Head of Muir Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children
Haypark Road
Denny
FK6 5JZ
Telephone: 01324 503170

Inspected by: Lynne Nimmo
Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 21 December 2011
Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Care and Support</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Environment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Staffing</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Management and Leadership</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What the service does well

The experienced and skilled staff team work very well in partnership with parents and their children. The service offers a range of ways for parents, children and stakeholders to be involved in developing the work of the service.

What the service could do better

The service could evaluate some of the initiatives used to promote participation within the service, outline the improvements they have found and show how they share this good practice with other services.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The introduction of a nursery blog has improved participation. It is being used extremely well as a way to have ongoing communication with parents. They are kept up to date about events within the service and are able to make comments or suggestions that are used to in practice.

Conclusion

We found that the service is very well managed and offers a high quality service to families. The staff team work very well together, using their varied skills and experience to work effectively with families.
Who did this inspection
Lynne Nimmo
1 About the service we inspected

Head of Muir Primary School Nursery Class is part of Falkirk Council’s early year’s provision and is registered for 30 ante and pre school children per session. The nursery was located in the small village of Head of Muir. The nursery operated from 9:00 am to 11:30 am and 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm Monday to Friday during school term time.

Before 1 April 2011 this service was registered with the Care Commission. On this date the new scrutiny body, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS), commonly known as the Care Inspectorate, took over the work of the Care Commission, including the registration of care services. This means that from 1 April 2011 this service continued its registration under the new body SCSWIS.

The service operated from a spacious and bright playroom within the primary school. There was a secure separate entry for parents and children.

A brief summary of the service aims were to “celebrates flexibility, creativity, diversity and choice to deliver:

* an inclusive approach that ensures, equality, dignity and privacy for all
* a safe and stimulating environment where children and adults learn together
* a planned curriculum, based on prior learning and play experiences, that develops the whole child
* appropriate challenges through which all children will realise their own potential
* opportunities for continuous personal and professional development of all staff.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

- Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good
- Quality of Environment - N/A
- Quality of Staffing - N/A
- Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.scswis.com or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.
2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out
In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection
We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection that took place on Friday 2 December 2011 between 9:30am and 4:30pm. We also visited the service on 12 and 21 December to gather further information and give feedback. The inspection was carried out by Inspector, Lynne Nimmo.

As requested by us, the service sent us an annual return. The service also sent us a self assessment form.

We issued 60 questionnaires to the families who use the service, 23 of which were completed and returned to us before the inspection.

During this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources including:

Evidence from the service’s most recent self assessment
Children’s profiles
Photographs
Children’s work, displays and floor books.
Curriculum plans and evaluations
Mind mapping
Storyline information
2 stars and a wish documents
Service information and meeting records
Newsletters
Training records
Supervision records
Registration certificate
Observation of practice
Individual Education Plans (IEP’s)
Nursery Blog
Children’s personal DVD of their time at nursery
Visitors book
Information from questionnaires used by the service
Improvement plan
Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call ‘quality themes’. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is ‘Quality of care and support’. Under each quality theme are ‘quality statements’ which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services’ responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org
The annual return
Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment
Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

We received a fully completed Self Assessment document from the service provider. We were satisfied with the way the service provider had completed this and with the relevant information they had given us for each of the headings that we grade them under.

The service provider identified what they thought they did well, some areas for development and any changes they planned.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account
Children were observed to be happy, contented and confident within the service. They were able to access resources easily and could extend activities as they wished. Children played very well together and have good relationships with staff.

We observed children enjoying a Scottish snack as it had been St. Andrews day. They were interested in what was being provided and had obviously learned a lot about Scotland. Children also enjoyed a range of activities that included water play, arts and craft, imaginative play, singing and stories. They also practiced Christmas songs and games in preparation for their concert and parties.

Taking carers' views into account
Of the 60 questionnaires we sent to the service, 23 were completed and returned to the Care Inspectorate before the inspection.

All parents confirmed that they received clear information about the service and stated they were able to visit before starting to use it.

