

Stornoway Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Stornoway Primary School
Jamieson Drive
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2LF

Telephone: 01851 703 418

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 November 2021

Service provided by:
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar

Service provider number:
SP2003002104

Service no:
CS2003017064

About the service

Stornoway Primary School Nursery has been operating since 2002 and registered with the Care Inspectorate when the Care Inspectorate formed in 2011. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 96 children aged from two and a half years to those not yet attending primary school; of whom no more than 5 are aged two and a half years up to three years.

The service is provided by Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar and is based within purpose-built premises in Stornoway. Children are accommodated within three playrooms, one of which is a Gaelic Medium immersion environment, and each having their own secure outdoor playing area. Children also have access to school facilities, such as the gym, dining hall and playing fields. During our visit, we observed that the new accommodation was fit for purpose and being well used to support quality experiences for children.

Stornoway Primary School Nursery's overarching aim is to give every child the best possible start in life, their statement of aims include:

- To provide a safe and stimulating environment where children are respected, valued, and included in all aspects of ELC [early learning and childcare] life.
- To enable each child to develop their full potential as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors in a high-quality learning environment.
- To consult with children and build on partnerships with families, the community, and other agencies to provide support for all.
- To promote our children's health and well-being, encouraging self-esteem and a respect for diversity and a fairness in life.
- To promote, develop and celebrate Gaelic language and culture throughout the ELC and wider community.

We started the inspection of Stornoway Primary School Nursery with an unannounced visit on Monday 15 November 2021. We continued the inspection using telephone discussions and email exchange, then concluded by giving inspection feedback virtually using Teams technology on Wednesday 17 November 2021.

This was a themed inspection where we evaluated the quality of care and support, the environment, staffing, and management and leadership. As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19 with a specific focus on Quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator within Quality of care and support.

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors. Our methodology for the inspection included:

- Observations of children's routines and staff interactions with children.
- Observations of infection prevention and control practice.
- Telephone discussions and email exchanges with the management team.
- Email exchanges with eight parents and four agencies working with the nursery.
- Discussions with four members of staff.
- Evaluating procedures for the safe recruitment and ongoing support for staff.
- Reviewing quality assurance processes including key records, policies, and written procedures relative to Covid-19.

What people told us

During our inspection visit, we observed children enjoying their play experiences, both in their playrooms and outdoors. They were happy, settled and confident within the nursery environment. Some of the children were proud to share the floor books, explaining the activities they had participated in and their learning journey.

We asked the nursery to pass our contact details to parents so that they could share their experience of how the nursery had delivered care to them and their children during the pandemic. Eight parents agreed to be contacted and exchanged emails with us. Parents who responded were extremely happy with the quality of care provided by the nursery for their children and were particularly impressed with the level of communication. This had made the family feel welcomed by staff. Examples of parents' comments included:

"Communication from management has been excellent throughout the pandemic. I think the nursery staff have coped admirably in the last 19 months and should be applauded for their resilience, commitment, and end to end care. It would be nice to be able to visit the nursery and see children's work and their setting in person, but I wholeheartedly understand that not being an option at the moment. We have been asked in once to update the care plan which was lovely as it was the first and only time I'd been in!"

"The staff have been great with my daughter, she loves nursery and I feel she is really well supported while she is there. They encourage her in all she does."

"I know that my child thoroughly enjoys each day spent in the nursery and thrives on all of the activities that take place. My child is enthusiastic about his learning because of the wide range of learning activities being experienced while attending Stornoway Primary School Nursery. As he is experiencing success in a range of learning activities his confidence is increasing. He is also learning that when he does not succeed in a task he can spend time developing the skills he needs in order to achieve his goal. Staff ensuring that my child's experience of preschool nursery is enjoyable and memorable during such a prolonged period of disruption because of Covid-19 is truly remarkable."

"The resources in the room seem varied and engaging and outdoor play stimulating and safe. The staff are always friendly and my children love nursery. They say they love the toys and fruit! I think the gate entry relies too much on parents closing the gates behind them. A spring/safety closure would be safer on the gate near car park so it cannot be left open."

"From the very first transition day staff have gone out of their way to get to know (child) and support her to come out of her shell and enjoy her learning. They have helped her to improve her Gaelic and ensure that she is included as she is very shy and needs support to join in with others. The staff ensure that my husband and I are involved in the nursery activities by recapping the highlights of the day when we pick (child) up. We are also very happy with the nursery's use of Seesaw to keep us updated on her progress. Not only are the pictures wonderful to look at, the explanation is always very informative and I'm impressed that they link it to the curricular area. We are also told about the themes they are going to cover beforehand."

"I feel that nursery have done fantastically well to cope with the pressures that Covid-19 have brought. They have continued to provide my child with a wonderful learning experience in times that have been challenging for us all. Outdoor learning and play have been used a lot within the nursery and the facilities available are great. The flexibility of the nursery opening times is also really helpful as my child attends all year which is hugely helpful to aid working families."

"Staff are incredibly good at involving us in our daughter's activities in nursery. We are able to view learning activities on Seesaw and comment on tasks achieved. We get regular newsletters from school via email and their Facebook page is regularly updated with useful information."

