

Portree Nursery Day Care of Children

Portree Primary School
Blaven Road
Portree
Isle of Skye
IV51 9PH

Telephone: 01478 612 127

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 February 2024

Service provided by:
Portree Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003001848

Service no:
CS2019378120

About the service

Portree Nursery is based in refurbished rooms attached to Portree Primary School. The premises consist of two interconnecting playrooms, kitchen area, toilets, nappy changing facilities, reception and an office. There is direct access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

This service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 20 December 2019 to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 48 children at any one time aged 3 to those not yet of an age to attend primary school.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 6 February 2024 and Thursday 8 February 2024. 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 children attending the nursery
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were safe, loved and secure in their attachments with staff.
- Children were happy and settled in the nursery.
- Staff were kind, caring and nurturing in their interactions with children.
- Staff had developed personal plans and used the information in them to support children and meet their needs effectively.
- Work had been done to improve the layout of the playroom and the range of resources and experiences available.
- Work was still required to improve the opportunities for play and learning outdoors.
- The service should continue to embed quality assurance systems and ensure this impacts positively on all areas of practice.

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?	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?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 1.1 : Nurturing care and support.

Children were happy, settled and enjoyed their time at nursery. Staff supported children's care and learning routines with kindness and compassion, which contributed to the development of strong and trusting relationships. Children experienced warm, kind, nurturing and responsive approaches to their personal care and learning needs. This supported children to feel happy, loved and secure and promoted an inclusive care setting where all children mattered.

Following the previous inspection, a requirement was made in relation to personal plans. The management and staff had fully actioned and met this requirement. Up to date personal plans were now in place for each child. Each plan was completed in partnership with parents and routinely reviewed with them. Regular auditing of personal plans was included in the service's quality assurance calendar and was completed by the management team. Personal plans now reflected children's individual needs and ensured that staff had sufficient knowledge and understanding of the specific needs of the children attending. Staff spoke with confidence about the care needs of children and how best to support them to progress and achieve their potential.

Since the last inspection, changes had been made to the lunch experience. The children now experienced a calm, relaxed and sociable lunch which they all had at the same time. Children were encouraged to serve their own food, pour drinks and practice social skills. Staff sat with children, chatting and modelling healthy eating, creating opportunities for children to develop their language and social skills. They were also able to offer appropriate levels of support. Lunch time was now a more homely experience and a positive learning experience which promoted children's independence skills.

Improving parental engagement was a priority the service was currently working on. They had reintroduced stay and play sessions to encourage parents to come into the setting. There were also parents' evenings. The manager explained that they had invited parents to be involved in the review of the service's vision, values and aims and were considering other options to increase parental engagement. The majority of parents who provided feedback strongly agreed that they were fully involved and informed about their child's learning and development and were also invited to give feedback and suggestions as to how the nursery could be further developed.

The service had established links with outside agencies and worked with them to provide responsive care and support to children. Children's health and wellbeing needs were supported by staff who used identified strategies based on children's individual needs.

Quality indicator 1.3 : Play and learning.

Children were actively leading their own play indoors, benefiting from long periods free from interruptions. The children were happy and engaged as they experimented and explored with a good balance of planned and spontaneous play opportunities which were in response to their interests.

Children were offered good opportunities to be imaginative and creative in their explorative play and investigative learning. Staff offered individualised support to children during their play, being aware of when to engage and when to step back.

Planning approaches were responsive to children's interest. Carefully considered wall displays at children's height allowed the children to see what their current interests were and good use of the children's own art work, mark making and photographs brought the learning to life for the children. At the time of the inspection, the children were very engaged in learning associated with their favourite book, 'There was a wee lassie who swallowed a midgie'. Staff had been creative in using the book to extend learning in various areas throughout the playroom, including literacy, language, numeracy. There were floor books which were used to record children's interests and illustrated how interests were extended and developed.

Staff understood their role in supporting children's development and were adding further value to children's play and learning through their carefully considered interactions. Staff were able to support, extend and challenge children's thinking. Staff interactions encouraged children to think independently and to reflect. As a result, children were respected, valued and achieving.

We recognised good quality play, learning and development was taking place during the inspection. Children had the opportunity to develop their numeracy and literacy skills and mathematical language while taking part in activities indoors. We discussed with the manager and staff how they could further extend these opportunities, particularly outdoors. The outdoor play area was highlighted by a number of parents as an area requiring improvement. The manager acknowledged that the outdoor play area currently offered extremely limited play and learning experiences for the children. However, they had plans in place to develop the area with a member of staff taking the lead role overseeing this.

