

Inshes Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Inshes Road
Inverness
IV2 3RF

Telephone: 01463 725 920

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 June 2024

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2007144853

About the service

Inshes Primary School Nursery is operated by The Highland Council and is based in the grounds of Inshes Primary School, Inverness. Inshes Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 76 children aged from three years to primary school age.

The accommodation provided is within two main rooms with direct access to a spacious outdoor play area. 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 12 and 13 June 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 children using the service;
- reviewed email communication from 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 enjoyed a lovely calming mealtime experience.
- Children were happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Improvements did not always directly impact on children's outcomes and experiences, and consistent approaches to holistic quality assurance should now be developed.
- The service had identified the potential for children's security to be compromised related to the layout of the environment. Long term plans are now in place to improve this situation.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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 experienced nurturing care and support from staff. Children were happy, relaxed and settled within the service. This helped them to form strong attachments with the staff looking after them. Older children in breakfast club and out of school care confidently approached members of staff for support and to help them fulfil their needs. Children responded by being very settled and confident in their surroundings and in the care of staff. When children needed reassurance, staff responded warmly and offered cuddles, if this is what they wanted. This supported children to feel safe and secure during their time at the service.

Most staff spoke knowledgably and confidently about children's individual care needs and what they did to support them. As a result, individual children received care and support that was right for them. Personal plans were in place, however, they were not all accessible. Whilst staff had knowledge of the children's care needs, preferences and personalities, access to all of the children's information, kept all together, would ensure a holistic view of children's needs were captured. This would enable all staff to have a clear record of children's changing and evolving needs to support them to consistently achieve their potential.

Mealtimes were positive, relaxing, and a sociable time for children, where they were provided with a range of opportunities to develop their independence. For example, children helped to prepare and serve the snack fruit items, they spread their own toppings, poured their own milk and water and cleared away their own plates and dishes. As a result, children had opportunities to take responsibility and learn key life skills. Food choices at snack and lunchtime were nutritious and children had access to fresh water throughout the day to support hydration. Staff engaged in conversations with children during their mealtime experience which encouraged language and communication skills.

We found that some children's long term medication had not been consistently reviewed within timescales in line with best practice. The manager took steps to immediately address these inconsistencies. We also suggested medication should be improved in auditing children's medication information as per best practice guidance.

(See area for improvement 1 under 3.1 Quality assurance are led well).

Staff spoke confidently about their role in safeguarding and protecting children. They knew how they would record and report any concerns. Regular safeguarding training helped keep staff up to date and be confident in their roles.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were engaged in their play throughout the session. They were actively leading their own play and learning, engaged with resources which supported their interests. Most staff showed enthusiasm in their interactions with children, providing resources and experiences to support their learning. We saw children smiling, chatting and laughing as they took part in a wide range of activities, including role play, constructive play, arts and crafts and messy play. This supported children to extend their imagination, learning, and spark curiosity in their play experiences.

Literacy and numeracy opportunities were incorporated into most areas of play within the nursery environment. Children had the opportunity to develop their language and literacy skills as they sat on comfy sofas sharing books with staff, digging in the outdoor area and singing nursery rhymes with their friends and staff in the garden. This experience contributed to children understanding the importance of recognising and reproducing words, which also builds children's vocabulary and communication skills.

Children attending breakfast club and out of school care were actively involved in regularly suggesting ideas for planning activities and resources they would like to use. Since our last inspection play was more child-led with staff responding to children's interests and ideas in planning. For example, in out of school club children had access to different activities. One child illustrated how much fun out of school care is. One child said 'I love making pizzas and baking'. A floor book was completed by the children and illustrated a wide range of activities such as baking, making pizza, arts and crafts, outdoor play and celebrating all multinational festivals and celebrations through out the year. This supported children to feel valued and listened to.

Planning floor books were in place to capture children's interests, thoughts and to plan fun learning experiences for the children. Children had fun and experienced a variety of play opportunities which promoted learning and development.

