

Belmont Nursery Day Care of Children

Belmont Primary School
Galloway Avenue
Stranraer
DG9 7BH

Telephone: 01776 702 952

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 May 2024

Service provided by:
Dumfries & Galloway Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003501

Service no:
CS2003015463

About the service

Belmont Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 56 children from 3 years and over to those who are not yet attending primary school. During the operating times the service will have exclusive use of the nursery premises. Following consultation between the school and the nursery management, the nursery may also have access to other rooms within Belmont Primary School. The rooms will be subject to a Risk Assessment prior to use. Key pad entry devices must be operational whilst children are present in the nursery.

Belmont Nursery operates within Belmont Primary School which is situated in a residential area of Stranraer in Dumfries and Galloway. Children had the use of one large playroom which could be split into three smaller rooms. Children had access to the outdoor play space via a door in the middle playroom.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 29 May 2024 between 10:30 and 17:00 and 30 May 2024 between 08:30 and 16:00. 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
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy and confident in the setting.
- Children benefitted from spontaneous and planned high quality play experiences, building on current interests.
- Children had access to a good range of resources that were clean, well-organised and encouraged exploration and fun.
- The manager should focus on ensuring quality assurance processes demonstrate continuous improvement.
- Children benefitted from a staff team who knew them very well and spoke confidently about their care needs.
- We would encourage the team to continue to discuss and review risk assessments, particularly in relation to the corridor, to ensure children's safety is promoted.

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?	5 - Very 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 found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.

Children were happy and confident in the setting and were keen to show us what they were learning. Staff were caring and nurturing towards the children. Adults offered assistance in self-help tasks whilst encouraging independence. This showed us that attachments and relationships in the nursery were strong.

Parents told us:

'Every member of staff is friendly and approachable,'

'I have a wonderful relationship with the teachers from Belmont Nursery, they are extremely attentive and supportive,' and

'Staff are amazing and nurturing with my child and tell me at the door if there is anything or on the learning journal.'

Children's emotional wellbeing was promoted using the characters from the Disney movie Inside Out. Staff always had pictures of the emotions on them, and some children asked the inspectors what colour they were. As a result, children were learning to identify their feelings and regulate their emotions.

Families were encouraged to be part of nursery life. For example, book bug sessions and family breakfast club was held every week. Younger siblings were also encouraged to come along. This showed us that the nursery was building strong relationships with children and their families. One parent told us, 'I had a "Stay and Play" session with my son and enjoyed reading through his personal plan really enjoy being able to do this, it makes us feel more connected at home to our sons learning and nursery journey.'

Children experienced a sociable lunchtime with peers as they could choose who they would like to sit with. Children's independence and life skills were developing with opportunities to self-select and self-serve their meals. Lunch helpers took pride in their roles by helping set the tables, filling water and milk jugs and preparing fruits for snack. This role enabled children to take responsibilities and develop lifelong skills. On the second day of inspection the layout of the room and staff deployment was reviewed which enabled the adults to sit with children as they ate. This further enriched the mealtime experience and prompted healthy eating habits.

Children benefited from a staff team who knew them very well and spoke confidently about their care needs. Information from parents was recorded in personal plans when children started the service. Personal plans included strategies to support children's health, welfare and safety needs which were implemented and updated regularly. As a result, children were being supported to achieve their potential.

A medication policy and procedure were in place and most medication was stored in line with good practice guidance. We discussed with the manager ways to streamline their procedures, and this was actioned immediately. This will ensure children are kept safe and healthy.

A dedicated sleep space had been created in the playroom to enable children to have the option to rest across the day. We observed one staff member offer a child an opportunity to rest on the bed when she was tired. A procedure was in place to support safe sleeping. This means that children's overall wellbeing was well supported.

We saw evidence that the team had linked appropriately with other professionals to support positive outcomes for children. Such as Health visitors, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Education Visitors.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children were actively engaged in a wide variety of play experiences. The playroom was set up to encourage independence and choice. We saw children engaged in play for extended periods across the day. For example, the café was popular with plenty of real-life objects to sustain the children's interest. This showed us that children's imagination was supported and encouraged.

Children benefitted from spontaneous and planned high quality play experiences, building on current interests. A sample of a pond habitat was enriching children's current interest in insects. Staff supported children to scaffold their learning with sensitive interactions and effective questioning. As a result, children were valued and listened to whilst being supported to achieve their potential.

Children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality play experiences. Children were excited to show us what they liked to do at nursery. One child asked us 'Would you like a tour?' This demonstrated to us that the children had ownership of their nursery and felt confident in the setting.

Children experienced rich and meaningful play opportunities to develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Children were supported in play to explore and create shapes such as, pentagons and hexagons. As a result, children were developing a range of skills. Planning approaches were responsive and child-centred.

Observations were recorded by staff and discussed as a team at the end of each day. Staff recorded experiences in 'big books' which captured the voice of the child. We would encourage the manager and staff team to streamline their recording processes to avoid duplication of work. This would allow focus to be on evaluating experiences to further ensure children are reaching their potential.

