

Lochmaben Nursery Day Care of Children

Lochmaben Primary School
Annandale Crescent
Lochmaben
Lockerbie
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Telephone: 01387 810 208

Type of inspection:
Announced

Completed on:
22 May 2024

Service provided by:
Dumfries & Galloway Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003501

Service no:
CS2003015497

About the service

Lochmaben nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children from age 3 years and over to those who are not yet attending primary school. During the operating times the service will have the exclusive use of the nursery playroom and the nursery outdoor play area. The nursery may also have access to other areas within Lochmaben Primary School.

The nursery is located in a residential area in the town of Lochmaben, within Dumfries and Galloway. The service is close to local shops, parks and other amenities. Children are accommodated in one large open plan playroom and an enclosed outdoor play space. The nursery also access other spaces within the local primary school building and playgrounds.

About the inspection

This was an announced inspection which took place between the 22nd- 24th May 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 people using the service and six of their family
- Gathered feedback from 15 families through MS forms
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children were confident, happy and having fun at nursery with their friends and staff on the days of the inspection.
- Children were supported by staff who were warm, kind and nurturing.
- Staff were committed to their new champion roles and keen to support children to reach their full potential.
- The manager was visible and engaged with children, their families and staff.
- The service should continue with plans to develop the responsive planning cycle in the nursery.
- The service should continue with plans to develop the outdoor space to spark children's curiosities.

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

On both days of inspection, we observed children that were happy, confident, and having fun. They experienced warm, nurturing, and responsive care from staff which helped them to feel welcomed and loved in the setting. We observed praise, cuddles and reassurance from staff which meant attachments and relationships were strong, resulting in children feeling safe, and secure in the service. One parent told us "The staff are welcoming and approachable, making children and parents feel at ease."

We found children enjoyed mealtimes that were relaxed, unhurried and sociable. During snack times children were encouraged to be independent and self-serve their drinks and food choices. Children enjoyed engaging conversations with each other and staff. Staff recognised this routine as an opportunity to check in with children and reflect on their morning at nursery.

Following the previous inspection, the team had focused on improving the mealtime experience and could now recognise the routine as a rich opportunity to promote close attachments and healthy eating habits. Lunchtime helpers had been introduced and we saw children taking pride in their role setting up and clearing away for their friends. Food choices were nutritious, and water was available to ensure children remained hydrated across the day. The team should continue to develop children's ability to self-serve their lunch meals.

Children's personal plans contained relevant core information about individual health, welfare, and safety needs. The service communicated effectively with parents through daily conversations at drop off and collection times, parent's meetings and sharing information through the services online journal system. One parent told us "staff take the time to get to know the kids well, their likes and dislikes". Management and staff should now focus on streamlining information gathered to enable staff to clearly identify 'how' they will support children's health, welfare and safety needs linked to next steps in play and learning. The senior leadership team agreed this was an area they will continue to progress and as a team they would look at developing a template to suit their service, staff, and children.

Children's health and wellbeing were supported by a clear administration of medication policy and procedures. The service was storing medication appropriately in line with best practice guidance 'Management of medication in day care and childminding settings.' We sampled the nursery's medication consent forms and health plans and found these were in line with current good practice guidance. We have asked management to monitor medication forms to ensure all information requested is recorded and medication held is in date as per storage instructions.

Children experienced sensitive and nurturing support for their personal care needs from staff. Staff were aware of safe nappy changing guidance and could access appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). We have asked the team to consider the privacy and dignity of children when supporting with toilet training at nursery.

Children's wellbeing was protected by a clear and concise safeguarding policy. Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They had recently attended child protection training and knew how to address any concerns appropriately.

Children were visibly happy, content and actively accessing all activities on offer on the days of inspection. Children benefited from a variety of play-based learning opportunities within the nursery. We observed a balance of adult directed and freely chosen activities which supported children to develop some key skills in problem solving, risky play, woodwork and mark making. Parents told us the variety of activities are now better in the mornings and their children are much more engaged.

The team met regularly to review their planning and recording approaches to ensure they remained child centred and responsive to current interests. The manager, in partnership with staff, should continue to embed, sustain, and evaluate the planning process to ensure high quality experiences for children in their care. We requested the team continue to monitor and review provocations set up each day to ensure children are continuously challenged and engaged in their play and learning.

Throughout the inspection we observed a wealth of opportunities available to develop children's language, literacy, and numeracy. Staff were regularly reading stories and using questioning skills to develop children's thinking and understanding. One child told us "I like the books." There was a range of numeracy resources which encouraged and developed children's recognition of numbers. We suggested the team continue to develop resources on offer to ensure children were being effectively stimulated and challenged to their individual stages of development.

