

## Bridgend Nursery Day Care of Children

Bridgend Primary School  
Ardross Road  
Alness  
IV17 0QA

Telephone: 01349 882 285

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
9 November 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Highland Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001693

**Service no:**  
CS2003013577

## About the service

Bridgend Primary School Nursery is situated in the town of Alness in the Ross and Cromarty area of the Highlands.

The nursery is located in a stand alone building in the grounds of Bridgend Primary School. Accommodation comprises of a reception area, two large bright playrooms, a kitchen, toilet provision and an enclosed outdoor space. The nursery also has access to a large school garden area.

The service is provided by Highland Council and managed by the primary school head teacher. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 48 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 8 November 2023 between 08:45 and 16:00 and 9 November 2023 between 08:45 and 12:00. 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, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service and six of their families;
- reviewed online questionnaire feedback from seven families;
- reviewed online questionnaire feedback from eight staff;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Staff supported the children's care and learning routines with kindness and compassion which contributed to the development of strong and trusting relationships.
- Play experiences across the nursery supported the development of children's language, literacy and numeracy.
- Consideration had been given to the continuous provision indoors to promote children's curiosity and imagination.
- The staff team had taken positive steps to developed the indoor space to ensure that children experienced an environment which was welcoming, comfortable and homely with cosy spaces to rest and relax.
- Children benefited from free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor area. This enabled children to have choice, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy.
- Effective quality assurance and self-evaluation processes were supporting the development of the service.
- Most families commented positively on the communication from the service and reported that staff knew their children well and what was important for their care.

## 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 where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Staff supported the children's care and learning routines with kindness and compassion which contributed to the development of strong and trusting relationships. Staff were very responsive to children's individual needs by offering reassurance, praise and physical comfort to children when needed. This supported children to feel safe, confident, and secure within the nursery environment.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning. This was carried out in collaboration with families and partners to promote consistency and continuity in care. All families who responded to our survey strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: 'I am fully involved in my child's care, including developing and reviewing their personal plan'. Personal planning information contained relevant information and strategies, linked to the wellbeing indicators, which were used by staff to support the development needs of children. Staff spoke confidently and knowledgeably about the care needs of children and implemented strategies to support them. As a result, all children received well-planned care and support to meet their individual needs.

Snack time was a positive, relaxing, and sociable time for children where they were provided with a range of opportunities to develop their independence. For example, children helped to prepare and serve the snack fruit items, they spread their own oatcake toppings, poured their own milk and water and cleared away their own plates and dishes. As a result, children had opportunities to take responsibility and learn key life skills. Staff sat with children which provided opportunities to promote close attachments and develop their language skills. Food choices at snack and lunchtime were nutritious and children had access to fresh water throughout the day to support hydration. However, at lunchtime the environment did not always support opportunities for children to take responsibility and be independent. The service had identified the need to further develop the lunchtime experience to be more nurturing and homely and offer more opportunities for children to develop their independence skills.

Systems to support the safe storage and administration of medication were in place. All medication sampled was clearly labelled and stored in a safe and accessible way. Permissions and protocols for administration of medication were stored with the appropriate medicine and staff were knowledgeable about the medical needs of children. This contributed to ensuring children's needs were met and they were kept safe.

Staff understood their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and protected from harm. They had recently completed child protection training and could confidently tell us how they would respond if they had any child protection concerns. This contributed to keeping children safe. Accident and incident records were completed by the staff and shared with parents in a timely manner. These records were regularly audited by the manager in order to monitor and address any issues which could impact children's safety and well-being.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had opportunities to have fun and lead their own play. Planning was both responsive and intentional, and there was good use of provocations to stimulate thinking and extend children's interests. For example, natural autumnal resources and other loose parts were used by children to create imaginary small world play experiences. Staff used and talked about these materials with the children to promote and extend discussions around wild animals. This supported children's engagement and opportunity to understand more about the natural world.

Overall, the staff team had a good understanding of child development and recognised that children learn in different ways. Most staff took time to support children's play and were continuing to develop their skills and expertise to extend children's learning through high quality interactions and observations. Time was set aside for staff to plan and discuss children's progress and development and identify next steps for each child. This provided staff with a good overview of children's progress in learning.

Play experiences across the nursery supported the development of children's language, literacy and numeracy. Children were able to practice and develop their emerging writing skills through painting, cutting, gluing and mark making across the indoor and outdoor spaces. Examples of children's mark making were valued, displayed within the service and used to support aspects of the day to day routine such as planning learning.

The regular sharing of stories, songs and rhymes with their peers and adults ensured children had the opportunity to revisit familiar texts and consolidate their learning. This supported the development of their talking and listening skills. Staff and children were developing their knowledge of British Sign Language and Makaton to support an inclusive environment and enhance communication between children and their peers.

