

Tomnacross Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Tomnacross Primary School
Kiltarlity
Beauly
IV4 7HW

Telephone: 01463 741 497

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 May 2024

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003017280

About the service

Tomnacross Primary School Nursery is situated just outside the village of Kiltarlity and is on the grounds of Tomnacross Primary School. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 32 children aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

The nursery was all on the one level and there was a large outdoor play area that could be accessed directly from the nursery. The outdoor play area contains a range of loose parts and open ended resources which extend and enrich the children's imaginative play and learning experiences.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection visit which took place on 8 and 9 May 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 using the service;
- spoke with parents and carers;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefited from warm and nurturing care from the staff team.
- Staff knew children well and had developed positive relationships with them.
- Children were happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Children's wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning which was reviewed regularly with families.
- Children enjoyed a lovely calming mealtime experience.
- Robust quality assurance practices were in place which supported the continuous improvement of the service.
- The management team had identified time to fully support the nursery setting which had resulted in positive changes.

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? | 5 - Very Good |
| How good is our setting? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 5 - Very 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 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 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, nurturing and caring approaches from staff which supported their overall wellbeing. Children were given praise, reassurance and physical comfort when they needed it and this supported them to feel settled and secure. One parent commented: staff are brilliant, they communicate very well to me at the end of the session about how my child's day has been".

Effective personal planning supported children to meet their potential. Staff spoke knowledgeably and confidently about children's individual care needs and what they did to support them. We saw staff responding throughout the day, offering kindness, reassurance and cuddles. As a result, individual children experienced care and support that was right for them. Staff were proactive in seeking additional support when children needed it, working with other professionals such as the speech and language therapist to identify appropriate strategies and support. As a result, children received the care and support that was right for them.

Mealtimes were very positive, relaxed and sociable. Significant improvements had been made to snack and mealtimes which were unhurried and calm. Independence was encouraged with children cutting fruit, pouring drinks and self-serving. Children selected their own cutlery and set the tables in the nursery servery. Staff sat with children, making mealtimes a safe and sociable experience. They were focused on the children, supporting younger children with eating. As a result, all children benefited from a positive, social experience.

Children were kept safe and well. Medication was stored securely and administered in line with best practice. Medication consent forms were in place and were detailed to ensure staff had all the required information to maintain children's health and wellbeing.

Staff worked in partnership with outside professionals to improve outcomes for children when they needed additional help. Appropriate strategies had been identified and put in place to support children, for example, using strategies from speech and language to support children in their communication and language. As a result, children were supported to reach their potential.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children led their own play and learning across the setting. Children were confident exploring and playing with different resources to develop their own learning and development. They had access to a good provision of loose parts, natural materials, and real-life resources, both in their playroom and within the nursery garden. Children were engaged in high quality outdoor play experiences that provided a variety of opportunities to be creative, develop problem solving skills, and have fun. We observed children enjoying time on the bicycles, where one child stated 'my teacher showed me how to ride my bicycle'. Children also enjoyed playing in the sand building sandcastle as well, as water play. As a result, children were happy and engaged in play outdoors.

Literacy and numeracy were supported through a range of experiences. Staff understood the importance of language development and used visuals as well as signs to promote language and communication. Children

enjoyed sharing books with staff throughout the day. Singing and mark making was a big part of the daily routine for the children both indoors and outdoors. This supported their language development, and they were having fun. Some children were developing confidence in learning early numeracy skills, counting aloud as they played, and recognising some numbers in the environment.

Child centred planning approaches were responsive to children's interests and offered a balance of responsive and intentional experiences. It was evident that children's voices were highly valued as floor books evidenced children's comments, drawings which demonstrated their involvement in the planning process. Regular planning meetings enabled staff and the management team to discuss planned approaches and assess the impact on children's play and learning. This ensured play experiences reflected children's interests to successfully engage their imagination and curiosity, which resulted in children having fun and learning through play.