20 questionnaires stated that parents are aware that staff regularly assess their child’s learning and development. 1 did not know this happened, 1 person disagreed with this and 1 person felt this was non applicable. All parents strongly agreed or
agreed that staff shared information about children’s development with them and used this information to plan the next steps to support their development.

Where children have additional needs, parents feel involved in the process to develop and Individual Education Plan for their child.

All parents strongly agreed or agreed that children have access to a balanced range of activities. They are satisfied that children have enough space to play and have regular access to outdoors for energetic physical play.

22 parents are confident that staff have the skills and experience to support children’s learning and development and share this information with them. 1 person disagreed with this. Overall they are satisfied children are treated fairly and with respect.

All parents strongly agreed or agreed that they are kept up to date with what is happening in the service. They feel involved in developing the service and confirmed they are asked for their ideas and views.

Overall all parents agreed or strongly agreed they were happy with the service provided. Some comments included:

‘Head of Muir nursery has provided my child with a safe, secure and happy environment in which I feel she has thrived over the last year’.
‘I have been more than satisfied with the care and education my daughter has received so far’.
‘We are delighted with the service Head of Muir nursery provides. My child has been welcomed, made to feel valued and respected by staff. All staff take an active interest in my child’s life. This ethos is clearly reflected in all the children’s behaviour - showing mutual respect between one another’.
‘I think Head of Muir nursery provides a high standard of service to the pupils and parents. They are professional at what they do’.
‘There is a genuine feeling of care and interest in the nursery which extends to the parent/carer. The staff work quickly to establish strong bonds with the children from the start’.
3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

**Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support**

Overall grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

**Statement 1**

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

**Service strengths**

We found that Head of Muir nursery has an excellent approach to involving children and their families in assessing and improving the quality of care and support.

Staff and management have effectively implemented their partnership with parent’s policy. We found that participation is embedded into everyday practice, with staff using a variety of formal and informal ways to consult and work with parents and children. Since their last inspection the service has introduced a nursery blog which has had a significant improvement on parents and children’s involvement in the service. Discussion with staff and viewing the blog, evidenced the ongoing communication and sharing of ideas. The blog is updated regularly so everyone has up to date information about the service and are therefore able to comment on all aspects of the nursery. For example, parents have been able to give suggestions about trips planned and ways to make payment easier. As information sharing is ongoing, staff are able to respond quickly to queries and act on any suggestions. Parents, therefore, experience their views being valued and used to improve the service.

In addition to the blog the service continues to use questionnaires, daily discussions, children’s group time, mind mapping, story line books, two stars and a wish, meetings and reviews to involve children and parents in assessing the quality of care and support provided. Parents also have the opportunity to become members of the parent teacher association (PTA) and Parent Council. These forums are also used effectively to work in partnership with parents, who then have the opportunity to influence the work of the service. The service was therefore, able to demonstrate that by using this range of methods, parents and children are routinely asked for their views which are used to improve the service.

Discussion with staff and observation of practice confirmed they knew children very
well. The admission procedure is used very well to gather information about children which enables staff to meet any particular needs children have. Where it has been identified that children have additional support needs, staff work closely with parents and other agencies to agree strategies to support them. This enables them to plan effectively to support children development. We observed that children are very well supported by staff to follow their individual plans. For example one child was supported to use a picture board to help plan their session. Staff are skillful when interacting with children. They use patience, encouragement, praise and prompting to help children develop.

All children benefit from the positive staff interaction in their play. Staff use observation extremely well to plan for and promote children’s development. They use two stars and a wish with children which enables them to have an input into what and how they learn in nursery. Techniques such as mind mapping and story lines are also used to involve children in the planning, with their ideas being used to introduce or further develop activities and topics. Staff use all this information to plan a curriculum that provides a range of stimulating activities to promote children’s individual development. The detailed records are shared with parents who know what their children are learning and are therefore able to support this at home.

Parents are encouraged to spend time in the service and accompany children on outings. We found that parents have helped at various events such as Christmas parties, shows and curriculum topics. They therefore, see the work of the nursery and are able to influence their children’s learning.

