

St. Columba's Primary School Nursery Class Day Care of Children

St. Columba's RC Primary School
Philip Avenue
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Telephone: 01506 653822

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 29 March 2017

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Care service number:
CS2003016154

About the service

St. Columba's Primary School Nursery Class registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. The service provides day care of children to a maximum of 60 children aged 3 years to entry into primary school.

The service operates as part of St. Columba's Primary school. Children have access to a large cloakroom area, playroom, gym hall and toilets. A large enclosed garden area is available for outdoor play. A small kitchen area is situated within the playroom for baking and the preparation of snacks.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). This is Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

What people told us

Throughout the inspection visits children remained confident, happy and very relaxed in the service. Interactions were of a high standard, with children enjoying playing on their own or with their friends. As children played they laughed with each other and engaged in a variety of interesting activities and learning experiences.

Children told us they liked the staff, playing outside, planting daffodils and eating snacks. Children confidently chatted to us, demonstrating their sense of security in the nursery environment.

We sent 20 Care Standards Questionnaires to parents of children who attended the service. We received 13 completed questionnaires before the inspection took place. Nine parents who returned our questionnaire strongly agreed that overall they were happy with the quality of care their child received in the service, four agreed.

Parents made positive comments about the staff, individual care given to their children, the activities on offer and the environment.

Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self assessment from the service.

The service identified what they thought they did well and gave examples of improvements. The service told us how the people who used the care service had taken part in the self assessment process and how their feedback directed the development of their plans for improving the service.

The self assessment submitted was of a very good standard and an appropriate reflection of the high quality practice identified during the inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

Children received high levels of care and support from a nurturing and extremely motivated staff team. High quality interactions between staff and children encouraged a feeling of belonging and being well cared for.

Staff maintained a sound knowledge of each child's development, personality and preferences. A key strength was staffs commitment for supporting children's individuality and identifying where additional support was needed. Staff skilfully worked with families and other professionals to develop strategies and support plans which ensured children remained fully included and engaged in the nursery experience. This promoted children's continued development and contributed to their overall wellbeing.

Staffs understanding of positive relationships and attachments promoted nurturing experiences. For example children with limited English were supported by inviting older siblings and other children who spoke the same language into the nursery. This approach was used particularly well when the younger children were upset and finding communication difficult. These relationships and staffs caring manner supported the children's emotional and mental wellbeing as they were encouraged to feel respected and well cared for.

We saw children enjoying their own space as they sat in bushes in the outside area. They had fun as they chatted in this small space. Children told us this was their "secret garden" and no one knew they were there. This gave them a sense of adventure whilst allowing them to have alone time.

Promoting choice and independence was a strong focus in the nursery. Each daily session remained free flow, enabling children to choose between inside and outside play. They were also given choice if they wanted to join in activities provided by other professionals. For example gym time and music specialists. Giving children this level of choice empowered them to take responsibility for their time in nursery, setting their own pace of day, revisiting and creating their own interests.

Children had access to an extensive range of fun, interesting and motivational experiences. A popular activity was playing in soil, planting daffodil seeds. Children were given the freedom of this activity which then led to some children painting daffodils while others went out to play in the mud kitchen. This activity was planned following children's interests in daffodils. Child-led planning and responsive care ensured children continued to feel respected as staff acknowledged their interests. This is also promoted children's achievements as they enjoyed their time in nursery.

Children were gently encouraged to learn and achieve important life skills. For example choosing, preparing and serving healthy snacks. In addition, their independence was promoted as they took responsibility for washing dishes, setting the table and self-selecting foods.

Independence was further promoted as children explored challenging and risky play through natural and physical play experiences. Enabling children to assess risk for themselves gave them responsibility and the confidence to stretch their abilities. Good examples of promoting risky play was enabling children to use real tools at the woodwork bench, this was managed well as children learned about safety whilst exploring wood and creating their own masterpiece. Children also enjoyed walks to a local wooded area where they could climb large logs and investigate the environment.

Staff remained reflective of their practice and took regular opportunities to maintain and enhance their knowledge of current guidance and best practice. Through discussions and observation of practice it was evident staff used their learning to support positive outcomes for children and their families.

What the service could do better

Quality assurance systems were well developed and supported management and the staff team to continually assess the experiences of children and their families. Action plans were achievable, clear and supportive of the improvement agenda. To further enhance the excellent practice observed and high quality experiences of the children, the service should continue to implement these action plans to address the improvements identified. This includes their plans to further involve children in the development of their individual 'Learners Journeys'.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
26 Feb 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
10 Feb 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
9 Feb 2009		Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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