

Newark Nursery Day Care of Children

Newark Primary School
Bridgend Avenue
Port Glasgow
PA14 5SU

Telephone: 01475 715 602

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 October 2024

Service provided by:
Inverclyde Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000212

Service no:
CS2008171662

About the service

Newark Nursery is a day care of children service situated in the residential area of Port Glasgow. The service is provided by Inverclyde Council.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 80 children aged 3 years and over and not yet attending primary school. At the time of our inspection, 62 children were registered with the service; 55 children attended the service on the first day of the inspection and 53 on the second day.

The service operates from premises within the Newark Primary School grounds. Children have access to an entrance area, a large playroom, a quiet room, toilets, enclosed gardens, school gym hall, and lunch hall. The service is close to transport routes and other local amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 8 October 2024 between 9:15 and 17:30, and 9 October 2024 between 8:35 and 15:00. Two inspectors carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received twenty completed questionnaires
- spoke with seven parents and carers
- spoke with staff and leadership team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children and families benefitted from exceptional care and unwavering support from warm, caring, nurturing staff who knew their needs well.
- Children's rights were fully respected across the nursery, creating a highly supportive environment where they felt valued and secure, contributing to their overall wellbeing.
- Children thrived in a warm, nurturing nursery that fostered feelings of love and safety.
- Staff had developed meaningful relationships with each other, families, and children.
- Excellent parental engagement was benefitting children and families.
- Children experienced high-quality mealtimes.
- Children benefitted from access to a wide range of stimulating resources and a well-furnished homely environment.
- Children were engaged in meaningful play and effectively supported and challenged by staff.
- The service had a robust positive ethos where the vision, values and aims were celebrated and encouraged.

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 evaluated different parts of this key question as very good and excellent, with an overall grade of very good. Significant strengths in aspects of care provided were sector leading, with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced exceptional care and support from highly motivated staff who knew them very well. This was based on developing solid, supportive relationships with the whole family. For example, secure partnerships were established with families before their child began their journey at the nursery. This fostered valuable and meaningful involvement from parents in planning for children's care and helped overcome barriers to children's learning and development. This supported strong relationships and effective communication, which helped children feel loved and secure.

Parents felt highly respected and included in the service. They expressed extreme gratitude and shared individual stories about how staff had supported them through significant life events that had impacted them and their child. This included providing support tailored to their individual needs and strengths, supporting family wellbeing and connections that mattered to the child. One parent commented, "The staff are amazing, easy to talk to and a good support to me and my child". Another said, "Staff always have time to talk about any worries or anything going on at home that could effect the children during the day". As a result, children's emotional wellbeing was fully nurtured, giving families a sense of reassurance and confidence in the quality of the service provided.

The service played a pivotal role in developing a community where children and families felt valued and supported. One example of this was ensuring children and families had access to fresh, affordable food, and support to prepare nutritious meals through Inverclyde Council's 'Thrive under 5' project. This helped children develop healthier lifestyles.

Mealtimes at the nursery were unhurried and relaxed, creating a warm social atmosphere for children. Staff supported this by sitting with them, engaging in conversations, and providing support to ensure their safety. Children could choose from two nutritional menu options or bring a packed lunch from home. Children were also gently encouraged to explore foods they hadn't tried before, empowering them to explore new flavours and make mindful meal choices.

Parents were supported to develop their overall wellbeing and employment prospects through innovative projects. For example, 'Home Start' volunteers shared their experiences in parenting, offering practical and emotional support. In addition, parents were able to learn new cooking skills, and they took part in paediatric first aid training. This empowered parents to develop their existing skills, supporting positive outcomes for children.

Children's health and wellbeing was fully supported through robust management of medication. Prior to starting at the service, the headteacher met with families to gather information about their child's medical needs. This led to the creation of a personalised emergency plan if needed. This attention to detail and individualised approach ensured that staff fully understood children's health needs. As a result, parents felt secure and confident in the care provided.

