

Lady Alice Nursery Class

Day Care of Children

Lady Alice Primary & Nursery Class
Gateside Avenue
Greenock
PA16 9EJ

Telephone: 01475 715 743

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 January 2024

Service provided by:
Inverclyde Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000212

Service no:
CS2003016254

About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Lady Alice Nursery is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 24 children aged 3 to not yet attending primary school. Currently, there are 23 full time children on the roll. All are attending full-time. The hours of operation are 8:45 to 14:45, Monday to Friday, term time only.

Inverclyde Council is the provider of the service. The primary school headteacher has overall responsibility for the management of the nursery. She is supported by the nursery depute and early years staff team who plan and provide the day-to-day care for the children.

The nursery is located within Lady Alice Primary School. The nursery accommodation consists of an entrance hall, office, staff toilet, and one large bright playroom divided into different play zones. There are adjoining children's toilets with nappy-changing facilities. Children have a dedicated outdoor place space. They can also use the gym hall and school playground.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place over two days, Thursday, 25 January 2024, between 11:15 and 17:40, and Friday, 26 January, between 9:15 and 17:50. Sixteen children attended the service on both days. 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, intelligence gathered since the last inspection and information submitted by the service.

In making our evaluations of the service, we:

- spoke with the children using the service;
- spoke with two parents;
- received feedback from nine parents/carers who completed our questionnaire;
- spoke with a student, three staff members, nursery depute, headteacher, and the quality improvement manager;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

Throughout this report any reference to parents also includes carers and guardians.

Key messages

The children really enjoyed coming to the nursery. The children and staff had formed lovely, caring and nurturing relationships.

Children had fun taking part in a wide range of interesting activities. They really enjoyed playing outdoors, running about with their friends and playing and making up games.

The staff were kind, caring and nurturing towards the children. The staff listened and responded kindly to the children's ideas and requests.

There were nice, relaxed interactions between the parents and staff. Parents thought highly of the service and the staff working there.

Staff enjoyed working at the service and felt supported by the management.

The management and staff should continue to develop the area used for snacks and lunches.

The provider should ensure that the toilet door leading to the children's toilets can be opened and closed by the 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - 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 made an evaluation of very good for this key question. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for the children attending the service.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Across the nursery, children received very good care and nurturing support from kind and caring staff. Children, parents and staff had built nice relationships with each other. For example, we saw that the depute took time to gently explain to a child that the friend he was waiting for would not be coming into the nursery that day.

There were very good procedures in place to help children and families settle into the nursery. We found that the staff had adapted their methods to support the individual needs of the parents and children, and they knew the children very well. A parent told us how helpful the staff had been during their child's settling-in process. During our visit a parent was settling her child. We saw that they felt so relaxed and welcomed that they were making paper planes for the children. The children really enjoyed flying them around the room. The range of supports and time taken by staff during the settling-in procedure helped the children settle well into the nursery, and helped build warm, kind, and trusting relationships between the children and the staff.

Various documents were in place which made up a child's personal plan. This helped staff support the child and promote continuity of care between home and nursery. Details included children's likes, dislikes and interests, as well as additional support needs. Staff and families reviewed and updated the information regularly. This approach ensured staff supported the changes in the children's lives or circumstances. It was clear that the children and their needs were central to how the nursery operated. The staff and management responded sensitively and compassionately to the ongoing needs of the children and the families they were caring for.

Staff chatted with parents when they dropped off and collected their children. This helped staff to build relationships and keep up to date with the children and their families' needs.

Staff held information about the children's dietary and cultural preferences. Staff used this information when planning children's meals and snacks. We sat with the children for snacks and lunch, which was unhurried. We saw that the staff were flexible, kind and patient. Staff gave the children time to develop their eating and social skills. The variety of freshly prepared, nutritious food was very good. For example, for snacks, the children had a choice of bananas, apples, chicken sandwiches, and toast, as well as milk and water to drink. The children enjoyed the food and chatting with their friends, staff and the inspector. Comments included: To the inspector, "There you are, a chicken sandwich and an apple". (A child passing us some snacks.) To the staff, "Can I have more milk please?" "Look, bubbles". (A child commenting on bubbles in their milk.) The children were very independent, as they poured their milk or water, got cutlery and plates and chose and ate their snacks. We saw that they were incredibly happy and relaxed. The children were encouraged to wash their hands throughout the day. This included before eating. They were particularly good at this. This approach helped the children develop their skills and independence, promote choice and build friendships. Water was available throughout the day. This helped ensure that children were hydrated.

The children had lunch in the playroom. This had been changed from eating in the school dining hall. The staff ensured that the children were involved in the lunchtime activity. Children helped set the tables, and

they were very good at helping each other. The children enjoyed their lunch, which included baked potatoes, cheese, lentil soup, bread, sausage rolls, and beans. Children chatted with each other. Staff praised and encouraged the children as they ate and were on hand to help them as needed. However, we found that the space available for lunch within the playroom was tight. We have commented on this under Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high-quality facilities.

