

Ladeside Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Carronvale Road
Larbert
FK5 3LH

Telephone: 01324 503 460

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 September 2024

Service provided by:
Falkirk Council

Service provider number:
SP2004006884

Service no:
CS2003015567

About the service

Ladeside Primary School Nursery is a daycare of children service which is provided by Falkirk Council. The service is situated on the same site as the primary school. Children benefit from a large open plan playroom with kitchen, quiet cosy spaces, cloakroom and children's toilets. The large, enclosed outdoor areas provide children with direct access to outdoor learning opportunities.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 48 children at any one time. Those attending the service should be aged between three years to those not yet attending primary school.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 25 September 2024 between 08:45 and 15:30. Feedback was given on Thursday 26 September 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 in the service
- reviewed digital responses from four families
- spoke with three families in person
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were having fun and were actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Children were very well cared for by kind and nurturing staff.
- Children were recognised as individuals and supported to achieve their potential.
- Children benefitted from a welcoming environment which had been well considered with children's needs and interests in mind.
- Staff communicated very well with each other and worked together to ensure children were safe and engaged in quality experiences throughout the day.
- A positive ethos and a culture of continuous improvement had been embraced by the service.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very 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 these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

Children experienced a warm and nurturing approach from a caring staff team. Staff knew children very well and as a result were able to offer appropriate care and support to individuals. They understood the importance of developing positive relationships with children and families. Some families told us staff were approachable, understanding and welcoming. One parent said, "They are all friendly, caring and make a point of knowing what is going on for each child". Strong attachments had been established and were evident in the interactions observed. This meant that children's emotional wellbeing was supported and their needs were being met.

Snacks and meals were nutritious and offered choice for children. They were involved in planning, choosing and preparing snacks, and larger options for lunch. This meant children were developing important life skills, such as cutting, as they learned to use knives safely to chop vegetables. It also supported them to develop an understanding of healthy eating options.

Mealtimes were relaxed and unhurried. A rolling lunch meant children could decide when they were ready to eat. This ensured their play and learning was uninterrupted. Children were supported to self-select their food, pour drinks and tidy up when they had finished eating. Staff sat with children and chatted to them as they ate. As a result, children enjoyed a positive social experience and staff were close by to keep children safe.

Personal plans had been developed and included the views of children and families. These were reviewed and updated regularly. Staff used this information, alongside information shared informally by families at drop off and pick up time, to support children's routines. Children with specific needs had more detailed plans where relevant information about their needs was recorded. We discussed ways in which "what matters to me" information could be used effectively to gather and share information and strategies to support all children.

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Children were having fun and were actively involved in leading their play and learning. They benefitted from a skilled staff team who were responsive and planned play experiences that promoted children's choice, based on their interests.

Staff extended children's thinking through the use of effective questioning. For example, children were encouraged to think about size, shape and colour as they played with building blocks. Staff asked them, "how can we make this bigger?". They gave lots of praise and encouragement, and celebrated children's successes. This meant children were happy and developing confidence as they learned new skills.

Children's learning and progress was recorded through carefully considered observations. These were shared with children and families in learning journals, wall displays, floor books and at focus child breakfasts. Regular assessment and evaluations of children's learning supported planning approaches to promote continued success and individual achievement. As a result, children were recognised as individuals and supported to achieve their potential.

Children were supported to develop literacy and numeracy skills through every area of the setting and in meaningful conversations and interactions with staff. Children's curiosity was encouraged through the use of interesting prompts. Staff were creative at engaging children and followed children's interests to support the development of language skills. Visual prompts and objects of reference supported some children, when needed, to develop an understanding of routines. This meant children had fun as they played and made progress at a pace that was right for them.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through use of the wider community. Weekly outdoor experiences included extended periods of time spent in local woodland where children had time to play, explore and enjoy nature.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

Children and families benefitted from a welcoming environment which had been well considered with children's needs and interests in mind. The indoor playroom was spacious with lots of natural light. It was furnished to a high standard and offered children ample space to play, rest and relax.

Staff continually reflected on how children used areas within the playroom and made changes when necessary. This promoted choice, independence and provided challenge in children's play and learning, and gave children a strong message that they mattered.

Children had daily access to two large outdoor areas. The large grassy area offered opportunities for children to explore risky play using loose parts. They had worked together as they developed their creativity and problem solving skills to build an obstacle course. Children were excited to show us this and proudly demonstrated their balancing skills to move across the course. Staff shared their plans to continue developing the outdoor area to offer children exciting opportunities in both spaces. Staff recognised the positive impact being outdoors had on children's overall wellbeing. We discussed with the service ways to support free flow access to the garden throughout the session. This would further enhance children's choice and wellbeing.

Risk assessments ensured that children's safety was promoted as potential risks had been minimised. Infection prevention and control routines were embedded and supported a safe environment. The playroom was clean and ventilated throughout the day. Children were encouraged to wash their hands at key times. We suggested adult supervision of handwashing to ensure all children were supported. This would further enhance routines and ensure they were robust.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Strong and encouraging leadership supported staff to have high aspirations and confidence in their ability to support children reach their potential.

Effective policies, procedures and quality assurance processes were in place and supported the development of the service. A positive ethos and a culture of continuous improvement had been embraced and resulted in high quality outcomes and experiences for children.

The leadership team had a very good understanding that self-evaluation was the responsibility of all involved in the service. Leadership roles empowered staff to develop their skills. Regular staff meetings provided opportunities to reflect together and share important information to support children's learning and overall wellbeing. This ensured a clear and consistent approach was effectively communicated.

Children and families were at the heart of the service and their feedback was valued, respected, and listened to. They were meaningfully and actively involved in influencing change and improvements. The staff and leadership team provided opportunities for children and families to have their voices heard and were responsive to their suggestions. For example, the service had recently undertaken significant consultation to update their vision, values and aims. The views of staff, children and families had been considered and were attractively displayed at the entrance to the playroom. This promoted a sense of belonging and meant children and families felt included and valued.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

Staff knew children very well and had formed secure relationships with them. They supported children in ways which were nurturing, respectful and met their needs. A parent told us how well their child had settled through a gentle transition. They appreciated the suggestion made by staff for their child to take part in a play in the woods activity. This was out with the child's usual pattern of attendance, however, staff recognised that the experience would benefit the child.

Management effectively used the mix of experiences and skills among staff to ensure children received the responsive care they needed. Staff communicated very well with each other and worked together to ensure children were safe and engaged in quality experiences throughout the day. A member of staff told us how they felt encouraged to share their skills and good practice with other practitioners. The management team made good use of staff helpers from the wider school community. As a result, children consistently experienced high levels of care and quality engagement.

Staff breaks were carefully planned around daily activities and children's needs. During transitions, staff were well deployed to promote continuity and consistency of care. Increased levels of supervision at busier times were in place to minimise risk and ensure children were safe. This included when children left the setting for their play in the woods, during snack and lunch times, and at pick up time.

The management team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed at all times. Staff were flexible and breaks were planned to minimise the impact on children whilst making sure staff had time to rest. We suggested further consideration be given to staff breaks to ensure staff attending woodland sessions took time to rest and recharge.

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

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