

Newbattle Community Nursery a SCIO Day Care of Children

67 Gardiner Place
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Dalkeith
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Telephone: 07491 651 105

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 May 2024

Service provided by:
Newbattle Community Nursery a
Scottish Charitable Incorporated
Organisation

Service provider number:
SP2018013203

Service no:
CS2018370293

About the service

Newbattle Community Nursery is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). The service is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide an Early Learning and Childcare service to a maximum of 46 children at any one time; aged from six months to not yet attending primary school; of whom no more than six are under two years.

The service is run by a voluntary group who form the committee and a manager, supported by two deputy managers. The nursery is situated within Newbattle Community Learning Centre in the Newtongrange area of Midlothian. Children had access to a safe enclosed garden. The service can also access a large hall within the community centre.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection that took place on 13 May 2024 between 09:00 and 16:00 and 14 May between 09:00 and 14:30. We provided feedback to the manager, deputy managers and a representative from the local authority on 16 May 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included, previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service and seven of their family members
- received ten online questionnaires from parents and families
- spoke with some committee members
- spoke with staff and received ten online questionnaires from staff
- spoke with visiting professionals
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy and confident within the nursery.
- Children experienced warm familiar relationships, they felt important and valued by the positive relationships formed.
- Children would further benefit from enhanced use of personal planning and monitoring of progress.
- Children benefitted from access to stimulating outdoor play spaces supporting their health and wellbeing.
- Moving forward the indoor environment could be reviewed to create a more homely, calm environment with space for children to play, learn and develop.
- Staff worked effectively as a team to meet children's individual needs.

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

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|--|----------|
| 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? | 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?

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 and confident in the setting. Their wellbeing was nurtured through warm and caring interactions from a committed staff team who were sensitive to children's individual needs. Staff were down at children's height and provided time for children to respond and participate in daily interactions and care routines. This let children know they were genuinely interested in them as individuals. Parents comments included, staff are 'kind', 'thoughtful', 'helpful', 'friendly' and 'caring'. Staff told us they have 'close', 'positive' and 'strong' relationships with children and their families. This meant that children felt important and valued by the positive relationships formed.

Children experienced calm, unhurried and social mealtimes. Staff were attentive to children's needs and listened to them; support was provided where required. Staff sat alongside children ensuring their safety whilst promoting independence and social skills. Children talked about their favourite foods and drinks, a child told us, "I spread cheese on my bagel". Sandwiches and vegetables were available for children who didn't want the hot option. A parent shared, "The nursery is very accommodating of [child's] dietary needs". Staff could continue to reflect and evaluate mealtime experiences. This would support consistency ensuring all children have opportunities to develop life skills.

Children's wellbeing was supported through personal planning. Termly key worker chats informed changes and progress. Staff told us about the 'safe bonds', 'positive' and 'close' relationships they have with families. Families shared, "It's nice to sit down with staff and fill in personal care plans together" and "Reviews are well planned". However, information in children's personal plans was inconsistent and stored in different places. This meant it was not always easily accessible and difficult to keep up to date. We discussed the wellbeing indicators and signposted the service to the personal planning guidance on the Care Inspectorate Hub. This is to better ensure staff have the right information at the right time to support continuity of children's care and development. **(See Area for improvement 1)**

Spaces were set up to provide opportunities for children to rest and sleep if needed. Mats, freshly laundered sheets and blankets were available, this ensured children's comfort and safety. Sleep monitoring sheets were kept up to date. We observed a child who had fallen asleep just before lunch in the baby room, staff gently moved the child onto a mat and reassured them as they stirred. They had lunch later in the day. This meant Children's individual sleep routines were supported and their overall wellbeing supported.

Staff were committed to supporting children with additional needs, partnership working was effective in supporting children to achieve their full potential. Staff worked with families and other professionals, such as Health visitors and the Local authority early years inclusion and wellbeing team, to identify strategies and next steps based on children's individual needs. A parent shared, "My child is supported 100%, if something is not working, I can chat with the staff and look at what can be changed". Comments from professionals included, "I have good relationships with the team". As a result, children received care and support that was individual to them.

Transitions were carefully planned and relationships with local schools contributed to positive transitions for children moving on. For example, planning was in place for teachers to visit the nursery, while social stories supported children's understanding of the changes ahead. This meant positive relationships and collaboration ensured children received care and support to meet their needs at a time that was right for them.

