

Bowhouse Primary School, Early Learning and Childcare Class Day Care of Children

Tinto Drive
Grangemouth
FK3 0DZ

Telephone: 01324 508 710

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 October 2024

Service provided by:
Falkirk Council

Service provider number:
SP2004006884

Service no:
CS2003043625

About the service

Bowhouse Primary School, Early Learning and Childcare is a daycare of children setting provided by Falkirk Council. It is situated within Bowhouse Primary School where the facilities are on one level. The nursery consists of one large open plan playroom, a cloak room, kitchen facilities, dining facilities and toilets. Children have access to a large well-equipped outdoor space directly accessible from the playroom.

The service is registered;

1. To provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 56 children aged 3 years to those not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time.

Any other conditions unique to the service:

2. Adult:child ratios will be: children aged 3 and over - 1:8 if the children attend more than 4 hours per day or 1:10 if the children attend for less than 4 hours per day.

3. Two adults to be in attendance at any one time.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 01 October 2024 between 09:00 and 16:15 and 02 October 2024 between 09:15 and 15:00. 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 several children using the service and five of their parents/carers. We also received 14 completed electronic questionnaires;
- spoke with seven staff and management;
- observed practice and how children were supported with their routines, play and learning;
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The inclusive and welcoming ethos created by staff has established close relationships with families.
- Children benefit from daily opportunities for outdoor play.
- Children's learning, was supported by staff who enabled them to lead their play. Effective use of questions helped them to extend children's thinking and creativity through play .
- Effective communication meant staff knew children well as information about their individual needs was regularly updated.
- Quality assurance was well used to assess the work of the service and plan areas for continued improvement.
- The staff team should continue to be developed as new members of staff share their skills, experience and knowledge.

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?	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 evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

The positive ethos within the service meant that a culture of respect and inclusiveness was embedded in practice. Staff promoted secure attachments through warm and nurturing relationships. Through sensitive and caring interactions, children were happy and confident, and settled quickly into their daily activities. We saw that children were supported sensitively and skilfully throughout the day by staff who understood their emotions. Where needed, personalised strategies were in place to help children understand their emotions and build resilience.

As children played, it was evident they had developed positive and respectful friendships with each other. They had a sense of belonging as they felt welcomed, valued and safe in the setting. Parent's shared, "All the staff are friendly and really seem to care about the kids".

Effective communication with families meant partnership working with parents was well established. This enabled a range of information to be gathered that was used to plan children's care. As a result, personal plans were used effectively to support each child's individual needs. For example, detailed plans were in place to help children regulate their emotions, follow routines or separate from a parent. These techniques helped children have positive experiences as they were tailored for their individual needs. Parents confirmed they were involved in shaping their child's care and shared, "(Staff member) made sure I was happy with the way they dealt with things".

Meal and snack times were relaxed and sociable experiences for children as staff engaged them in a warm and natural way. They used the opportunity to talk about healthy eating and chat with children about their food choices. We saw children had opportunities to develop their self help skills. For example, at snack time children confidently served themselves as they chose food they wanted and poured their drinks. Staff encouraged them to develop skills such as spreading their toast and clear away their dishes when finished. We saw that children weren't as involved with these tasks at lunch time. We talked to staff about ensuring they had the same involvement as snack time as this promoted their independence and sense of self.

We were satisfied that best practice guidance was followed to ensure the safe storage and administration of medication. Monthly audits were in place which helped ensure all required information was consistently recorded. This overview meant that everyone understood the procedure in place and equipment maintained. For example, inhaler chambers were regularly cleaned.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children benefitted from a well organised environment where a range of activities supported their development and interests. This enabled them to lead their play both indoors and outdoors. Open ended resources helped children use their imagination, curiosity and investigation. As a result, we saw children were busy and had fun as they played with their friends. Parents liked that children were involved in "Seeing friends, woodworking, reading time and singing songs, building blocks" and "Playing with the blocks and playing outside".

As staff were enthusiastic and responded positively to them, children shared their ideas for developing their play. Children confidently talked about what they were doing and felt valued as they were listened to. Staff used these opportunities to enhance children's experiences as they extended their play, talked about risk and encouraged them to problem solve. As a result, children were involved, engrossed and challenged by activities for long periods of time. Staff reflected well together and shared significant observations about children's learning. They considered, as a team, 'next steps' which would respond to that and develop children's interests. Parents shared, "I am involved with my childcare as being primary person for drop off and pick up. I take what is told to me and we do fun learning at home".

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of child development and the importance of children's emotional wellbeing. A focus on being outdoors meant children had daily opportunities to play in the natural environment. They developed their physical skills using large equipment and built obstacle courses with loose parts. We saw that children were confident in their abilities as they climbed and balanced on planks of wood. They were also learning life skills as they negotiated with each other and took turns. Some of the children would benefit from a visual prompt to help them take turns. We asked the service to consider how they could do this.

