

St. Pius Nursery Day Care of Children

Banchory Road
Dundee
DD4 7TQ

Telephone: 01382 438 528

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 June 2021

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2015337964

About the service

St. Pius Nursery is provided by Dundee City Council. The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate in 2015, and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 84 children at any one time as follows: A maximum of 54 children aged three to those not yet attending primary school. A maximum of 30 children aged two years of age.

The service is based in the grounds of St. Pius Primary School in Dundee. The nursery accommodation is a stand alone building and comprises of a large entrance hall, two nursery rooms, toilets and nappy change, and large, enclosed outdoor play areas directly accessed from the play rooms. Staff have made significant change to how space is used during the pandemic.

With the large three to five group being split into two cohorts, each with their own indoor and outdoor space. Two year old children are cared for in their own room and also have their own outdoor play space leading directly from the playroom.

Two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate carried out an unannounced on-site inspection on 10 June 2021. The inspection was completed virtually once requested documentation was provided by the service. Inspection feedback was given on 23 June 2021.

This was a focused inspection to evaluate how well children were being supported during the COVID-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of children experiencing care during the pandemic.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parents to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it Right For Every Child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. These are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

What people told us

Inspectors had some opportunities to speak with children during the on site part of this inspection and they spoke keenly about their play. Their comments included:

"Football - I'm in the goal - it's my turn"

"Going fast"

"I did it myself - I can do it"

"Need more water "

"It's germs"

"I'm in the show"

"Putting the fire out - that's my big hose - whoosh"

"That was a big jump - at the top".

Children were seen to be settled and happy in the service and to be enjoying the range of activities on offer. Children in both observed groups played outside for much of the observed session, returning inside for lunch and to use the toilet facilities. We viewed feedback gathered by the service through their consultation with children, which included their responsive approach to planning. Children's comments included:

"You have to cough like this (covers mouth) or this (coughs into elbow)".

"I turn around on my bed so I don't breathe on my mummy, and I know the germs song - happy birthday song."

"I hate the coronavirus."

"Why can't I help make snack- it's not fair."

"But I want to pour the milk!"

"I always want to help set the table."

"After coronavirus can we help?"

"I know why we have the spots there - it's so we all have to stand apart and wait and the arrows are for the way to go cos we have to go that way out that gate."

"I feel sad because I can't go to the skate park."

"I wash hands when I come in. Covid when you get a cold. My nose isn't making a noise anymore, watch (sniff, sniff)"

"I wash the hands when your playing outside cos it's the germs, can't bring toys and germs."

"Coronavirus that means you have germs. If you spread them they spread to more people. I just want them to go away."

"It spreads around cos bugs came. Washing our hands with soap. Someone had the coronavirus in our group and we have to get a test. We had to stay in our home."

"Don't spread the germs, wash our hands."

"When you wash your hands, you might have the coronavirus, if you don't wash your hands."

"Washing your hands for the germs."

These comments showed that age appropriate conversations were taking place in the service, children were learning about safe behaviours during the pandemic to keep themselves and others safe.

We were unable to speak directly with any parents during the inspection and requests to make contact with parents via telephone or e-mail were unsuccessful prior to concluding the inspection. We viewed feedback from the service's consultation with parents, their comments included:

"I'm happy with my child's transition into nursery."

"She plays with her friends."

"That she continues to enjoy her time there and learns new core skills like taking turns and sitting to eat etc."

"I'm happy with things how they are ."

"I was happy for her to be around other kids knowing that the nursery were following the correct procedures to keep everyone safe ."

"I was very confident that she would settle in well as she was made to feel so welcome."

"I feel I was given all details of how my child's day would be and information regarding dropping off and pick ups."

"With Covid and everything being up in the air, the nursery staff continued to update parents as things continued through the weeks."

"The cutting through school makes running into people that otherwise you would not be in contact with - seems strange ."

"My daughter starts 15 minutes later than my son and finishes 30 minutes after my son, which means hanging around in the playground when it is not supposed to be like that ."

When parents were asked "What does your child tell you about their time at nursery?" one commented; "Lots about friends, good and bad, play time, teacher one on ones and learning new words." another commented; "What he plays with, who he plays with, the nursery teacher names."

When parents were asked "What information would you like us to communicate with you?" one had commented; "Just what he is eating every day and if he's napping." another had said "Dinner and snacks - I don't know if he eats the lunch choice and when asked if I could bring a packed lunch I got told no. Which means my four year old goes hungry sometimes."

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 and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

4 - Good

Quality indicator 5.1:

Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during Covid-19:

- Children are nurtured and supported throughout their changed experience in their early learning and childcare setting.
- Effective communication with families enables responsive care to support children through changing circumstances.

There was a busy, purposeful and welcoming atmosphere throughout the nursery, with children seen to be active and involved at play. Staff had worked hard to implement change whilst keeping as much as possible familiar to the children. This had been effective in supporting children to feel settled and secure and to adjust quickly to returning to nursery.

Staff were nurturing and responsive in their care of the children. They engaged enthusiastically in their play, supporting and extending experiences appropriately to enhance learning opportunities and children's enjoyment of activities. Staff had fun with the children; there was much laughter and light-hearted interaction.

Children were happy, confident and had good relationships with staff. We saw active and confident children who led their own play and learning. They were building friendships, were independent and had clearly adapted well to the changed routines within the nursery.

