

Paradykes Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Paradykes Primary School & Family Learning Centre
Mayburn Avenue
Loanhead
EH20 9HB

Telephone: 0131 271 4650

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
12 March 2024

Service provided by:
Midlothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002602

Service no:
CS2003016404

About the service

Paradykes Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 50 children at any one time aged from three years to entry into primary school. The service is provided by Midlothian Council.

The nursery is located within Paradykes Primary School. It consists of one playroom. A secure door entry system was in place and the service was well maintained throughout. There was also a secure and well resourced outdoor play area which was accessed directly from the playroom.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 5 March 2024 between the hours of 09:00 and 15:45. 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, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with all the children using the service and we received written feedback from 19 families.
- Spoke with all staff and management. We received written feedback from four staff.
- Observed practice and daily routines.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, nurturing care from responsive staff, which helped them feel secure, safe and loved.
- Children were leading their play due to the play spaces and resources, and supportive staff interactions.
- Staff had a positive team ethos and were respectful in their interactions with each other, children and families. This contributed to everyone feeling included within the setting.
- Children made progress in literacy and emotional wellbeing through creative and engaging play experiences.
- Staff engaged in regular self-evaluation for improvement to ensure they continued to provide high quality learning.
- Staff showed commitment to continuous professional development to support positive outcomes for children and families.

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 cared for with nurturing and caring approaches which supported their health and wellbeing. We observed children getting cuddles when they were upset and others being supported to follow routines and keep safe. This led to happy children who felt safe, valued and that they matter. One parent told us "All members of staff are caring and involved. Key worker is always visible but others willing to give feedback if required".

Children were supported in their personal care with kindness, dignity, and respect. Staff were calm and caring when interacting with children and knew their individual needs and preferences. As a result, children were happy and engaged and their routines were well managed. One parent commented "I love how nurturing and kind the nursery environment is. Every teacher has been so lovely and helpful when my child was having trouble settling in".

Children were well-supported in the indoor and outdoor environments by staff who knew about nurturing principles and delivered them calmly and with warmth. Staff engagement with children was child-centred and they communicated with children in a respectful manner. We saw this reciprocated in child to staff and child to child interactions. This meant children were respected, included and confident. Detailed care plans were in place for children who had other agencies involved. Regular meetings ensured the principles of "Getting it right for every child" were followed. This meant everyone was clear about their role and responsibilities to support children to make progress at a pace that was right for them. One parent commented "The staff really know each child and family. They take time to help nurture children's interests and give them the time to grow and learn through the things they love. They have a special way of making each child feel seen and valued".

The service had established a rich mealtime experience in the school dining hall that promoted children's independence and encouraged them to eat well. We observed this routine to be a time for children and staff to connect and enjoy talking together. One parent told us they "Like the close links with the school". Mealtimes and snack times were well planned, unhurried, and dietary requirements were catered for. Rolling snacks promoted engaging conversations about food and supported children to develop confidence as they had ownership of the routine. Staff continued to reflect and evaluate the experience to ensure children continued to have the opportunities to develop independence and life skills.

Children were kept safe and well by knowledgeable staff in the safe administration of medication and in safeguarding children. Staff were confident in who to go to if concerned about a child's wellbeing. Accidents and incidents were recorded and shared with parents in a respectful manner.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were engaged, having fun and explored the environment freely. Many natural and loose part resources were available, which supported individual children's age and stage of development. Children benefited from the support given by staff to develop their curiosity and imagination. They did this through quality interactions at the child's level, use of effective questioning and a genuine interest in children's play. One parent told us "The staff are very engaging both with parents and children. My child brings things home which he has made on a daily basis. His imagination is being nurtured".

Children were actively leading their play and learning through a balance of planned and freely chosen activities. They talked confidently about their learning as they told us what they liked to learn about. This was documented in planning, floor books, children's learning journals and was shared with families. Staff used children's interests and ideas to extend their learning through quality observations and meaningful interactions. They engaged with children at their chosen activities and used the opportunities to capture what they wanted to learn. This meant children's voice was heard and their right to play and learn valued. For example, one child made a cardboard sun dress to take on holiday and this led to creations being made at home. The introduction of a sewing machine in nursery for the child and others extended their creativity and enjoyment. Parents told us they were fully informed and involved in their child's learning and development. One parent commented staff had an "Investment in making topics being focused on (seasons, Scottish language, Remembrance Day) interesting and appropriate to the children's level of understanding".

Indoor and outdoor spaces offered children rich and well-resourced core provision. Staff had been creative in their approach that offered children well-structured and inviting spaces to play, explore, and investigate. Children were able to experiment and learn about cause and effect, for example, when mixing up their own paint. They were able to estimate, problem solve and predict what would happen. This meant that children were challenged in play that deepened their learning and sustained their engagement.

