being prepared for her time in school".

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 had. We saw staff responding with kindness throughout the day. 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

Snack was a positive, relaxing and sociable time for children. Children were fully involved in the preparation and delivery of snack. For example, children were supported to serve their own food and drinks. This promoted children's independence and skills for life. Staff engaged in conversations with children during their snack experience which encouraged language and communication skills. Children ate lunch in the school hall. They were responsible for collecting and tidying away their own tray of food. This provided some opportunities for independence. The service should continue to review the lunchtime experience.

Children's wellbeing was supported through personal planning which was reviewed regularly with families. Individual children's plans had been updated and staff had worked hard at creating these documents and capturing some strategies to support children. Senior staff should begin to monitor the personal plans to ensure staff support individual children and promote their health and wellbeing.

Children were safe and protected from harm. Staff had a satisfactory understanding of their role and the service's child protection policy and procedures provided support and guidance. However, the senior management team should be aware of notifiable incidents including safeguarding. Improvements had been made to the storage and documentation around medication.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Most children were actively involved in leading their play and learning. We saw children playing imaginatively in the home corner, being puppies and playing collaboratively, and developing language skills.

The sand, water and dough area along with the construction and jigsaws were also well used. However, due to the demands on staff time, there were missed opportunities to allow children to play uninterrupted and for an extended amount of time. Staff were aware of this and were evaluating ways in which to effectively support and extend children's play and learning.

Children showed good levels of engagement, and were developing motor skills, language, and communication, and were learning to share tools and resources. We observed staff praising and celebrating children's achievements.

The service used a combination of long term and responsive planning to meet children's needs and further their learning through their interests. They also used floor books to document evidence and were beginning to work with the local authority trackers to assess and inform future planning. Staff were growing in confidence when recording observations and participating in planning. We acknowledged more time was needed to embed this and evidence how this was impacting positively on children's development. There was a commitment from the senior management team to continue to develop the planning, observations and next steps to ensure children were supported and appropriately challenged throughout their learning.

Children showed an interest in their own learning journals, and these were regularly shared with parents. However, at times the observations lacked information about individual learning, and how this was evaluated to support further development. Observations needed to focus clearly on individual strengths, significant learning taking place and specific next steps. This should then inform responsive planning and further enhance progression in learning at a pace that is right for each child. Observations should be regular so that there is ongoing understanding of the stage that each child is at in their play and learning. (See area for improvement 1)

Areas for improvement

1. For all children to make progress at a pace that is right for them, the provider should ensure observations and tracking of individuals are focused clearly on strengths, significant learning and specific next steps. This should then inform responsive planning. Planning should be meaningfully evaluated so that there is ongoing understanding of the stage that each child is at in their play and learning.

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

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me.' (HSCS 1.27)

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator 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

Children were welcomed into a bright, calm space with plenty of natural light and ventilation contributing to children's wellbeing. A parent commented that it was "nice, welcoming and homely. Family portraits, other achievements etc".

The learning environment had been an area of development for the staff team, and they had worked hard to improve this. The room was now a welcoming and inviting space where children were busy, engaged and

having lots of fun. A range of experiences enabled children to play collaboratively, developing communication and language skills and making progress their own learning. Parent comments included "staff are continually working on making the space they have fun for the children and change it round to make it different and exact for them" and "I think the work the staff do to ensure the setting is safe and lay out changed from time to time so the kids can enjoy their space and be creative and have it slightly different for them to play and make things is great. They use the space well and make it always fun".

Play areas had been considered and took account of children's interests and development. These areas offered sufficient space for children to play on their own and in small or larger groups, with some spaces used flexibly to extend their activities. Children had access to a suitable range of play resources to support their play and encourage curiosity and creativity. Management and staff should continue evaluating the quality of play spaces and resources, to ensure that they offer children stimulation and challenge.

Children had access to a spacious, stimulating outdoor learning space. This was an interesting space with different surfaces and resources for children to practise key skills. Children participated in imaginative play in the outdoor mud kitchen, climbing and balancing on play structures and exploring loose parts. The service are continuing to work with the local authority to review how children access the outdoor area.