Parents have an opportunity to discuss their children’s development at parent’s nights. Information from parents evidenced that they found these evenings useful and like having the opportunity to discuss their child’s development and see their profile.

**Areas for improvement**

The service should continue to work with parents and children in partnership. They should consider evaluating the blog they introduced to show how effective it has been in improving participation. Consideration could be given to sharing this information with other services to demonstrate the positive outcomes for families.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0
Statement 5
We respond to service users’ care and support needs using person centered values.

Service strengths
We found that the service is very good at supporting children using person centred values. As one parent commented ‘Staff have worked in partnership with me and my family to provide my child with a positive, holistic experience. This has allowed her to grow in confidence both at home and within the nursery’.

The service has an established enrolment process in place. This enables staff to gather information about children and their needs before they start. Parents and children are able to visit the service before starting where they are given information about what the service provides. Staff use this information to plan children’s care and ensure that their individual needs are met.

Through observation, discussion with staff and sampling of documentation, the service demonstrated that person centred values are used when planning for children. All children have personal profiles in place where staff record their individual development. Through observation and use of photographs, staff monitor children’s development, note their achievements, identify next steps and record any areas they need extra support with. Where a child has a difficulty in any area, their keyworker will develop a focus sheet that outlines how they will support the child with this. Children’s progress is monitored to ensure they achieve the goals set. As staff are continually monitoring children’s development, they build up a very good understanding of individual children’s needs and are able to continually support their development.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed for any child who has been identified as having additional learning needs. This identifies which areas of development the child needs support in and outlines how this will be done. For example we observed a child being supported to use a sequencing board as this helped them to organise their nursery session. As staff use the strategies agreed, they are able to measure children’s progress and alter programmes to further promote their development. For example, they were in the process of helping one child increase the number of tasks they complete while in nursery. Parents are involved in all meetings concerning their child and agree any decisions made in respect of them.

Staff plan effectively to provide a curriculum that supports children’s learning and interests. All staff contribute to this process and work hard to implement the plans. However, they are flexible about this and will change activities in response to children’s needs and interests. Where some activities do not take place, staff record why and reschedule them. Staff note what children are learning and use this information to ensure continued developmental progress is encouraged. By taking this approach, staff are continually reviewing the provision for children and are therefore are able to make changes to meet their needs.
The nursery have a poppy group which is used to support children’s learning. This enables children to work in small groups away from the nursery so they can concentrate on particular topics or interests. Again, there is a very good record of these sessions so everyone knows how children are progressing.

Management and staff are very skilled and experienced when interacting with children. Everyone was observed to support children very well. The service has very good transition arrangements in place that support children to move into primary 1. As children are routinely involved in school events such as attending assembly and using the gym hall, they are familiar with the building and staff. We found that children are well prepared for moving into primary 1 as staff plan activities and visits between nursery and the classroom so that children become familiar with the environment and build relationships with the teaching staff.

**Areas for improvement**

We found that a few of the children’s profiles were not up to date. It would be helpful if staff recorded the reason why this is, such as children’s absence.

New legislation requires that a care plan for each child is in place and includes information about their health, well-being and safety. This has to be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis. The service should obtain a copy of Scottish Statutory Instrument - The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services Regulations) 2011 (SSI 2011/ 210)) and implement any changes needed to meet this.

**Grade awarded for this statement:**  5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:**  0

**Number of recommendations:**  0
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment - NOT ASSESSED
Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing - NOT ASSESSED
Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service strengths
As previously identified in Quality Theme 1, Statement 1, service strengths, the service uses a range of ways to involve children and their families to participate in assessing and improving the quality of management and leadership.

As the service works effectively in partnership with parent’s, they have various opportunities to discuss the work of the nursery. Information from consultations is very well collated and shared with parents. This lets them see collective views of parents and how the service plans to address any suggestions. This demonstrates that the service uses information from parents to improve the service or give reasons why things have to be done in a particular way.

The Standards and Quality Improvement Report and school/nursery improvement plan is shared with parents. They are kept informed about the progress made.