Self assessment

We had not requested a self evaluation prior to our inspection. However, the management team shared their new approach to self evaluation, which meaningfully involved staff, children and parents. We looked at their findings to cross reference with our own observations and assessment of the quality of service provision. The self evaluation was informed by national guidance and best practice, including how to support children's health and wellbeing and operate safely during the Covid-19 pandemic.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during the inspection process, we evaluated the service to be operating at a very good level under this theme. The nursery had created a welcoming ethos where children and their families felt nurtured and respected. We observed that children had formed positive relationships with staff where there was lots of affection and praise; as a result children were happy and settled.

Staff conversations with parents both remotely and at drop off and pick up times were friendly and respectful. This made it more likely that parents would feel comfortable to share information about their child with staff or raise any concerns about their care.

Staff had been using in the moment planning to help them be responsive to children's interests and offer challenge. Floor books highlighted how staff listened to children's views and used these to plan for activities that would motivate children to be curious about learning more. We could see that staff had worked hard on the different elements of children's personal plans, for example additional support plans and child protection files contained rich information about children's health, wellbeing and safety needs. Children's learning and development was recorded using the online Seesaw application. Our sampling of these records reflected children's individual needs and had been regularly reviewed by parents. This was a previous recommendation that had now been met.

At feedback, we advised the management team that the Care Inspectorate had recently published personal plan guidelines that would assist staff in consolidating how they recorded information about children. It would also help the management team track how children were being supported to achieve their best.

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/how-we-support-improvement/care-inspectorate-programmes-and-publications/personal-planning-guides-for-providers/>

Staff demonstrated a sound understanding of the nursery's child protection policy and their responsibilities for keeping children safe, including how they should report any concerns. We were impressed with the robustness of these records and how the child protection coordinator sensitively liaised with families and external agencies to ensure the best outcomes for children involved. Staff participated in annual child protection training; however we asked that they be provided with Scottish Government's Coronavirus (COVID-19): supplementary national child protection guidance. Reflecting on this document will help make sure the protection of children continues to be prioritised during the pandemic.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-supplementary-national-child-protection-guidance/>

We were satisfied that effective infection prevention and control measures were in place to support the health and safety of children as well as staff during the pandemic. For example, regular handwashing, enhanced cleaning, physical distancing and good ventilation.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during the inspection process, we evaluated the service to be operating at a good level under this theme. Good use was made of the available space in the new accommodation, which was bright and attractive with plenty of high quality resources including child size furniture. For example, there was a sensory room for children who needed time out from the bustle of the nursery day, but during the pandemic this had also been utilised as an isolation room for any children presenting with Covid-19 symptoms. This meant that children would feel comfortable in a safe space until their parents could collect them.

The design of the accommodation enabled children to be independent and make choices although the management team agreed that this would be enhanced by decluttering the playrooms. This is because too many resources out at a time can be overwhelming for some children rather than promoting choice and challenge. Each playroom had free flow access for children from indoors to the garden area however during Covid-19 outdoor play was timetabled to limit children's close contacts. Children still had the opportunity for outdoor play on a daily basis, which supported their physical development, inquisitiveness and overall wellbeing.

Developing the outdoor environment to support quality outdoor learning for children was one of the service priorities within their improvement plan. Staff had participated in training based around the forest kindergarten approach and we could see that they had used this and the philosophy of loose parts play to organise the outdoor environment. Playing in nature based environments help build children's resilience and their confidence in risk taking.

We acknowledged that the restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on the organisation of nursery routines. For example, to limit children's close contacts their lunch could not be offered in the school lunch hall and instead was served in the playroom. Practice was inconsistent between the playrooms: we observed in one playroom children's play was interrupted for staff to tidy and set up lunch tables, while in another children could join lunch when they were ready thus respecting their own intentions and flow of play ideas. Staff did not routinely sit with children to model expected behaviours and attractive tableware was not always used regardless of whether a hot lunch or packed lunch was offered. We asked the management team to support staff to reflect on best practice guidance to help ensure a quality mealtime experience for children where they are learning life skills, such as setting the table and sharing with friends. (Please see recommendation 1.)

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Staff should review lunch time arrangements to ensure that children have opportunities for high quality social engagement, including involvement in the planning and preparation of meals where appropriate.

The manager and staff should refer to national best practice guidance such as Food Matters Nurturing happy, healthy children (2018) and A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare (June 2021). These can be found in the HUB area of the Care Inspectorate website.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: "I can enjoy unhurried snack and meal times in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible." (HSCS 1.35)

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during the inspection process, we evaluated the service to be operating at a very good level under this theme. Communication was a strength. Children experienced a warm atmosphere because of the very good working relationships within the team. Staff had very good relationships with parents and external agencies, making it more likely that everyone would work together to support children to achieve.

