

Paxton Nursery Day Care of Children

Selkirk Street
Methil
Leven
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Telephone: 01333 426 513

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 September 2023

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2003015967

About the service

Paxton Nursery is registered to provide care for a maximum of 90 children per session from the age of two years up to an age to attend primary school, of whom no more than 15 may be age two - three years.

The service is situated in Methil, Leven, Fife. The setting has three playrooms where all children take part in a wide range of high-quality play experiences. There is a family room, kitchen and dining area, two offices and changing and toileting areas for the children. There is a fully enclosed outdoor learning environment for the children to access throughout their nursery session.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 and 20 September 2023 between 09.00 and 16.15. We provided feedback on 20 September 2023. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration and any complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service
- spoke with six families using the service
- reviewed feedback from 19 families using MS forms
- reviewed feedback from 20 staff members employed in the service using MS forms
- spoke with senior management and staff
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children received excellent care and support from staff who were attuned to their individuality and had high aspirations for all children to reach their full potential.

Children's rights, wishes and choices were respected and listened to by responsive staff. They were empowered to influence change and improvement and to have ownership of their nursery.

Staff were passionate, inspiring, empowering, and loving, resulting in positive attachments for all children with staff.

Families were welcomed into the service daily for a variety of activities such as bookbug and breakfast.

Play spaces were carefully created, and a variety of rich resources across the whole service promoted children's natural curiosity and imagination, learning and growth.

The service was exceptionally well led. The dedicated staff team had created strong and sustained positive and nurturing ethos. This resulted in some excellent care, support, learning experiences and outcomes for children and their families.

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?	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
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?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this key question as excellent, where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.

Children and families were at the heart of this service. Staff had developed strong relationships with children and these highly positive attachments resulted in children feeling safe, secure and loved. Children benefitted from outstanding care and support from highly skilled staff, this supported children to flourish and thrive. Staff were extremely responsive and were tuned in to individual children's needs. Staff were highly skilled at picking up on children's non verbal body language and understanding their needs. This enabled staff to fully support children's emotional wellbeing and sense of security. Families confirmed this with one parent telling us, "Staff have been excellent at supporting me and my child. The way they comforted him and built trust, he is now confident and settled."

All families were valued by staff who had developed inspirational and inclusive approaches. Through sensitively gathering important information from families on a daily basis, staff ensured they had the most current information to meet the individual needs of all children. Families were included and listened to as key partners of their children's care, play and learning. This approach supported highly effective personal planning processes and enabled continuity of care between home and nursery. This meant families and staff worked together to support children to reach their full potential. One family told us, "I always feel heard and acknowledged when speaking about my child."

Children were supported to understand their rights through creative and innovative practices. Staff had skilfully encouraged children and families to learn about the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). By using knitted buddies called 'captains' children and families were empowered to learn about and interact with a variety of articles from the UNCRC and how these relate to them as individuals. These high-quality learning opportunities were introduced at a pace that was right for children and families. Children proudly showed us their captains and one child told us, "this is captain lugs he helps us to listen and the teachers listen to us too." This innovative approach has supported children to develop a deeper understanding of their rights and ensured they are valued and respected.

Mealtimes provided children with opportunities to develop their independence and life skills. Through extensive consultation with children, families and staff, the service were committed to providing the best possible mealtime experience for all children. As part of their on going improvement journey, thorough consultations had taken place with children, families and staff to enhance the lunchtime experience. Staff were actively engaging with the Care Inspectorate practice note - 'Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare (ELC)' and had implemented positive changes to support children. For example, children were included in the planning and preparation of their snack. They independently and confidently set up and cleared away their snack and lunch. Staff joined children at the table and used the opportunity to engage in high quality interactions and encouraged children to try new foods in a sensitive and nurturing way. These carefully considered approaches ensured children experienced high quality mealtime's that were unhurried, sociable and relaxed.

A key strength of this service was the high level of support given to all families to ensure their wellbeing. Staff fully recognised that families were unique and offered individual support to meet their needs. This also included emotional support, financial guidance and practical help to families in crisis. Staff were highly

knowledgeable and extremely confident in their practice to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. This was promoted through regular training and highly effective systems to identify protection concerns.

Medication was effectively stored and administered safely, following best practice guidance. Records were detailed and accurate, and supported staff to meet children's individual health needs and requirements. This ensured children always received the right care and support at the right time.

The service have demonstrated how they have continued excellent practice in this area, through discussions with staff and observing their development plans, we were confident that these excellent practices were sustainable and that excellent performance in this area would be maintained.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children's play and learning experiences were supported through creative approaches. Children were empowered to lead their play and independently accessed a variety of high-quality resources both indoors and outdoors. Staff were highly skilled in observing children's play, extending their current interests and providing rich opportunities to develop intentional play and learning. Literacy and numeracy were key focus areas and opportunities and experiences were of a very high standard and embedded throughout the service. This excellent practice in literacy and numeracy had been recognised and shared across the sector to support other settings to raise standards for children.

Children benefitted from fun, stimulating and interesting experiences which promoted curiosity, imagination, and collaborative play. Across the service we saw children engaged in play for extended periods of time. They accessed a variety of areas including messy play, construction and outdoor play.

Children were at the heart of the planning approaches as staff placed high value on children's views, wishes, ideas and choices. This aspirational approach encouraged children to flourish, thrive and progress as unique individuals and was maintained by staff's responsiveness to their interests. Staff creatively used floor books to evidence children's play and learning and children's voice was clear throughout the floor books. Children had been enabled to develop their thinking and independence skills.

