

Kyle (English) Nursery Day Care of Children

Kyle Primary School
School Road
Kyle
IV40 8LG

Telephone: 01599 534 194

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 September 2024

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003013621

About the service

Kyle (English) Nursery is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 20 children at any one time between the ages of two years to those not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than five are under three years of age.

The service is provided from new purpose built premises in the grounds of Kyle (English) Primary School. There is a playroom with reception area, toilets, kitchen facilities, a separate office and storage facilities. Entry to the premises was secure and children had access to an enclosed outside play area which surrounded the building.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 September 2024 between 09:30 and 16:00 and 26 September 2024 between 08:30 and 11:45. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 six children using the service and four of their families;
- reviewed online feedback from four families;
- reviewed online feedback from two staff;
- spoke with two staff and management;
- observed practice and children's experiences; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefited from warm, caring and nurturing approaches which supported their overall wellbeing.
- Staff worked well with families to get to know the individual needs of the children.
- There were opportunities for children to develop skills in language, literacy and numeracy through their play experiences.
- Improvements to planning and observation approaches supported learning experiences to be more responsive to children's curiosities and interests.
- The indoor and outdoor environments had been structured to take account of the children's stages of development and learning.
- The service had identified the need to further develop the quality of the indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Quality assurance processes were contributing to positive outcomes for children.
- Effective staff deployment ensured that children's individual needs were met and that they experienced continuity of care.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - 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 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 warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff throughout the inspection. We observed staff sensitively listening and responding to children at appropriate times, offering comfort and reassurance when needed. This supported children to feel secure, valued and loved. Personalised transition arrangements for children joining the service ensured that they received the individualised support they needed at the right times. The views of families and children were included in this process which supported their ideas and wishes to be respected.

Staff managed minor disputes between children very well. They skilfully empowered children to think about their choices and how this impacted on their peers. This demonstrated a very 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.

Children's wellbeing was supported very well through effective personal planning. Personal plans were developed with parents and reviewed to support children's changing needs which promoted continuity and consistency in care. All families who responded to our survey strongly agreed with the statement: 'I am fully involved in my child's care, including developing and reviewing their personal plan.'. Staff spoke confidently and knowledgeably about the individual care needs of children and effectively implemented strategies to support their development and progress. As a result, children received well-planned care and support to meet their individual needs.

Staff worked in partnership with outside professionals to improve outcomes for children when they needed additional help. Appropriate strategies had been identified and put in place to support children, for example with communication and language development and emotional regulation. As a result, children were supported to reach their potential.

Snack time was a positive, relaxing, and sociable time for children where they were provided with a range of opportunities to develop their independence. For example, children helped to choose, prepare and serve the snack fruit items. They collected crockery and other items to set the table, they spread their own oatcake topping, poured their own milk and cleared away their plates and dishes. This supported children to have opportunities to take responsibility and learn key life skills. The snack area was welcoming with homely touches such as a tablecloth, flowers, real crockery and cutlery which promoted a relaxed and nurturing environment. At snack and lunchtimes, staff sat with children which provided opportunities to promote close attachments and develop their language skills. We discussed with the manager how they could further develop the lunchtime experience to offer more opportunities for children to develop their independence skills, for example serving meal accompaniments and drinks.

Systems to support the safe management and administration of medication were in place. All medication sampled was clearly labelled and stored in a safe and accessible way. Permissions and protocols for administration of medication were stored with the appropriate medicine and staff were knowledgeable about the medical needs of children. This contributed to ensuring children's needs were met and they were kept safe.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their own play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned play experiences. For example, the outdoor space was a popular area for children to play and we observed periods of sustained purposeful play where children were having fun following their interests, investigating forces with loose parts as they rolled balls along guttering. Other children were supported to explore their interest in creating towers and other structures using large building blocks. This provided opportunities for children to be creative and solve problems together which enriched their play and learning experiences.

There were opportunities for children to develop skills in language, literacy and numeracy through their play experiences. Staff shared books with children individually, or in small groups as children could choose to join in. They engaged children with fun interactions, naming items in pictures, repeating words and asking appropriate questions. Maths and numeracy concepts were modelled and reinforced to children through their play experiences and during the day to day routines. For example, we observed children being supported to count numbers of chairs and crockery items during snack and develop their understanding of measure whilst comparing heights of objects during construction activities. We spoke with the manager about ways literacy and numeracy could be embedded further within the learning environment, for example, by having wider access to mark making materials across play areas.

