

# Duncan Forbes Primary ELC Day Care of Children

Duncan Forbes Primary School  
Keppoch Road  
Culloden  
Inverness  
IV2 7NY

Telephone: 01463 791 897

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
14 November 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Highland Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001693

**Service no:**  
CS2003013535

## About the service

Duncan Forbes Primary School Nursery is operated by The Highland Council. Duncan Forbes Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a day care service to a maximum of 89 children at any one time, of those 89 no more than 64 are aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school and no more than 25 are attending primary school.

The nursery is located beside Duncan Forbes Primary School in Inverness. It has its own separate entrance. The accommodation is within two main rooms with direct access to a spacious outdoor play area. The outdoor play area contains a range of loose parts and open ended resources which extend and enrich the children's imaginative play and learning experiences.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection visit which took place on 13 and 14 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 children using the service;
- spoke to parents and reviewed email communication from parents and carers;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children benefited from warm and nurturing care from the staff team.
- Staff knew children well and had developed positive relationships with them.
- Children were happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Children enjoyed a lovely calming mealtime experience.
- Effective quality assurance and self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service.
- The views of children and families were actively sought to inform the development of the service.
- Effective staff deployment supported positive outcomes for children.

## 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?	4 - 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, nurturing and caring approaches from staff which supported their overall wellbeing. Children were given praise, reassurance and physical comfort when they needed it and this supported them to feel settled and secure. Parents commented: "staff are very easy to communicate with, very friendly and informative". "Everyone is really lovely and I feel they genuinely love working with kids". "The staff are friendly and care about the kids and how they feel".

Children's wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning which was reviewed regularly with families. Staff spoke confidently and knowledgeably about the care needs of children and implemented strategies to support them. Personal planning documentation contained relevant information and strategies which staff used to support the development needs of children.

Staff and management worked in partnership with outside professionals to improve outcomes for children when they needed additional help. For example, after liaising with speech and language therapy and the local health visitor, appropriate strategies had been identified and put in place to support children with communication and language development. As a result, children were supported to reach their potential.

Snack and lunch times were positive, relaxing and sociable times for children where they were provided with a range of opportunities to develop their independence. For example, children experienced a strong sense of pride as they helped to organise and serve the snack. They prepared fruit items, poured their own milk and water and cleared away their own plates and dishes. As a result, children had opportunities to take responsibility and learn key life skills. At snack and lunchtimes, staff sat with children, which provided opportunities to promote close attachments and develop their social skills. Food choices were healthy and nutritious, family requests for specific food items at lunchtime were accommodated and children had access to fresh water throughout the day to support hydration. This supported children to be nurtured through their daily experiences.

Children were kept safe and well. Medication was stored securely and administered in line with best practice. Medication consent forms were in place and were detailed to ensure staff had all the required information to maintain children's health and wellbeing.

Management and staff were clear about their roles in keeping children safe. Information was displayed at the entrance to the service, ensuring all adults were aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and who to contact should they have any concerns. Staff understood their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and protected from harm. They could confidently tell us how they would respond if they had any child protection concerns.

### **Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.**

Overall, children were engaged and observed to be busy and happy in their play. They had opportunities to lead their own play which supported them to develop their confidence and sense of wellbeing. They were able to choose from a range of real life and natural resources which supported their imagination and curiosity

Literacy and numeracy opportunities were incorporated into most areas of play within the nursery environment. Children's knowledge, understanding and skills in literacy and language were supported in a number of ways. Children had the opportunity to develop their language and literacy skills as they sat in the cosy corner sharing books with staff, painting in the outdoor area and singing nursery rhymes with their friends and staff before lunch. Staff used strategies with the youngest children, such as repeating words and using eye contact to help develop spoken language. This experience contributed to children understanding the importance of recognising and reproducing words, which also builds children's vocabulary and communication skills.

Planning approaches were child centred and based on their interests. Observations of children's play and learning identified progression and highlighted areas where children needed supported or challenged. This meant that children were developing a broad range of lifelong skills through their play. Families also had opportunities to contribute to planning for their children's development and learning which supported them to be active partners in the planning process.

Connections within the community enhanced children's experiences, for example, children went to visit their local church hall, and lots of visitors such as the local community coming to visit for a tea party as well as the local police and paramedic. Staff highlighted how beneficial these were and children really enjoyed their time within their community.

## 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

Children experienced a welcoming and homely nursery with plenty of natural light and good ventilation. It was a clean, tidy and well-maintained space for children to play, learn and relax in.

The playrooms were decorated in a neutral colour with children's artwork displayed on the walls which therefore promoted a natural environment. The playrooms were laid out with chairs and tables for children to sit for snack/and do activities they wished to participate in. We identified further scope to develop the indoor environment and the layout of the playrooms. We suggested that more cosy areas in each room would be an advantage to provide more space for children to rest and relax and it would be beneficial to have more effective resources to take into account children's needs and preferences. Management have agreed to address this.

Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with good opportunities to be outside. Children told us that they enjoyed playing outside which promoted physical energetic play to keep them active and healthy. The large outdoor areas offered a wealth of play and learning opportunities. Children's health and wellbeing was supported as they all had free flow access to the outdoors for fresh air and exercise. Children were very engaged in their play outdoors which provided rich and exciting opportunities for investigation, curiosity, and imaginary play. The garden provided a range of spaces for development of physical skills and exploration. The children had access to a variety of engaging and challenging resources and activities, for example, open-ended and natural resources, mud kitchen, messy area and trikes. We saw nice interactions between staff and children, with staff responsive to the individual needs of each child, for example, children were happily engaged in the water play in the garden as well as

walking along planks of loose parts. This experience provided opportunities to promote mathematical thinking, imagination and creativity.

Staff effectively supported children to identify and minimise risk whilst in the outdoor nursery. Staff and children used the Care Inspectorates 'Keeping children safe - look, think, act' (SIMOA campaign) to keep children safe by raising awareness of how, and why, they could leave a childcare setting without a responsible adult. Children had been involved in checking the outdoor area for potential risks and to ensure the nursery gates were locked at all times. This was clearly seen on the children's floor books where one child commented "we need to lock our doors so strangers don't come in, we don't ever run off, we need to stay safe". This helped keep children safe and secure in the service.

Infection prevention control procedures followed best practice guidance. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack and mealtimes. The setting was kept clean and tidy which contributed to reducing the potential spread of infection.

To ensure confidentiality, systems were in place to ensure children's personal information was stored appropriately within the service and electronic information was managed in line with general 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 vision, values and aims of the service were shared in a joined up approach with parents and carers in the local community. The service values were clearly underpinned by children to be 'achieving, happy and safe'. This was clearly highlighted throughout the nursery and after school club. Parents who gave us feedback either strongly agreed, or agreed that they were meaningfully involved in developing the setting. These visions and values positively informed practice within the service.

Robust quality assurance process had been put in place by the management team. They used best practice guidance such as "A quality framework for Daycare of Children, Childminding and School-aged Children" to evaluate the service they provided. Staff routinely evaluated their practice during team meetings, with a focus on reflection and improvement. This had resulted in children experiencing improved outcomes across the setting. We discussed with the management team the importance of reviewing key areas regularly to ensure sustained improvements.

Children and families views were actively sought to inform the development of the setting. Successes and achievements were shared with children, families and partners and were used as a starting point for future improvements. Strong leadership supported staff to have high aspirations and confidence in their capacity to support children and families in reaching their full potential. This contributed to the positive atmosphere that had been created. Parents commented: "we always get asked our opinions". "We always get asked what can be done to improve the service depending on our children's needs". This meant that the management team and staff were able to tailor the service provided to meet children and families' needs and wishes.

Staff told us they felt very well supported by their manager, and the senior early years practitioner who had recently been appointed. This strong leadership led to staff feeling empowered and confident to make changes within a continuous cycle of improvement. This meant that children received consistent, high quality care and support.

## 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 team's skilled interactions and respectful approach meant that children received compassionate and responsive care. As a result, children were confident on being supported by staff to gain confidence in the environment.

Staff knew children well and secure relationships between them had been established. We witnessed children being supported by staff in ways which were appropriate to meet their needs. This meant that children felt safe, secure and happy in a service where a caring staff team nurtured and supported them. Busier times of the day, such as pickups/drops off were well managed. Staff were fully aware of the measures in place to keep children safe at these times.

A shared approach by the staff team ensured children and families were supported to achieve their potential. Strong connections with staff meant children and families felt confident and relaxed in the service. The care and support they received had a positive impact on their overall wellbeing. Parents commented, "the afterschool club are a wonderful team, they do an amazing job". "Everyone is really lovely and I feel they genuinely love working with kids".

Staff had clear roles, were flexible and moved with children dependant on their interests and needs, for example, when children wanted to go outdoors and members of staff went out with them. Staff placed themselves thoughtfully during busier times to ensure all children's individual needs were well considered. As a result, children benefitted from a very calm and positive experience.

Positive working relationships had been formed between staff which meant they were all meaningfully contributing to the inclusive and positive ethos of trust and respect. Staff breaks were well planned to ensure that children were supported at key times of the day. The staff team worked collaboratively and supported each other well.

Regular meetings and support from the manager engaged staff well in the process of reflecting on practice. This meant that staff felt valued and empowered to grow professionally and provided children with a happy, secure and supportive environment.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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