Children were given the opportunity to express their emotions and feelings and have their voices heard in discussions about their wellbeing, learning, and development. For instance, one-on-one conversations and small group activities, where they joined in enthusiastically and learned about familiar and traditional stories to support social and emotional situations. This thoughtful approach fostered warm and nurturing interactions with staff who offered praise, attention, and reassurance. As a result, children felt valued and understood, helping to build strong, positive relationships.

Children were kept safe through sector leading wellbeing support measures and safeguarding procedures. Children's voices were clearly valued and placed at the centre of keeping them safe. When needed, their views were captured in a 'Nurturing Me' plan and 'Ecomap', a visual assessment tool where information was gathered to assess their wellbeing and the meaningful relationships in the child's life. This helped staff gain the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure the protection of children under their care and a safe environment for children.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children actively led their play through a balance of spontaneous and planned high-quality learning experiences. Experiences promoted independence, choice, and creativity. For instance, children enjoyed playing in the building area and at the LEGO table, where they created various structures using the available materials. They used their imagination to set up an ice cream shop outside with the large blocks and re-enacted real-life situations in the home corner, preparing pretend meals for their friends, staff, and visiting inspectors. This helped children use transferable skills and make connections in their play and learning.

Children had many opportunities to develop their language, literacy, and numeracy skills throughout their play, and staff naturally encouraged this in their interactions. It was evident that children were having fun while playing, and their experiences positively impacted their learning.

Staff were knowledgeable about child development and how children's learning builds over time. They worked skilfully with children within the learning environment to ensure that activities were based on children's knowledge, skills, and interests. Staff used effective questioning to extend children's learning and thinking and carefully adapted the environment to meet the needs of all children. This ensured an inclusive approach and instilled confidence in the nursery's ability to meet the needs of all children.

The Dinky Diggers community programme's stay and play drop-in sessions for preschool children in the local community were more than play opportunities. They were a chance for children and families to come together, play, and learn about the great outdoors through experiences such as planting, cooking using the fire pit, and creativity using loose parts materials. This strong community link was extended during the nursery stay and play sessions, which helped children revisit their learning and develop life skills.

Staff used learning journals to record and track children's skills, informing their next steps in learning. These journals were shared with families, ensuring they were fully informed and involved in their children's learning journey. The newly formed Inverclyde Council's early learning trackers should further support staff in assessing children's progress and targeted intervention, strengthening play resources and the environment.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of 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 a clean, bright, welcoming, and well-ventilated environment. The service was well maintained, and careful consideration was given to resources and furniture. Almost all play areas had comfortable furniture for children to relax, rest, and observe play. This created an inviting and homely atmosphere and gave a strong message to children that they mattered.

Children were given the freedom to explore and learn at their own pace, with access to a range of activities and experiences. Play materials were carefully chosen to meet children's needs and stages of development, encouraging their natural curiosity and interests. These included blocks, sensory materials, and a well-resourced creative area. As a result, children were happy and having fun taking part in experiences that stimulated their learning and enhanced their development.

Children had free flow access to the outdoor space, which enabled them to direct their own play and be independent. One parent commented, "Children have the opportunity to actively play outside at their own will. Children can ride bikes there, invent active games that are impossible inside". Another said, "Wide range of learning experiences from wild life to general exercise. The resources are always out and ready for the day. Bird watching is something that my wee one loves there are activities for this". This provided children with interesting, exciting spaces with different surfaces and resources to practise key skills and learn about nature.

Staff had a sound understanding of risk in children's play. Robust assessments were regularly reviewed and updated to minimise potential risks for children, families, and staff. This dedication to safety indicated the nursery's continuous improvement and commitment to the wellbeing of all involved.

Overall, well-considered infection prevention and control procedures were embedded in practice. For example, children were well supported with handwashing at key times, such as before lunch and after visiting the toilet, and the environment was clean. This meant children were safe from the potential spread of infection.

