

Philphaugh Community School Nursery Day Care of Children

2 Linglie Road
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 October 2024

Service provided by:
Scottish Borders Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001976

Service no:
CS2003017378

About the service

Philiphaugh Community School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 48 children not yet attending primary school at any one time and no more than 15 are aged 2 years to under 3 years.

The service is located within the primary school and close to transport links and local amenities. The children are cared for in two playrooms and they have access to a dining area, toilets and changing area. There is also a fully enclosed garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 October 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 and observed children using the service
- Contacted families and staff through Microsoft forms to gather their views
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy and confident in the setting.
- Children experienced warm, nurturing care from adults that knew them very well.
- Staff were working hard to ensure children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- The service was led by a strong leadership team who involved staff in the development of the service.
- Staff felt valued and were enthusiastic about making changes to the service to ensure they provided children with a happy and supportive environment.

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?	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?

4 - 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 experienced calm and nurturing approaches from a staff team who provided very good care and support. We could see staff demonstrated warmth, care and had built trusting attachments. This resulted in children being settled and confident within the setting.

Staff were skilled and professional in their role. They valued the importance of working closely with families and staff were building relationships to ensure children's routines, needs and preferences were met.

Staff confidently described children's individual needs and how they were supported. Staff knew the children well which meant they were able to respond to their individual needs and preferences. Care plans were completed and staff were using information to ensure strategies were in place for the children who required additional support.

Children experienced a sociable, relaxed and unhurried mealtime with their friends and staff. The service had reviewed the mealtime experience and developed a routine that was sociable and promoted choice and independence for children. Older children were taken into the dining hall where they were supported by their key worker. They had opportunities to set the table, self-serve their meals and pour their own drinks. Staff were on hand to chat to the children and provided support if required. Younger children had their lunch in the snack area within the nursery. This provided them with a more nurturing environment. Some independence and life skills were promoted and the service agreed to continue to develop these opportunities for the younger children. Children were happy and developing good meal time habits.

The service agreed to complete a procedure for storing food brought in from a child's home. This would support good food hygiene practices.

Staff had a good understanding of children's health needs. All medication was stored appropriately and boxes were clearly labelled with children's details. We discussed where further information may be needed to support children, for example, how high should a individual child's temperature be, before administering paracetamol. Medication was audited. Procedures were described if a child required a sleep and these complied with national guidance to maintain children's safety. Allergies and food preferences were displayed appropriately. This ensured children's needs were met.

Children's wellbeing was protected by a clear and concise safeguarding policy. There was a designated child protection officer and staff had received relevant child protection training. This ensured they knew how to respond to concerns about a child.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

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

Children were visibly happy, confident, and actively accessing all areas on offer. Children experienced rich play opportunities that helped develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. For example, mark making, play dough and construction gave children opportunities to work together and develop their curiosity and questioning. This meant that children were developing a range of skills.

Younger children experienced opportunities to play with each other or on their own, if they wished. They particularly enjoyed finding out about wild animals and imaginary play was developed through the home corner. As a result, children engaged in play and learning experiences that were enjoyable and relevant to them.

Effective use of questioning supported children to understand, self-regulate and extend their thinking. This supported their wellbeing and was beginning to widen children's skills and consolidate their learning. The service were keen to strengthen the emotional resilience of children and families through a nurturing approach to secure children's wellbeing, including their right to play.

Children chose to spend a lot of time playing outdoors which was facilitated well by staff. Children were developing their physical skills through building, using the push pull toys and the large mud kitchen. Pumpkins were available outside for children to "pick their own". This provided children with an opportunity that they may not have had before. Staff joined in with play and were responsive to children's interests. Staff recognised where further challenge would be beneficial and equally, where support was required. This meant staff supported children's needs, wishes and their overall wellbeing.

Leaders had introduced a new planning cycle and staff told us they had been well supported when implementing the new process. This meant children were beginning to experience play and learning opportunities that were responsive to their interests and stages of development. Planning was a mixture of intentional and responsive experiences and staff were beginning to regularly review children's progress. A further system was being implemented that would provide individual support to some children, which leaders hoped would reduce the attainment gap. The impact of this would be monitored through tracking children's progress. Leaders had reviewed children's observations and were developing staff's skills and knowledge around this. This was not yet embedded but staff were motivated and working hard to implement these changes.

Observations of children's interests and activities were shared online with families. This ensured they were able to see what children had enjoyed and celebrate their successes. Staff were encouraging parent participation through regular updates on Showbie, observations and discussions with families. Staff were beginning to use this information to plan experiences tailored to each child. These were monitored by nursery leaders to support a holistic approach.

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

Children were cared for in an environment that was bright, welcoming, clean, and well ventilated. It was furnished with natural resources which helped create a calm and relaxing environment. We observed a calm, productive and welcoming environment with all children engaged and busy. Indoor and outdoor

environments were safe and secure and the service was well maintained to support children's safety and wellbeing.