We reviewed the service's medication policy and found improvements had been made since the last inspection. We were satisfied that the procedures followed Care Inspectorate guidance. Detailed plans were in place to support staff to administer medication safely. This included the name of the medication, symptoms and expiry date. We found families had regularly reviewed and signed off on this information.

The management and staff had linked with other professionals, as required, to support children and families. This approach helped them identify the next steps and strategies to help meet the child's individual needs and support positive outcomes for the child. This helped the children to settle into the service and ensured support was in place to help them reach their full potential. A parent spoke highly of the staff and told us how helpful and supportive the staff had been and the difference this made to her and her child. "It is amazing (nursery). Very happy. They never miss anything; it is fantastic".

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The staff listened to the children and responded positively to their requests and ideas. The planned and spontaneous activities available were linked to the child's interests. This meant that processes were in place to encourage children to be actively involved in leading their play. Staff were very kind and caring, interacted warmly with the children as they played, and were on hand to support them as needed. This approach helped to enrich the children's play and learning and encouraged their imagination, creativity, and curiosity. It helped the children to feel valued and meant that the children really enjoyed being at the nursery, having fun, playing, chatting and laughing with their friends. We could see that there was a close bond between the staff and the children. The staff really knew the children. We saw staff and children cuddle, laugh and have fun together.

The children were very happy, confident, and content. They played very well together, and it was clear to us that they enjoyed coming to the nursery. The children had a good range of activities to take part in both in and outdoors. We saw children sitting on staff knees, reading stories, and then building on the activity by bringing in toys and games. Children relaxed on the floor, some on their tummies, playing snakes and ladders, patiently waiting their turn while chatting and encouraging each other. Throughout our visit, we observed children and staff smiled at each other. Staff were down on the floor at the children's level. This made it easier for children to engage with staff and the activities. Children had lots of fun participating in various activities that challenged and excited them. This encouraged them to use their imagination and promoted language, numeracy, and literacy skills. Other activities included large block building, experimenting with water play, painting, rolling wheels around the floor, and down ramps. Children used items within the areas to count, mark make, pour, design, and make telescopes. They enjoyed cutting up vegetables in the home corner and playing with a fire station, wheeled toys, and figures.

Children told us: "I was playing helicopters".

"What is made out of potato?" A child showed us a potato from the house corner.

The children loved the smart board. This enhanced their learning and promoted rich discussion as it allowed them to enlarge and project books, items, and themselves onto the board. A child excitedly brought in a small figure of Mario. He was amazed when he saw it enlarged on the smartboard. Children liked quiet times, relaxing, reading books with staff, playing games, and chatting with friends.

Feedback from children via our questionnaires. What I like about this service: "All the parts. I like outside, the bikes and all the ladies". (child age 4). "Nursery's fun. I play blocks with my friends". (child age 3).

The children had regular opportunities to take part in physical play. We saw the children having fun playing in the gym hall and outside in the various playground spaces. This allowed them to freely run around, play games, learn to take turns, and get fresh air. The children also had their own outdoor nursery space.

These experiences helped the children to be active, have fun, develop their skills and confidence, build friendships and celebrate and share their successes.

Parents comments: "There are lots of learning opportunities through play both indoors and outdoors. The nursery encourages participation from parents for stay and play and events and also to attend outings".

"The staff are very appropriate and show so much care for each child. Xxx said he likes playing with blocks and Xxx". (His key worker).

What would make this service better? "Nothing at all. My little girl loves the nursery".

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high-quality facilities

The building had a secure door entry system in place. Staff monitored who entered and left the building. The outdoor play areas were secured. This meant the children were kept safe at nursery and as they played outdoors.

The nursery was bright, nicely decorated, and had good natural light and ventilation. The furnishings were to a good standard and provided the children with a welcoming and relaxed environment. The playroom had various areas. This offered a good space for the children to play and relax. The children moved freely around the playroom and were able to choose what they wanted to play with. However, we found that when the children were having lunch, the area needed to be bigger. The current set up made it difficult for the children to move around with ease or self-select the food available. This was due to the two round tables for four children, a food trolley, eight children and staff. We spoke to the management, and they agreed to look at how they could improve this to allow the children to move freely around the space, and enable the children to become more involved in their lunchtime experience. This improvement should allow the children to be more engaged in the activity and develop their independence and confidence when practising new skills. Further guidance can be found at the Care Inspectorate Hub: Setting the Table, Food Matters and Mealtime practice note.

Staff had set up the areas to help children choose what they wanted to play with. There was a cosy space for the children to relax and rest in. We saw that the children enjoyed playing on their own or with their friends. The children had various outdoor and indoor spaces, which allowed them to take part in physical play, get fresh air, and enjoy just running around. They were comfortable and confident at nursery and had fun. There was a good range of resources and materials to support the children's learning. The staff and

management, as part of their ongoing planning, were looking at how they could continue to enhance and develop the play experiences for the children, to help the children know the types of equipment and toys available to them. It would be beneficial if a picture book was developed for the children to look at and make choices.

