

# Methlick Nursery Day Care of Children

Methlick School  
Methlick  
Ellon  
AB41 7DS

Telephone: 01651 806203

**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

29 November 2019

**Service provided by:**

Aberdeenshire Council

**Service provider number:**

SP2003000029

**Service no:**

CS2017358507

## About the service

Methlick Nursery registered with the care inspectorate on 21 August 2017. The service is provided by Aberdeenshire Council and registered to provide a day care of children service for a maximum of 20 children aged three to those not yet attending primary school. The nursery is accommodated within the primary school in the rural village of Methlick, Aberdeenshire.

The aims of the service were to provide a safe, nurtured and fun learning, environment, to deliver a child led approach focussing on children's interests to help build a learning programme comprising of individual developmental next steps and Curriculum for Excellence outcomes.

We carried out an unannounced inspection of Methlick Nursery on 29 November 2019. During the inspection we observed and talked to the children as they played. We spoke with three parents, the head teacher and nursery staff, we observed staff practice and outcomes for children and we checked documentation relevant to the inspection.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting it right for every child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it right for every child. They are: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

## What people told us

There were up to 11 children present at the sessions during the time of the inspection. We observed the children and saw that they were happy, busy and concentrating well on their activities. They were confident in and asking questions talking to us about their experiences, displays and photographs in their learning journals, which contributed to the inspection:

'We used the fire bowl (outdoors) and we made pizza and ice pops for lunch.'

'It looks like a ladybird' (playdough model with pipe cleaner legs.)

'My (playdough) cakes need to cook for 5.'

'Look at my baby, I made a bed and this is her blanket; she's going to sleep.'

'I painted daddy; he has yellow legs.'

We spoke with three parents who were very happy with the nursery. They spoke positively about the staff being very helpful, making time to talk with parents and being supportive with any issues. Parents described their children's enjoyment of nursery, how they had settled in well and making good progress in their learning; learning to count, talking about rhyming words, and children's increased confidence in playing outdoors in all weathers. Parents valued the information shared in for example the literacy presentation and seeing what

children had been doing in their journals. Parents had been able to make suggestions and felt these had made a difference.

Eleven parents returned completed questionnaires to us before the inspection. All strongly agreed or agreed that they were happy with the quality of care their child received in the service. Comments included:

'It is a warm, very welcoming, friendly environment. You can tell the teachers love their jobs and care so much for the children. My children love going and are always excited to go in. We are very lucky.'

'I am so impressed by the staff, facilities and outdoor opportunities. My child loves the setting and I am delighted with the care they are given during their time there. My child runs in everyday without any hesitation and is never in a rush to leave when I arrive to collect. This alone gives me peace of mind.'

'My child is very happy at Methlick Nursery and looks forward to going to 'school.' Everyone there is very happy and always smiling. It is a great village nursery and gets the thumbs up from us.'

'The village has a community garden, park, woodland walk, haddo and Formartines on its doorstep that could be utilised more by the school. Obviously this would be dependent on volunteers, and so on but could perhaps be something that is looked into further.'

'The staff have been a fantastic support and my child loves attending. My child's transition into nursery wasn't the easiest for my child or myself but the staff were amazing and in no time at all my child was comfortable and has gained confidence.'

'I am 100% happy with all aspects of care and learning. The staff are fantastic; a credit to the profession.'

'Methlick is the perfect size and also the teachers are calming and focussed. My child now wants to go to nursery and manages to tell me about their day. The teachers are not only lovely but incredibly focussed on the children, not gossiping with parents. They also allow children to act their age which I love.'

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance processes. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

<b>Quality of care and support</b>	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of environment</b>	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of staffing</b>	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of management and leadership</b>	5 - Very Good

## Quality of care and support

## Findings from the inspection

The quality of care and support provided for children at Methlick Nursery was very good.

Children were welcomed into the nursery and nurtured with warm and responsive care and attention. As a result children were happy and settled. Staff helped children feel secure and connected by displaying photographs of their families at children's eye level.

