

# Muirfield Pre School Class Day Care of Children

Muirfield Primary School  
School Road  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
7 February 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Angus Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000043

**Service no:**  
CS2003016864

## About the service

Muirfield Pre School Class is daycare of children service, registered to provide care to a maximum of 70 children at any one time aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

The nursery operates from Muirfield Primary School in Arbroath, Angus. The children are accommodated within one large open plan playroom, which also has two smaller adjoining rooms, known as quiet rooms. There is a small office and staff room. The children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor area that is accessible from the main playroom. The nursery has a secure door entry system in place.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 to 7 February 2024 between 08:30 and 16:00. Two inspectors carried out the inspection.

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.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children and eleven parents using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experienced caring, nurturing interactions from staff who knew them well.
- Children had fun and were engaged in play throughout the sessions, playing independently and cooperatively with friends. Children had a good level of involvement in planning activities.
- The manager and staff had a clear vision about the development of the service and were passionate and committed to drive forward improvement.
- A culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement had been created and supported staff to reflect on practice. Targets were realistic and reflected the needs of children and families using the service.
- Children were cared for by the right number of staff to ensure they had consistently positive experiences.
- Staff worked together as a team and communicated well to ensure children were effectively supervised and supported.

## 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 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: 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were nurtured through daily experiences. Parents commented that, "staff were very friendly and seem to genuinely care and love looking after the children they care for". This enabled children to confidently seek support from staff. As a result, there was a warm and welcoming ethos within the service and children were at the heart of care.

All parents and carers agreed or strongly agreed that they were fully involved in their child's care, including developing and reviewing their personal plan. These included documents such as, My Worlds, developmental milestone trackers and online learning journals. Staff used additional documents, such as Individual Education Plans, to clearly outline additional support for children who required more specific targets and strategies. This enabled staff to work collectively to provide meaningful, consistent care and support for children. One parent told us, "My child's speech has come on amazingly, with a lot of support from the setting too". As a result, children's wellbeing and development benefitted from effective personal planning.

Strong working relationships with other agencies ensured that children got the support they needed to reach their full potential. Visiting professionals, such as a Sports Coordinator Group, Speech and Language Team and Additional Support Needs, were invited to create tailored support sessions. Staff skilfully gathered information and observations to ensure children got the most from each session. This resulted in children achieving developmental milestones.

Staff were knowledgeable in their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. They were able to confidently identify signs and symptoms that would cause concern for a child's health and wellbeing. The reporting and recording of concerns was clear and accurate to ensure information could be shared effectively with lead agencies, if necessary. As a result, children were protected from harm.

Staff created a strong ethos of inclusion through regular communication and consultations with parents. They used a range of methods to ensure they were approachable and available to all parents and families. For example, online platforms such as, Class DoJo and Online Learning Journals shared key information about children's daily experiences and events. While emails and face to face check in's promoted effective partnerships with parents to ensure their child received care that was right for them. One parent told us, "I love being able to come in for stay and play within the nursery and see where the children are playing and learning. It's so lovely to see the photos of the different activities the children have done throughout the year and the achievements they've gained on the wall". As a result, families were well informed about their child's care and support.

### Quality Indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children were busy and fully engaged in a fun, stimulating environment. Areas such as, the construction, water tray and home corner were a hive of activity, with children exploring their imagination, creativity and social skills. Staff arranged toys, items and learning materials to encourage child to lead their own play and learning. As a result, children were empowered in the play spaces and able to immerse themselves in rich play and learning opportunities.

Staff intuitively responded to children to fully support their play and learning. They demonstrated skilled interactions that enhanced children's outcomes. They were often seen at children's level, modelling play or using effective questioning to extend children's interests. Care was taken to only intervene when necessary, allowing children the independence to explore their own learning and manage mistakes. As a result, children experienced high quality play and learning experiences.

Literacy and language were facilitated well by staff, both indoors and out. For example, children's interest in the book 'My Granny is a Pirate' was extended into the water and tuff tray, where children could act out the story with a pirate ship and other materials and characters. Children played enthusiastically together, sharing their opinions and ideas, while a member of staff reread the story for them.

Opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills were well considered. Staff used children's ideas to extend their learning. For example, while playing in the construction area, one child commented that their creation was bigger than their foot. Staff used this as an opportunity to explore mathematical language and measurement further. A metre stick and measuring tape were included within the learning environment to provide children with tools to explore this further. This resulted in children feeling listened to and promoted achievement.

Children's quality of play and learning was enhanced by their involvement in the community. Walks, trips and visitors were arranged in line with their needs and interests. For instance, visits from the military and construction workers supported children to understand people's roles in the community and explore what they do. This enabled their play to develop and provided a deeper learning experience. Walks were also used to support children's health and wellbeing, as it enabled them to return to nursery ready to play and learn.

Regular planning meeting took place to ensure children's experiences were meaningful and purposeful. Staff gathered observations and evidence within their designated areas, to feedback to the wider team. Possible lines of development were identified and planned for the week ahead. This resulted in children experiencing a broad range of play and learning experiences while having their views and ideas respected.