Meaningful observations and reviews ensured children's progress, development and learning was well monitored. Staff revisited learning with children and shared videos with parents using QR codes. This approach meant staff identified 'next steps' which ensured continued progression was supported. This enabled child centred planning approaches which supported them to achieve.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Staff had created a safe, welcoming and well organised environment which was inviting and supported children's learning and development. We saw that children had positive experiences as they influenced the pace of their day as staff listened to them and supported their choices.

Resources and toys were arranged so that children could choose what they wanted to do. The layout meant children had space to develop their games and play as they could move resources around. Staff understood how children benefitted from using natural resources. They also ensured resources made of different materials were available to meet some children's individual needs.

Children benefitted from direct access to enclosed, outdoor areas for play. Large equipment, and open ended resources offered children a variety of play experiences. Playing in the natural environment, promoted their well-being as they benefitted from fresh air and exercise. When playing children told us, "I like playing on the swing".

We were satisfied that the environment was well ventilated, hand washing promoted and regular cleaning took place. These measures were effective at minimising the spread of infection. Risk assessments and daily checks were used well to achieve and maintain a safe environment. Informal discussion meant issues were talked about. We asked that when changes were made, the information was recorded and dated so current practice was implemented.

Staff were security conscious as they supervised when children were arriving and leaving the service. There was established systems in place for the maintenance and repairs. This meant the environment was well maintained and safe for children.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

There was a clear focus on self-evaluation and quality assurance. National and local guidance had been used by the service to assess their work. This had identified what they did well and identified changes that would improve outcomes for children. As a result, the improvement and action plans reflected priorities that would build on current good practice and further develop the service. For example, they would be able to improve partnership working with parents by providing groups to attend. Parents shared, "The nursery do hold meetings with parents to discuss what we like or would like to change from time to time".

A range of reviews and audits took place to monitor the work of the service. Staff had opportunities to share their skills and interests and identify learning that would help them develop their practice. We suggested peer support could be considered to assess children's experiences. This would enable staff to share their skills, experience and knowledge and further enhance outcomes for children.

Staff used team meetings and daily huddles well to talk about the service. They reflected on the day and shared how children had used resources in their play. As their interests were considered, 'next steps' for children's learning were well planned and meaningful. Staff felt valued as their suggestions were listened to and contributed to a team approach.

Opportunities were in place that supported parents' and children's views to be gathered. While a few parents disagreed they had been involved, others said they had shared their views. One parent said, "I have participated in a feedback session with the service. It was an open forum to provide constructive feedback and suggest improvements". We also saw that parents shared their opinions about the groups they attended. This meant they felt valued and knew their opinions mattered. Parents shared they were "A great opportunity to bring parents together and share advice and support each other".

Children's voice was captured as staff used their interests and ideas to inform planning. This meant resources were provided to extend their experiences.

How good is our staff team?**4 - Good**

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a range of staff skills and experience within the team. Staff were committed to professional development and used training and best practice guidance to keep up to date. Newer staff had felt supported when they started the service, which meant they settled in well. This would help provide a sound basis to develop positive working relationships. Parents shared "All the staff are very kind and always say hello, ask how we are and take an interest in what my child has been doing out with nursery."

Staff were deployed indoors and outdoors to support children. We noted, at times, staff who were new to the setting were temporarily left responsible for an area. This was due to experienced members of staff being needed to support children in another area. At these times, staff familiar with the routines and expectations of the service should reorganise themselves. This will maintain the skill mix across the team. Children will be appropriately supervised by staff who are familiar with their individual needs. Newer staff will then have the opportunity to get to know children and learn how their needs are met. This approach will promote positive outcomes for children as all staff will be able to support them in a consistent way. Parents views included, "I feel things can sometimes go unseen as staff are dealing with lots of children at once" and "There's been a couple of incidents where my child has been hurt or been in a fight and nobody has seen how it's happened."

At busier times, routines had been established to support children. For example, at lunch time, familiar support staff provided continuity with their routines. If they had to undertake another task, we saw that most staff communicated verbally with each other to ensure children were supervised. To promote communication in the service, walkie talkies were in place within particular areas. For example, outdoors. When in these areas, staff should be aware of and use the walkie talkie system in place. This will support a consistent and effective way to communicate and share information.

Children were supported with dignity and respect because all staff across the setting used a rights based approach. We saw that interactions were warm, kind and compassionate and children were listened to. Parents shared "The teachers at the ELC are doing a great job with the kids. They deserve to have more resources and teachers to help them give the best they can give. I understand there's kids with extra care needed but I do believe they need more support in that department".

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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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