

Hillview Nursery Day Care of Children

Hillview Community Centre
13 Cultenhove Place
St. Ninians
Stirling
FK7 9DU

Telephone: 01786 446 283

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 November 2024

Service provided by:
Stirling Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003015590

About the service

Hillview nursery is a day care of children service registered to provide care for a maximum of 36 children at any one time.

The service is provided from within part of a community centre within the Cultenhove area of Stirling. The building consists of two large playrooms, children up to the age of two have access to a separate sleeping area. There are toilet and changing facilities, office spaces and a staff room. There is a fully enclosed outdoor learning environment for the children to access throughout their nursery session.

Hillview nursery is in partnership with Stirling Council to provide ante and pre-school funded places.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 and 6 November 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
- spoke with three parents and received written feedback from four families
- spoke with staff and received written feedback from 13 staff members
- spoke with the senior management team
- observed practice and children's routines and experiences
- reviewed documents and spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

Children benefitted from a committed staff team who were passionate about providing high-quality care and support to help children flourish and thrive.

Families held the staff team in high regard and valued the service with which they were provided.

Leaders embedded a strong sense of commitment to continuous improvement. They were well organised, visible, and supportive of staff. Children, their families, and staff were meaningfully involved as key partners in the service as their views were respected and valued.

Children's right to play were valued and fully supported through exciting and interesting experiences.

A real strength of the service was their positive relationships within the communities they had created to support families to flourish and thrive.

Staff worked very well together they were compassionate, friendly, and motivated. It was evident they had children's best interests and wellbeing at the heart of their work.

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 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 warm and nurturing care and support from staff, and it was evident loving, and respectful relationships had been formed with the children. We found children were happy and settled, as staff effectively and sensitively responded to their needs and requests. A strong focus on promoting children's emotional resilience resulted in children who were confident in what to do if they felt sad or upset. Staff managed minor disputes with calm and supportive interactions and skilfully empowered children to think about their choices and how this impacted on their peers. These approaches resulted in children that felt loved, secure and had formed trusting relationships with both staff and their friends.

Staff understood the value and benefits of working alongside families to ensure children received care and support that was of a very high quality. Their holistic approach included home visits with their child's new keyworker prior to starting at the nursery. This meant introductions were made in a familiar environment which contributed to smooth and nurturing transitions and empowered families to be central to their child's personal planning. Children that experienced challenges were very well supported by staff that demonstrated a commitment to working with other professionals. Early intervention, support strategies and on-going assessment meant all children were included and receiving care that was compassionate, consistent and supported them to flourish and thrive. One parent told us, 'I really value the relationships I've made with staff, they go above and beyond, they know my child and me very well, it's a small community.'

Children experienced mealtimes that were unhurried, relaxed, and sociable. Staff sat with children and engaged them in rich conversations around healthy foods which helped promote their language and social skills. Older children were provided with a wealth of opportunities to be independent and responsible, such as self-serving, pouring their own drinks and clearing away their plates and cutlery when they had finished their meal. We asked that younger children were offered more of these opportunities to further develop their life skills. Staff were responsive to our suggestions and had enhanced these opportunities by our second visit. Allergies and dietary requirements were well managed, and staff were knowledgeable on how to respond to a choking episode which contributed to keeping children safe and healthy.

Children's rights were sensitively respected as staff asked children if they were ready to have their nappy changed. Experiences were nurturing and respected children's dignity as staff talked children through their personal care routines which promoted their health and wellbeing. We asked the manager to monitor and review the nappy changing procedure as part of their quality assurance process to ensure all staff had a clear understanding of current best practice.

Medication was stored safely, and paperwork enabled staff to understand children's health conditions. Some information on the use of an inhaler required to be updated and a medication protocol was missing from the medication folder. We asked staff to ensure their auditing systems take this into account which would further support staff to provide children with safe and effective treatment.

Staff were confident in the process should they have a concern about a child's welfare and effective procedures were in place to safeguard children. This contributed to keeping children safe and protected.

Quality indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Staff provided children with a range of play experiences that were responsive to their views and ideas which meant children were fully engaged in fun and exciting experiences that captured their interests in a meaningful way. They used a range of responsive and intentional planning which was child centred and empowered children to make choices and lead their own play and learning.

Older children benefitted from a wealth of loose parts, natural and real-life experiences which were attractively represented and supported them very well to be busy, creative, and inspired their imagination's. Younger children were offered a wide range of sensory, messy, and creative play experiences which captured their curiosities and provided them with a sense of wonder. These core provisions of high-quality resources were complimented by staff that were skilled in effective questioning. Staff successfully scaffolded children's learning and widened their skills by enabling them to think and problem solve independently. We found this approach was naturally woven into conversations, embedded in practice and supported children very well to reach their full potential. As a result, children were happy, confident, and eager to learn, and progressing well.

Children engaged very well with experiences and activities provided to support early language, literacy, and numeracy skills. Adults spontaneously sang, read stories, and played games with children. Mark making opportunities were available in areas of play and we observed children writing on sticky notes and laughing as they stuck them on their jumpers. There was a strong focus on numeracy and staff naturally incorporated learning into play experiences. For example, during a fruit cutting activity an adult said, 'Look you've cut it in half, how many bits do you have now?' All children benefited from opportunities for literacy and numeracy which were embedded into children's play and within their environments.

Children's experiences, successes and achievements were shared with families on a digital platform. We found observations and next steps in learning were of high quality, individual and focused on development & learning. Monitoring and tracking of children's development was very well managed.