The well planned indoor and outdoor spaces provided welcoming, interesting, and exciting areas for children to explore. Staff had developed and set up play spaces that encouraged curiosity, imagination and creativity. This included arts and crafts, home corner, STEM activities, story corner, woodwork, small world and sensory play. This gave a strong message to children that they mattered.

The team continually reviewed the learning environments to ensure they were fun and exciting spaces for the children to play and learn. This was monitored by the senior leadership team through environmental audits. Leaders were supporting staff to review play spaces to ensure children experienced high quality environments to play, develop and learn.

Free flow access between the indoors and enclosed outdoor garden further supported children's abilities to lead their play and learning. Children were supported to put on their outdoor clothing. All families told us their child had the opportunity to play outdoors and a parent commented "My child loves the outdoors and the nursery doors are always open to the garden ". As a result, children's health, wellbeing and independence was being encouraged and promoted.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through connections to their own and wider communities. Visits to the local care home and planned visits from the emergency services ensured children respected and understood their local community. As a result, children were developing their sense of belonging.

Infection prevention and control practices were evident, across the setting. Children and staff were confident in good hand washing/hygiene. Staff also showed an understanding of infection prevention and control by supporting children with runny noses, messy hands and faces. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was available and utilised appropriately at the service. This meant that children were kept safe and healthy.

A secure entry system and ring doorbell helped maintain children and staff's safety. Children's information was managed by appropriate systems to protect confidentiality. Online information was password protected to comply with data protection requirements.

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 key question as very good.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The staff team were settled and leaders were committed to providing high quality outcomes for children. Staff were motivated, responsive and children benefitted from a dedicated team who were becoming confident in delivering their vision and values. The calm, welcoming and nurturing environment was created through an ethos of working together and promoting wellbeing. This meant that the staff were keen to further develop their knowledge and provide children with enjoyable opportunities in an environment that fostered a sense of belonging.

The service was led by a strong leadership team who delegated responsibility appropriately to staff and involved them in the development of the service. Very good direction was provided to the team who were focused on providing children and families with positive experiences.

The leadership team had a good understanding of the strengths of the service and what was needed for improvement. They were committed to using the views of children and families to inform the future planning and development of the service. Parents were engaging more with their child's learning through Showbie, stay and play sessions and parental engagement opportunities such as 'Pop-ins' and Information Evenings. Parents commented "Several times a year we can take part in a stay and play time and you get to see what they have been up too" and "The staff invite the parents to come and read stories and play day any time". This supported staff to deliver high quality care and support families' particular needs and choices.

A culture of self-evaluation within the team supported the improvement agenda. Staff felt involved in the process and their ideas were valued and respected. Staff told us how the management team provided a clear focus for their shared team work including setting out clear responsibilities and expectations. Staff champion roles had recently been created and staff were keen to develop these to improve outcomes for all children.

Quality assurance calendar and systems were in place, and these identified any gaps in the quality of provision. Monitoring quality of practice, observations and next steps, medication and the mealtime experience meant children were provided with a service that continued to meet their individual needs.

How good is our staff team?

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 4.3: staff deployment

We observed the routine and pace of the day was led by children. Whilst there were planned group times, we found these provided meaningful opportunities for children to have fun and check in with their key workers during their busy day at nursery.

Leaders recognised and valued the importance of ensuring that the service was well staffed at all times. Staff were proactive and flexible in their deployment throughout the day and effectively supervised children when they moved between the playrooms and outdoors. Staff worked well as a team and were attuned and responsive of each other, recognising when support may be needed. The wellbeing of staff was promoted by the leadership team. This promoted a culture of care and respect where staff felt valued. As a result, they felt part of a skilled team that promoted positive outcomes children and families.

Staff communicated well across the team and worked together to support children's individual needs and preferences. They were skilled, knowledgeable and good at reading children's cues. Staff supported children to achieve, grow and belong in their community. As a result, children felt safe, secure and nurtured through positive, trusting and responsive relationships.

Staff were proactive at anticipating when support might be needed. This created a respectful atmosphere which ensured children's experiences were positive and appropriately supported throughout the day. A parent commented "If I need help staff will be there to help to the best of their abilities". Staff were

committed to professional development and had undertaken additional training and learning. This meant that staff felt valued and empowered to grow professionally and provided children with a happy and supportive environment.

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 children are kept safe, healthy and achieving in the service. We recommend that the service further develop children's personal plans to include:

- information about children's development
- parental involvement and discussions
- information on how the service will meet any identified needs
- significant events which may give rise to an additional support need, both short term and long term.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing

This area for improvement was made on 17 October 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had care plans in place for each child. These included all relevant registration details and were regularly updated by parents/carers. Information regarding children's development was written and staff were in the process of reviewing and creating next steps for all the children. If children required additional support, staff had recorded strategies and these were reviewed as and when needed.

This recommendation is 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	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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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