Robust systems for managing accidents and incidents ensured the health and wellbeing of children. Information was promptly shared with children's families, and first aid was administered when needed. Regular audits further demonstrated the nursery's proactive approach, which helped to identify any common or recurring concerns and take appropriate action to ensure children's safety.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of 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 leadership team was welcoming, approachable, and engaged well during the inspection. This engagement contributed to the positive ethos and culture of continuous improvement. In addition, their passionate, committed, inspired and motivated approach helped guide staff and achieve the best possible

outcomes for children and their families.

The nursery's vision, values, and aims were clear and deeply ingrained in its daily practices. This alignment was centred on every child's human rights and needs and reflected in the respectful relationships between staff, children, and families. The nursery's commitment to creating a safe and happy environment instilled family confidence in the care and support provided.

An improvement plan had been created, and the agreed upon priorities were outcome-focused for children and families. Children and families were actively involved in developing the service through regular conversations and completing questionnaires, ensuring they were meaningfully involved and influenced change within the service.

Quality assurance systems, including peer monitoring and assessment, were in place. Staff regularly evaluated children's learning opportunities and resources, demonstrating their commitment to continuous improvement and ensuring a high-quality service.

Regular meetings allowed staff to discuss successes and achievements, children's needs or next steps in learning, and reflect on their practice. This resulted in a positive ethos across the team and nursery, which supported children in reaching their full potential.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of 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

Staff demonstrated a deep understanding of the children and had established secure relationships with them. This knowledge allowed staff to know where and when support might be needed to meet children's needs, safety and engagement in quality experiences. Staff supported children during one-on-one activities and focused group times, where they came down to the children's level and joined in with their discussions and play. This level of care and attention ensured children felt safe, secure, and happy in the service.

The leadership team's strategic approach, which involved thoughtful planning, to staff breaks minimised disruption for the children while allowing staff time to rest and recharge. This approach ensured all staff were present during children's lunchtime, maintaining safety and fostering meaningful interactions between staff and children.

Staff worked closely with children's families, building resilience and identifying and supporting children who required additional support. They had carefully considered individualised plans for children to ensure appropriate, proportionate, and timely support, including specialist input where needed. This approach instilled confidence in the staff, knowing they had the necessary skills to promote children's holistic development.

Staff told us that effective teamwork, which involved regular communication, shared responsibilities, and mutual respect, was a key strength of the service. This created a respectful atmosphere that ensured children's experiences were high-quality, positive, and appropriately supported throughout the day. One parent commented, "All staff are so friendly and caring". Another said, "All very approachable, and I feel I have a great connection with them all, and it makes it even better as my son loves all the staff".

Staff had the opportunity to lead parenting programmes, such as Dinky Diggers, cooking and Zumbini classes for children and their families. These opportunities supported solid and caring relationships and the quality of the service provided. This promoted high staff morale and a happy and motivated team fully invested in providing the best care.

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

Management should ensure that each child using the service has a personal plan, which sets out how their health, safety and welfare needs are to be met. This should be done after consultation with the parent, and where possible the child. This should be in place with 28 days of the child starting the service and reviewed at least once in every six month period.

In line with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, No 210 (5).

This area for improvement was made on 12 October 2017.

Action taken since then

Children's health, wellbeing, and development were recorded in 'All About Me', 'More About Me', and personal learning plans and were linked to the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators. These working documents were regularly reviewed with families, ensuring a shared approach. This practice made families feel valued and integral to their children's care, fostering a strong partnership and trust in the service and staff practices.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

Management should ensure children have daily access to a stimulating outdoor environment.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to age 16. Standard 5.1: Quality of experience.

This area for improvement was made on 12 October 2017.

Action taken since then

Throughout their sessions, the children had free-flow access to the outdoor learning environment, where they could participate in many stimulating outdoor experiences. This supported children's choice of when and where to play, learn about the great outdoors, and follow and extend their interests.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
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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