The Equity and Excellence Lead within the service demonstrated a clear understanding of their role in supporting children to meet their developmental milestones and making their transition to primary school. They provided valued support to staff, as they worked collectively together to identify gaps in learning and adapted and planned activities and experiences which supported children to thrive. As a result, children were progressing well.

Community links and family learning was a real strength of the service. For example, children their friends and family were able to enjoy the nursery garden at the weekends. The service had recently been awarded their silver status for rights respecting schools. Families were invited into the service to participate in book bug, big bedtime read, make, and taste sessions and nurture cuppa chats. These approaches supported effective communication and helped build positive relationships. We encouraged the service to invite families back into their children's playrooms on a daily basis and signposted best practice guidance, 'Me, My Family and My Childcare Setting' to assist them with this.

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

The setting provided children with spaces that were very warm, welcoming, and inviting. Soft lightening, interesting ceiling mobiles and natural décor and furniture created warmth. High-quality resources promoted children's investigation, curiosity, enquiry, and imagination skills. We found children had a sense of ownership within both playrooms, there was ample space to meet their needs and for them to comfortably play and learn. Children were able to select resources at ease and make decisions on how resources could be used. Spaces provided children opportunities to play on their own or in larger groups and had been created to support children's wellbeing. For example, children were offered opportunities to rest, relax and play in a calm, quiet areas. A cosy nook under the stairs at the entrance of the nursery had thoughtfully been created with soft furnishings and books which enabled children time to settle into their routines if needed. A parent told us, 'It's such a home from home environment.'

The nursery garden was a large, open space, shared by both age groups and resourced to provide children with fun, and interesting experiences. Children could experience physical play and explore nature. There were areas for mark-making, music, role play, and messy play. Some small slopes, trees and a larger loose parts area offered children opportunities for more challenging activities. Younger children did not experience free flow to the nursery garden due to the layout of the building, however, it was managed very well. We could see all children enjoyed being in the garden with their friends and playing with their siblings. We found staff were very aware of the risks around children potentially leaving the setting and had measures in place to prevent this. For example, a low gate from the garden leading onto a public path had been secured and the service were collaborating with the provider to have it replaced to ensure children's safety.

Daily checks of the environment were carried out by staff prior to children's arrival which supported them to identify and action any issues if required. Staff used radios to communicate if they needed assistance from other staff members. We saw staff effectively used a risk benefit approach with children and had implemented wellbeing buddies to support children to think about their choices. Staff and children had a good understanding of our SIMOA (safety, inspect, monitor, observe, act) keeping children safe campaign and confidently discussed how this had supported them to account for children at all times. Children told us, 'SIMOA keeps us safe' and 'The ladies love us, they give us cuddles.' These approaches contributed to children feeling secure and developed their awareness of keeping themselves and others safe.

Staff had a good understanding of infection prevention and control practices. For example, hand washing routines were embedded in practice and the service was tidy, well organised, and clean. We highlighted to staff a toilet door that was left open and faced out onto an area where children were eating. The service was responsive to our suggestions and had rearranged this area before our second visit, which ensured children were kept safe and healthy.

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.

3.1. Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The senior management team were passionate, visible, and committed. They had formed positive working relationships, and their strong leadership supported staff to have high aspirations and confidence in their capacity to support children and families in reaching their full potential.

Planning for improvement reflected current priorities within the setting, they were clear, realistic, and achievable and underpinned by local and national guidance and legislative frameworks. Clear points of action, responsibilities and timescales ensured positive change was made and improvements were sustained. Self-evaluation and robust quality assurance processes enabled the staff to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards the needs of their children and families. This collaborative approach contributed to the positive ethos and resulted in a happy, secure, and supportive environment for children and families.

The senior management team had successfully embedded a strong sense of commitment to continuous improvement. They ensured children, families and staff were fully involved in the development of the service which promoted a shared vision and responsibility to improving outcomes. Leadership at all levels was celebrated and valued. Staff had undertaken a variety of roles and responsibilities which recognised their individual strengths and interests in certain areas of practice. Staff reflected well together and confidently told us of how training had improved their practice and outcomes for children and families. We asked the senior management team to consider how their learning could be shared more widely within the staff team.

The senior management team and staff engaged well with us during the inspection and were responsive to any suggestions we made to support positive outcomes. Most of which had been identified through their own robust self-evaluation and quality assurance processes and were part of their ongoing improvement work. We found they were well placed to achieve their ongoing improvement priorities to ensure children and families continue to experience care, play and learning that is of a very high quality.

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

Staff were warm, friendly, and committed. Morale was high, they were happy in their roles and felt very well supported by each other and the senior management team. Staff told us they felt listened too and their views were valued. This contributed to the strong team working ethos we observed and staff that fully identified with the service. A staff member told us, 'I believe that Hillview nursery is like a home away from home and because of this we have great lasting relationships with families past and present.'

The staff team had a very good mix of skills and knowledge. They had a good understanding of current guidance and how they used this to enhance children's experiences. Staff were well-trained, experienced, and respected each other which resulted in a well-established team. Families held the staff team in high regard and valued the service with which they were provided. their comments included 'Staff help and listen in any way they can' and 'Very enthusiastic and positive staff.'

Staff communicated well with one another and deployed themselves effectively across play spaces. This minimised disruption to children's routines throughout the inspection. Staff worked together to support each other and used radios to ensure all children were accounted for and that their needs were being met. Breaks were managed well with key staff supporting children at busier times of the day while enabling colleagues time to eat and rest. Effective staff deployment ensured children were always well supervised and supported appropriately.

Staff members new to the team were provided with a robust induction which gave them confidence within their roles and responsibilities. They were complimentary of the leadership team and other staff members whom they found approachable and supportive which ensured they felt part of the established staff team.

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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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