Staff had undertaken training in infection prevention and control. We found that the service had appropriate policies and procedures in place. The staff and children were very good at washing their hands throughout the day, and it was clear that the children were familiar with and relaxed with the nursery routines. During the day, we saw that children helped each other. As well as planned cleaning, we observed that there was particularly good janitorial support given to the nursery. This ensured that the nursery had good arrangements for monitoring, maintenance, and repairs. These approaches helped reduce the spread of infection across the nursery, keep the building well-maintained and secure and keep the children safe.

Risk assessments of the building and outdoor area were in place. This helped support staff keep the environment safe for the children. The service had renovated the children's toilets and changing area. And these were bright, clean, and suitable for the age range and needs of the children attending the service. We noted that the door leading to the children's toilets was very heavy and children were unable to open the door without staff help. As discussed, the management should speak with the local authority to address the heaviness of the door leading into the children's toilets and look at how they can support the children to open and close the door with ease. This improvement will enable the children to be more independent.

The local authority was registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This helped ensure that the service's information was managed in line with general data protection requirements.

How good is our leadership?

4 – Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The head teacher and new nursery depute had formed, in a short time, a very good working partnership. They were motivated, enthusiastic, skilled, and knowledgeable. They shared with us their plans and quality assurance processes, which would help them evaluate and improve the outcomes for the children, families, and staff. They were realistic and acknowledged that, as a new team, their evaluation and improvement processes were at an early stage. They were clear that they were on a journey.

We found that there was a lovely ethos between the staff, children, and management. They shared with us how the nursery depute and head teacher actively sought their views and feedback to help improve the outcomes for the children and families. They participated in implementing new approaches. For example, the team were looking at improvements to how they planned, observed, and gathered information to help improve the nursery and meet the needs and wishes of the children. This approach made the staff feel part of the team and valued.

The management and staff discussed with us the importance of ensuring that families and children participated in and influenced the ongoing improvements of the nursery. They had begun to put in place new ways to get their feedback and ideas. They ensured that the information included the aspirations of children, their families, and the wider community. We looked at how this was being recorded and monitored

and we could see how it linked to form part of the ongoing quality assurance processes. This approach will help the management and staff implement the nursery's vision, values, and aims, and help the team continue to support the needs of the children, families, and staff.

Parents' comments included:

"The nursery manager is always well organised. She is very efficient and always planning for the children. She gives accurate and informative updates with newsletters. She is approachable and looks at each child's personal needs. I have confidence in sending my son to the nursery knowing that she ensures the best for his well-being".

"The nursery head is very attentive and organised, and you can tell the effort put into the children's well-being and regular reassurance given to parents".

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Good communication between the nursery and parents ensured that parents were kept up to date with who was caring for their children. A staff notice board was displayed to let parents know who was working in the nursery. This was in the process of being updated. If there were staff changes, staff introduced themselves to the children to ensure that the children knew who was looking after them. Staff told us that they really enjoyed working at the nursery. They talked enthusiastically about the various ways they were supporting children to help them reach their full potential. They shared with us how important it was for them to work as a team to provide high-quality play and learning for children in their care.

Children and their families experienced a warm, kind, caring, and nurturing setting. Very good relationships and effective communication were established between the staff and parents. We found that the staff worked well together, and they were respectful in their interactions with each other, creating a positive ethos and ensuring that they were very good role models for the children. Staff were compassionate and respectful in their engagements with children and each other. They were invested in children's development. We observed staff praising, encouraging, and celebrating children's achievements during our inspection. The atmosphere was relaxed, and there was lots of laughter, cuddles, and kindness.

Parents' comments included: "Amazing staff at Lady Alice Nursery". "Great team who seem to always put the children first". "Friendly staff... I feel the teachers really know the kids well". "Friendly, kind staff".

We found the ratio of staff to children to be in line with current guidance. We noted that the early years support assistant had not been available to work in the nursery for some time. We discussed this with the management, which recognised the positive benefit this additional support had on both the staff and children. They shared with us their plans to employ a new member of staff.

Staff were keen to continue to develop their skills and knowledge. They had attended training, including child protection, and read good practice guidance. They told us of recent training they had participated in and the positive impact on their practice.

Staff told us they had regular meetings with each other and management to discuss the ongoing needs of the children and families as well as operational issues. They felt this was effective in helping them reflect on their practice and identify training opportunities that supported positive outcomes for children.

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

Lady Alice Nursery Class should update administration, recording and storage of medication procedures in line with the current health guidance on the 'Management of Medication in Daycare and Childminding Services'.

This area for improvement was made on 26 September 2017.

Action taken since then

The medication procedures had been updated and improved and now met current best practice guidance.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

Lady Alice Nursery Class should take appropriate measures to control children's risk to the spread of infection.

This area for improvement was made on 26 September 2017.

Action taken since then

We saw that good infection, prevention and control procedures were being undertaken by staff and children. Staff confirmed that they had undertaken training and cleaning procedures were in place.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

Lady Alice Nursery Class should audit accident and incident records and where necessary, take action to reduce future risks.

This area for improvement was made on 26 September 2017.

Action taken since then

Audits of incident and accident records were in place.

This area for improvement has been met.

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?	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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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