

# Wester Overton Primary School Nursery Class Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
9 June 2023

**Service provided by:**  
South Lanarkshire Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003481

**Service no:**  
CS2003015378

## About the service

Wester Overton Primary Nursery Class is registered to provide care to 64 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 Wester Overton Primary School, Strathaven, 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 6 June 2023 between 09:10 and 16:50. Feedback was provided on Friday 9 June 2023. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with 10 people using the service and 10 families
- spoke with 13 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

## Key messages

- Relationships between children and staff were nurturing, supportive and warm.
- Quality assurance systems needed to be more robust.
- Recent changes to the playroom layout enabled free flow play indoors and outdoors. This had increased children's engagement levels and was having a positive impact on staff practice.
- Children had access to a wide variety of areas that promoted learning across all areas of the curriculum.
- A greater understanding of integrating children's play experiences with curricular learning and improved knowledge of good practice guidance was needed to secure improved 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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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

Relationships between children and staff were nurturing, respectful and support was offered sensitively. A parent told us "My child is happy and developing well. They are learning lots and have made friends" and another said they liked "The opportunity for my child to make friends and build confidence".

We observed staff being considerate and aware of children's personal preferences and individual needs. A visiting professional told us "It is apparent when engaging with the nursery that they aim to support all children and recognise any concerns. These are then shared with health visiting team and a plan is created to support the children. From a health visitor view it appears that Wester Overton Primary School Nursery Class are meeting the needs of their children and engaging well with families". The manager told us they had also recently completed a piece of work to align systems that would further enhance support plans for any additional support needs. This approach ensured care and support for children would be consistent.

A new format had recently been introduced for children's personal plans. This included information about dietary and medical needs as well as likes and dislikes. Parents who provided us with feedback told us that communication with them about their child's individual care and learning was mostly shared verbally at drop off and pick up times. Another parent told us "I feel staff are unaware of my child's capabilities". We reminded the service that children's progress, reviews with parents and next steps set for children's significant needs and interests must be logged in their personal plan and they agreed. See area for improvement one.

Children experienced an unhurried, sociable snack in the playroom. There were opportunities to develop skills in self-serving, pouring and cutting. However, staff told us lunchtime was a developing area and we agreed. The lunch experience in the school dining hall was not engaging for all children. We advised the manager to continue with their plans to monitor and adjust lunchtime to ensure the experience was sociable and relaxed.

Medication for individual children was stored safely out of the reach of children. We talked about children's date of birth and storage of medication as part of a management of medication discussion and how this aligned with best practice guidance. Actions taken contributed to keeping children healthy, safe and well.

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.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Planning for learning had been a recent focus for the staff team and was now led by children based on their interests and needs to support breadth and progression in learning. For example, staff had identified a recent interest in making potions. We observed children creating their own potions using water, lemons, limes and flowers.

Another member of staff was supporting children's interest in the outdoor area where potions were being made from sand, water and mud. Children were engaged and having fun. This type of learning helped to develop imagination and curiosity. A parent agreed and told us "My child has great fun socialising and learning".

Children were busy and active both indoors and outdoors. There were minimal interruptions to the flow of the day and children benefited from this. A wide range of experiences were on offer and spontaneous play was happening. Some staff were skilled at extending play to further support children in their learning. Children outdoors were mixing food colouring with water to explore colour mixing and volume. Water was then recycled to feed plants. A staff member supported the experiments using questioning skills to develop children's thinking.

Some staff were skilled at stimulating children to lead their learning through creativity and challenge with loose parts. Children used blocks, toy animals and netting to create a safari park. Children were happy, chatting and problem solving during this play. A staff member supported this learning by introducing sticky tape and ideas to further develop their creations. This led to children to discuss further and invent ways they could camouflage their safari animals.

A parent told us they would like to see "More use of the great surroundings and activities we have in our local community". Staff told us that lead roles for the team had recently been introduced to build learning within a variety of areas such as engaging with the local community. Parents had been invited to stay and play sessions and visits to the local library had taken place. Links with a local care home provided children with the chance to take part in bowling and art and craft experiences with residents. This meant that children were starting to have regular opportunities to learn in their local community.

### Areas for improvement

1. The manager should ensure that children's progress, reviews with parents and next steps set to support significant needs and interests are logged in personal plans.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me. (HSCS 2.17)

### 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. Children had access to a large open plan playroom with direct access to the large outdoor area. The service was clean and well organised with plenty of natural light for children to play, learn and relax.

Children were protected from harm through a variety of safety measures. For example, children were involved in creating risk assessments. Staff had been reflecting on collection procedures now that families were coming back into the playroom at the end of the day. A wide variety of areas such as a hobbit hut, large scale loose parts including wooden blocks, tyres and foam bricks, climbing frames, sand and water play, and a planting area were available.

