

Crossgates Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

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Unannounced

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29 March 2023

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003017088

About the service

Crossgates Primary School Nursery is situated within a residential area of the village of Crossgates just outside the city of Dunfermline. It is close to amenities including local shops, woodland area and play park. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 74 children from 2 years to an age to attend primary school, of whom no more than 15 are age 2.

The accommodation is provided from a purpose built extension to the main school building and dedicated space within the school linked by the main corridor. Both playrooms have direct access to outdoor play space. Children's bathroom areas and nappy changing spaces are available in both rooms. The nursery has its own separate entrance.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced announced inspection which took place on 28 March 2023 between 09:15 and 16:00. We returned on 29 March 2023 to complete the inspection and give feedback. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with 10 children using the service
- spoke with/gathered feedback from 5 parents/carers
- spoke with management and staff members
- observed practice
- reviewed relevant documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced highly supportive transitions across the whole year, which were based on promoting children's wellbeing and collaborative working between nursery and school staff for play based learning.
- Children were happy, settled and very engaged in their play and learning, benefitting from responsive and nurturing staff.
- Children's and families' views were actively sought to inform the development of the setting and parental feedback was very positive about their experiences within the service.
- The strong management team work had developed a culture of ongoing reflective practice which was embedded within the service to support positive outcomes for children.
- The deployment of staff within the service was well managed and effective in meeting children's needs.

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?	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?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were very happy as they were consistently heard singing and laughing and had developed positive relationships with each other and adults present. These positive relationships contributed to children's sense of security. The opportunities for siblings to spend time together through the linking of both playrooms further contributed to this. The service continued to keep under review how they could improve younger children's entry into the service each day to ensure they feel confident upon separation and ready for play.

Children were warmly welcomed by staff who knew them and their life outside nursery. For example, through the sharing of home achievements, feedback through online journals and positive relationships with parents. These were further enhanced by the ongoing parental engagement opportunities. Regular parent chats allowed for more personalised discussions. As the nursery is spread across a large space, we suggested peer review of children's journals as a way to support staff's wider understanding and knowledge of all children. This would enable staff to remain informed about individual children and further enhance positive relationships and support them to meet children's needs.

Medication records were kept under review ensuring safe administration which supported children's wellbeing. Medication was held securely within the room and supported with an appropriate care plan. We asked the service to consider flow charts for children with asthma to demonstrate what the next steps should be should the advised dosage of medication not have the desired result. We also asked the service to consider where they hold notes about children's medication for passing on to parents to ensure their continued confidentiality.

Children's dignity was maintained through positive and respectful approaches to nappy changes/toileting and respectful approaches and discussions, recognising children's right to privacy. Staff were heard using positive language with children such as asking if they would like 'freshened up' and providing reassurance and physical comfort when needed during toileting accidents.

Approaches to distressed behaviours were appropriate as staff demonstrated an understanding of behaviour as a form of communication, enabling them to support children to self regulate and manage conflict. A range of strategies were used including the use of 'sign along' which was shared with families to support children's communication and reduce frustration. Children were learning how their behaviour affected others and were involved in discussing the nursery values and development of garden rules. The natural way in which staff used labels for emotions when chatting with children enabled children to understand their feelings and change their behaviour. These practices maintained children's dignity whilst empowering them to manage conflict.

Personal plan Information held on children was up to date, such as medication reviews, support meetings for children with additional support needs and basic contact details. Staff were able to discuss individual support and strategies in place.

This enabled staff to meet children's needs ensuring continuity of care based on current needs such as medicines required or whether food preferences or allergies still remain the same.

Children experienced positive and social mealtimes. They were fully involved in making choices for snack and lunches. For example, they made a decision between two options for lunch in the morning using pictures and planned their snacks using the 'eatwell plate' diagram. This supported their understanding of making healthy choices. A visual system using a traffic light approach supported children to know when there was space available and make decisions over when to eat during the rolling lunchtime.

1.3 Play and learning

Children's wellbeing during periods of transition was enhanced due to the extensive and supportive 'wee wonder's' experiences. The pace and detail of transition across the whole year established an understanding of expectation and reduced anxiety. The relationship based approach through continued support into primary one from nursery staff, connections with families, community and link nurseries promoted children's self esteem. The shared approach between nursery and primary one enabled staff to take the lead in the development of play-based learning, supporting relaxed, familiar and enjoyable experiences. This supported children's high levels of emotional wellbeing and confidence and provided a secure base for learning when moving into primary one. The service should now resume links with local playgroups to enhance transition into nursery.

Planning systems enabled responsive and planned approaches to support individual and group interests and needs. Planning was continually evolving to capture the specific needs of children under three. This meant children enjoyed play and learning opportunities that were relevant and supported them to achieve. We discussed how staff's awareness of schemas could also be incorporated into planning.

Children continued to have their voice heard and influence provision through the nursery's 'little voices' approach. This embedded and active approach to support children's participation and consultation led to continuous improvement of the lunch time experience and playroom provision. This empowered children to have ownership of the nursery and their experiences within it. One child told us "little voices are for babies, I have a big voice", we therefore asked the service to consider this feedback from a child.