Good relationships and communication with children and families ensured staff understood children's needs. Clear personal plans had been developed in partnership with parents and regularly reviewed. Further support had been sought from external professionals where necessary. Risk assessments helped to protect children and keep them safe. Well organised systems were in place to ensure that where children required medicine or had an accident this was managed safely.

In response to a recommendation at the previous inspection staff had made significant improvements to how they observed and recorded children's progress in their learning and planned individualised support. Children were clearly achieving well as a result. Children had fun as they developed their skills in understanding and thinking as they confidently acted out the story of Red Riding Hood for a parent. Children manipulated play dough imaginatively; using story-telling and exploring size. Children's artwork was displayed showing their individual creativity and representational skills.

Children independently chose to play indoors or out demonstrating self-help skills in putting on outdoor clothes. Outdoors children experimented with mixing colours as they explored large scale painting. They played imaginatively constructing with open-ended materials, mixing mud in their mud kitchen and investigating how water travelled down a slope.

Children's health and wellbeing was promoted through routines and activities and having regular access to fresh air and physical play. Children helped to choose and prepare snacks. Where children chose not to help because they were busy their choice was respected. Most snacks identified on the menu were healthy however we suggested following the national nutritional guidance more closely and excluding foods usually associated with a meal or pudding, to help children learn to eat the right kind of snack foods.

Visiting professionals enriched children's experiences. Children demonstrated their knowledge of colours, rhymes and early counting skills from regular sessions of Spanish language learning. Kodaly singing was now being continued by staff. A zoo lab visit had sparked real interest and motivated children to learn more. The service was well placed to continue to provide high quality experiences.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

## Findings from the inspection

The quality of environment provided for children at Methlick Nursery was very good.

The nursery consisted of a self-contained classroom, kitchen area and adjoining cloakroom and toilet facilities. Significant improvements had been made to the environment since the previous inspection. The nursery had been re-decorated in neutral colours making the room fresher and lighter. Staff had continued this theme with neutral, calming display boards making the environment more inclusive. The toilet extraction systems were now working efficiently. A new nappy changing facility had been installed. The environment was very clean and systems to ensure cleanliness and hygiene were maintained well. These aspects contributed to an inclusive environment, privacy and dignity and better infection prevention and control.

Staff were responsive to children's interests and took account of children's next steps in learning in planning the environment and activities. The layout of the room made best use of space and provided stimulating open-ended resources in a variety of play themes. Furniture was modern, minimal and enabling. Children were able to access resources easily, make choices, direct their own play and move freely between the indoor and outdoor environment. As a result children were engaged and learning purposefully through their play both individually and in group activities with their friends.

The nursery utilised an area of the school playground making best use of the space available to them. Since the previous inspection the outdoor area had been extended and securely fenced. It was well equipped with a variety of play opportunities and lots of loose parts. A new literacy shed meant children could read and mark make in a cosy shelter. A canopy for den making also provided some shelter. As a result children were keen to be outdoors and busy with all the activities. The climbing frame was awaiting a repair.

Staff planned regular opportunities for children to explore a more natural environment within the school grounds however there was scope to make better use of the local community to provide more meaningful opportunities.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

The quality of staffing supporting children at Methlick Nursery was very good.

The current staff team consisted of an experienced lead early years practitioner, full-time and part-time practitioner. All were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and aware of their responsibilities to the code of practice.

The current aims for the nursery identified the values, skills and behaviours expected of practitioners; to be friendly and approachable, form supportive relationships with children, families and colleagues, be responsive to the children's needs, create fun, creative stimulating learning opportunities, to enable the children to have the confidence and skills to maximise their independence, be an inspiring role model, communicate in a manner which is professional at all times, and most of all let an enjoyment of working with children and families shine through. We found that the staff team were meeting these well thought out aims very well.

Parents reflected positively on the friendly welcoming atmosphere promoted by the staff. They felt staff were approachable and had made positive relationships with their children contributing to children being keen to come to the nursery and school. Parents felt staff had shared well judged information about their children's learning and development.