Clear child protection procedures were in place and staff were aware of their responsibilities in safeguarding children. Accidents and incidents were recorded and audited to identify risks and keep children safe. The service had a system in place for the administration, monitoring and storage of medication.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

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

Children were meaningfully engaged and having fun as they played and explored. We observed children who were familiar in their daily routines. They were well supported to move between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Children in the big room were confident in leading their own play. A variety of resources, equipment and experiences available were developmentally appropriate and challenging. We observed children happy and engaged outdoors. A child was pretending to drive the loose part's car, they told us, "I live far away, we need to get home". A parent told us, "[Child] is always returning home telling me adventures they had, bear hunts, camping learning and about creatures". As a result, children were confident in the environment whilst experiencing good quality opportunities for play, learning and development.

A balance of planned and spontaneous experiences provided children opportunities to develop their curiosity and imagination. Creative staff were responsive to children's ideas, interests and extended these in the moment. Over lunchtime some children talked about learning from the recent story 'bear hunt', proudly sharing their experiences. This meant children's voices were heard and listened to. Planning and children's observations were inconsistent across playrooms. We discussed with the service, observations should contribute to planning for interactions, spaces and experiences. Ongoing support, monitoring and evaluation will contribute to depth while enhancing children's progression in learning and development. We directed the service to 'Realising the ambition (2020)' and Care Inspectorate, 'Growing my potential'.

Children's experiences, learning and progress were captured in floor books and each child had an individual learning folder. These provided children with opportunities to recall previous learning experiences, successes and achievements; supporting literacy and language and their sense of achievement. Some parents commented they would like to see and hear more about their child's learning. Another parent told us, "I realised I could take my child's folder home; I could see more of what they were learning". We discussed with the service, ways of sharing floor books and individual learning folders with families more often. The service was receptive to feedback and told us how they were reviewing ways to share children's individual learning. This will provide opportunities for children and their families to celebrate successes and achievements.

Staff had a good understanding of child development and play which they used to provide quality interactions; whilst extending play and learning experiences. Staff made good use of commenting and questioning to extend children's thinking and problem-solving skills. As a result, children were challenged in their everyday play and learning. The use of visuals for daily routines included 'what's for breakfast, lunch and snack' and 'song time'. This supported predictability and consistency. Books for children to read at home provided a nice touch. This enriched literacy and communication as well as a sense of togetherness for children and their families at home.

Areas for improvement

1. To support consistency and to monitor progress in children's care, learning and development. The manager should ensure information about children is logged in their personal plans and learning folders.

This includes but not limited to; children's progress, identified support strategies and next steps. These should be reviewed and updated with families regularly.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) 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.); and

'I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me' (HSCS 2.17).

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

The service was based in a local community centre, staff made the best use of spaces available. Spaces were clean, with natural light and ventilation. They made the best use of space but also they need to review the overall environment. We discussed with the service the amount of furniture, resources and displays. Management informed us the big room was due to be painted over the summer and they plan to review the whole environment following repainting. Reviewing spaces and resources will contribute to creating a more homely, calm environment with space for children to play, learn and develop.

Indoor and outdoor spaces reflected children's needs and current interests, open-ended resources allowed children to develop their creativity and imagination. Children experienced an exciting outdoor environment which was well structured to provide opportunities for challenge, risk, imagination and curiosity. A child told us, "That's not a mud kitchen, it's the potion station". The outdoor environment included a smaller developmentally appropriate space for the babies to explore. Parents were positive about children's outdoor play experiences, their comments included, "They take them to local parks and walks (they did this recently after reading 'Going on a bear hunt' story)". This contributed to children's choice, physical development and overall health and wellbeing.

The setting and equipment were safe, secure and maintained. A maintenance log was in place and was working well. Staff were clear on reporting processes, knew their environment well and understood how best to keep children safe. A secure entry system into the playrooms, daily checks and ongoing risk assessing ensured children's safety. Children's information was stored safely and securely which complied with best practice guidance.

Infection Prevention and Control practices provided a safe and clean environment for children. Children were familiar with handwashing routines and ongoing staff hand washing was visible throughout the day. We discussed hand washing and advised best practice guidance is to encourage children to wash their hands at the sink. This will support independence, routines and contribute to children's transition as some children were moving into the big room.

