

Newton Park Primary Nursery Day Care of Children

Newton Park Primary School
Seaforth Avenue
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Telephone: 01955 609 702

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 June 2024

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003017258

About the service

Newton Park Primary Nursery is registered to provide a service to a maximum of 60 children, aged from three years to those not yet attending primary school. The nursery is operated by The Highland Council. The head teacher is the registered manager of the nursery. The nursery operates term time only.

The nursery is located within Newton Park Primary School in Wick, Caithness. It has its own separate entrance. The nursery premises consists of three playrooms, reception area, kitchen and toilets. There is an enclosed outdoor play area, which 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 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
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefitted from a caring and nurturing staff team.
- The nursery was welcoming and inviting for children and families.
- Children had opportunities to lead their own play and learning which impacted positively on their development and wellbeing.
- Children experienced positive snack and lunchtime experiences.
- Good self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service.
- There was a sufficient number of staff working in the service to meet the needs of individuals.
- There was potential for children to be placed at risk as the staff and leadership team had not consistently follow their safeguarding procedures.

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?	3 - Adequate
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?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Most children were happy, settled and enjoyed their time at nursery. They experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to their personal care and learning needs. Staff recognised children as individuals and they responded to their needs and wishes, most of the time. They communicated with children at their level in a quiet and sensitive way. These supportive interactions developed close bonds between staff and children, contributing to positive relationships.

Staff managed minor disputes between children well. They skilfully empowered children to think about their choices and how this impacted on their peers. This demonstrated a calm and supportive approach which helped children regulate their emotions and enabled them to resolve minor conflicts. As a result, children were gaining confidence and skills in regulating their individual emotional security and wellbeing.

Effective partnerships had been formed with external agencies to help assess children's developmental needs. Children requiring additional support had individualised strategies in place, which were reflected in practice. This resulted in them settling well into their routines and being fully included in nursery experiences.

Children's individual wellbeing was not consistently supported by effective personal planning for all children. Some personal plans did not always identify clear strategies of support and had not always been updated to reflect children's ongoing needs. This had the potential to compromise consistency in care.

Children experienced positive snack and lunchtime experiences. Children were encouraged to participate in these daily routines which provided them with a range of opportunities to be responsible and independent. For example, children took on the role of snack helper and prepared the food for snack. They could choose when they had snack and staff sat with them at snack and lunchtime which made it a positive sociable experience for children and provided opportunities for emerging language skills to be developed.

There was potential for children to be placed at risk as the staff and leadership team had not consistently follow their safeguarding procedures. Some concerns raised in chronologies had not been followed up and referrals were not made to the lead agency. **(See Requirement 1)**

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Most children were engaged and seen to be busy and purposeful at play. They had opportunities to lead their own play and learning which impacted positively on their development and wellbeing. Resources were well-presented and encouraged exploration, enquiry and fun. The continuous provision indoors had been well considered to include a wide variety of open ended and natural resources, enabling children to explore opportunities which promoted their curiosity and imagination.

We observed children following their own interests. For example, some children were highly engaged creating "treasure baskets" from Lego. Children's interests had also been considered within the environment. For example, recent interests in insects and the sea were reflected in the provocations, resources and objects available to play with. This supported children to feel engaged and included within the environment.

Children had opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills through play and during daily routines. For example, during lunch staff skilfully facilitated conversations that encouraged children's use of numbers, words and counting in everyday situations. A range of mark making resources supported children to engage in early writing through their play experiences. For example, we saw staff down at children's level supporting them to draw a road on large pieces of paper for their toy cars, this contributed to the development of fine motor and imagination skills.

Most staff used skilled interactions to support children's learning and development. We observed staff using a range of communication techniques to support children at different developmental stages. These included, using open questions to extend play and learning as well as timing interactions carefully and using visual prompts to support other children. This enabled children to feel valued and included within the nursery setting. However, on occasions there was missed opportunities to extend children's thinking and widen their skills through play. This was more noticeable when children played outdoors.

Positive approaches to supporting risky and adventurous play were embedded within practice. We saw children being effectively supported to jump, climb and balance in the garden. This encouraged opportunities for children to assess and manage risk and build self-confidence.

Children's progress and development was recorded through learning journals and developmental overviews. Staff had undertaken improvement work to develop observations to make next steps in progress and learning clear. Some observations identified children's knowledge, skills and understanding and some were descriptive. Next steps to develop these were not yet consistent. For example, there were not always specific details about how continued progress would be supported. The leadership team should continue to monitor staff practice to help identify inconsistencies and where further work is needed.

Requirements

1.

By 4 September 2024, the provider must ensure that children are protected from harm.