Personal learning journals were in place for all children which captured some of their achievements and progress. These contained observations and photographs demonstrating children's breadth of learning experiences. These should now be developed further to improve the quality of observations to capture the learning. The service had identified this as an area for improvement. Staff were currently being supported by the local authority to develop their skills in writing quality observations. Management should regularly monitor the quality of observations and next steps. This is to ensure the information supports planning of relevant play and learning experiences. This would enable provision of activities tailored to the needs and abilities of individual children and support them to be successful learners.

Children made use of their local community through trips to their local farm and park. The service also made great use of their large green area where the children in the out of school area 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?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a setting which was clean and well-ventilated with lots of natural light. Children's need to rest and relax was considered. The nursery was decorated in a neutral colour with some of the children's artwork displayed on the walls which promoted a natural environment.

Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with good opportunities to be outside. In the nursery and out of school care children told us that they enjoyed playing outside which promoted physical energetic play to keep them active and healthy. We saw some nice interactions between staff and children, with staff responsive to the individual needs of each child. For example, children were engaged in the water play in the nursery garden where there were lots of giggles and conversations. This experience

provided opportunities for children to use their imagination and develop their sensory and gross motor development.

There was a wide range of resources available indoors which included natural and open-ended resources. Large equipment, open ended resources and opportunities for planting and growing offered children a variety of play experiences. Playing in the natural environment, promoted their well-being as they benefitted from fresh air and exercise. The staff also spoke very confidently of their plans to further develop the outdoor area. The garden provided a range of spaces for development of physical skills and exploration. The children had access to a variety of engaging and challenging resources and activities, for example, open-ended and natural resources, messy area and bikes/trikes. This supported children to develop their problem-solving skills and spark curiosity in their play experiences.

Arrangements for security within the setting were not always well considered. Plans were in place to increase children's security related to a potential security issue with the main door, if children were not adequately supervised. Furthermore the outdoor area was a challenge risk due to the area being close to the main road and the carpark. The staff team worked well together to identify and minimise potential risks to children and had appropriate risk assessments in place. However, we found there was potential for children's security to be compromised. As a result, we made a requirement. **(See requirement 1).**

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and staff. During food preparation and serving, staff followed best practice guidance and carried out effective cleaning of tables before and after children ate. However, at times children across the service were not supervised when handwashing before snack. Staff addressed this immediately and offered support when needed. This contributed to minimising risks of infection for both the staff team and children.

Children's privacy was protected by the safe storage of their information, including electronic and paper files.

Requirements

1. By 30 September 2024, the provider must ensure that children are kept safe by implementing effective systems to prevent children leaving the service and prevent strangers from entering.

This should include but is not limited to:

- a) ensuring the premises are secure at all times;
- b) ensuring children are effectively supervised at all times;
- c) reviewing the risk presented to children by the outdoor fence in the garden.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of the Social Care and Social Work and Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/2010).

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?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses

3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children's care and support outcomes benefited from a leadership and staff team who generally embraced a positive approach to continuous improvement. The management team responded positively to our suggestions and accepted changes were needed to improve identified aspects of service delivery.

Since the last inspection, we discussed the importance of building leadership capacity with the senior nursery practitioner and within each staff team to develop a culture of continuous improvement. The management team supported staff to have opportunities for leadership roles within the service. For example, staff led on different areas of the environment including the home corner, outdoor and literacy across the nursery. SHANNARI indicators were incorporated throughout the service and in the development of the outdoor area. This led to staff feeling valued and having some ownership over the service.

