

High Blantyre Primary School Nursery Class Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 January 2023

Service provided by:
South Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003481

Service no:
CS2003016821

About the service

High Blantyre Primary School Nursery Class is registered to provide care to 60 children. The age range of those children is from aged 3 years to not yet of an age to attend primary school.

Care is provided from the nursery within High Blantyre Primary School, located within High Blantyre, South Lanarkshire. The service is close to local shops, schools, transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 24 January 2023 between 08:30 and 15:15. Feedback was provided on Thursday 26 January 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 previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with five people using the service and 12 of their family
- spoke with seven staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- All children had a personal plan in place which contained information to help meet their needs.
- Children's rights were respected.
- Additional support plans and staged intervention was in place for individual children where needed and was helping to improve their outcomes.
- The environment had been upgraded and this was having a positive impact on experiences for children.
- The manager and staff team worked well together and were committed to bring about positive outcomes for children.

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

1.1 Nurturing care and Support

A parent told us "My child's key worker updates their care plan regularly and always phones to go over any targets being set. We are always kept in the loop." This was consistent with our findings. All children had a personal plan in place which contained information to help meet their needs. For example, targets for learning, likes and dislikes. This supported children's care and learning needs to be met.

Children were involved in the creation of shared values for the service. Staff were committed to promoting these values and bringing them to life for children through flexible routines and settling in procedures. This enabled children to lead their learning with limited interruptions to their play. Parents agreed and told us "The settling in process was brilliant they tailored it to my child" and another said, "The amazing staff (and it was a whole team effort, not just their key worker), rallied around to help my child settle".

Children's rights were respected. Their voice was celebrated and viewed as important to improve their outcomes as well as the outcomes of the service. Children were happy and secure in their attachments. Interactions were at children's level and natural. A child told us "I love my nursery because I get to play with friends and play with the kitchen toys. It makes me sad when I'm off because I don't get to see my friends and the big girls".

Additional support plans and staged intervention was in place for individual children where needed and was helping to improve outcomes. A parent told us "My child's keyworker understands my child's needs and is working with speech and language to help with communication". We observed staff being considerate and aware of children's personal preferences and individual needs and staff were active in trying to support families. This approach ensured care and support for children was consistent.

Relationships between children and staff were nurturing, respectful and support was offered sensitively. A parent told us "I feel my child is very well cared for at nursery. They love going to nursery and come out telling me about their day". We found staff to be caring and warm. They communicated with children using appropriate techniques. Children received cuddles, lots of reassurance and praise.

Staff had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. They participated in regular training and systems ensured they were confident in recognising and responding appropriately to any concerns.

Children experienced unhurried and sociable mealtimes. Eating in the sunshine café within the playroom some opportunities were available to develop skills in self serving during snack time. However, staff told us lunchtime was a developing area and we agreed. There were missed opportunities to develop self-help skills during lunch and the experience was not engaging for all children. We advised the manager to continue to review this experience to ensure routines are reflective of individual children's needs.

1.3 Play and Learning

Planning for learning was responsive and child-led based on interests and needs. For example, supporting emotional wellbeing for children was explored using The Colour Monster storybook. Staff supported by providing mark making, painting and discussion opportunities. Children enjoyed the experiences provided. This type of learning helped to progress skills in resilience and understanding.

Children benefitted from weekly visits to the local forest. Opportunities to develop ideas, thinking and imagination were enhanced and visits were led by a confident and knowledgeable staff member. This provided children with an opportunity to play and learn in nature. Experiences were shared with families online and in photos floor books. A parent told us "The children are provided with so many age and stage appropriate activities".

Flexible learning pathways for individual children ensured they experienced quality outcomes. Some parents were involved in assessment, multiagency and partnership working to create plans for children. Frameworks for learning were tailored to help support children with complex learning needs. A parent told us "My child has a great keyworker who understands all of their needs". Staff told us about current strategies in place and how they helped promote children's development. These were helping to limit unnecessary involvement from visiting professionals.

Cosy and quiet spaces were available around the environment for children to rest, relax and support their emotional wellbeing. Staff knew the purpose of the nurture room and used it effectively to support individual and small groups of children. We suggested that staff continue to develop the aesthetics of that space.