To support children's wellbeing, privacy and dignity and to minimise the spread of infection, improvements should be made to the nappy changing and toilet facilities throughout the setting. These spaces should be brought in line with current good practice guidance. To support this improvement, we directed the service to the Care Inspectorate, 'Nappy changing for early learning and childcare settings (excluding childminders)' (2023). This would contribute to children's overall health, wellbeing and safety. **(See Area for improvement 1)**

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing, privacy and dignity and to minimise the spread of infection, improvements should be made to the nappy changing and toilet facilities throughout the setting. This should be brought in line with current good practice guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'If I require intimate personal care, there is a suitable area for this, including a sink if needed' (HSCS 5.4); and

'The premises have been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes' (HSCS 5.18).

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 leadership team and staff worked together to ensure a positive ethos within the setting. The setting's vision, values and aims informed their practice. We could see the nursery values in action around nurture and love, supporting best outcomes for children. Moving forward, the service could review their vision, values and aims with children, families and the staff team. This would contribute to creating child friendly values and ensuring everyone is meaningfully involved in how the service works and develops, contributing to genuine partnership working.

Children and families' views were collected through a variety of ways, with feedback informing some areas of development. Children's views were collected throughout their daily experiences. Family feedback was encouraged using questionnaires, closed social media page and daily dialogue. For example, recent questionnaires asked families how they can improve sharing children's individual learning and development. Parents were very positive about the leadership team, many comments included how the service had an 'open-door policy' and the leadership team are 'always' available to help or discuss concerns and improvements. This created a positive culture enabling families to confidently highlight improvements and share concerns.

Policies and procedures were in the process of being updated, management had a system in place to prioritise key policy updates. Families were invited to review these alongside the leadership team and committee. Whilst quality assurance systems were in place, evidencing continuous improvement and self-evaluation was at an early stage. Improvements did not always show the impact for children and the service. We discussed with the manager developing a system to support continuous evaluation and improvement through staff reflection and leadership oversight. For example, in areas such as, personal plans, observations and environment. This will contribute to creating a culture of continuous improvement with robust quality assurance processes in place, supporting best outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team?

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 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff deployment was managed well and effective to meet children's needs. Staff worked very well together, this enabled children to follow their interests and access the full provision. Management understood the importance of ensuring staffing in playrooms was above recommended levels as children required support to access the toilets and the garden. There was a strong team ethos, staff clearly understood their responsibilities and deployed themselves effectively to support children's needs. A parent commented, "it's very well organised and there's set staff doing roles". Staff were positive about the relationships they have with each other, their comments included, 'working well together', 'strong team', 'support each other', 'good relationships' and 'can rely on each other'. The manager and two staff were designated as supernumerary. This supported busier times of the day such as, mealtimes or the beginning and end of the day. Effective staffing supported quality interactions while promoting positive transitions for children and their families. Consequently, children experienced consistency and continuity across their day.

Good staff communication ensured children were safe and accounted for and protected from harm. Walkie talkies were used effectively, ongoing head counting was observed across the day, especially at times of transition. Identified staff were on rota for drop off and pick up times. Parents were positive about the level of staffing and the care children were provided. Their comments included, "There are plenty staff, each have a comfortable number of children to look after" and "Lots of staff on duty all the time, never had any issues with lack of staff". As a result, children were safe and secure within their environment and sufficient levels of staffing supported positive outcomes for children.

Staff were qualified with a range of skills, strengths and experience. Staff training was available and supported by the leadership team. Positive comments from staff included, "New knowledge gives greater experiences" and "Keeps me refreshed". New staff were supported into the service using the national induction resource and ongoing support was provided through mentoring. Staff were positive about the support provided by mentors and the wider staff team. This meant that individualised programmes and training were offered in line with best practice guidance at a pace that was right for them.

Staff were supported in their wellbeing from a caring leadership team. Staff breaks were managed with minimal disruption to children's care and learning, this ensured staff's wellbeing was considered. Regular meetings, annual appraisals and the managers open door policy contributed to the staff team feeling supported and valued. Staff were positive about the support they received. Their comments included, management are 'very understanding', 'supportive', 'super when I need them', 'I can speak to them about how I am feeling' and, "We have a lovely, experienced close-knit team". This created a positive environment where staff wellbeing was well supported, contributing to best outcomes for children.

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

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| 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? | 4 - Good |
| 4.3 Staff deployment | 4 - Good |

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