

Limekilns Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 November 2022

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2003015895

About the service

Limekilns Primary School Nursery is situated within a Medway hut in the ground of Limekilns Primary School in the village of Limekilns. It is close to local amenities including shops, woodland and the beach. The service provides early education and childcare for a maximum of 34 children at any one time aged 3 years, to an age to attend primary school.

Children have access to one large playroom, cloakroom space, children's bathroom area, a nappy change area and an outdoor play area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 November 2022 between 09:30 and 16:00. The inspection was completed and feedback given on 16 November 2022. 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

- Nurturing care and support for children
- Quality interactions with children which supported and extended their learning
- Appropriate support for children with additional support needs
- Effective quality assurance systems which included children's and parents voices to drive improvement
- Strong leadership with a clear vision and a good pace of change
- Personal plan information in regard to allergies should be reviewed to ensure that all relevant information is recorded.

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?	4 - 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/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children appeared happy and confident in the nursery. They were familiar with the staff and confidently approached them for comfort and reassurance. Children enjoyed kisses and cuddles throughout the day when they needed them and often enjoyed cuddling up on a staff member's knee for a story. This meant they felt secure and nurtured.

Children's interactions with each other were positive as they responded well to staff expectations such as sharing and taking turns. Children were able to discuss their feelings and asked other adults about their feelings. One child told us "I'm sad because it's raining". A parent commented "I think the staff have helped my child to become more resilient and less anxious". An emotion station was available with a range of sensory and visual resources which supported children to explore their feelings. There was scope to develop use of this further and fully familiarise children with some of the resources such as the 'colour monster' story. This promoted wellbeing, friendships and positive behaviour.

Snacks and lunches were nutritious and varied, contributing to children making healthy eating choices. They were able to be involved in the planning and preparation of snacks supported by adults to make balanced choices. The experience for lunches enabled children to choose their lunch on arrival and decide when to eat during the lunch time period. This gave children more control over their day. For example, one child ate the main course and then returned a little later for dessert when feeling ready for this. Children were independent in self serving and collecting their dishes. The service should continue with their plans for further review of the lunch time experience with a focus on promoting the social aspect of eating together.

Children were encouraged to be independent in personal care and simple tasks, promoting their skill and control. For example, they cleared away and washed their dishes and helped each other to dress for outdoor play. Although children were learning to take responsibility for themselves, staff need to be more aware of when children require support. For example, one child had their shoes on the wrong feet and another remained in wet trousers after play outdoors. Parents also raised this as a concern and told us that "children aren't always getting the level of support that is appropriate for them, as independence and child-led approaches are being used in a 'one size fits all' manner." Further attention to individual needs would contribute to children's comfort.

Appropriate systems were in place for the recording of accidents and medication for children's continued wellbeing. Accident forms were completed to ensure correct action was taken, and accurate information recorded and shared with parents. Medication was stored, administered and recorded in line with guidance. We asked that the overview sheet within the cabinet be updated to reflect the actual children receiving medication at the present time. These systems contributed to children's continued care and welfare.

Personal planning for children with additional support needs, identified specific strategies enabling their success. Personal plans were kept under review and staff were able to discuss individual needs and targets as they were involved in review meetings. However, most of the information was held within the school building.

There should be up to date information held within nursery to continue to support staff to meet children's specific needs. This would enhance practice and enable children to achieve.

A record of children with allergies ensured children's continued wellbeing. We noted there was a lack of information on one child with a known allergy. Personal care plans should identify the signs, symptoms and any required action where an allergy is identified. This is to ensure that children receive prompt care in the event of illness or an emergency (see area for improvement 1).

1.3 Play and learning

Children enjoyed access to a good range of toys and activities which supported their learning and development. They were able to make choices about where they wanted to play due to the free flow access to the garden, promoting their independence. Children's level of engagement was good as they played together for prolonged periods; for example, within the block play area where they used house plans from one child to recreate their recent house build. They then used other resources to move the doll's house furniture into their structure. The opportunity to move and re-purpose resources allowed children to be creative.

Spaces within the nursery provided children with opportunities to play in large and small groups. Children moved freely around the playroom; the story corner provided a comfortable space for rest and relaxation. Children spoke positively about this area as a favourite space. They had developed a real love of books through book bug activities and regular story telling in groups or one to one, promoting their language and literacy.

Children did not appear very interested in their personal learning journeys (PLJs) as they quickly flicked through them. These need to be developed to ensure regular contributions of photographs and observations of learning are captured. Regular entries would allow children to re-visit and build upon prior learning. Observations should consistently capture the language of learning and link with the next steps identified for children. As yet there were emerging links between next steps, PLJs and planning. The head teacher and staff should continue with their efforts to develop this to enable effective planning and assessment to meet children's needs and interests.

Children had fun as they freely moved around play areas and independently explored the wide variety of activities and experiences on offer. Resources were easily accessible promoting choice, curiosity, creativity and engagement in play. Most children were busy and staff were effective in supporting and extending children's play through appropriate questioning. The service should continue with their plans to develop the quality of interactions to provide further challenge, depth and enjoyment for all children.