The service had developed links within the community with support and involvement from parents. Children went on community and forest walks, trips to the shops and the local community centre. This encouraged children to develop their sense of belonging and strengthen their connections to their local community. We were told by families how much they enjoyed being involved in the nursery visits and the benefits they get from learning alongside their child and grandchild.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Children experienced an environment that was clean, warm, and welcoming. The room had natural light and was well ventilated with open windows and doors. Low lighting and soft furnishings helped the space to have homely and calm atmosphere. Following the last inspection, the team had worked hard to develop the indoor space through consultations with children and their families. We would agree with the team's plans to focus on developing the outdoor area to the same high standard.

We highlighted feedback received from parents in relation to the temporary cloakroom space and the barriers they felt this presented at drop off and pick up times. The service provider present agreed to continue to explore and progress this issue with the local authority to ensure the space available for children and their families was suitably structured to promote children's play, learning and independence.

Children could lead their play as they could easily access toys and equipment at their level in shelves, tubs, and baskets. Natural, opened ended materials were available, sparking children's curiosity & extended play.

Loose parts play was also available for children within the playroom. Staff were responsive to children's requests and helped extend their play by adding new resources such as cars as well as fruit for smoothie making. We asked the team to continue to monitor and review the resources available to children over their day to empower them to play together and extend their learning without adult involvement. We also suggested the team consider extending small world resources for children.

Free flow access between the indoor playroom and enclosed outdoor garden supported children's abilities to lead their play and learning. The outdoor area provided children the opportunity to engage in risk taking, working together and imaginative play further enhancing their play and learning. The addition of the woodwork bench outdoors provided new challenges to children and helped them further develop their creativity and problem-solving skills.

Infection prevention and control measures were in place in line with current guidelines. Children and staff were confident in effective hand washing procedures. Personal protective equipment (PPE) was available and stored appropriately. During the inspection we suggested the team introduce an area to support children to learn self-care skills for runny noses. A snuffle station was created over the course of the inspection in response to this, which children engaged with.

Risk assessments were in place for all areas and activities within the setting. Mitigation measures were well considered and realistic. Monitoring and supervision had been established in the nursery to ensure children were always accounted for. Busier times of the day such as parent drop off and pick up times were planned to ensure children remained safe and secure in the environment. There was a secure entry system in place which was monitored by staff, this supported children's safety when attending the nursery.

Accident and incidents were being recorded and shared with parents, management were conducting monthly audits to identify any areas of risk and any changes required to support a safe environment for children.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

The team engaged well with the inspection process and were open to our suggestions and ideas for improvement. The team, in consultation with families, had recently reviewed the vision, values, and aims of the nursery. We observed the values of the nursery embedded into daily practice, which supported a positive environment for children and their families.

Management and staff had worked hard to develop close relationships with families. The parent committee was well established. Parents spoke passionately about the changes and developments within the nursery they had been involved in. Regular consultation through questionnaires, parent's meetings, parent forum and stay and play sessions had ensured parents and children feel part of the service.

The senior management team had a vision for the setting which was shared by the staff we spoke to. The manager was visible, approachable, and knowledgeable and they promoted high aspirations for the team, children, and their families. Parents told us the manager is "amazing their leadership shines through." Another parent told us the about the strength of the service "The ethos and life of the nursery and the managers outstanding commitment to continuously improving the setting."

The manager, with support from the head teacher, had made significant improvements to the setting following the previous inspection. The manager had introduced a culture of self-evaluation within the team to support the improvement agenda. They had introduced opportunities for the team to self-reflect on training and the impact this had on their practice. We could see the impact of this on the service provision, environment, and engagement with children. Staff we spoke to told us they felt involved in the improvement process and their ideas were valued and respected.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Staff engaged well in the inspection process. They were open and honest during discussions. We found staff were deployed effectively throughout the indoor playroom and enclosed outdoor garden which supported high levels of interactions and promoted the wellbeing and safety of children. We asked the team to continue to work together to ensure the effective supervision of children in the wider periphery.

Children experienced a caring and nurturing setting, as good working relationships and effective communication had been established between the team, senior management, and families. We found staff worked well together within the nursery. They were respectful in their interactions with each other, creating a positive ethos for children and their families. One parent told us the nursery has a "Nurturing, welcome ethos." Another parent told us "The staff are always kind and welcoming."

Key worker systems were now established which supported continuity of care for children and their families. One parent told us "My child's key worker, always makes time to talk to me and keep me informed and involved in his learning." Another parent told us "The staff are fantastic they know my child really well."

Staff told us they now used each other's strengths and interests to enrich children's play and learning experiences. Staff had taken on lead roles in the nursery and were keen to tell us how this was beginning to impact on children's play and learning experiences.

The head teacher, manager and staff acknowledged the challenges of the past year using supply staff and the impact of unplanned absences on children, their families, and the wellbeing of the team. New vacancies had now been filled and new members of the team felt welcomed and included.

Staff had attended a variety of training to support their learning, development, and practice. We could see the impact of training emerging in the environment, interactions and play experiences offered to children. We would encourage the team to continue to reflect on their practice and continuous professional development to support positive outcomes for children and their families.