Observations of children's individual development and learning were recorded and regularly shared with families through profile folders and an online platform. All families who responded to our survey strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: 'I am fully involved and informed about my child's learning and development'. Most observations highlighted children's learning through the early level curriculum and included some next steps for development. The service had identified the need to continue to build staff confidence in identifying and planning next steps in learning for children to ensure they are sufficiently challenged at an appropriate level.

### 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

The indoor nursery spaces were clean and comfortable with plenty of natural light and ventilation. This provided a welcoming space for children and families. As part of their ongoing improvement work, the staff team had used best practice guidance to carefully consider the experiences and spaces available within the learning environment indoors and outdoors. As a result, the playroom and outdoor space were set out in a manner which enabled children to access a good range of resources easily and lead their own play. This demonstrated the value of children's ownership and autonomy within the service.

The indoor playroom was structured to reflect children's interests and stages of development and learning. Consideration had been given to the continuous provision indoors to promote children's curiosity and imagination. We observed some children having fun emptying and filling containers and real objects in the sand tray. Small world resources and craft materials were available which supported children's current interest in the fire service. Some children commented as they created their own fire engines from craft materials: "Now time to make the ladders." and "Broom broom!". As a result, children were engaged in play experiences within an environment which reflected their interests and curiosities.

There were cosy and quiet areas for children to rest and relax which supported their emotional needs. Indoors, quiet spaces with soft furnishings, blankets and sleeping mats were used by children to read books and rest. Staff and children also used these areas for reading and sharing stories together. We observed nurturing attachments between staff and children during these times. This supported children's language development as well as their sense of well-being within the nursery.

Children benefited from free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor area. This enabled children to have choice, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy. Children had access to a range of loose parts including, cable drums, plastic pipes and sticks which they used to support imaginary play. In the outside space there were opportunities for children to take part in more physical play experiences. Areas to climb, run and explore provided opportunities for children to have fun and develop their movement and coordination skills.

Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection, for example children were confident in their hand washing routines at snack and lunchtimes and after returning from outdoor play. Risk assessments were in place and implemented effectively by staff to ensure that the environment was safe for the children attending.

## How good is our leadership?

**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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Since the last inspection, the manager and staff team had made significant progress in implementing clear and effective plans to improve the service through their self-evaluation and quality assurance processes. A robust and transparent quality assurance calendar had been created and implemented effectively, enabling the manager to undertake quality assurance of key areas such as observations of learning, planning, the environment, personal planning and staff practice. As a result children were experiencing a well-managed service with a strong focus on quality and continued improvement.

Effective self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service. An improvement plan with identified actions and timescales was in place. Staff were familiar with current improvements and could describe the positive difference they were making for children and families. Planned improvements were realistic, with a focus on promoting positive outcomes for children and supported by best practice guidance. These included developing quality assurance approaches as well as reviewing and improving the continuous provision within the learning environment. The impact of these improvements was making a positive difference to children's experiences. For example, as a result to changes made to the continuous provision indoors, children had access to more resources which promoted their creativity, curiosity and

imagination and cosy spaces to rest and relax. This supported their overall well-being and development. The service are currently taking part in the Care Inspectorate Early Learning and Childcare improvement programme to further develop and support their professional knowledge and skills when implementing change.

Regular monitoring of staff practice linked to the service improvement priorities was being effectively implemented by the nursery manager. Monitoring of observations and planning as well as children's experiences had taken place. Constructive feedback was given to staff to highlight areas of strength and aspects of their practice which could be further developed. This supported a culture of reflective practice and continuous improvement and promoted positive outcomes for children.

The views of children and families were actively sought by the service to inform the development of the setting. For example, families had been involved in the development of the indoor play spaces by providing resources from home such as loose parts and real objects to support children's imaginative and role play experiences. As well as this, children were consulted about the changes to the indoor provision. Some children commented: "I think it is better, I really like the curtains it feels cosy" and "I like to play with toys in the house". Regular communication with families also took place through a variety of methods including email, telephone, through an online platform, newsletters and face to face discussions. Stay and play sessions had taken place, with some focussed on areas of the service improvement developments such as the development of the indoor play space. This has provided opportunities for families to be actively involved in supporting their children's learning and development. Almost all families who responded to our survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: 'My child and I are involved in a meaningful way to help develop this setting and our ideas and suggestions are used to influence change'. Meaningfully involving families in the service developments helped to promote a shared partnership in the delivery of high quality care for children.