There was a strong team ethos. Staff spoke positively about teamwork and support from colleagues in meeting children's needs. Staff met within their playroom teams to discuss their planning and also as a whole team. When people work well together, children experience care and support that is consistent and stable. New staff confirmed that they were welcomed by the team and had participated in an induction programme so that they understood their role and responsibilities. This contributed to them feeling confident in meeting the individual needs of children. To support staff further, we signposted the management team to the national induction resource, which will help them develop the induction process to match national standards. The guidance can be found here:

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/3528/early-learning-and-childcare-national-induction-resource.pdf>

Staff told us about the effective leadership and support from the management team, both for their pastoral care and professional development. The management team routinely undertook observations of staff practice in the playrooms to evaluate outcomes for children and inform staff appraisals. Staff annual appraisals and six monthly reviews were also underpinned by expected codes of practice. Staff with specific professional and personal needs had more frequent individualised meetings with their line manager. We found that the outcome of meetings was sensitively recorded including any referrals to further support. This practice ensured the wellbeing and safety both of the member of staff and the children in their care.

Staff were very motivated to develop their practice. The service provider had a continuous professional development calendar that all staff had access to. Staff shared the other professional development activities they had participated in during the pandemic, such as reading, webinars and staff discussions. We could see that some of this had been recorded by management in staff personnel files although staff were aware they should also be reflecting on how their learning impacted on the quality of experiences for children. As a result, children will receive high quality interactions and experiences.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during the inspection process, we evaluated the service to be operating at a good level under this theme. Historically, the primary school head teacher was the registered manager of the service with the deputy head teacher early level being responsible for operational management of the nursery. One of the key benefits for children of this management arrangement had been that the deputy head teacher had implemented smooth transition processes for children moving from nursery to school. However during the inspection process, the provider formally registered a senior early years practitioner as the manager. They would now form a management team with clearly defined roles. For example, the deputy head teacher being the link between school and nursery and offering continuity in the curriculum.

This gave us confidence in management accountability and that the service would be well led and managed. Strong leadership makes it more likely that staff will be motivated and have the capacity to support children to reach their full potential.

The service improvement plan had been adapted to take account of the impact of the pandemic on the usual operation of the nursery. We were impressed with the work the management team had undertaken around self evaluation and the service's improvement journey. Self evaluation processes were at an early stage but took account of local and national expectations. For example, the new document A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare (June 2021) was displayed to promote staff reflection on how the service was doing and how it could do better. Both staff and parents intimated that they felt listened to and that their feedback influenced plans for developing the service. We could see from the self evaluation big book and wall display that staff had also taken account of children's perspectives. In this way, everyone felt included in the life of the nursery community and that their contribution was respected.

At feedback, we discussed how the previous management structure had given staff little autonomy on leading initiatives of interest to them. The management team should now work with staff to identify leadership opportunities based on the service improvement priorities and self evaluation as well as their own interests. This will contribute to staff professional growth and build on individual strengths.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

Medication: Staff should access the document Management of Medication to review and update their knowledge and practice ensuring care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me." (HSCS 1.19)

This is to be in place by 17 December 2018.

This recommendation was made on 13 November 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The medication folder with policy and protocols demonstrated that staff were in the main following Care Inspectorate guidance. Children's medication is stored in individual labelled containers although inhalers are not always in original packaging. Medication administration forms filed in indexed folder and included relevant information. These folders should consistently be stored near to the medication where they can be easily accessed when administering children's medication. The management team agreed to rectify this immediately. The recommendation had been met.

Recommendation 2

Personal Plans: Childcare plans must be reviewed and updated every six months or sooner if required.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My Personal Plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices." (HSCS 1.15)

This is to be in place by 17 December 2018.

This recommendation was made on 13 November 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Children's care plans are stored in their playroom and reflect children's individual needs. Parents confirmed that they are involved in reviewing these. Confidential information is stored securely in the nursery office, which includes online files. Seesaw software is used for children's learning journals and parents commented very positively about how this helped them understand more about children's care, learning and development. The management team is monitoring the frequency of staff observations of learning and the quality of information recorded on how children are being supported to achieve their best. The recommendation had been met.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings								
13 Nov 2018	Unannounced	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	4 - Good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	4 - Good	Management and leadership	Not assessed
Care and support	4 - Good									
Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	4 - Good									
Management and leadership	Not assessed									
26 Oct 2016	Unannounced	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	5 - Very good	Staffing	Not assessed	Management and leadership	Not assessed
Care and support	5 - Very good									
Environment	5 - Very good									
Staffing	Not assessed									
Management and leadership	Not assessed									
25 Sep 2014	Unannounced	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	4 - Good	Environment	5 - Very good	Staffing	4 - Good	Management and leadership	4 - Good
Care and support	4 - Good									
Environment	5 - Very good									
Staffing	4 - Good									
Management and leadership	4 - Good									
1 Mar 2013	Announced (short notice)	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	5 - Very good	Staffing	5 - Very good	Management and leadership	6 - Excellent
Care and support	5 - Very good									
Environment	5 - Very good									
Staffing	5 - Very good									
Management and leadership	6 - Excellent									
8 Feb 2011	Unannounced	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	Not assessed	Management and leadership	Not assessed
Care and support	5 - Very good									
Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	Not assessed									
Management and leadership	Not assessed									

Date	Type	Gradings	
1 Mar 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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