Information from questionnaires, confirm that parents feel listened to during any consultation process and their suggestions are used to develop the service. Also when visitors take part in the nursery they are encouraged to give their views about the service.

Areas for improvement
The service should continue to offer the very good opportunities for parents and children to become involved in the development of the service. Consideration should be given as to how they can also be involved in the self evaluation process for the Care Inspectorate.

The self assessment document could be used more effectively to show the range of work carried out by the service. It would be helpful to have examples of good outcomes for children and families.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0
Statement 4

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide.

Service strengths

We found that there are very good systems in place to evaluate the service provided.

The service uses a range of quality assurance tools to measure their performance. This includes indicators from documents such as Child at the Centre. All staff are involved in evaluating the service and identifying areas for improvement. By taking this approach, staff feel involved in the development of the service as they are able to take on projects to improve the service. One example of this is the nursery blog.

As previously reported the work of the service is regularly evaluated with reports produced which identify strengths and areas for development. Staff review their work on an ongoing basis. This includes evaluating the curriculum, assessing what children are learning and identifying next steps to progress their development. These systems are effective in determining what is working well and any changes needed.

Various meetings and surveys take place and are effectively used to monitor the ongoing work of the service. For example the service has recently asked for views about the transition process in place. Information gathered has confirmed that children and parents find this a very positive experience and at present no changes are needed. By using these techniques, staff are able to ensure that the service they are providing continues to meet families needs.

Appraisals give staff the opportunity to review and discuss their own practice. Within this forum staff achievements are noted and continued professional development needs identified. This lets staff improve their skills and knowledge which they share with team members and improve the provision for children. We found that staff use their skills, knowledge and experience effectively within the service. For example they run parents groups that cover topics such as healthy eating. Staff also develop their skills as necessary. For example, one member of staff undertaking a course in sign language to enable them to communicate better with a family.

Staff attend cluster meetings and use these forums to discuss good practice. They discuss procedures in place and possible ways to improve them.

The Local Authority has external quality assurance systems in place to assess the service. This involves visits from quality improvement officers, who will assess areas of the service and identify any areas for improvement.

As we have previously reported, parents and children have various opportunities to help evaluate the service. For example on a daily basis children give their opinions about the activities, with parents having the opportunity to speak with staff. More
formal opportunities such as meetings, parents evenings and surveys are also used to gather views about the service. Information from parents confirm that they feel staff are very approachable, listen to them and respond promptly to any queries or concerns they have.

After any inspection the service produces an action plan which details how they will take action on any requirements or recommendations made to improve the service.

**Areas for improvement**

The management team is currently undergoing some changes. The acting head teacher and depute will consider their roles in relation to the nursery. To date we have not been formally notified of the changes in management. See requirement 1.

Some information displayed still referred to the Care Commission. This should be updated to the Care Inspectorate to reflect the change in the regulator.

The self assessment completed for the Care Inspectorate could be used more effectively to show the very good outcomes for children and families. Examples of good practice should be included in this document.

When assessing their work, staff could identify better in some areas how effective the processes they have in place are. For example they stated that a suggestion box is in place, but it would be helpful if a judgement had been made it being a useful tool to gather suggestions as they hoped it would.

Staff should consider using forums they are involved in such as the cluster meeting to share initiatives they use and how they have improved their service. They should evidence where their ideas and practices are used by other services.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 1

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Requirements**

1. The provider must notify the Care Inspectorate about the changes to the manager of the service.
   
   This is to comply with The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2002 [SSI 2002/114 Regulation 22(1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) - Notice of Absence.
   
   Timescale: By 20 January 2012.
4 Other information

Complaints
No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

Enforcements
We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

Additional Information

Action Plan
Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in SCSWIS re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).
5  Summary of grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement 5</td>
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<table>
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<td>Statement 4</td>
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6  Inspection and grading history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Gradings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 Sep 2009</td>
<td>Unannounced</td>
<td>Care and support 5 - Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Environment 5 - Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Staffing 5 - Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good</td>
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</table>

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.
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This inspection report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànain eile ma níthear iarritas.

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