Children were able to flow between indoor and outdoor play throughout the day. Outdoor play included opportunities to dig in a mud garden, grow lettuce and engage in nature play. We discussed and staff agreed on the importance of children wearing available helmets when riding bikes outdoors.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

The premises offered a calm, warm and welcoming environment. It was clean and tidy with plenty of natural light for children to play, learn and relax.

The environment had been upgraded since our last inspection. To help facilitate this, an audit of the playroom and outdoor space using good practice guidance was carried out. Improvements included things such as the installation of a new heating system, an investment in new resources and child sized furniture and refresh of fixtures and fittings. The improvements were being well-maintained and resources used by children were in a good state of repair.

Parents and staff welcomed these improvements and acknowledged the positive impact on children and the service. They told us "The space has been improved massively since the start of the year with more resources" and "The environment provided for the children is great. It is a lovely playroom and is well set out". This ensured a strong message was shared with children that they mattered and that there were ample resources and a welcoming space to support their needs and interests.

Children were protected from harm through a variety of safety measures. For example, a secure entry system and various risk assessments. The large garden provided lots of opportunities to develop learning through risky play and challenge. The space was well organised with areas offering opportunities to climb, dig, explore using senses and take part in large physical play.

A range of experiences and resources that stimulated natural curiosity, learning and creativity were provided. For example, children enjoyed transporting pasta in cups from the art studio to the story corner to use as milk for feeding dolls whilst other children were supported by staff to extend concentration and language skills whilst digging in the mud outdoors. Parents were grateful for children having access to this type of play telling us "Areas are always set out well for the children going into nursery in the morning with lots of resources and experiences".

A variety of policies supported a well led service such as sun safety, complaints and lost children. We suggested that the complaints policy was updated to reflect up to date contact details for Care Inspectorate and signposted the manager to recent keeping children safe guidance.

The variety of new resources included loose parts and open-ended materials to spark curiosity and extend children's learning. As part of this children had access to a role play area, story corner, art studio, sunshine café, a large block play space, outdoor play and information technology opportunities. Areas were attractive, stimulating and offered children provocations for learning.

A parent told us "I have attended stay and play sessions and the environment has been clean, safe and hygienic". We agreed, infection control procedures overall were contributing to keeping children safe such as embedded handwashing and the use of aprons during mealtimes. Posters displayed supported children to develop their understanding of this. We reminded staff to regularly check the nappy changing area and to support children with wiping their nose. This would ensure infection control procedures were maintained and staff agreed.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

The manager and staff team worked well together and were committed to bring about positive outcomes for children through regular self-evaluation. For example, elements of the service 2022/23 improvement plan priorities reflected some of our findings on environment and staff training.

A parent told us "The manager has always been very friendly, caring and helpful and I could speak to them about anything I am concerned about, as well as the other staff" and another parent told us "The nursery leader is very approachable and my child's keyworker has worked with me on several occasions when I've had any concerns". This helped demonstrate a well led service with capacity for and commitment to improvement.

Quality assurance processes were in place and we observed some elements of this having a positive impact on practice and improving outcomes for children. Staff told us they were involved in reflecting, auditing and acting towards improvement. We agreed that continuing to audit and monitor in this way would contribute to a high quality well-managed service.

Strong and trusting relationships with families had been established and were supporting meeting the needs of children. Two-way communication methods to engage with families were embedded such as regular online updates and daily chats.

Parents were welcomed into the service at drop off and pick up time and visited for stay and play sessions. Families told us they felt this partnership approach ensured they had the information needed to support their child's needs and interests. A parent told us "All staff are very approachable and happy to chat through any concerns" and another told us "The staff are amazing, very caring and supportive. You can really tell they are passionate about what they do. They also really take the time to get to know the children and their families".

Respecting children's rights was a part of planning and quality assurance. Staff actively ensured children were listened to and used their input to influence their own practice and improve outcomes for children. For example, children's art and creations were celebrated and displayed in a respectful way and photos of their families were displayed around the playroom giving them a sense of ownership of the space.

