

Parkhead Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Harburn Road
West Calder
EH55 8AH

Telephone: 01506 871 404

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 September 2022

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Service no:
CS2003016170

About the service

Parkhead Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 74 children aged two years to not yet attending primary school at any one time. Of those no more than 10 are aged two years to under three years.

At the time of our inspection the service was not at capacity and was not yet caring for children aged two years.

Care is provided from purpose built premises attached to a primary school. Children are cared for in an open plan playroom with access to a sensory room for quieter activities. Children had free-flow access to an enclosed outdoor area and an additional enclosed grassy area for physical play.

The service is located in the West Calder area of West Lothian and is situated close to public transport routes, main road, shops and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 07 September 2022 between the hours of 09:30 and 16:00. Further inspection activity took place remotely and we gave feedback to the provider and management team on 09 September 2022. 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 and eight of their family members
- spoke with eight staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with one visiting professional

Key messages

- Children's rights, including their right to play, were respected and embedded in the daily life of the service.
- Staff knew children well and carefully considered how to meet each individual child's needs.
- Children benefitted from a relaxed pace and the freedom to choose when, where and how to play.
- The premises were safe, well-maintained and offered a range of engaging play spaces.
- Some infection prevention and control processes would benefit from a more consistent application of best practice.
- An ethos of continuous improvement was evident, with staff and managers striving to ensure children had the best possible experiences.
- The new staff team worked well together and should now focus on having more opportunities to engage with parents on a more regular basis.

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?	4 - 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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm and caring interactions from staff and each other. This created a loving environment where children were valued as individuals. One child told us, 'I love seeing everyone at nursery'. Children's rights were respected and were central to the care being provided. This included different aspects of care, play and learning being linked to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Children experienced relaxed and unhurried mealtimes where they enjoyed opportunities to develop their skills and independence. This included pouring their own drinks, self-selecting and preparing some foods as well as helping to set up the café-style dining area. Staff took this opportunity to engage in high quality interactions with children, helping to create a pleasant atmosphere while children ate with friends.

Staff knew children well and planned for their care in partnership with parents through personal plans, which were reviewed regularly. Parents told us they had the opportunity to talk to keyworkers about children's care. We discussed how parental engagement could be more clearly recorded in plans to evidence where parents had been involved in agreeing strategies.

Where children required additional support, this was detailed within their personal plan with staff using the agreed strategies to help meet each child's needs. Links with external agencies for specialist support further contributed to ensuring children received the care and support that was right for them.

Children were kept safe from potential harm as all staff fully understood key procedures related to the management of allergies and medication. In addition, staff had undertaken child protection training and confidently discussed how they would respond if concerned about a child.

The settling in of new children was carefully planned to ensure that each child was able to make the transition from home to nursery at a pace that suited them. Parents commented positively on this, with one saying, 'The settling in process has been very good as it has been led by myself and my son in consultation with the staff'.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were meaningfully involved in leading their play and could choose to take part in both planned and spontaneous play experiences. Careful consideration had been given to providing a well-balanced range of activities that supported children to develop their skills, language and numeracy. This was further supported by staff's use of skilled questioning to help extend children's learning.

Staff were knowledgeable about children's development and used relevant theory and best practice documents to support their planning for children's play. An innovative approach to ensuring staff could easily access these documents digitally was available in the staff base.

The pace of the day was sensitively structured with a clear focus on minimising disruptions to children's play. Parts of the daily routine such as mealtimes, toothbrushing and story time were provided in a way that allowed children to choose when to end their play to join up with their peers in small groups. Visual prompts were available throughout the setting to support children to make informed choice about their play.

Strong connections had been made within the local community to offer additional opportunities for play and learning. Children were excited to tell us about outings they had made to the local shops where they had helped select food that would be prepared for lunch. Plans were in place to continue to strengthen community partnerships in the coming months.

Children's learning and progress was monitored through detailed observations by staff, which were recorded on electronic learning journals and shared with children's families. One parent told us, '(My child) is included in all activities and is encouraged to try new experiences which we see on our online observations which is great.' We discussed the importance of monitoring consistency of information and outputs from the journals to ensure all were of the same quality.

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.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The nursery premises were safe and secure with access to the indoor and outdoor areas carefully controlled, ensuring children were kept safe from potential harm. The main playroom was clean and well-ventilated with lots of natural light, which provided a welcoming environment for children.

