

Lawhead Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Lawhead School Wynd
St. Andrews
KY16 9NG

Telephone: 01334 659 426

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 August 2023

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2003015925

About the service

Lawhead Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a day care service for children. The setting is located in a residential area of St. Andrews. The service may be provided to a maximum of 30 children from the age of three years up to an age to attend primary school.

Children have access to the nursery classrooms, toilet areas, outdoor play areas and the P1 classroom.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 29th of August between 08:30 and 17:30. 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:

- spent time with the children using the service
- received feedback from 16 of their family members
- spoke with staff members and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Strong nurturing relationships between children, staff and families were improving outcomes for children.
- Children were listened to and their interests respected as they played.
- Children had access to a well-developed outdoor learning environment.
- Children benefitted from a staff team that were passionate and committed to taking forward improvements.
- Opportunities to explore risk and play supported children to understand risks and manage them appropriately.
- The service should review the lunch and group time routine to ensure that children are not sitting for an extended period.

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?	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?

4 - Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Staff used warm, caring and nurturing approaches to support children. Children and staff enjoyed spending time together, laughing and chatting. One parent told us, "They make every child feel supported and welcomed". Another parent told us, "The staff are warm, compassionate, kind and caring and my child feels safe with them". This showed children were valued as individuals and respected.

All children had personal plans in place. These included their likes, dislikes and information about their medical care needs. Most parents told us that they felt fully involved in planning their child's care and support. One parent told us, "They were very helpful in helping my child to settle in well". Personal plans were specific to children and identified what support they needed to achieve their potential. As a result, children were progressing well.

Outside, quiet spaces had been developed, and children accessed these areas to sit with a book or speak with their friends. We observed limited spaces for children to rest and relax inside. One parent told us, "There is no sleeping area or down time/relaxation". We encouraged the service to build on the good practice outside as they continued to develop areas inside for children to rest or relax.

Most mealtimes were valuable social experiences. The meals were healthy, nutritious and followed best practice guidance. Children helped prepare snack as they cut up watermelon. Staff sat with children at snack time and had meaningful conversations as they ate. When finished, children were able to freely return to play. Staff used these experiences well to build strong and trusting relationships.

The lunchtime experience was less relaxed as children had spent time sitting in groups before going to eat. This meant children's experience was less positive. We suggested staff build on the good practice observed at snack time as they develop their lunch time experience. This would further ensure that children are developing a healthy relationship with food and mealtimes.

Children's medical needs were being met safely. Medication consent forms were completed with parents and medication was stored appropriately. One medication did not have the appropriate label in place. We suggested the service further develop the audits of medication to ensure this is included. This would ensure that children's health needs were accurately met.

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

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

All staff knew children well as individuals. They spoke confidently about children's interests, likes and dislikes. One parent told us, "Staff are understanding and attentive in my child's development and value their interests. Allowing them to develop and learn in their own way". Parents told us that their children loved coming to the setting. Children told us, "I like the teachers and playing outside". This showed children felt valued and respected as individuals.

Children's interests were reflected in the responsive interactions from the staff team. Some children had shown an interest in floating and sinking on the day of inspection. The staff member used effective questioning to support and develop children's learning well. For example, later that day the children made their own sail boats and tested them in the water. One parent told us, "Staff are very good at aiding children to explore their interests". As a result, children were excited and keen to take part in their learning.

Children and staff shared their learning on wall displays, individual folders and in books that included photos, children's comments and staff observations. Learning was regularly shared with parents. Some wall displays were not updated regularly. We encouraged the service to continue to develop their approach to how learning is displayed and celebrated in the setting. This would further support children to share their learning and achievements with their friends and family.