Children's health was supported by appropriate infection prevention and control measures in place and staff's understanding of these.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

The nursery team had an understanding of the service's strengths and the improvements that were still needed to improve the overall quality of the service. We acknowledged that staff and management had worked hard to make some meaningful improvements to the setting, which were having a positive impact on children and their families. For example, the play environment and parent participation. Comments included "I feel the nursery is well managed every day I go to pick up and drop off they have a set strict routine for coming in and out to keep the safety of the children a priority" and "I feel the nursery is very well managed. My child took a while to settle and everyday I felt that the staff were all aware of how he had settled and that management overall is very precise especially in terms of pick up and drop off that it is done the same way every time which leaves no room for problems or any safety issues".

We found some quality assurance processes had been developed. This included a clear action plan detailing progress made on previous areas for improvements and improved self-evaluation processes. While staff were still developing knowledge and confidence in using these new systems, we found some evidence that they were impacting positively in some areas of practice and the quality of children's experiences. Management and staff recognised that while they had made some progress with their improvement journey, there were still further improvements needed. We acknowledged that quality assurance needed time to become firmly embedded in practice and ensure sustained improvements. (see area for improvement 1)

Staff had started to use self-evaluation to contributed effectively to the ongoing improvements within the nursery. This should be further developed to include formal and informal monitoring of personal plans, planning for play, observations and staff practice. This would ensure the management team have an oversight of all aspects of the nursery and demonstrate a reflective and considered approach to the

development of the service.

Children's voices were 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. This resulted in children being respected and valued.

Families shared with us that overall, they were happy with their level of involvement in the setting. The service had welcomed parents back into the setting and had offered "stay and play" sessions. Some parents expressed that they did not feel fully involved and informed about their child's learning and development and handover times were rushed. The service should continue to evaluate the ways in which they consult with families to ensure it is meaningful and effective.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children receive a high quality service, the service should ensure robust self evaluation and effective quality assurance systems are developed and implemented to improve outcomes for children.

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)

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

4.3 Staff deployment

Staff engaged well with us and were confident, open and professional in their discussions. They were kind, caring and nurturing in their interactions with the children. Parents were all complimentary about staff and comments included "I love everything about the team they are all lovely and so caring towards all of the children you can see they have a great relationship with the children and the children love them too", "very friendly and always informative about my child's day" and "I love the staff, they are always happy and helpful if I have questions about anything.....they are very knowledgeable about all the children and you can see all the children are happy in the setting".

Staff had worked hard and were keen to share with us, how they had improved some areas of practice, which were impacting positively on children's experiences. They worked well together to create a welcoming environment for children and their families. They were professional, courteous and supportive to one another. However, at times they did not feel supported by the senior management team or included in the wider community of the school.

The deployment of staff at times throughout the day resulted in limited opportunities for overall learning, development and support being limited. All children's play was interrupted to tidy and go outside. Supporting children's individual needs, staff's shift patterns and time out sessions meant staff deployment was often difficult to manage. Further consideration should be given to the deployment of staff to ensure staff can fully support the needs, wishes and choice of children within their play opportunities. The management team should continue to monitor this, to ensure staffing levels enable children to consistently receive high quality engagement and interaction throughout their time at nursery.

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 children's individual health and wellbeing needs are met, the service should further develop children's personal plans. This should include but not be limited to, documenting strategies that identify how staff will meet children's individual needs and reviewing these plans in consultation with parents. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15)

This area for improvement was made on 11 January 2023.

Action taken since then

Personal plans had all been updated and there was a system in place to ensure they were reviewed every six month.

Information was used from all about me form to form the basis of strategies if required. Staff regularly reviewed and updated this information.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To enable all children to be cared for in an appropriate environment that meets their needs and supports them to reach their full potential. Staff should continue to develop the environment to ensure appropriate play spaces are available with suitable resources and materials to effectively challenge children and reflect their current interests and curiosities.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'If I experience care and support in a group, I experience a homely environment and can use a comfortable area with soft furnishings to relax.' (HSCS 5.6)

This area for improvement was made on 11 January 2023.

Action taken since then

The environment was now a welcoming space. Children were busy and had plenty of learning opportunities and suitable resources to ensure they were challenged and having fun.

Staff had started to evaluate the play areas and to ensure children were getting the most out of the environment.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children receive a high quality service, the service should ensure robust self evaluation and effective quality assurance systems are developed and implemented to improve outcomes for children.

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 11 January 2023.

Action taken since then

The service had begun to quality assure and evaluate aspects of the setting. However, they need time to ensure these systems are embedded into the setting to ensure good outcomes for children are routinely provided.

This area for improvement is not met and carried forward into this report.

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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