Staff knew children and their individual needs well. Information was gathered and reviewed to inform children's care and support in the service. Learning journeys were well presented and accessible to children, with relevant observations tracking children's progress. Staff were preparing to introduce a new communication system, Seesaw, for the start of the next term. This should be effective in ensuring that learning journeys can be more routinely shared with parents and increase their involvement in their children's learning.

Staff made very good use of outdoor learning. All children were seen to be having fun outside, they were creative and had good opportunities to explore, investigate and problem solve. A range of activity and open-ended resources were available that offered challenge. We observed confident and active children, who climbed, jumped, balanced and had good awareness of space, speed and safe behaviours. They had opportunities to engage with nature, to use wheeled toys and be creative with loose parts materials. Outdoor learning was a key strength of the service; it was supporting children's emotional well being as well as promoting a safe play environment in the fresh air.

Staff were aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children. Staff received an annual update of child protection training that ensured their knowledge was up to date in this key area.

Staff should consider moving the mud kitchen from the railings leading into the adjacent street, as there were some highly confident climbers in the two's group and this posed a potential risk of accident or children able to climb over the railings and out of the nursery.

There could be more restful areas created outside to support the pace of the day for the younger children

attending, some of whom were getting very tired towards lunchtime. Staff should consider creating more spaces for children to sit, lie down and rest during their busy nursery day.

The younger children were becoming tired and restless by lunchtime and very little food was eaten by both observed groups. Some of the two's group left the table without trying their first course and did not return until dessert was served; this distracted the other children still sitting at the table. Staff sat at the table with children once serving the plated food. There was little conversation encouraged during the mealtime. Some children may have benefitted from more individual support and encouragement and a calmer atmosphere may have been more conducive to a more relaxed and enjoyable experience for children. We suggested that staff review mealtimes, taking account of the wealth of good practice documents to inform practice in this area. Staff should consider how they enhance the experience for all children, creating a more relaxed atmosphere, where children are supported to eat well, try more varied foods and ensure that their nutritional needs are met during the extended nursery day (see area for improvement 1). It was noted that the third cohort was not observed and staff reported that their group was calm and settled and the children ate well; this good practice should be used to inform whole service improvement.

Quality Indicator 5.2

- Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff.
- Children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

The service had incorporated Scottish Government guidance into the setting to keep children, staff and families safe. Staff were routinely updated with any changes to guidance which helped them to feel confident in their roles. Risk assessments, policies and procedures had been reviewed and updated to take account of Covid-19 and to inform staff infection control and prevention practice. Parents had been kept well informed about changes introduced to their children's nursery experiences in order to keep them safe and well.

The nursery environment was clean and well maintained. Regular cleaning took place throughout the day including additional cleaning of high touch areas. There was clear guidance in place for staff and checklists to note when cleaning tasks had been completed.

Windows were kept open at all times to ensure good ventilation of the building. Children spent much of their morning outdoors, in the fresh air, therefore reducing the risk of infection.

Children were cared for in consistent cohorts in designated areas. Each group had their own indoor and outdoor space which restricted wider mixing within the nursery. Staff socially distanced appropriately; numbers using the staff room were limited at any one time and appropriate use was made of PPE. Tables were seen to be cleaned before lunch and utensils used by the children came directly from the dishwasher. There was clear nappy changing guidance in place that reflected best practise.

Good hand washing was seen throughout the observed session, and this was further supported by use of hand sanitizer which was available throughout the nursery. Children were familiar with hand washing routines and younger children were helped to wash their hands thoroughly.

Staff had established safe arrangements for arrivals and departures from nursery. Parents were respectful of the system of designated routes and places to drop off and collect their children to avoid congestion. These outdoor parental contacts still allowed staff to share information with parents in a safe and socially distanced manner.

Quality Indicator 5.3

Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during Covid-19:

- Staffing arrangements meet the needs of children and families.
- Staff are well supported and confident.

There was a committed, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable nursery team who were confident in their roles and responsibilities. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of additional areas of responsibility in relation to implementing Scottish Government Covid-19 guidance. They had completed a range of training and read a range of guidance to enhance their knowledge and inform their practice, particularly in relation to Covid-19 and infection control and prevention practice.

Very good teamwork was observed. Staff were supportive and respectful of each other and flexible to meet the needs of the service. They had pulled together effectively through periods of staff shortages to ensure that the children continued to be well supported. This included the head teacher working in the two's room to ensure that staff to child ratios were met; she actively embraced this role and worked confidently alongside the rest of the team.

Staff had reviewed routines and all aspects of how the nursery operated to increase safety and reduce the risk of infection and virus spreading. All staff had been involved in reorganising the nursery environment, daily practice and routines to ensure that children's needs could be met within a safe environment. Staff had shared ideas and worked well together to make the required changes, with regular review and team discussions to ensure the smooth running of the service. The nursery had ensured continuity of care for the children by having consistent staff teams within the three cohorts.

Staff told us that they had felt safe returning to work and that the level of preparation, training and sharing of information had given them confidence and reassurance. Staff felt very well supported by the management team and felt that there were good systems in place for communication and information sharing. This was a positive, experienced and cheerful staff team, with a caring ethos, good leadership and commitment to the well-being of families.

Areas for improvement

1. Staff should review mealtimes to enhance the experience for children, support them to eat well and improve their nutritional intake to support their health and well-being.

This is to ensure that children's care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state:

'I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible .' (HSCS 1:35)

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	4 - Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	4 - Good
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	5 - Very Good

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