

Bantaskin Primary School Early Learning and Childcare Class Day Care of Children

Bantaskin Primary School
Bantaskin Road
Falkirk
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Telephone: 01324 508500

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 December 2022

Service provided by:
Falkirk Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2005110091

About the service

Bantaskin Primary School Early Learning and Childcare Class is a Falkirk Council early learning and childcare provision. The service is registered to provide early learning and childcare for a maximum of 49 children aged from three years to not yet attending primary school.

The service operates Monday to Friday during school terms. The service is situated within Bantaskin Primary School. The setting consists of three adjoining rooms creating an open plan space and direct access to the outdoor space.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 14 December 2022 between 09:15 and 17:30. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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:

- spent time with the children using the service and spoke with five parents
- spoke with staff members and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Children were confident and independent. They were engaged and having fun taking part in various activities both indoors and outdoors.
- Children had access to very good quality facilities indoors and outdoors, including many opportunities to explore the local community.
- Children's interests and learning from home were valued by the staff and were used to plan for meaningful experiences in the setting.
- The staff team were committed to professional learning, and this informed practice which improved outcomes for children.
- The service should ensure consistent strategies are used which respect children's rights.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very 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?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

Children experienced mostly warm and nurturing approaches from a caring staff team. Staff understood the importance of developing secure relationships with children and families and the positive effect this could have on children's experiences. One parent told us, "Staff know their child well, almost like it is family". This demonstrated that strong attachments had been formed. Staff cuddled and comforted children when required and were quick to respond if a child became upset. This meant that most children's emotional wellbeing was supported, and their needs were met.

At times, consistent strategies and approaches to support children's choice and wellbeing were not in place. We encouraged the service to ensure children's rights were always respected throughout the day, for example allowing children to leave an experience when they choose. The service should ensure that interactions consistently respect and value children's choice across experiences throughout the day (**see area for improvement 1**).

Children enjoyed an unhurried and relaxed eating experience. They chose when they ate, which allowed them to enjoy uninterrupted play. Children were supported to be independent by pouring their own drinks, serving their own food, clearing and washing their plates. For some of the mealtime experience, staff sat and spoke with children and made this a social experience. On the day of inspection, there were limited options for vegetables at lunch time. We suggested that the provider consider healthy options that are available at all mealtimes including special occasions to ensure they meet best practice guidance. Allergies and dietary requirements were identified and supported well. As a result, children were safe.

Systems for recording medication were in place, including parental permissions, storage information and records of administration. Staff were confident to talk about children with medication and plans in place for specific children. However, the information specific to medication was not always easily accessible, clear or regularly reviewed. We suggested the service develop an auditing system to ensure medication policies and procedures were consistently adhered to. This would enable children's individual needs to be fully considered and support staff to respond appropriately to any identified medical needs.

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 1.3 – Play and learning

Children were busy and engaged in leading their play and learning throughout our visit. They benefitted from a skilled staff team who were responsive and planned high quality play experiences, which promoted children's interests and curiosities. The staff team had developed creative approaches to ensure that all children had opportunities to link learning from home to nursery. For example, one child showed an interest in dinosaurs at home, the child then found that staff had set up dinosaurs in the setting to further explore. As a result, children felt listened to and their learning from home was valued. Children's learning and achievements were celebrated and displayed attractively throughout the play spaces. This allowed children to revisit and share their learning and take pride in their achievements.

Staff robustly evaluated and reflected on learning by using a measured approach which linked to relevant best practice and current research. This ensured that children benefitted from a staff team who had a deep knowledge and understanding of child development. As a result, progress in children's learning at nursery was evident and documented in different ways. This meant that children were progressing well and were happy and confident.

Children had fun as they experimented and explored open ended resources. They experimented with paint, explored the woodwork bench and benefitted from a variety of opportunities to be creative and develop their imagination. Staff asked questions to extend children's thinking. For example, while outside, the lock to the gate was frozen and a staff member asked the children how this could be fixed using skilled questioning. These extended conversations supported children's problem solving and creative thinking and showed that they were listened to and valued. This meant that children extended their learning through play, leading to increased self-esteem.

The staff team had completed extensive work with speech and language therapy around strategies and approaches for children with specific individualised support. We found that the strategies used by staff to support children were not always consistent. The service should continue to develop consistent approaches to ensure that all children get the support that is right for them.

Planning approaches were child centred with children actively involved in planning. Displays were used effectively to highlight children's learning. Children had individual next steps which key workers were able to speak confidently about. Observations highlighted children's learning and linked strongly to best practice guidance and current relevant research.

Areas for improvement

1. To consistently respect children's rights, needs and choices, the provider should ensure staff receive and implement training on approaches which develop staff's understanding of children's rights. This should include, but is not limited to, developing sensitive and compassionate responses to children's actions and ensure that children's choices are respected.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My views will always be sought and my choices respected, including when I have reduced capacity to fully make my own decisions' (HSCS 2.11).