Following the previous inspection, the management and staff made improvements to how children's next steps and targets were recorded and evaluated. 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. Children's learning was regularly shared with parents. Management explained that as part of their quality assurance, they routinely monitored learning journey folders and offered staff feedback on their content.

Children made good use of their local community through regular walks, trips to see the farm animals near the nursery and visits to their local woods. The service also made great use of their large green area where the children played on a daily basis. Staff highlighted how beneficial these were and children really enjoyed their time within their community.

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 welcoming and homely nursery with plenty of natural light and good ventilation. It was a clean, tidy and well-maintained space for children to play, learn and relax in.

Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with good opportunities to be outside. Children told us that they enjoyed playing outside which promoted physical energetic play to keep them active and healthy. We saw nice interactions between staff and children, with staff responsive to the individual needs of each child. For example, children were happily engaged in the water play in the garden. This experience provided opportunities to promote mathematical thinking, imagination and creativity.

Staff effectively supported children to identify and minimise risk whilst in the outdoor nursery. Children had been involved in setting visual boundaries, for example, hanging ribbons around the perimeter of the site. Children confidently explained what the boundaries meant and knew to keep up the top half of the garden.

Staff were monitoring security arrangements at the entrance to the setting, which were effective in preventing children from leaving the setting unattended. The staff team worked well together to identify and remove potential risks to children within the setting. A risk assessment was in place and staff responded quickly to any changes, such as utilising the space within the setting to ensure that children's

experiences were not compromised. To support the service to keep children safe, we highlighted an area that would benefit from additional security measures, for example, children have access to the outdoors by pushing the exit button in the cloakroom. We discussed with the staff, manager and representative from the local authority ways in which this could be managed to further minimise the risk of children leaving the premises unsupervised. **(See area for improvement 1).**

Infection prevention control procedures followed best practice guidance. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack and mealtimes. The setting was kept clean and tidy which contributed to reducing the potential spread of infection.

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should ensure the setting safe and secure this should include and not limited to:

- Appropriate measures in place to ensure the setting is safe and secure.

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, 5.19).

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements and led well

The manager and staff fully engaged in the inspection process. The manager and the staff demonstrated their commitment to the service and were motivated to make improvements to ensure positive outcomes for children. This was highlighted by the improvements which had been put in place since the previous inspection.

Children benefitted from a management and staff team who were committed to providing a quality service. This resulted in a shared vision for the development of the service. Staff were enthusiastic as they worked together to enable change. They demonstrated the awareness of the importance of self evaluation to support the delivery of high quality care and learning tailored towards children and families and will continue to encourage parents to contribute to improve the service.

Children and families were regularly consulted, and their views gathered. They did this with questionnaires and face to face discussions. All parents strongly agreed and agreed they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the setting. The management and staff team had developed a comprehensive programme of family engagement which included open afternoon sessions, questionnaires, and families had opportunities to join their children in nursery for lunch. This supported families to feel respected and their views and opinions to be taken into consideration.

High quality care and support was achieved by quality assurance systems and processes including self-evaluation and an improvement plan. The manager had allocated time to focus on the nursery with the head teacher, principal, senior practitioner and the staff team. The senior practitioner and manager

implemented formal and informal monitoring and auditing across the service leading to continuous improvement. Staff were skilled and motivated and worked really well together. Continuous reflection on practice and regular opportunities for professional discussion brought about positive changes for children and families. We suggested ways in which their improvement journey could be captured to allow continued reflection.

Policies were in place which supported safe practice within the service. These were all regularly reviewed to ensure they followed current best practice and guidance.

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

Children experienced nurturing interactions from a staff team who had differing skills and experience in the role. They knew children's preferences and wishes. Staff knew children well and secure relationships between them had been established. We witnessed children being supported by staff in ways which were appropriate to meet their needs. This meant that children felt safe, secure and happy in a service where a caring staff team nurtured and supported them.