Planning systems had been reviewed to be more responsive to children's interests and curiosities. With a number of new children in the service, a current planning focus was encouraging children to develop positive relationships and their emotional resilience. Staff modelled and labelled emotional language for children while resolving conflicts and when encouraging children to share and think of others. As a result, children were supported to understand their emotions and develop positive relationships with their peers.

Observations of children's individual development and learning were recorded and shared with families through profile folders. Overall, observations highlighted children's learning through the early level curriculum and included some next steps for development. The service had identified the need to build staff confidence in identifying and planning next steps in learning for children to ensure they are sufficiently challenged at an appropriate level.

Opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through connections to the local community. For example, children took part in regular trips to local woodland and areas of interest within the community. The children had taken part in learning visits to the local Lifeboat, Police and Fire stations as well as visiting other shops and businesses within the area. The service had also established a link with a local supermarket which supported a variety of learning events within the nursery. As a result, children were enabled to develop their understanding of the wider community and sense of place.

How good is our setting?

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 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The nursery playroom was clean, bright and comfortable with plenty of natural light and ventilation. This provided a welcoming environment for both children and families. The nursery layout enabled children to access resources independently and provided ample space for exploration and play.

The indoor and outdoor environments were structured to take account of children's stages of development with appropriate resources and materials which reflected their curiosities and interests. The continuous provision indoors had been considered to include some open ended and natural resources, enabling children to explore opportunities which promoted their curiosity and imagination. We observed children following their own interests in the home corner using open ended objects to make imaginary food and be creative. Children's individual interests had also been considered within the environment with one child's interest in sand, water and transport toys reflected in the resources and objects available for them to play with. This supported children to feel engaged and included in the nursery space. The service had identified the need to review and improve the learning environment further to ensure areas for play are purposeful and inviting for children with provocations to support their development.

Systems were in place to help keep children's safe. Secure entry systems and risk assessments helped staff to mitigate risks and enhanced children's safety. Children were supported in developing their skills and awareness of staying safe through well supported risk benefit play, for example, during physical play opportunities outdoors. This ensured that the environment was safe for the children attending.

Children benefited from free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor area. This enabled children to have choice, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy. Children had access to a range of loose parts including: cable drums, plastic pipes, large building bricks and balls which they used to support imaginative play experiences. In the school playground, there were opportunities for children to take part in more physical play experiences. Areas to climb, run and explore provided opportunities for children to have fun and develop their movement and coordination skills.

There were infection prevention and control procedures in place which supported a safe environment. For example, the service was clean and well maintained. During food preparation and serving, staff followed best practice guidance and carried out effective cleaning of tables before and after snack. We observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene and hand washing at necessary times. This contributed to minimising risks of infection for both the staff team and children.

How good is our leadership?**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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Staff worked together to create a caring, supportive and inclusive ethos within the service. The vision and values were reflective of the positive relationships developed between staff members, children, their families and the wider community. One parent reported a strength of the service as: "The relationship my child has with the staff and their help in building positive relationships between the children."

The views of families were actively sought to support the development of the service. Through surveys, stay and play sessions and informally at drop off and pick up times, families have had the opportunity to contribute their ideas towards changes. For example, families have participated in the development of the vision, values and aims and supported developments within the outdoor play area. All families agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: 'My child and I are involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service'. Some commented: "We have started coming in on a Friday and doing gardening with the nursery." and "I am invited into the nursery setting regularly and I am shown and asked to contribute to floor books and my child's folder.". We found this promoted inclusion and allowed families regular opportunities to be involved and contribute towards change. We signposted the Care Inspectorate practice note 'Me, my family and my childcare setting: A practice note for building stronger connections and meaningful relationships' to support the service with their ongoing development of family engagement opportunities.