We found systems were in place to carry out annual appraisal meetings with staff. These helped to set goals for staff and identify their training needs to further assist them in their role within the service. All members of the team were registered appropriately with the Scottish Social Services Council.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 30 June 2023, the provider must ensure that each child receives appropriate care and support, and their needs are met by the staff team. To achieve this, the provider must, as a minimum, ensure:

- a) Each child has a written plan which sets out how they will meet the child's health, welfare, and safety needs within 28 days of starting in the service.
- b) Personal plans are reviewed and updated by parents, at least every six months or sooner depending on the individual needs of the child.
- c) Personal plans support the service to remain up to date with each child as an individual through their changing play interests, needs and successes, identifying appropriate strategies to meet children's needs, support progress and help children to achieve their full potential.
- d) All staff are aware of and understand the information within the personal plans and use this to effectively meet each child's health, welfare, and safety needs.

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

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

'My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected.' (HSCS 1.23).

This requirement was made on 17 April 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

We sampled personal plans during our inspection and found every child now had a plan completed. Plans contained relevant information, next steps and were reviewed regularly with families. One page profiles supported all staff to know individual children's needs and next steps.

Please refer to Key Question 1 for further details.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

By 30 June 2023, the provider must ensure children's health, welfare, and safety. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure that:

- a) Areas accessed independently by children are safe and secure.
- b) The service has a secure door into the playroom that always supports children's safety and individual needs.
- c) Children have an appropriate area to store personal belongings within a safe and accessible area.
- d) Robust safety measures are implemented to support a safe environment for children.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 (1) (a) (Welfare of Users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210); and

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

'My environment is safe and secure' (HSCS 5.17). 'I have an accessible, secure place to keep my belongings.' (HSCS 5.3).

This requirement was made on 17 April 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

The team had made significant improvements to the environment to ensure it was safe, clean and stimulating for children. Secure door entry systems had been added to internal doors to support children's safety.

A temporary cloakroom had been created within the playroom, the team and local authority continue to progress a permanent and suitable solution.

Monitoring of children to ensure their health, wellbeing and safety had been established in the team.

Please refer to Key Question 2 for further details.

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

Children's learning would benefit from rich experiences through a variety of opportunities provided to allow children to lead their own learning. This should include, but not limited to, staff supporting children's engagement through meaningful interactions.

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

'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31).

This area for improvement was made on 17 April 2023.

Action taken since then

Staff had undertaken a wide range of training which was impacting their practice.

we observed staff to be nurturing, kind, and engaging with children.

Staff were responsive to children initiations of play.

Staff were skilled at helping extended children's play and learning through effective questioning.

Children were inquisitive, curious and confident during our inspection which showed us they felt safe and secure in the space.

Please see Key question 1 for further details.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's health, welfare and safety, the provider should review access to the kitchen area within the playroom to ensure children are kept safe from harm.

This area for improvement was made on 17 April 2023.

Action taken since then

The service had reviewed the access to the kitchen and a transferable gate had been added to mitigate against children entering the space without an adult. Risk assessments had also been updated to highlight potential risk and mitigation measures in the kitchen space. Staff should continue to be vigilant when closing the gate to the kitchen space.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support service improvement, the manager and staff should continue to develop robust and routine quality assurance systems to ensure that the quality of the service is monitored and assessed effectively. This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) Monitor staff practice and provide staff with constructive feedback to support them in meeting children's needs.
- b) Carry out regular and effective monitoring and auditing of records and personal plans to ensure detailed and relevant information is gathered to support children's needs.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) 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 area for improvement was made on 17 April 2023.

Action taken since then

The manager, with support from the head teacher, had introduced a more robust quality assurance system to support the improvements within the service. Observations and monitoring of staff practice and constructive feedback was now established. Which supported the team to continue to grow and develop their skills and daily practice.

Personal plans, learning journals and one page profiles were now monitored to support moderation and consistency across the team.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support the new manager to develop the service and to enhance positive outcomes for children, families, and staff. The provider should review the time allocated to complete and review managerial responsibilities, including the time allocated to the manager to ensure there is sustained improvement moving forward.

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

'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23); and

'I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources.' (HSCS 4.27).

This area for improvement was made on 17 April 2023.

Action taken since then

The manager was now allocated more time to complete tasks specific to their role, as well as supporting the improvement agenda and action plan following the previous inspection.

Previous area for improvement 5

To improve the continuity of care and better outcomes for children, the provider should review the current system in place to support individual children and the consistency of the staff team.

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

'I experience stability in my care and support from people who know my needs, choices and wishes, even if there are changes in the service or organisation.' (HSCS 4.15); and

'I am supported and cared for by people I know so that I experience consistency and continuity.' (HSCS 4.16).

This area for improvement was made on 17 April 2023.

Action taken since then

The team was now staffed to full capacity with all vacant posts filled. The team told us this had a positive impact on their own health and wellbeing. The consistency of a formed team now allowed staff to continue to grow and develop their champion roles, as well as support the ongoing improvement agenda.

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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