Some aspects of quality assurance were in place but needed to be embedded consistently and effectively to ensure high quality outcomes for children. Children were not always benefitting from improvements that would directly impact on their outcomes and experiences. The service had not yet developed consistent approaches to holistic quality assurance. We suggested that the service consider streamlining their improvement focus and associated paperwork. Self-evaluation helped staff to reflect on practice. However, identified actions and changes had not been put into place so impacts on children's experiences and outcomes were not clearly defined. As a result we made an area for improvement. **(See area for improvement 1).**

Children's outcomes benefitted from parents working in partnership with the service. They agreed their ideas and suggestions were taken into account and influenced change at the service. Through surveys and stay and play sessions families have had the opportunity to contribute their ideas towards changes. For example, families requested a trip away with the nursery. Management arranged this and children went on a day trip to a local farm in the area. Furthermore parents commented on the outdoor area to be developed further. Management have taken this into consideration and have plans in place to resurface some of the outdoor area. This supported families to feel respected and their views and opinions to be taken into consideration.

Opportunities for staff to meet with management on a one to one formal basis had been carried out through annual appraisals. These provided opportunities for staff to meet with the manager to discuss their practice, strengths and areas for possible development through training. This supported staff to feel valued. However, it was still too early to assess the impact of these meetings on experiences and outcomes for children.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing and promote the continued development and improvement of the service, the manager should ensure robust quality assurance systems are in place.

This should include but is not limited to:

a) Auditing all children's information recorded, including medication information, accidents and incidents ensuring this corresponds between recording formats.

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)

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff Deployment

Staff were nurturing and caring and worked well together as a team across the breakfast, nursery and out of school care and they brought a range of skills and experience to the service. The staff team communicated with each other when a task took them away from their designated area. For example, they informed each other when leaving the room or when attending to a child's needs. The ethos between team members was positive and interactions between staff were kind and respectful. This helped to create a positive atmosphere for both staff and children to feel comfortable and secure in.

At lunchtime, staff breaks were well planned to minimise impact on the children whilst enabling staff to rest and be refreshed. Continuity of care for children was consistent throughout the day with minimal changes to staffing. This ensured positive transitions for children and helpful communication with families at pick up and drop of times.

We looked at the service's staff deployment and found that a previous area for improvement had not been fully met. Staff ratios were met and staff supported and supervised children to the best of their abilities. However, the layout of the environment outside and the individual needs of the children meant they could not always provide the level of supervision, care, and support they wanted to. There were various blind spots in parts of the outdoor area and it did not take into account the complexity of individual children especially at busier times of the day. This resulted in some missed opportunities to support children to reach their potential. The manager agreed to consider the outdoor area to ensure this is safe and secure and how staff could be further supported to ensure all children experience high quality care and support.

(See area for improvement 1).

Staff were safely recruited and were registered with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) to protect children and keep them safe from harm and abuse.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children are safe and receive high quality experiences at all times, the provider and manager should further review and make appropriate changes to staff deployment to improve experiences for 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).

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

To ensure improved outcomes for children and families using the service, the provider should ensure the leadership team manage their time productively to undertake their role effectively.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/10).

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 30 August 2023.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection, we discussed the importance of building leadership capacity with the senior nursery practitioner and within each staff team to develop a culture of continuous improvement. The management team supported staff to have opportunities for leadership roles within the service. For example, staff led on different areas of the environment including the home corner, outdoor and literacy across the nursery. SHANNARI indicators were incorporated throughout the service and in the development of the outdoor area. This led to staff feeling valued and having some ownership over the service.

This area for improvement has now been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children are safe and receive high quality experiences at all times, the provider and manager should further review and make appropriate changes to staff deployment to improve experiences for 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 30 August 2023.

Action taken since then

We looked at the service's staff deployment and found that a previous area for improvement had not been fully met. Staff ratios were met and staff supported and supervised children to the best of their abilities. However, the layout of the environment outside and the individual needs of the children meant they could not always provide the level of supervision, care, and support they wanted to. There were various blind

spots in parts of the outdoor area, which staff could not easily see from either the playrooms or the immediate outdoor area. It also did not take into account the complexity of individual children especially at busier times of the day. This resulted in some missed opportunities to support children to reach their potential.

This area for improvement has not 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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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