Quality assurance processes were in place to ensure aspects of the service were routinely monitored. An improvement plan for this session had been created which identified key areas for change which included developing tracking and monitoring of children's learning as well as improving the provision within the learning environment. Aspects of monitoring were taking place which were supporting the identification of areas for development. For example, monitoring of planning and assessment approaches supported staff to develop the quality of observations. Further work was planned to improve staff confidence to plan developmentally appropriate next steps for individual children. The improvements to planning approaches were supporting staff to provide more responsive learning experiences to meet children's needs. This supported a culture of reflective practice and continuous improvement and promoted positive outcomes for children.

Regular staff meetings and visits to nursery from the manager were supporting effective self-evaluation. The service had used best practice guidance to implement changes and review aspects of provision together which had included implementing refreshed approaches to planning children's learning. The staff team worked well together, and staff welcomed feedback and suggestions for improvement. Staff were encouraged to be part of the service development, contribute ideas and reflect on their practice together. This demonstrated the commitment of staff to the ongoing development of the service and improving outcomes for children.

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

The staff were caring and nurturing and committed to providing a positive experience for all children. They were warm and friendly in their approach, which promoted a happy and inclusive environment where children could play and have fun. When providing feedback for our survey, families responded very positively about the communication from the service, the approachability and helpful manner of the staff team as well as the quality experiences they felt their children were receiving. Parents commented positively on the staff team and told us: "The staff are welcoming, knowledgeable and friendly and know my child very well.", "We trust them as much with our child as we would family." and "I am very appreciative of the staff involved in the nursery and believe that my child is lucky to be attending this setting. My child is developing into a confident, happy, inquisitive learner and the staff in the nursery are doing a fantastic job of helping to support them.". This supported children and families to feel valued and respected.

Staff worked well together as a team and brought a range of skills and experience to the service to meet children's needs. They told us of training they had attended, shared experiences of learning visits to other services and were knowledgeable around best practice guidance and documents. They confidently told us how they used their experiences and knowledge in their practice to improve outcomes for children. For example, visits to neighbouring services had provided staff with ideas to develop the snack time experiences. As a result, changes were implemented and opportunities for children's independence and choice were improved at these times.

Arrangements for unplanned absence were supported by effective systems to ensure children's needs were met. For example, the service tried to use members of supply staff known to the children to ensure consistency in care and minimise disruption to children's routines. Clear personal plans and other key information was available to all staff. This ensured that staff working in the service understood the needs of individual children and how to support them.

The service was appropriately staffed to meet adult-child ratios and the staff team worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day. For example, the staff team communicated well when a task took them away from a specific area or the needs of children changed. 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.

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

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 15 August 2023, the provider must ensure that children experience care in an appropriate and safe environment. At a minimum, the provider must ensure that the outdoor play areas used are safe and secure

This is in order to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

This requirement was made on 18 May 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Children experienced care in a safe and secure environment. Large planters had been installed to create a boundary within the play space at the rear of the building to prevent children from falling down a steep grassy slope.

Since the last inspection, a new piece of fencing had been erected which attached to the boundary wall between the nursery and the school. This ensured that the entire nursery boundary was enclosed with secure fencing.

Daily checks of the outdoor space included a check of the physical space to ensure equipment was in good working order and all areas were safe. Staff were confident of the procedure to follow to report any areas of concern or damage within the outdoor space. This helped to keep children safe.

Met - outwith timescales

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 support children to achieve, the service should improve the approach and skills of staff in relation to planning for children's learning and tracking and monitoring their progress. Staff should be supported to

develop their understanding of how to effectively observe and assess children's learning in order to plan quality learning experiences and meaningful next steps.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).

This area for improvement was made on 18 May 2023.

Action taken since then

Processes of tracking and monitoring children's progress within the nursery had been developed. Staff had received training and ongoing support to improve approaches to observation, planning and assessment within the service. They have used best practice guidance to inform planning approaches for all children including, two years olds. One staff member commented: "We use responsive planning to ensure that we are following the children's lead and interests in their learning. We also use the curriculum for excellence and the benchmarks to help with our planning as well as using realising the ambition."

Observations of children's learning were being regularly monitored by the management team and staff had been provided with constructive feedback on how to improve these. As a result, staff were better able to recognise and plan for children's learning. The service had identified the need for further improvements to develop the tracking and monitoring for individual children and were in the process of implementing these changes with support from the local authority early years team.

This area for improvement has 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	5 - Very Good
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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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