Since the previous inspection, staff had received training and support in relation to planning for children's learning and tracking and monitoring their progress. Staff were now more confident in how to effectively observe and assess children's learning in order to plan quality learning experiences and meaningful next steps. The manager explained that as part of their moderation and quality assurance, they routinely monitored learning journey folders and offered staff feedback on their content. Children's achievements and progression were being regularly shared with parents. We looked at the learning journey folders for ten children and found that they now contained more focussed observations and identified next steps.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2 : Children experience high quality facilities.

Children experienced a clean, welcoming, and homely nursery with plenty of natural light and good ventilation. Children had space to freely move around indoors. Overall, children experienced developmentally appropriate spaces that met most of their needs. Comfortable soft furnishings helped the environment to feel calm and welcoming. Distinct areas had been set up to facilitate a range of play and learning experiences and resources were accessible, enabling children to lead their own learning. Work had been done to display children's voice around the room with displays, photos and floor books which celebrate their thoughts, ideas and achievements. This gave children a strong message that it was their space and that they mattered.

Ensuring a healthy and safe environment which promoted children's wellbeing was important to the management and staff team. There was a system to report any repairs and damaged items were replaced. Daily checks of the premises were completed and there were risk assessments in place to ensure that the environment was safe for the children attending.

Appropriate infection prevention and control practices were in place and minimised the spread of infection. For example, the setting was clean and well maintained. Food safety practices were robust and provided high levels of safety for children. We observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene and hand washing at necessary times.

Children's safety was well managed as staff were attentive and alert to children's movements. Tools such as updated registers and regular headcounts helped children to move safely around the building. Children's security and safety was respected because of the measures in place.

Effective arrangements were in place to ensure children and families' personal information was stored securely. Paperwork was stored securely within locked cupboards. This ensured confidentiality was maintained and complied with best practice guidance.

The playroom opened directly onto the secure outdoor play area which the children could access on a daily basis. However, there was no free-flow outdoors which prevented children from making choices and directing their own play. Several parents commented that they would like to see the children having greater access to outdoor play and learning. Comments made included "better outdoor play facilities", "improved outdoor area, with more grass etc", "more equipment for outdoor play" and "a sheltered outdoor area (like a gazebo style set up) so children don't need to be cooped up inside in wet weather". Development of the outdoor area had been highlighted as an area for improvement following the previous inspection. The manager advised that some initial planning of the development of the outdoor space had taken place and a member of staff had now taken on responsibility for overseeing the improvements. Parents were also being encouraged to be involved.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 3.1 : Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

The manager and staff fully engaged in the inspection process and welcomed the guidance and the signposting to various websites and best practice offered by the inspector. The manager and the staff demonstrated their commitment to the service and were motivated to make improvements to ensure positive outcomes for children.

The manager promoted a positive attitude to change and recognised the importance of including all relevant stakeholders in developing a shared vision to secure quality outcomes for the children. The management team had continued to develop and implement policies and procedures and quality assurance processes to support the development and improvement of the service. For example, a new improvement plan had been created and an annual quality assurance calendar was in place to ensure purposeful audits of various aspects of the nursery were routinely carried out. These developments had resulted in the improvements we were able to identify since the previous inspection, for example, improvements to personal plans, observations and next steps.

Appropriate quality assurance processes were in place to ensure that the quality of the service was monitored and assessed in a focussed and meaningful way. For example, there were regular audits and monitoring of observations and tracking, staff were encouraged to be more involved in the self evaluation process, and parents were invited to be involved in reviewing the vision, values and aims of the service.

Feedback from parents highlighted that they appreciated the quality of the information they received about their own child's development and progress, as well as more general information about the nursery. They also welcomed the opportunities available to them to come into the setting and learn about their child's experiences. Parents acknowledged that they were invited to attend board meetings and to become actively involved in decision making and the running of the nursery.

Staff had opportunities to meaningfully contribute and be part of the evaluation process. There were regular team meetings where all staff were supported to reflect on the service provided, evaluate learning opportunities and resources available. They could also share any feedback or suggestions they might have about the service during the regular visits to the nursery by the manager.

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 quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3 : Staff deployment

The deployment of staff was well managed and effective to meet children's needs. Children were cared for by a consistent staff team who worked well together.