How good is our setting?

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 key question as very good.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

The setting was comfortably furnished and welcoming for the children. The room had natural light and was ventilated with open windows. There was ample space indoors and outdoors for children to play and explore together or alone if they chose to do so. We suggested that children would benefit from more cosy areas to relax and have time to themselves if they wanted.

Free flow access between the indoors and enclosed outdoor space further supported children's abilities to lead their play and learning. The outdoor area provided children the opportunity to engage in risk taking, problem-solving, working together and imaginative play enhancing their play and learning opportunities. As a result, children had a sense of ownership of their nursery.

Children had access to a good range of resources that were clean, well-organised and encouraged exploration and fun. Staff had developed the indoor and outdoor play spaces recently to offer a variety of open-ended and natural resources. For example, children spent prolonged periods in the café with small wooden shapes to make a birthday present for one of the inspectors. As a result, children explored opportunities that promoted and challenged their curiosity and imagination.

We would encourage the team to continue with the development of the play spaces and to audit the environment to ascertain children's engagement. For example, the use of the snack area when children are not eating and the art area. This would further enhance the opportunities available to children to support their play and learning.

We were satisfied with the Infection Prevention Control procedures in place. We saw staff cleaning toys and surfaces appropriately. Handwashing had improved on the second day. As a result, children were being kept safe and healthy.

Risk assessments were in place for all areas and activities within the setting. Mitigation measures were well considered and realistic. Staff and children were aware of the Care Inspectorate's SIMOA campaign which encourages services to act responsibly to safeguard, protect and support children's wellbeing. They had introduced their own purple elephant when speaking about being safe with the children. We would encourage the team to continue to discuss and review risk assessments, particularly in relation to the corridor, to ensure children's safety is promoted.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

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

There was a vision, values and aims for the setting. The manager and staff team had incorporated the values into practice. A display captured the views of parents and children in relation to their 'FRIENDS' motto. As a result, there were high aspirations for children and their families.

Feedback was regularly sought from children and families to ensure their wishes and choices were fully considered. This encouraged children and families to feel included in the life and development of the service. Families confirmed they felt involved. One parent told us, 'Nursery is always asking for parents feedback.' As a result, children and families are at the heart of improvements.

Families were welcomed into the service each day, spending time chatting with staff. They were building relationships with staff and developing confidence as they spent time in the nursery environment. This meant they felt included and respected as they heard about children's experiences and achievements.

Staff were motivated and spoke passionately about their leadership roles. The manager had created conditions where people were enabled to lead these changes. Staff told us they discussed and shared ideas to introduce new, fun and stimulating activities for children in their care. As a result, children were benefitting from high quality experiences.

Staff told us they felt supported by the management team. Regular team meetings enabled the staff to be reflective, and to consider how they could contribute to improving children's experiences and outcomes. This meant that children were benefitting from a staff team who were committed to improving the service.

The manager engaged very well during the inspection process, demonstrating an ethos of continuous improvement. The nursery was led by a confident and passionate manager. This resulted in a positive working environment where staff felt confident to initiate well-informed change and were encouraged to share the responsibilities to lead these changes.

We recognise the period of change which the manager has led the nursery through since their appointment to the post. Quality assurance processes had been put in place, however these processes were yet to show how they were supporting improvement within the service. The manager should now focus on ensuring these quality assurance processes, including self-evaluation demonstrate continuous and sustained improvement.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment.

Staff told us they used each other's strengths and interests to enrich children's play and learning experiences in each area. We observed this throughout our inspection and when reviewing floor books. We are aware of the frequency of staff rotating around allocated areas, currently two days. We would ask the team to continue to review the impact of this to ensure staff can fully engage with the planning cycle and effectively evaluate children's outcomes.

Staff communicated effectively with each other throughout the days of inspection. They were respectful in their engagement which supported a positive ethos within the service. Good working relationships had been established which meant that the children and families experienced a warm and caring atmosphere. One parent told us, 'The caring, friendly staff always make you feel welcome.'

There was enough staff in the setting to ensure the safe supervision and engagement of children present. Staff breaks were planned to minimise the impact on children. However, further work was needed to consider how some areas are supervised. At times during the day, such as lunchtime, staff were unable to adequately supervise the corridor area. Staff deployment should be reviewed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. This is to further ensure that children benefit from positive engagement and are kept safe at all times.

Staff absences were well managed to provide consistent care and support. Staff were flexible and were happy to help if a colleague was absent. There was a positive ethos of attendance, and parents told us staff were mainly consistent.

There was a wide range of opportunities for staff training. Staff spoke to us about their recent training, including epilepsy awareness training, play, learn and the brain and developing number knowledge. Staff told us about the impact this had on their practice and on outcomes for children. This meant staff were building on their confidence to provide high quality care for all the children and developing their practice.

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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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