The service had an active parents' council which supported ongoing improvement and quality. The manager and staff welcomed this and a parent told us "The Parent Council are fully integrated into the nursery. I can confidently say that staff are champions for children and are open to working with the parent council and the wider community to ensure that the children have the best experiences possible".

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Deployment of staff supported supervision of children. Staff were consistent in their communication during daily tasks and responsibilities. This ensured children's experience across almost all of the daycare were positive and they were safe. Continuing to progress this type of practice would help to ensure individual children continue to receive the right support from the right person at the right time.

Staff participated in training that led to improvements in children's experiences. For example, training in Makaton (a language programme that uses symbols) increased staff's knowledge of the programme. They used it as a method of communication and to support children's speech. A child told us "Makaton is my favourite" and a parent agreed telling us "I'm very happy with the nursery resources the staff are always teaching children new things like Makaton".

Distributed leadership roles such as woodland, health and wellbeing and literacy co-ordinators helped staff reflect well together to continually maintain a quality service. They used best practice guidance to support better outcomes for children and met regularly to evaluate the quality of the service and discuss any improvements needed.

Staff were motivated, happy to be at work and committed to their role. They shared a common vision and worked hard to achieve quality care and learning for children. Working well together they had created a warm and welcoming environment for children. Parents told us "Staff are very approachable and friendly, they listen and act" and another parent told us "Staff are so kind, caring and compassionate".

The service recognised that the team had a mixture of skills and knowledge. The induction process helped new staff to build relationships with children and families, understand their responsibility to keep children safe, and continually develop their learning. We discussed and the manager agreed that the service should continue embedding staff learning to ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge to provide children with high quality early learning and childcare.

Almost all staff were well deployed throughout the day. We identified a period during lunch time routines and tasks where the movement of staff could have been reduced. Following a discussion, we were satisfied that the management team would reflect on this to minimise impact on children and meet their individual needs.

Staff caring for children were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. They are the regulatory body responsible for registering the social services workforce. They provide public protection by promoting high standards of conduct and practice and support the professional development of those registered with them.

Communication methods such as phone calls, emails and face to face chats provided a platform for sharing information that supported meeting children's needs. Parents told us they were "Very happy with the service" and "The way staff speak to children is amazing, empowering and comforting".

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 provide a welcoming place for children to play, the provider should ensure that the environment and resources are well-maintained. This should include, but is not limited to, ensuring heating systems, fixtures and fittings, and resources used by children are in a state of good repair.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I am able to access a range of good quality equipment and furnishings to meet my needs, wishes and choices.' (HSCS 5.21) and 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.' (HSCS 5.22)

This area for improvement was made on 23 March 2022.

Action taken since then

The environment had been upgraded since our last inspection. To facilitate this an audit of the playroom and outdoor space using good practice guidance was carried out. Improvements included things such as the installation of a new heating system, an investment in new resources, child sized furniture and a refresh of fixtures and fittings. The improvements were being well-maintained and resources used by children were in a good state of repair. This recommendation was addressed.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children can access a stimulating and engaging play space at all times, staff should undertake an audit of the playroom and outdoor space using good practice guidance. Once evaluated they should put a plan in place and improve the use of space and resources to provide a rich learning environment.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states: 'As a child, I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 23 March 2022.

Action taken since then

A wide variety of new resources included loose parts and open-ended materials to spark curiosity and extension of learning in children's play experiences. As part of this consideration had been given to the layout of spaces. Children had access to a role play area, story corner, art studio, sunshine café, a large block play space, outdoor play and information technology opportunities. Areas were attractive and offered children provocations for learning and a stimulating environment to play and learn. This recommendation was addressed.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure that children receive high quality care and support, staff should reflect and build on their learning to ensure that it impacts positively on children's experiences.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 23 March 2022.

Action taken since then

Staff learning and improvement work included a focus on enhancing opportunities for extending children's learning. Staff took part in training around this to promote higher order thinking and open-ended questioning and we observed some examples of these types of skilled interactions. Staff training opportunities were used and applied in practice to improve outcomes for children. For example, risky play and quality interactions were having impact on staff practice to support and extend children's thinking, curiosity and learning experiences. This recommendation was addressed.

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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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