We observed all staff being very welcoming, kind and nurturing in their approach. It was evident through discussions and our observations that they were all very motivated and committed to provide an inclusive, welcoming setting where all children mattered. Staff talked knowledgeably about children's individual needs, next steps and how they were being met. Staff demonstrated an awareness of when and how to effectively intervene, picking up on cues to support children's wellbeing and extend their play and experiences. They were responsive and respectful of children during interactions and play which supported children to feel safe, secure and happy. Children enjoyed spending time with staff and were comfortable in their company.

Staff were warm, caring and sensitive and demonstrated positive team working. They worked well together and their differing skills and knowledge complemented one another and resulted in quality interactions with children. Staff communicated effectively with each other and worked flexibly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. This promoted a happy and secure environment where children were encouraged to lead their own play and learning.

Children benefited from effective supervision and quality engagement throughout the day. Staff were empowered to deploy themselves and respond to the needs of the children. This enabled staff to follow children's needs and interests without compromising the experiences of others. Transitions were seamless and well planned, with children being comfortable about what was happening next. During busier times of the day, routines had been established which promoted children's safety.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 20 February 2023, to ensure each child receives appropriate care and support and their needs are met the provider, manager and staff must ensure:

- a) personal plans, including protocols, set out children's current needs and how they will be met
- b) all staff are aware of and understand the information within the personal plans and use this to effectively meet each child's needs
- c) personal plans and protocols are easily available for staff whilst ensuring confidentiality is maintained.

This is to comply with Regulation 5(1)(2) – (Personal plans) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210). (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/210.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.' (HSCS 1.15)

This requirement was made on 25 October 2022.

Action taken on previous requirement

Following the previous inspection, work had been done to improve how information was gathered within personal plans. This ensured that staff had sufficient knowledge and understanding of the specific needs of the children attending and how best to support them to progress and achieve their potential. Staff had effectively used personal plans to capture and consider children's individual needs. These documents were completed with parents and ensured that there was consistency in the care and support children received.

This requirement has been met.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

By 20 February 2023, the provider must ensure improved outcomes for children and practice by implementing effective systems of quality assurance. To do this the provider must, at a minimum, ensure:

- a) regular and effective support and supervision for all staff is implemented
- b) staff are supported to develop their knowledge and understanding around self-evaluation processes and are involved in the systematic evaluation of their work and the work of the service

- c) clear and effective plans are in place for maintaining and improving the service
- d) the management team effectively monitors the work of each member of staff and the service as a whole.

This is to comply with the - Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210). (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/210.

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

This requirement was made on 25 October 2022.

Action taken on previous requirement

In response to the requirement, the service had introduced measures to improve systems for quality assurance. They had begun to use self evaluation and audit tools as part of their quality assurance processes. These included a quality assurance calendar to support the service with keeping processes on track.

Regular staff meetings took place. These were being used to encourage greater involvement of staff in the self evaluation process, as well as sharing information and keeping staff up to date with best practice. There was regular informal discussion between the staff and the manager and formal meetings had been arranged to monitor staff practice and to provide effective support and supervision for staff.

We saw evidence of how families' views were sought to inform the development of the service. For example, parents had been invited to be involved in reviewing the service's vision, values and aims. As well as daily informal contact with families, the service made use of an online app to maintain contact with parents and share information.

The manager acknowledged the importance of continuing to develop and embed their quality assurance system and ensure it is having an impact on all areas of practice. This would contribute to improved outcomes for all.

This requirement has been met.

Met - within timescales

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 support children to achieve, the service should improve the approach and skills of staff in relation to planning for children's learning and tracking and monitoring their progress. Staff should be supported to develop their understanding of how to effectively observe and assess children's learning in order to plan quality learning experiences and meaningful next steps.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: 'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me.' (HSCS 1.27)

This area for improvement was made on 25 October 2022.

Action taken since then

Training and guidance in relation to monitoring and tracking of children's learning and progress was provided to staff. The manager explained that as part of their moderation and quality assurance, they routinely monitored learning journey folders and offered staff feedback on their content. Children's achievements and progression were being regularly shared with parents.

We looked at the learning journey folders for ten children and found that they now contained more focussed observations and identified next steps.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's creativity, play, and learning the manager and staff should review and develop the environment, both indoors and outdoors, to ensure that children are able to experience a high quality environment which is well resourced.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable to my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning, and creativity.' (HSCS 2.27)

This area for improvement was made on 25 October 2022.

Action taken since then

There had been some improvements to the indoor environment since the last inspection. However, the improvements to the outdoor area were still very much in their initial stages. Further work was required to ensure that children were offered a range of rich stimulating play resources outdoors to support and develop their learning.

This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.

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	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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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