

Bushes Early Learning and Childcare Class Day Care of Children

Bushes Primary School
Grampian Avenue
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Telephone: 03003 000 149

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

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CS2003014752

About the service

Bushes Early Learning and Childcare Class is a childcare service provided by Renfrewshire Council. The service is based within Bushes Primary School in Glenburn. The service is registered to provide early learning and childcare to a maximum of 40 children aged from three years to those not yet attending primary school. The nursery consists of a large playroom, quiet room and toilets. Children can also access the gym hall, lunch hall, outdoor play area and secret garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection visit which took place on 25 October 2022 between 09:45 and 16:20. Two inspectors carried out the inspection 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 reviewed email questionnaires from seven parents and carers;
- spoke with staff and reviewed seven email questionnaires;
- spoke with management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children received nurturing care and support from staff who knew them very well.

Children developed their curiosity, imagination and problem-solving skills through high-quality play experiences in an inspiring environment.

Children could lead their play and participate in a range of stimulating activities.

The staff empowered children to participate fully in their play and learning using skilled interactions and actions.

The approach of the senior management team, led by the Depute Head Teacher, helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care.

A culture of reflection and self-evaluation supported staff in planning improvements.

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 evaluated this key question as very good because there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Staff cuddled and comforted children when required and quickly responded if they became upset; they followed the children's cues and recognised if they needed support. This approach provided a positive and nurturing ethos and encouraged children to form attachments with the staff and feel confident in their care.

A Calamari SHANARRI knitted toy promoted the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators, which are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. In addition, staff used the SHANARRI wellbeing language when communicating with children during their play and learning experiences. For example, asking children, "were you active?" and "did you feel safe?"

We sampled children's personal care plans linked to the Health and Social Care Standards; these provided relevant information, children's likes, dislikes, and the important people in their lives. One parent told us, "We've had a care plan review and a parents evening so far; they involve me in my child's care, the conversations at drop off and pick up are great, and the staff know how everyone is doing; it's an excellent skill!" Another parent commented, "The quality of care is just fantastic and it's consistent, so you know it's genuine. I am so grateful my child has the benefit of being a part of Bushes nursery."

The staff team knew the children well and understood their individual needs. They spoke knowledgeably about children, describing their personal characteristics and sensitivities. In addition, systems were in place to review the children's care plans with parents to reflect on children's changing needs and interests. However, only some children had chronologies linked to the GIRFEC SHANARRI wellbeing indicators to record significant life events. We discussed how the staff team could develop care plans for all children to ensure they recorded strategies on how they plan to support individual children's care and wellbeing. This approach will support staff in meeting children's needs and offer individualised care and support.

Children had a rolling snack in the nursery, which supported them in developing their self-help skills, for example, pouring their own drink or milk into their cereal. One parent commented, "They have a healthy snack in the morning, such as apples, bananas, breadsticks, and pancakes." Lunchtime was in the school canteen, and children washed their hands in the nursery before having lunch. The children could choose a hot meal provided by the service or a packed lunch from home. One parent told us, "We have access to the weekly menu via parent pay online, I feel this is good as I also gain access to which choice my child has taken each day, and I feel the snacks and lunches are nutritious." We observed that the children were familiar with the lunchtime routine, a social time for them to chat with friends. We suggested how the staff could improve the lunchtime experience by sitting beside children to promote good role modelling, enabling children to develop life skills and have a positive relationship with eating at mealtimes. We signposted the manager to the Practice note Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare (ELC) available here: <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/5018/elc-practice-note-4-mealtimes.pdf>.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children were happy and confident and having lots of fun; they played independently and together, where they could learn from each other. One parent told us, "My child enjoys the construction corner, I feel that all the areas of the nursery are age appropriate; they have thought it out well, the different areas can cater to different age groups, yet they can all meet around the same area and play." During the inspection, a small group of children enjoyed the magnetic toys, where they created models based on their interests and prior learning. For example, one child told the visiting inspectors that they were making a boomerang that comes back to you as they had seen this on a computer game at home. The other children made a car wash and track using Sellotape and lollipop sticks. They shared the resources while developing problem-solving skills and told the inspectors about their experience of going to the car wash with their families, bringing their knowledge to the play experience.

The nursery was a numeracy and literacy-enriched-enabling play environment. Children used pre-printed labels for their artwork, helping them to recognise their names. Books were available to children in all areas of the learning environment, supporting children's interest in reading. Staff used the books to extend children's learning by using open-ended questioning to support their thinking and inquiry.

Children had opportunities to mark make and play resources such as playdough and baking supported them in building their fine motor skills. Numbers and domino prints were on chairs helping children to identify different ways to recognise number sense and math skills. Staff used a wooden number called a 'magic number' for counting at the secret garden. Children, at the end of the play session, responded to the magic number by counting children and forming a line.

Children's learning journals were detailed and shared with parents, giving them insight into their children's play and learning experiences; this included the child's voice in their learning and supported their parent's contributions, involving them in the planning process. The Seesaw app encouraged parents to share children's learning from home, and the use of narrative observations by staff clearly showed the reflection of children's progression targets, experiences, and outcomes at the early level of the Curriculum for Excellence. One parent told us, "The seesaw app is regularly updated to see learning progress and what topics they will cover each week; their key worker updates us at the end of the day on anything we need to know." Another parent commented, "I went along to a stay-and-play morning, this was fantastic to be a part of; it feels like a great community."

Most parents were happy with the communication level; however, some would like to see the Seesaw app used more often, and one parent did not like the Seesaw app and would like the learning journal to be more about their child. The management and staff team agreed to review how they share children's play and learning with families.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good because there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Children experienced a setting that was welcoming, clean, and inviting. The playroom benefitted from natural light and ventilation. Furniture and resources were of a high standard and organised well to support children's spontaneous play indoors and outdoors. Wall displays included children's artwork, interests, and involvement; this highlighted children's ideas and suggestions for play experiences which helped ongoing improvements and promoted a strong sense that children matter.