A collaborative approach towards self-evaluation and improvement was a priority for the manager. Regular staff meetings and visits to the nursery by the manager supported self-evaluation. Time was provided for staff to come together, reflect on practice and be involved in the identification of areas for improvement and review progress in meeting these. For example, the staff team had worked collaboratively to review changes made to the indoor spaces and the refreshed approaches to documenting planning for children's learning. Some staff commented: "Staff have been working to make the nursery more homely and children are feeding back they like the changes and this session staff have been evaluating their interactions with the children." and "There are areas which are undergoing development in the nursery; in particular the home area is now developed to provide a cosy and stimulating environment for the children to encourage free play, role play and communication skills." This resulted in children being supported by adults who were better skilled to provide developmentally appropriate care and learning experiences that offered challenge, fun and enjoyment.

### 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 service was appropriately staffed to meet adult-child ratios and the staff team worked to ensure all areas of the service were appropriately supervised and supported. The staff team communicated well with each other when numbers fluctuated between the indoor and outdoor play spaces and during transition

periods such as lunchtime. The ethos between team members was positive and interactions between staff were kind and respectful. This helped to create a positive atmosphere for both staff and children to feel comfortable and secure in.

Continuity of care for children was consistent throughout the day with minimal changes to staffing. At lunchtime, staff breaks were well planned to minimise impact on the children whilst enabling staff to rest and be refreshed. Staff shared important information about the needs of children at necessary times. This ensured positive transitions for children and clear communication with families at pick up and drop of times. One parent commented: "My child has additional needs so staff have been great at providing extra support as much as they are able to. I get feedback each day about my child, which is great to have."

Arrangements for unplanned absence were supported by effective systems to ensure children's needs were met. For example, the service tried to use members of the existing staff and school team for supply work to minimise disruption to children's routines. A folder with key information was available to all staff. This ensured that staff working in the service understood the needs of individual children and how to support them.

New staff had received an induction, which covered important information needed to care for children as well as important policies and procedures. Good practice guidance including 'Early Learning and Childcare - The National Induction Resource' was used to support staff who were new to the setting. Staff support and supervision sessions were taking place at regular times. This provided opportunities for staff to reflect on practice, celebrate individual achievements and agree areas for future development.

## 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 enable all children to be cared for in an appropriate environment that meets their needs and supports them to reach their full potential, the manager should as a minimum ensure:

- a) all children experience an environment that is welcoming, comfortable and homely with cosy spaces to rest and relax;
- b) appropriate play spaces are available which provide suitable resources and materials to effectively engage and challenge children's play, learning and interests; and
- c) children's curiosity, creativity, problem solving, and imaginative skills are promoted and encouraged by extending the use of loose parts and open ended resources indoors.

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

'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of



experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HCSC 2.27).

**This area for improvement was made on 3 March 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The staff team had taken positive steps to develop the indoor space to ensure that children experienced an environment which was welcoming, comfortable and homely with cosy spaces to rest and relax. Resources had been added to the indoor playrooms such as curtains, plants and soft lighting in cosy spaces to add homely touches which made the play spaces more nurturing and welcoming. Cosy spaces had been developed in each indoor play space which included sleeping mats, cushions and blankets which children used to rest and relax during the inspection.

The staff team used best practice guidance to audit the play spaces and had made changes to improve the resources available for children. This included developing the home corner to include more real objects and items to support children's literacy and numeracy such as recipe books, weighing scales, a phone and clock. The availability of loose parts had been developed across both of the indoor playrooms and children used some of these resources to create enclosures for animals and in their role play experiences. As a result, children were engaged in play experiences which effectively engaged their play, learning and interests. The service had identified further areas for improvement within the indoor play spaces and we spoke with the manager about further ways loose parts could be incorporated into other areas of the indoor play space, for example within the home corner.

This area for improvement has been met.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To support the effective development of the service and improve children's experiences, the provider should ensure effective quality assurance processes are developed. This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) developing effective monitoring, including staff practice and the quality of children's experiences within the service;
- b) supporting staff to develop their knowledge and understanding around self-evaluation processes and providing sufficient opportunities for staff to evaluate their work and the work of the service; and
- c) ensuring effective systems are in place to identify, monitor and review the impact of improvements.

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 3 March 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The service had developed quality assurance processes which were effective and enabled the manager and staff team to identify, monitor and review the impact of improvements. For example, monitoring of staff practice and children's experiences identified areas for development within the lunchtime experience and in the provision of numeracy which the service had plans to develop and improve.

Regular team and individual support and supervision opportunities provided time for staff to develop their

knowledge and understanding around self-evaluation processes. Staff had received formal training to develop their understanding around the process of self-evaluation from the local authority support team and could talk confidently about improvements in the service and how they had made a positive impact on outcomes for children. As well as this, monthly staff meetings were used to focus on aspects of self-evaluation with the staff team. As a result, staff are beginning to reflect well together and use these reflections to bring about positive change to outcomes for children and families.

This area for improvement has been met.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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?	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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