Staff were passionate and committed to the benefits learning outdoors had on a child's development and wellbeing. They valued these experiences as an important part of the planned and responsive learning offered. This meant children had developed a strong connection with the world around them.

Staff ensured children experienced rich numeracy and literacy opportunities indoors and outdoors. There was print displayed around play spaces and staff recognised how further to promote this. Children enjoyed books, spontaneous stories and singing which promoted language development. This supported communication across the setting, helping all children to be included. High-quality play experiences and creative use of resources meant children were supported to develop skills in fun and meaningful ways.

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

Children benefitted from a large playroom and direct access to an enclosed garden space. The playroom offered children play spaces that were calm, well structured, and met their stages of development. Staff took pride in creating and maintaining high quality spaces that met children's holistic needs. This gave a strong message that children mattered. One parent told us "A good sized nursery which can ensure children can play comfortably in adequate space and members of staff can keep an eye on all the children easily".

Another parent told us "The garden is perfect for them to run around and play whilst indoors has something for everyone. My daughter especially likes the house corner".

The setting was comfortable, well furnished and resourced to a high standard. One parent commented "There's a lovely, warm homely feel about the nursery". Children's wellbeing was promoted through lots of natural light and ventilation. Children benefitted from regular fresh air and exercise. Some children preferred to play outdoors for extended periods of time and staff had sensitively structured this space to ensure there was a breadth of rich and meaningful learning opportunities. This meant that children's needs and style of learning was being met.

Children played in a safe and secure environment. The nursery had a system in place for reporting the maintenance of the provision. Boundary fencing in the garden, high handles on doors and effective staff deployment meant children's safety was promoted.

Children helped staff carry out daily risk assessments of play spaces. This supported them to develop an understanding of risks and how to manage these in their play. For example, we saw children supporting each other and offering reassurance when jumping from the large spool. As a result, children were developing important life skills in meaningful ways. Children were keen to show us around their nursery and this told us they felt ownership of their setting.

Staff were very confident in their practice in promoting effective infection, prevention and control. This ensured children's health and wellbeing. Hand hygiene routines were embedded and cleaning of areas before children ate were robust.

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 improvements are led well

Children and families experienced a welcoming, warm, and inclusive ethos that valued them as partners. Management and staff promoted a shared vision for the nursery which provided a safe, caring, supportive learning environment that inspired learning through quality play. This ensured positive outcomes for children. One parent told us "The parent forum recently asked that nursery provide us with dates for our diary so that we can plan days off work in advance for things like stay and play and sports day and straight away nursery took this on board and the newsletter now contains a "date for diary" section". This told us families could experience a varied inclusion programme.

Staff were clear about their role and expectations. The management team promoted leadership opportunities at all levels. This meant staff were invested in driving forward improvements through rich experiences for children and families. Staff told us "We have open discussions everyday to reflect and plan. I feel very involved in improvements within the setting and attend regular supervision meetings".

Quality assurance systems included input from management, staff and children. This ensured everyone was involved in monitoring what happened in the nursery.

Staff demonstrated commitment to their professional learning through training and reading of best practice guidance. This included supporting children's emotional and developmental well being. Staff were able to reflect on training and talk about the positive impact this had on outcomes for children. As a result, children benefitted from a team that showed commitment to ensure children made progress through rich and creative play and learning.

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

Staff had a positive team ethos and were respectful in their interactions with each other, children and families. They were knowledgeable and skilled to effectively ensure children's experiences were positive. One parent told us "Honestly speaking I can't thank enough every single staff at the nursery. They all have played a positive part in my son's life".

Staff communicated very well with each other and worked together to keep children safe and engaged in quality play and learning opportunities. They were proactive when anticipating where and when support might be needed. This created a respectful atmosphere which ensured children were appropriately cared for throughout the day. Staff commented "This is a very flexible, strong and supportive staff team who actually enjoy each others company". As a result, children experienced quality interactions that gave a strong message that they mattered.

Debriefings each day kept staff up to date with operational information, as well as time to discuss children's specific interests and needs. Team meetings provided opportunities for staff to come together, discuss information in best practice documents and plan for a breadth of experiences. There were opportunities for staff to reflect on practice and ensure they were meeting the needs of every child. This meant staff felt included and were empowered to have a voice in the development of the service.

Staff wellbeing was a priority for management. Staff told us that as a result they felt valued and listened to. This meant children experienced continuity of care from a committed and passionate staff team.

The deployment of staff was well managed and effectively met children's needs. Staff worked well together and ensured children were able to follow their interests and access the full provision. Staff were always vigilant of children and used a register to record when children entered and left the setting. Parents told us "All the staff are amazing", "Always friendly and show care towards my child", "This team are all exceptional I genuinely believe all the staff do an amazing job at this nursery" and "The children all seem to love the staff as do the parents". This meant that children and families benefitted from strong partnerships that supported children to thrive and flourish.

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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