How good is our setting?

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 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a setting that was welcoming, comfortable and furnished to a high standard. The entrance and play area were laid out in a way that immediately gave children and families a sense of belonging. The playroom had been developed with feedback from children. It offered children cosy spaces to rest and relax as well as areas to have fun exploring, creating and investigating. Low lighting and soft furnishings were used very well to create a homely environment which was relaxing. One parent told us, "It is a really warm environment, and you can tell that the staff work extremely hard". This gave a strong message to children that they mattered.

Children benefitted from close links with the local community. They experienced regular outings. For example, parents told us about positive experiences of trips to the Falkirk Wheel, Kelpies and the city centre. The staff members took time to ensure that trips to the local community were at the children's pace, not rushed and meaningful. This told children that they were valued and allowed them to take part at a pace that is right for them. The learning from this approach was thoughtfully captured by staff in a book that was written and displayed in the setting.

Regularly reviewed risk assessments were in place and effectively highlighted most hazards and appropriate actions to minimise potential risks to children and staff. We suggested that the outdoor risk assessment be re-visited to fully consider potential risks to children, including the height of the fence in the front garden. Children benefitted from a risk benefit approach from the staff team which valued meaningful real-life experiences such as using real tools, climbing trees and exploring the zip line outside. The staff team had worked hard to develop wonderful experiences for children outside and were creative with the use of space.

Staff understood their roles and responsibilities around infection prevention and control practices. Clear policies and procedures ensured that there was a consistent approach across the service. As a result, children were cared for in a safe environment.

Children's information was stored securely, and confidentiality was respected. This demonstrated the service's commitment to understanding and following guidelines on data protection.

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 passionate and enthusiastic team were committed to delivering high quality experiences for children and families. There was a shared inspirational vision amongst the staff team which valued children and recognised each individual child's potential. We saw practice that reflected this vision. For example, one child had shown an interest in woodwork and was supported on a journey as they built their own birdhouse using real saws, hammers and nails. This journey was captured very well and celebrated their learning while providing opportunities for children to reflect. This meant that children were supported to reach their full potential.

The leadership team knew their service well. They had developed an improvement plan which was targeted and achievable. There was a recent focus on supporting children's mark making skills. As a result, the staff demonstrated an in depth understanding of child development in this area. For example, staff focused on opportunities to develop children's fine motor muscles such as with clay and tools. Children's progress in this area was evident and documented very well, which highlighted the impact of this approach.

Children's and families' views were sought and used to inform further development of the setting. Parents had previously highlighted aspects of parental engagement and communication as an area for improvement. This is now a focus of the improvement plan. As a result, families felt listened to and actively involved in the development of the service.

There were opportunities for children to take part in feedback about the quality of the service and what they would like to be better. For example, children had been meaningfully consulted about where they would like the snack area in the setting to be. Practitioners spoke to us about how they gathered their views. On the day of inspection, we were unable to see where this was recorded. The setting should continue to move forward with their approach of how they meaningfully involve children in the development of their service and document this to allow children to reflect.

The leadership team ensured very good quality assurance systems were in place which evaluated many aspects of practice. Regular review meetings with staff and management gave them the opportunity to discuss their own training and development needs. Staff told us that they found this supportive and were encouraged to take on leadership roles.

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

Children experienced continuity of care as staff deployed themselves effectively to ensure high quality experiences. Effective communication between staff and their flexible approach meant children were supported in almost all areas. As a result, children were able to have access to the outdoors throughout the entire session. We suggested that the team explore how staff can be deployed to allow children to have access to both garden areas throughout the day.

Staff were proactive during busier times of the day, such as at pick up time, to ensure there was very good supervision and children were continually supported. The staff team worked effectively together to ensure that children's needs were met. Routine tasks were carried out with little or no impact to children. Transitions were well planned for, which meant that children were comfortable about what was happening next.

Building positive, trusting relationships was a priority in the service. Children benefitted from home visits to support their transition to nursery. This helped staff get to know children and their families and ensured they were fully involved in planning for individual needs and wishes. As a result, families were listened to and respected.

There was a wide range of regular opportunities for training. Staff spoke confidently and passionately about their recent training. They spoke to us in depth about the impact this had on their practice and on outcomes for children. Staff were enthusiastic about providing high quality care for all the children and developing their practice. They took part in regular appraisals with the manager which provided opportunities for them to talk about their development needs. As a result, children benefitted from a committed team who were focused on supporting positive outcomes for children.

Staff were proactive in recognising any gaps and ensuring effective supervision and quality engagement with children. This included during staff breaks, as they were very well planned for to minimise the impact on children's experiencing while ensuring staff had the opportunity to rest and be refreshed. This ensured children received continuity of care throughout the day.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - 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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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