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should ensure that information held on children's allergies is completed in full, with information on the signs and symptoms as a result of any allergic reaction. This is to allow staff to recognise and act on any reaction for children's continued wellbeing. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care 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)

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

Children enjoyed a safe, inviting, comfortable and clean environment. Wall displays were developing which respectfully presented children's work and photographs of their play. This supported them to feel valued. All areas were well maintained and ventilated to an appropriate standard. New soft furnishings such as rugs, cushions, table-cloths and investment in new furniture contributed to a home from home feeling. Within the garden changes made to the stairs and raised beds had addressed concerns raised, contributing to children's continued safety. The service should now continue with their own plans to further enhance the learning environment to benefit children.

Children's risk of cross infection was reduced through the promotion of handwashing and the regular cleaning of resources. The outdoor handwashing station supported children's choice to remain outside for snack whilst minimising their risk of infection. The storage of aprons and gloves within the disabled toilet should now be improved to prevent the risk of cross infection to these items. This would contribute to children's continued wellbeing.

Sufficient resources which were easily accessible enhanced children's play. For example, they were able to move resources from other areas to develop their play such as when they placed the playmobile people and sand in the water tray to make 'friendship soup'. This allowed children to lead their own learning.

Children enjoyed daily outdoor play in the nursery garden which promoted their physical development. They enjoyed access to a range of physical play equipment, loose parts materials and opportunities for digging, planting and growing. These opportunities supported children to be active, creative, learn about life cycles and build strength and coordination. The service should now develop increased opportunities to make use of the local community such as foreshore play at the beach. Parents told us they "would like more opportunities to use the beach, forest and local community." Forest and beach play would provide children with opportunities to understand and manage appropriate risk.

Children's personal information was stored securely to ensure families' privacy and dignity. Information was accessible to relevant staff whilst remaining confidential. Children remained safe with access to the premises being closely monitored by staff.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

3.1 Quality assurance and leadership are led well.

The inspiring leadership by the head teacher was supporting effective communication across the team and building an ethos of respect and trust. There was a high level of commitment to nursery improvement and a clear focus for moving forward. Staff told us they felt informed about what was happening through the introduction of the daily huddle (short information sharing meeting). The head teacher had developed a robust quality assurance approach which was having a positive and visible impact and improving outcomes for children.

Staff were being supported to develop their knowledge and confidence in using current best practice documents and national and local guidance. This was supporting their learning and their involvement in ongoing quality assurance. Staff were using an 'Improvement' floor book which was effective in evaluating and evidencing their improvements. This supported staff to make changes based on current guidance and their observations, contributing to children's positive experiences.

An improvement plan was in place providing a clear direction. An additional action plan for specific aspects of nursery provision was also held to support more focused improvement. This was beginning to provide opportunities for staff to take some responsibility, promoting their self esteem and ownership for improvement.

Children's voices were captured within the self evaluation process as they were consulted on their views. This included the review of the lunch time experience, playroom provision and the development of a children's charter. This meant that children could influence matters that affected them, enabling them to feel included and respected.

There were increasing opportunities for parents to give their views. A new website, newsletters, information leaflets and a 'you said/we did' board supported sharing of information. Parents were encouraged to give their feedback following opportunities to be involved in the nursery such as 'stay and play' and 'book bug' which also provided them with an opportunity to view and assess the service.

The pace of change for the nursery was appropriate, supporting the embedding of improvements and addressing of previous safety concerns. The head teacher was working with staff to develop a clear vision which would be built upon with meaningful aims and values to support a shared approach to improvement. This meant that changes made would have a positive impact on children's experiences and be sustained through a culture of improvement.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

There was sufficient staff to meet minimum ratios throughout the day which met children's care and support needs. Planned breaks were managed well, ensuring children continued to have positive experiences.

Staff engaged well during the inspection process and were open and honest. They confirmed that they felt supported by the new head teacher and found them to be very approachable. They were able to identify their strengths as a service along with their areas for improvement. This was supporting them to move forward as a team as practices such as the daily huddle supported improved communication.

Absence management was managed to support continuity of care for children. At the time of inspection, a part time staff member had increased her hours to support consistency, which met children's needs. Children were able to talk about who was absent as staff informed them, which meant they were prepared for changes. We discussed how further information could be provided to parents about who is looking after their child on days where supply staff are covering; for example, displaying a photograph and name of the staff member. This would support communication between staff and parents for children's continued wellbeing.

Staff were flexible in moving between indoors and outdoors to support children's play and ensure appropriate supervision at all times. They engaged with children at their level and were responsive to their cues, contributing to children's enjoyment and positive experiences.

There was a good mix of knowledge and skills across the staff team which promoted children's safety and wellbeing. Staff spoke about their individual areas of passion such as outdoor learning and we saw some staff had taken the lead in sharing their learning with others. The head teacher was supporting the team to begin taking forward areas of responsibility and supporting improved communication across the team. This should be progressed to contribute to positive outcomes for children and to build a strong team who learn from the skills, knowledge and experience of each other.

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	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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.2 Staff recruitment	4 - Good

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