The staff team had developed extensive knowledge and understanding of child development, relevant theory and practice. Staff were highly skilled in their interactions and engaged very effectively with children to extend problem solving and reasoning skills. Staff had very high aspirations for all children and their carefully considered questioning was used to provoke thought. Discussions were used to enhance children's experiences and challenge their thinking. As a result, children were respected, valued, listened to and achieving.

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

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

Children benefitted from a learning environment that was well-furnished, organised and spacious. Staff had carefully considered the spaces around children's needs and interests, as well as responding in the moment to their learning. Children were engaged and explored the variety of resources on offer. This gave a very strong message to children that they matter. Families consistently described the service as being very well resourced with one parent commenting, "Rooms and play spaces are well equipped with plenty to keep their little minds occupied."

Children had space to play in small groups and by themselves, the environment was bright, very clean and well ventilated. Play spaces both indoors and outdoors reflected current interests and were well resourced to support individual learning and to offer challenge. There were opportunities for children's curiosity, enquiry, and creativity that encouraged them to explore using real, natural and open-ended resources.

Children benefitted from opportunities to develop their awareness of risk in their play, for example climbing on equipment, then jumping off. Children were confident to ask staff for help when faced with challenges. Staff skilfully supported children to understand and make decisions about their outdoor play experiences. This approach encouraged children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe while supporting their confidence, health and wellbeing.

Staff had a clear understanding of infection prevention and control measures and took the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection. Robust risk assessments ensured that children benefitted from a safe and clean environment. Effective handwashing routines were established in all rooms across the service. This further protected children by keeping them safe and healthy.

How good is our leadership?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this key question as excellent, where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

We found outstanding leadership within the service which supported a positive and empowering culture. This resulted in a highly motivated staff team who were passionate and had high aspirations for children and their families. The shared vision for the service was evident as staff took an active role in supporting improvement. This approach ensured that the service continued to build on the outstanding experiences for children and families.

Children, families and staff were at the heart of improvements in the service. Children were consulted first, and their views, thoughts and ideas were valued and responded to. Children's views informed on-going improvements and continuously shaped their nursery experience. This resulted in children feeling highly valued and included in the improvement journey.

Management and staff were passionate and highly committed to the on-going improvement and development of the service. They strived to achieve the best possible outcomes they could for children and their families. Families told us they felt listened to and that was extremely important to them. Staff regularly reflected on the improvement priorities to evaluate the impact on outcomes for children. This was recorded in detail to show what was different and better for children and families as a result of the on-going improvement work. This approach ensured that outcomes for children were outstandingly high.

The management team were a highly visible presence in the service. We saw that they engaged extremely well with families using the service. They had developed genuine, strong relationships with families that valued them as individuals. Parents told us that they felt valued and that the management team and staff went over and above to support them. They told us staff were, "A really lovely warm, welcoming & engaging team."

Management and staff used their very well-developed self-evaluation processes to critically reflect on their service provision. Self-evaluation was prioritised and robust improvement planning embedded into daily

practice. This was clearly linked to current, best practice guidance including the Care Inspectorate document, 'A quality framework for the day care of children, childminding and school-aged children.' This was further enhanced by management being in the playrooms on a daily basis. This approach meant staff confidently reflected on practice and were able to discuss at length areas of strengths or development. As a result improvements were continuous and highly effective, impacting positively on outcomes for children and families. All staff told us they found this supportive, and that they felt highly valued and respected as a skilled team.

To support and sustain continuous improvement the management team and staff had firmly embedded highly effective procedures to monitor, evaluate and measure the impact of progress on children's outcomes in all aspects of their service. This aspirational approach had been shared by the local authority as an example of best practice across the sector. Staff spoke with confidence about their role in the improvement journey and told us how changes were positively impacting the care, play and learning of all children in their service and in wider communities. We acknowledged excellence in this area of practice.

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.

Children benefited from a passionate and caring staff team that knew them and their families very well. Staff had developed strong relationships with families, and this ensured there was meaningful and highly effective partnership working in line with families' preferences. All families we spoke to praised the staff team. Parents told us, "Staff are always kind and friendly, they have good knowledge of the children's needs, likes and dislikes. Always very helpful and provide a good amount of classes to involve the parents in the children's nursery life." and "I can't fault the professionalism of the staff and the care they give my child."

Staff had clear roles and responsibilities and communicated effectively with each other. This resulted in children's needs being consistently met across the service. Staff were respectful and very supportive of each other. They were consistently warm, caring and sensitive in their approach and demonstrated positive team working. This promoted a culture of compassion and respect, leading to a secure and happy environment for children, families and staff.

Staff were proactive during busier times of the day such as at arrival time, to ensure there was very good supervision and that children were welcomed and accounted for. Routine tasks were carried out with little or no disruption to children's play and learning. Transitions across the day were well planned with children being supported to understand the routine and what was happening next. This meant that children felt included, respected and valued as they understood the routines of the day.

Staff told us they felt very well supported by the leadership team. Regular communication enabled staff to feel included and valued in their role in supporting improvements in the service. The induction process had been developed using the Scottish Governments national induction resource. This ensured new staff benefitted from learning about important aspects of their role from an early stage. New staff were welcomed and valued by the team. All staff were highly committed, motivated and enthusiastic about providing and sustaining high quality care for all children and families.

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?	6 - Excellent
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
1.3 Play and learning	6 - Excellent

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	6 - Excellent

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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