The staff team had established supportive relationships and worked well together. The lead practitioner with the involvement of all staff had systematically the impact of induction procedures and changes to the environment with a focus on outcomes for children.

All staff were aware of recent good practice documents and were working on initiatives for example involving children and families and intergenerational work. Core components of child protection, first aid, elementary food hygiene and infection control had been updated and learning was contributing to keeping children safe and well. All staff had undertaken training to build their own knowledge and could identify learning points; for example, in developing mathematics, story-telling and drama outdoors. Literacy pathways were beginning to be used to identify skills gaps. They could describe the impact of changes they had implemented in the environment on increased child led learning and free choice.

The staff team were motivated to continually develop the nursery and provide children with high quality experiences.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

The quality of management and leadership at Methlick Nursery was very good.

The nursery had been well led by the previous head teacher working in partnership with the lead practitioner and staff. Action plans had been taken forward resulting in significant improvements in the environment and approaches which had enhanced children's experiences and outcomes.

The lead practitioner and staff had developed innovative approaches to self-evaluation focussing on the impact of improvements on the children's experiences, and their engagement in learning. Approaches were now more responsive to children's interests and ideas. Children were more involved in evaluating the service and putting their ideas forward using a variety of methods; voting cups, voting buttons, an ideas tree and big book planning. A 'you said, we did' board reported back to parents on the results of evaluations.

As a result of evaluation with parents, information sharing with parents had been improved. Displays and information sharing sessions had helped parents to understand what and how children were learning in the nursery. The school website was up to date and informative. A parents Facebook page, a See-saw application, regular newsletters shared group experiences. A learning journey day shared more individual information. As a result, almost all parents responding to our questionnaires were very positive about being involved and informed.

The nursery was well placed to continue to improve. A new head teacher had recently been appointed who had quickly established positive working relationships with the staff, children and families. Further predicted changes to the management team during the expansion of early learning and childcare were being planned for in advance to ensure a smooth and seamless transition. The management team recognised that more formal quality assurance and assessment and moderation of children's progress would support this; and this being taken forward as a focus of the current school improvement plan.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

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

## Previous requirements

### Requirement 1

To ensure that the premises are fit for the purpose of providing a high quality service for the children the provider must by 17 August 2018 complete the planned re-decoration of the nursery and ensure all outstanding maintenance is attended to effectively.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.' (HSCS 5.22) and 'My environment is relaxed, welcoming, peaceful and free from avoidable and intrusive noise and smells.' (5.18)**

It also complies with Regulation 10(2)(c) and (d) Fitness of Premises; the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

This requirement was made on 4 July 2018.

### Action taken on previous requirement

Significant improvements had been made to the nursery, including re-decoration and nappy changing facilities. The nursery was now very well maintained.

**Met - outwith timescales**

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

### Previous recommendations

#### Recommendation 1

In order to ensure that children are fully supported to reach their potential the manager should help staff to plan for differentiated individual learning and to evaluate and track children's progress.

**This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me.' (HSCS 1.27)**

This recommendation was made on 4 July 2018.

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

Careful observation, assessment of children's progress and next steps in learning now impacted clearly on planning. Approaches had been significantly improved and were having a positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

The recommendation was met.

#### Recommendation 2

In order to ensure continuous development and secure the best possible outcomes for children the head teacher and staff should develop relevant and focussed improvement plans and implement systematic self-evaluation, monitoring and review.

**This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19)**

This recommendation was made on 4 July 2018.



## Action taken on previous recommendation

Clear action plans had resulted in significant improvements and impacted positively on the environment and enhanced childrens experiences. Systematic evaluation had included all stakeholders and was focussed on children's learning experiences and outcomes. Parents and children were now much more involved and their views taken account of.

The recommendation was met.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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								
16 May 2018	Unannounced	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>3 - Adequate</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>3 - Adequate</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	4 - Good	Environment	3 - Adequate	Staffing	4 - Good	Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
Care and support	4 - Good									
Environment	3 - Adequate									
Staffing	4 - Good									
Management and leadership	3 - Adequate									

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