These provided children with opportunities to learn through challenge, risky play and to explore using their senses.

The aims and objectives of the service were shared with families and displayed. Various policies such as child protection and complaints were in place and supported the management of the service.

Resources were open-ended. Materials and loose parts sparked children's curiosity for learning. A parent told us they felt the service had "Excellent resources and equipment". Resources indoors included books, an interactive whiteboard, mark making, creative arts and role play. Areas were attractive, stimulating and offered children provocations for learning.

Staff were aware of the Care Inspectorate keeping children safe (SIMOA) practice notes. They were active in encouraging children to consider risk to keep themselves safe at time such as using scissors and building structures overhead height. Staff used attendance registers and regular head counts to help keep children safe. This helped to maintain a safe environment for children.

Infection control procedures overall were contributing to keeping children safe such as embedded handwashing. Posters displayed supported children to develop their understanding of this. We reminded staff to regularly check the bathrooms and discussed good practice guidance for storage of items within children's bathrooms. This would ensure infection control procedures were maintained and staff agreed.

The service had suitable maintenance procedures in place. Areas identified were logged and progress monitored until completion. This helped to maintain a level of quality across the environment.

## How good is our leadership?

### 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this quality theme as adequate, where there are strengths, but these are just outweighed by weaknesses.

Staff told us that they felt the manager was visible and accessible. This helped staff feel motivated to provide care to children.

The structure of the leadership team for the service had changed since last inspection. To ensure this works effectively, clarification of roles and responsibilities was needed. Further leadership training would also support capacity for improvement by building staff knowledge of the expectations within their roles.

Some monitoring processes had contributed to improvements for children and their families. These included, auditing digital literacy learning and playroom observations. However, the manager told us that quality assurance systems needed to improve and we agreed. The manager should continue strengthening approaches within quality assurance and monitoring to ensure they are robust and lead to improvement. See area for improvement one.

A parent told us staff were "Very professional" and another said they would like "Better communication about the day and more pictures/updates on the app". Team meetings were taking place and provided a platform to share information about developments at the service. These could now be built on to include discussions about learning and to develop a shared vision for improvement amongst the staff team.

Professional development review meetings had helped staff to reflect on their practice. The service should continue with this to ensure there is a consistent focus on providing constructive feedback that aims to improve staff practice and enhance the quality of children's care.

Staff were in the early stages of developing lead roles within the service. For example, nature and outdoors, story sacks and information technology. This was encouraging staff to learn and share new skills that helped improve experiences for children and families.

The manager was networking with other early learning and childcare services within the local authority. This was providing meaningful opportunities to gather more ideas and gain further knowledge about current good practice.

### Areas for improvement

1. To improve the quality of children's experiences, the manager should develop quality assurance processes that are robust and identify strengths and areas for development.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes'. (HSCS 4.19)

### How good is our staff team?

### 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this quality theme as adequate, where there are strengths, but these are just outweighed by weaknesses.

Interactions with children were caring and nurturing. Staff listened to children and offered cuddles and reassurance when needed, helping children feel loved. Parents told us "My child has a close bond with their practitioner" and "My child has thrived by being at nursery".

There was a mixture of skills and experiences across the staff team. They had participated in some training that contributed to meeting children's needs such as child protection. Most staff however, needed a greater understanding of integrating children's play experiences with curricular learning and improved knowledge of good practice guidance such as Realising the Ambition "Being Me". This would support them to meaningfully self-evaluate and reflect on their practice in a way that contributes to improved experiences for children. See area for improvement one.

There were a few missed opportunities for staff deployment to better support positive experiences for children across the whole day. For example, consistent approaches during the lunchtime experience and a few occasions during play when interactions rather than supervision would have enhanced experiences and learning further.

The manager told us they had plans in the 2023/24 academic year for the team to undertake nurture and teamwork training. We agreed this would support staff to work well together to ensure improved staff communication and quality engagement across the day.

People caring for children were safely recruited and 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 supporting the professional development of those registered with them.

Staff were warm, friendly and happy to be at work with children. They were committed to improving outcomes for all children. This created a positive environment for children and their families. One parent told us "The nursery are really trying to reintroduce parents back into the nursery environment, and build those relationships back" and another said, "All the staff seem very nice and caring with my child's best interests at heart".

## Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children receive high quality care, the manager should ensure that staff access training that provides them with a greater understanding of integrating children's play experiences with curricular learning and improved knowledge of good practice guidance to able to reflect on practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state 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).

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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