Children were able to choose where they would like to play for most of the session. There were times when children's play was stopped. For example, before lunch children sat in group time for an extended period. This meant it was a less calm experience for children. We encouraged the service to further review the transition from play to lunch. This will ensure children continue to benefit from the calm and nurturing experience observed the rest of the session.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children had access to a good range of resources that were clean, well-organised and encouraged exploration, enquiry and fun. Staff had developed the indoor and outdoor play spaces to offer a variety of interesting, open-ended and natural resources. The committed staff team ensured that most areas were well developed, set up and supported children to lead their own learning. As a result, children explored opportunities that promoted and challenged their curiosity and imagination.

The outdoor spaces provided welcoming, interesting and exciting areas for children to explore. One parent told us, "It is a lovely environment, particularly the outdoor area". Some areas inside were not set up with the same attention to detail and appeared cluttered. We shared this with the service and encouraged them to build on the good practice outside as they developed the inside environment. This will further ensure that children continue to benefit from an environment with rich learning opportunities.

Staff had a good understanding of risk and play. Children enjoyed meaningful real life experiences such as climbing trees, making campfires and exploring real tools. This approach encouraged children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe.

Risk assessments were in place and regularly reviewed. These highlighted hazards and mostly appropriate actions to minimise potential risks to children and staff. Some parents told us they were concerned with the gate entry to the outside garden. We discussed this with the service who took action based on our feedback to secure the gates outside and further review the risk assessments.

Effective infection prevention and control practices were well embedded across the service. Children and staff were seen regularly washing their hands, in line with good practice. They were confident and familiar with these routines. We asked staff to review their nappy changing facilities and areas for children to ensure they are nurturing spaces. We signposted the service to the Care Inspectorate's guidance, "Nappy changing guidance for early learning and childcare services". This would further ensure a positive experience for children as they are supported with their care needs.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The team were committed to delivering high quality experiences for children and families. There was a shared vision amongst the staff team which valued children's rights and recognised each individual child's potential. As a result, children's experiences were at the heart of the service.

Staff knew the service well and were building on their confidence to discuss what they do well, how they know and what they could improve. There was a manageable and focussed improvement plan in place. The service planned to improve how they evaluate this plan to ensure improvements are focused and include families' and children's views. This will further ensure that improvements are targeted and lead to improved outcomes for children.

Staff had some informal leadership roles in the setting. The setting had plans to introduce more formal roles for staff to lead a range of developments and improvements. We encouraged the service to continue with their plans. This would further support improving outcomes for children by empowering the team to lead more focused developments.

The management team were approachable and motivating. Staff said they felt supported by the leadership team. One parent told us, "The leadership team is very approachable, friendly and had been fantastic". Some parents said that they were unclear who the manager of the service was. We shared this with the manager who had plans to highlight this information with parents. This would further support families to feel confident in the care that their children received.

A range of effective quality assurance systems were in place which focused on improving outcomes for children. This included regular meetings, audits of children's learning journals and appraisals with staff to discuss individual goals and supports. As a result, the service continued to improve.

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 theme as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Children benefitted from having opportunities to develop relationships with all staff in the service. Staff interacted positively with the children and were kind, nurturing and caring towards them. One parent told us, "The staff are what makes the nursery such a valuable place". When asked what they like about the service. Another parent told us, "The support of staff and their kindness, empathy and overall approach". This showed children benefitted from a passionate, caring team.

Staff had clear roles, responsibilities and demonstrated very effective communication. This ensured that children's individual needs were consistently met from all staff. Staff were respectful and very supportive of each other. They were very warm, caring, and sensitive in their approach and demonstrated positive team working. This promoted a happy, loving, and secure environment for children.

The motivated staff team worked together to share key tasks and responsibilities. They worked very well as a team by sharing ideas and communicating effectively. Staff shared ideas from their own learning which was based on best practice. For example, one staff member had introduced sewing as an experience for children. This learning was shared through the staff team and celebrated. As a result, children benefitted from staff that felt listened to, valued and empowered to develop their own practice.

Staff were proactive in recognising any gaps and supervised children while also spending quality time with them. They worked flexibly to supervise children in their play and offer a range of experiences safely. There was very good communication between staff. As a result, children experienced a very calm, nurturing experience most of the time.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very 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?	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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