Staff had clear roles, were flexible and moved with children dependant on their interests and needs, for example, when children wanted to go outdoors and members of staff went out with them. Staff placed themselves thoughtfully during busier times to ensure all children's individual needs were well considered. As a result, children benefitted from a very calm and positive experience.

Staff had time off the nursery floor to complete tasks while leading on improvements. Staff have told you they benefit from this time very well and use this to look at planning, training and improvements they can focus on. Staff also went to visit other nurseries to look at different aspects and ideas for their environment for both indoors and outdoors. Staff have commented that this gave them a better perspective of other settings and what works well, and to look at improvements that can be made across the nursery. This supported the staff team to fulfil their roles effectively, help drive forward improvements, and better support children's experiences.

Busier times of the day, such as lunchtime, were planned for. The children had lunch together in the main school canteen. The staff worked well together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with all the nursery children whilst allowing staff to each have a break.

Overall, the deployment and levels of staff within the nursery were effective. Staff ratios were met and staff supported and supervised children to the best of their abilities. For the majority of the time, a good staff to child ratio allowed staff to be responsive to individual needs. However, during busier times of the day there were some occasions where staff were taken away to monitor the cloak room. Management have addressed this and are aiming to look at the security for the door in the cloakroom. (See 2.1 children experience high quality facilities).

Induction procedures were effective in supporting new staff to have the necessary skills and knowledge to support children. Temporary staff told us they had been made to feel welcome by the existing staff team

and they were given key personal information about children. This meant that children received the care and support that was right for them.

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

The service should consider how they observe and capture children's progress and development and use this knowledge to support children's next steps and extend their experiences

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

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

This area for improvement was made on 17 August 2023.

Action taken since then

Following the previous inspection, the management and staff made improvements to how children's next steps and targets were recorded and evaluated. 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. Children's learning was regularly shared with parents. Management explained that as part of their quality assurance, they routinely monitored learning journey folders and offered staff feedback on their content.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support the effective running of the service, the provider should ensure that the manager allocates time each week to effectively manage and lead the care service provided.

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).

This area for improvement was made on 17 August 2023.

Action taken since then

The manager had allocated time to focus on the nursery with the head teacher, principal teacher and the senior practitioner. A management remit has been created so all tasks are been planned out through a quality assurance calendar. The senior practitioner and manager implemented formal and informal

monitoring and auditing across the service leading to continuous improvement. The manager feels she has more time to focus on improvements and outcomes with the help from her colleagues.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support children's wellbeing and promote the continued development and improvement of the service the provider must ensure the manager effectively monitors the work of each member of staff and the service as a whole.

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 May 2023.

Action taken since then

The senior practitioner and manager implemented formal and informal monitoring and auditing across the service leading to continuous improvement. All staff have received support and supervision from management and the senior practitioner.

All staff received individualised feedback from monitoring visit with personal next steps.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support children's wellbeing, learning and development the provider must ensure that at all times suitably qualified and competent staff are working in the nursery in such numbers as are appropriate for the health, welfare and safety of children.

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

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 17 August 2023.

Action taken since then

Staff ratios were met and staff supported and supervised children to the best of their abilities. Provider to supply an additional EYP to ensure the setting is suitably staffed to meet the needs and the layout of the environment. However, during busier times of the day there were some occasions where staff were taken away to monitor the cloak room. Management has addressed this straight away by reviewing staff and taking account of the enhanced security along with risk assessment in place.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 5

To ensure children receive high quality care and effective supervision, you, the provider, must ensure that staff have sufficient time allocated to undertake the role effectively.

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).

This area for improvement was made on 17 May 2023.

Action taken since then

Staff have 3 hours a week off the nursery floor to complete tasks while leading on improvements. Staff have told they benefit from this time very well and use this to look at planning, training and improvements they can focus on. This supported the staff team to fulfil their roles effectively, help drive forward improvements, and better support children's experiences.

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

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

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