The provider must ensure that:

- a) Child protection procedures are implemented in accordance with national guidance.
- b) All staff have a good understanding of child protection and are clear on their roles and responsibilities.
- c) Child protection referrals are made to lead agencies within appropriate timescales.
- d) The service is effectively managed by ensuring the required notifications are made to the Care Inspectorate in line with guidance.

This is 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: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

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.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The nursery was welcoming and inviting for children and families. Children's artwork was displayed to ensure children felt valued and respected. Natural furnishings and homely touches provided a calming and nurturing environment for children to play and learn.

Children had access to resources that were clean, well-organised and encouraged exploration, enquiry and fun. The continuous provision indoors and outdoors had been well considered to include age and stage appropriate play experiences and interesting, open ended and natural resources. For example, there were some basic real-life items across the setting including, environmental print, recipe books and phones which supported literacy and numeracy experiences and development. As a result, children were enabled to explore opportunities which promoted and challenged their curiosity and imagination. However, there was scope to further develop the range and type of literacy and numeracy learning opportunities in the outdoor area.

Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with daily opportunities for free flow access between the indoor and outdoor nursery areas. This enabled children to be independent, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy. Outdoors, there were opportunities for children to experience more physical play experiences, helping to extend their gross motor skills. We observed children having fun investigating in the large sand pit and using the larger playground equipment to climb and balance. This contributed to children being confident when playing outdoors.

The outdoor area was secure, with a clear perimeter fence. Staff were aware of where they needed to position themselves to ensure they had good vision of children playing. This contributed to children being safe as they played outdoors. Staff worked well together to ensure children were accounted for at all times, undertaking regular counts as children moved between the indoor and outdoor environment.

Overall, children were supported to be healthy and safe through effective infection, prevention and control practices. The environment was well ventilated, hand washing was embedded in practice and regular cleaning took place. However, arrangements for storage of items in the nappy changing area should be reviewed to ensure they follow best practice guidance and minimise the potential spread of infection.

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.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are well led

Children's voices were valued in the service. Opportunities for children to share their ideas and influence their learning was part of daily experiences. Through observations of play and daily discussions, staff responded to children's interests and suggestions. This resulted in children being empowered, valued and allowed them to drive change.

Good self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service. An improvement plan with identified actions and timescales was in place. Planned improvements were realistic with a focus on promoting positive outcomes for children and were supported by best practice guidance. Staff contributed effectively to the ongoing improvements within the nursery, as they were encouraged to critically review their own practice, identifying strengths and next steps. This demonstrated a reflective and considered approach to the development of the service.

A collaborative approach towards quality assurance and improvement was a priority for the leadership team. Some quality assurance processes ensured aspects of the service were being reviewed and monitored in a focused and meaningful way. For example, since the last inspection we noted improvements to staff deployment and the indoor environment, both of which contributed to good quality play and learning experiences for children. However, quality assurance processes in a few aspects of practice such as, auditing of personal plans and chronologies were not robust. As a result, we identified some inconsistencies and gaps in safeguarding procedures.

Staff told us they felt supported by the leadership team. They received support and supervision throughout the academic year. This enabled them to discuss wellbeing needs, contributing to positive relationships. However, there was scope to strengthen the processes in place to enable performance to be constructively reviewed. For example, linking support and supervision to feedback of individual staff practice.

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.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a caring and nurturing staff team. They were enthusiastic and committed to providing a positive experience for the children in their care. They were warm, friendly and responsive in their approach and demonstrated positive team working, which promoted a happy and secure environment for children. They modelled positive social interactions, both verbal and nonverbal, supporting children to develop an understanding of relationships.

The manager recognised that continuity of care was important to ensure positive outcomes for children and took this into account when deploying staff. There was a sufficient number of staff working in the service to meet the needs of individuals. Staff worked well together as a team and their differing skills and knowledge complimented one another and resulted in positive interactions with children. Staff communicated effectively with one another. This was noticeable at times where children moved between areas, particularly between inside and outside. This ensured children were accounted for at all times.

Staff provided individualised support by effectively engaging with children throughout the day. Most staff demonstrated an awareness of when and how to effectively intervene, picking up on cues to support children's wellbeing and extend their play experiences. This resulted in positive engagement and interaction. However, there were some missed opportunities to extend play and learning. On occasion some children would have benefitted from adult support and interaction to settle and engage in play. This was most evident when children were playing outdoors.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 3 March 2023, the provider must ensure children are safe and receive high quality experiences at all times.

To do this the provider must at a minimum: 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 comply with regulation 15 (a) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

This requirement was made on 24 January 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

There was a sufficient number of staff working in the service to meet the health, welfare and safety needs of individuals. As a result, children benefitted from positive play and learning experiences.

Met - outwith timescales

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
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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