Opportunities for children to experience risk and challenge were provided throughout the nursery, particularly in the outdoors. Children had the opportunity to use real tools as well as having access to physical, energetic play helping to support their overall health and wellbeing. Staff understood how to confidently risk assess these activities, ensuring children's safety.

The toys, resources and furniture available to children were well-maintained with a range of different areas set up to promote a variety of play types. Children also had opportunities for rest and relaxation within the playroom with an additional sensory room available to provide an additional quiet space if children needed this.

The indoor and outdoor environments were set up to support children to free flow between different areas where they were able to choose from a range of toys and materials that helped stimulate their imagination and curiosity. Children's current interests were considered when arranging the different play spaces with each space well-resourced to support children's play and learning.

Visual prompts were displayed to help children learn and follow different parts of the daily routine such as lunchtime and handwashing. In addition, good use was made of pictorial guides to resources that were stored elsewhere helping children to identify the toys they would like to play with.

While all toilet and changing areas were clean and well-ventilated with suitable handwashing facilities available, we identified occasional inconsistencies in how best practice for infection prevention and control was being applied. To reduce the potential transmission of infection, we asked the management team to

review the storage of some items in nappy changing areas, use of toilet doors and monitoring of handwashing. This was acted upon during the inspection.

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 leadership team had worked closely with staff, children and families to establish a clear vision for the setting with the input of all stakeholders valued and contributing to the development of the service.

Progress of planned improvements was monitored to ensure any changes were successfully implemented. The leadership team was receptive to feedback from families and where a concern was raised this was quickly acted upon to ensure children were fully supported.

Children's views were carefully considered and incorporated into daily nursery life. This included consulting children and using their current interests as the basis for the play and learning experiences available.

An ethos of continuous improvement was evident within the nursery as staff and the leadership team sought to develop the quality of care, play and learning for children. Learning through play was at the centre of the wide variety of quality assurance processes that were in place within the setting.

A distributed leadership model was in place, which allowed individual staff members to use their skills and knowledge to develop key areas of practice. Staff were reflective and keen to continue to improve both individual and organisational practice. Staff confidently discussed their champion roles and how they were contributing to children's experiences.

Robust self-evaluation and monitoring processes were in place to help maintain and improve the quality of care, play and learning. Regular auditing of key areas of practice took place to ensure that children's care was at a consistently high standard. We discussed how additional auditing of accidents would support already strong levels of risk assessment in the setting.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

4.3 Staff deployment

Suitable staffing levels were in place throughout the day, with staff available in appropriate numbers to support children's wellbeing while engaging with children at their level. A mixture of skills, knowledge and experience in the staff team contributed to positive interactions and play experiences for children. Staff were committed to their role with an enthusiasm for supporting children to reach their full potential.

Parents commented positively on the relationship their child had with staff and how this supported care. One said, 'My son has a key worker who he is very fond of and she is very friendly and welcoming.'

Significant turnover had taken place in the staff team in recent times with measures taken to help ensure parents could become familiar with new staff. This included displaying staff pictures at the entrance and sharing these on the closed social media group. One parent spoke positively of this, saying, 'I am always updated via (social media) if there is a new member of staff and it is nice to meet them on drop-off or collection.'

Staff communicated well across the day if a task took them away from children, which ensured consistency of care for children as staff shared key information to ensure children's safety and wellbeing.

We identified that the period prior to lunchtime and the morning session collection time was slightly more challenging for staff in terms of supervision in the outdoor area as some were involved in different tasks. However, staff handled this well and sought support if needed, which was quickly provided.

New staff received an induction to provide them with key information such as children's allergies and other important parts of the nursery routines. A mentoring system was in place to help offer further support to staff, which they told us helped them quickly settle into the team.

Some parents told us that they would like more opportunities to meet with new staff and discuss their child's progress with keyworkers. One said, 'I feel a little more feedback would go a long way to helping us as a family and helping our son to improve in all areas', while another commented, 'Drop off and pick up are still all done without entering the nursery - I do feel like this impacts the amount of interaction you have with staff as sometimes it can be busy and you don't get a chance to speak to anyone'. We asked the service to consider how greater opportunities to engage with parents could be provided on a more regular basis, which was included as an objective in the current improvement plan.

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

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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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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