The nursery learning environment provided opportunities for children to engage in risky play and challenge. The staff took risk-benefit approaches and supported children with assessing risks to ensure their safety. In addition, children had access to an exciting outdoor play area and secret garden, which provided opportunities for children to play together, problem-solve and develop their physical development and energetic play opportunities to support their health and well-being. One parent told us, "My child tells me she loves nursery and plays outside; today she was in puddles." Another parent said, "My child particularly enjoys spending time outdoors in the secret garden and outdoors where they do a variety of activities. She also enjoys the baking and cooking activities, which I love to see her take part in at such a young age."

Staff communicated well to minimise potential environmental risks, and children were monitored and supervised during indoor and outdoor play. Risk assessments were in place for all play areas and were regularly reviewed and updated to keep children safe. Staff worked well together to provide a safe environment for children to play and have fun during their learning. The head teacher emailed maintenance records to the Care Inspectorate as part of the inspection process; this showed which tasks needed to be completed by the local authority. We discussed the importance of having the identified safety equipment fixed as soon as possible so that children remain safe to prevent potential accidents or harm.

Staff had created a very positive learning environment with purposeful play zones; for example, there were opportunities for children to lead their play and learning and choose from a wide range of toys and resources that stimulated their imagination and curiosity. Children's current interests were considered when arranging different play experiences within each play zone and were well-resourced to support and extend children's play and learning. The children talked about their play and learning with their peers, staff, and the visiting inspectors. The children chose and helped to set up the play resources at the start of the day and tidied and stored them at the end of the day. The service agreed to share the learning experiences offered to children with their parents and carers during coffee and catch-up sessions in the coming weeks.

There were well-managed Infection control practices within the service, and children and staff carried out handwashing at appropriate times throughout the day. The safe practices minimised the risk of any spread of infection within the service.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good because there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Children benefitted from a child-centred approach to play and learning that created an ethos that promoted their right to play and have fun in different environments. In addition, the staff used self-evaluation tools such as the Realising the Ambition guidance document, How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare and A Quality Framework for Daycare of Children, Childminding and School-aged Childcare." These evaluation tools supported staff reflection and continuous evaluation to identify what works well and what actions were needed.

A distributed leadership model supported individual staff members to share their skills and knowledge to develop key areas of provision. As a result, staff were reflective and keen to improve personal and organisational practices. Policies were reviewed in line with best practice guidance and implemented within the setting resulting in children benefitting from a knowledgeable and committed staff team.

Regular communication with families took place through various methods, for instance, email, questionnaires, face-to-face discussions, stay-and-play sessions and information on the nursery and school website. Almost all parents told us that staff were always available to discuss any issues or update them on how their child had spent their day, contributing to the positive relationship between families and staff supporting children's continuity of care.

During the pandemic, the senior management team, led by the Head Teacher, consulted families about the shared vision for the school and nursery. During the inspection visit, we saw these shared with children in practice and displayed across the service. In addition, the senior management team involves nursery children in the values award ceremony, and nursery staff regularly remind children about the nursery values; one example is 'be kind', helping them as they progress from nursery to school.

Regular questionnaires gained families' feedback, views, and suggestions regarding the ongoing improvements within the service. For example, one parent told us, "We have received various questionnaires over time asking for parent/carer feedback." Another parent said, "We have participated in fundraising to help the nursery."

There was a wealth of information for parents and carers displayed in the cloakroom with information, advice, and QR code links, for example, GIRFEC, parent zone, Early Years Scotland, and the NHS website, further supporting the health, wellbeing and care of children.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good because there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Staff communicated and worked well together as a team to meet the needs of the children and were responsive and respectful of children during play interactions. Staff were responsible for designated play zones each term; this was flexible and adapted to meet children's needs. This approach created a positive and predictable environment for children, within which they felt safe and secure.

There was a mixture of skills and abilities among the staff team. All staff had undertaken training and professional reading that had developed their skills, and an induction programme helped staff understand their role and responsibilities, contributing to the level of care and support of children.

Staff had formed positive relationships with parents and carers and worked with them to meet their children's needs. One parent commented, "I feel all staff, particularly my child's key worker knows her very well and her likes and dislikes." Another parent told us, "The level of support and care they provide is excellent. I could not be happier with my child's placement at this nursery."

Regular meetings with the depute head teacher took place to support the staff team's wellbeing and ongoing development within their roles. Staff shared that they felt well supported and nurtured by the senior management team, encouraging them to be motivated and driven to provide quality childcare experiences.

Procedures were in place for unplanned staff absences to meet children's health, welfare, and safety needs. One parent commented, "The turnover rate for the staffing seems to have been higher for the last year but as far as my daughter is concerned, it does not give us any concerns."

During the inspection the Senior Early Learning and Childcare Officer was visible and responsive during staff breaks and busier periods throughout the day to ensure no disruption to children's play and learning. Children benefitted from consistent and familiar staff each day who knew them well and had the skills and experience to keep them safe.

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 further improve children's personal plans, these should be developed to include more information about how the service plans to meet children's needs, reflecting the SHANARRI well-being indicators. These should be reviewed with parents at least every six months.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3 - Health and Well-being.

This area for improvement was made on 7 November 2017.

Action taken since then

Staff supported the children's overall wellbeing in daily practice. Parents spoke positively about meeting with staff to discuss their child's interests and preferences, promoting positive relationships. Children's care plans included the GIRFEC SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. The staff team should ensure strategies record how they plan to support and meet the care and wellbeing of individual children.

Met - within timescales.

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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