## 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

The environment was welcoming and furnished to a high standard. Children had access to a large playroom as well as two smaller playrooms, known as quiet rooms. Children used the quiet rooms for more relaxed quiet play, such as reading. This positively impacted their well-being as a result. Within the main play space, staff had zoned areas to support children's play and learning. For example, there was a construction area, home corner and writing area. Toys and games reflected children's interests, which as a result, encouraged them to explore their curiosities and imagination.

Children benefitted from a secure environment. Staff effectively used registers and whiteboards to ensure they knew where children were. As well as a security entry system, internal doors were fitted with release buttons which were out of children's reach. This promoted children's safety. The outdoor area was fully enclosed. Items, such as pallets, had been attached to the fence, providing children with opportunities to climb and potentially leave the service unattended. Whilst staff carried out daily checks with children and were aware of most risks, we highlighted the importance of being mindful of such unsafe climbing opportunities. This would further ensure children's safety while playing in the garden.

Children had free flow access to outdoors, as two members of staff were always outside and the door remained open. This promoted and respected children's choice and provided them with regular opportunities to be active out in the fresh air. At times, the playroom had become cold due to the open doors. Staff were aware of how this could impact on children who were playing inside and were responsive in supporting a warmer space. They used additional heaters to raise the temperature and continued to liaise with the building contractors to manage the temperature.

Staff used a risk benefit assessment to support children manage and explore risks safely. For example, staff encouraged children to share their thoughts and opinions when taking part in outings in the local community. This enabled children to develop a deeper understanding of dangers and how to manage them.

Infection control measures were in place and in line with current guidance. The environment was clean and well ventilated. Children and staff were seen washing their hands at appropriate times, such as before eating and after being outside. The children had a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and had developed good hygiene habits.

## How good is our leadership?

**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: 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

The service's vision, values, aims and objectives were shared with parents and displayed within the environment. These included, the well-being indicators Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (also referred to as SHANARRI). Their values included, "creativity and motivational" and "relationships and teamwork". These were connected with the school's values, aims and objectives which supported an inclusive approach.

Children and families were meaningfully involved in developing the service and their views were actively sought. Children's ideas and suggestions were captured in a variety of ways, such as mind maps and within planning sheets. Staff dutifully responded to these, which enabled them to shape their care, play and learning. Families were encouraged to give feedback, for example, through questionnaires and face to face discussions. As a result, children and family's views were valued, listened to and respected. One parent commented, "I have no doubts about the management and staff. They provide great care for my child".

A robust quality assurance system was in place to promote continuous improvement. Staff told us that there was regular communication and opportunities to meet to discuss the key strengths of the service and areas to improve. For example, staff meetings were used to raise standards and allowed staff an opportunity to take forward any passions or interests they had. Staff were encouraged to lead on areas they were particularly passionate and skilled in. For instance, capturing children's experiences in Floorbooks or developing children's attention and listening skills. This promoted leadership at all levels, which resulted in motivation and positive teamworking.

A culture of self-evaluation for improvement had been created and supported staff to reflect on practice. An improvement plan had been developed, which provided clear and achievable targets. The senior leadership team confidently discussed the key improvement priorities, many of which were ongoing tasks. These were well recorded to identify the impact changes had had to ensure they were having a positive impact on children's outcomes. This resulted in a continuous cycle of improvement.

### 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

The leadership team were passionate about the service and engaged well throughout the inspection process. Staff shared with us that the manager was approachable and supportive in their role. A parent told us, "They are all highly qualified and nurturing, caring and professional". As a result, children benefitted from a committed staff team that knew the positive impact they could have on their experiences and outcomes.

The leadership team recognised the importance of ensuring the setting was appropriately staffed to meet children's needs. Children were cared for by the right number of staff to ensure they had positive experiences. Staff worked together as a team and communicated well to ensure children were effectively supervised and supported. They were responsive to children's play and moved flexibly throughout the play spaces to provide effective support, interaction, and engagement. As a result, a parent told us, "My child's key worker is great and is extremely good with not just my child but all of the children". Effective procedures were in place to ensure children were accounted for at all times, for example, staff recorded numbers of children on whiteboards. This promoted children's safety.

Staff were respectful and supportive of each other. This created a nurturing environment for children and families. Children were well supported by staff who knew and understood their individual needs. As a result, staff and children had developed positive relationships.

Consideration had been given to the differing skill mix and experience of staff, to ensure that children received high quality care and support. Families told us they were confident that staff had the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to care for their children.

Staff had undergone a variety of training and further targeted training is planned for the upcoming year. For example, training in schematic play was used to support children with their interest in transporting items around the outdoor environment. The training was meaningful and could be seen through staff's practice, supporting their roles and improving outcomes for children.

A positive ethos within the setting helped to minimise absences. Staff's well-being was supported through 'individual well-being staff meetings'. This provided staff with the opportunity to share their views and opinions in a safe space. As a result, this helped towards creating a positive environment where staff and children could thrive.

The staff team were stable and consistent, which ensured families knew which staff were supporting their children. Effective arrangements were in place in the event of absence, with the manager providing support when needed. Changes to staffing were often communicated with parents, to enable children and families to experience continuity and consistency of care.

## 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?	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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