Active play was enhancing children's resilience and overall wellbeing. Opportunities included free flow access to the outdoor area which presented challenge, walks, forest play, gym time and yoga. This meant children were building healthy habits, developing muscle tone, strength, physical confidence and boosting energy levels.

Nursery events for families such as 'tea and toast' supported social networking for children and families and broke down barriers, building a secure base for family engagement and learning. The rich calendar of family learning opportunities was welcomed by parents who told us "communication using see saw is very good along with family engagement opportunities. There is a lovely friendly atmosphere" and "plenty of opportunities to be involved". The use of technology such as the 'see saw' app allowed staff to share videos of sign along to support continuity of children's learning. Groups such as 'peep', 'bookbug' and play workshops were well attended supporting parents knowledge of early learning. These provided additional learning experiences to support children's confidence, self belief and achievement.

Personal learning journals were accessible and inviting to children. They demonstrated ownership of these and were able to talk about the photos and artwork within them. These allowed children to revisit and extend on prior learning.

Progress meetings with parents supported opportunities to share learning and discuss next steps for children. There was scope to improve the capture of this within the looking forward/looking back sheets and ensure continuity of review of 'all about me' information.

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were supported to keep themselves safe through the use of a child friendly display about our safety campaign (SIMOA) to reduce the risk of children leaving a setting unnoticed. Staff took the opportunity to engage children in this using a cuddly toy elephant known as SIMOA and regular conversation. This raised children's and staff's awareness and supported regular revisiting to help keep children safe.

Children's personal information was held securely as staff took steps to ensure their confidentiality. This included using discreet areas for more private conversations with parents, storage of information such as allergies and personal care needs was stored confidentially whilst still being accessible. This ensured that children's needs were met quickly whilst maintaining their privacy.

Resources, materials and equipment were in good condition, accessible and plentiful. A very good balance of natural and open-ended resources across areas supported children's creative play, investigation and curiosity. This increased children's positive engagement and enjoyment.

Indoor and outdoor spaces were inviting, warm, well ventilated and organised supporting children's participation and engagement. For example, interest tables, wall displays, quiet areas to rest, be alone or look at journals provoked learning and supported quieter activities. Spaces to play together in groups enabled children to build their co-operation, negotiation and social skills.

Risk assessments were in place and supported provision of a safe environment for children. This included additional risk assessment of the corridor space linking both playrooms. There was scope for the development of personal risk assessments where needed for children and some personalisation of general risk assessments to further to reflect changes made following incidents. This would ensure these were specific to the individual setting.

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led.

There was a strong culture of improvement as the service took a variety of approaches to measure performance. For example, supporting staff to access visits to other settings to share best practice on emotion works, nurturing approaches and garden development. Professional reading and reflection using best practice guidance documents was actively promoted ensuring provision was current.

In addition to internal quality assurance, the service reflected upon feedback from the visiting teacher, 'learning partnerships' with other head teachers and the development officer. This enabled ongoing change based on reflective practice.

There was a shared responsibility for improvement as the whole staff team were involved in the ongoing monitoring of aspects of provision. For example, the review of accidents and incidents allowed them to identify patterns and plan appropriate action to reduce children's risk of injury. The team regularly self-evaluated provision through continuous reflection in line with improvement plan objectives. This supported a shared understanding of current levels of provision and progression of improvement.

The service improvement plan was kept under review and supplied a clear direction to support quality care and support for children. It demonstrated achievements made to date such as the implementation of the family learning calendar and emotion works training for staff. In addition, rapid action plans for specific focus areas such as the development of the rolling lunches were developed as required. Quality assurance tools such as the 'How good is our school' were used to identify strengths and areas for improvement with staff continually assessing performance using the challenge questions. We suggested including the 'Quality framework for daycare of children, childminders and school-aged childcare' document to enhance measurement of provision. This planning contributed to positive outcomes for children.

Parents also had a range of opportunities to spend time in the nursery and view provision through stay and play and other sessions, after which their views were actively sought. A parent told us: "I've never had a need to raise concerns about the nursery or suggest improvements to them as I believe it is an excellent nursery setting with so much for them to do as well as an excellent team of staff." This meant parents voice was valued and contributed to the nursery improvement journey.

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

4.3 Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a staff team who were caring and nurturing in their interactions with children and families. Parents told us: "the whole team are lovely and so engaging with the kids. My child's key worker is brilliant with all of us. My child loves her". The team worked well together to share information to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children and their choice of where to play.

Procedures for absence management were supportive to children's continuity of care as regular staff were used when core staff were unavailable. A staff photo board supported parents to know who their child's keyworker was. We asked the service to consider sharing information about supply staff along with a photograph to keep them informed about any changes in staffing.

The management of staff shifts and breaks was seamless, ensuring appropriate staffing ratios to meet the needs of the children during busy times such as lunchtime. Deployment of staff across the setting and throughout the day was supportive of children's free flow play. Busy times such as pick up or drop off were managed well, contributing to children's safety. Staff demonstrated a very good understanding of the SIMOA campaign, which resulted in appropriate actions to reduce the risk of children leaving unnoticed.

The skills mix of staff was used well to enhance children's experiences. Staff held champion roles such as leading on family engagement, PEEP, community visits, sign along and under threes provision and practice. This supported skill sharing and built respect within the team.

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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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