

Maidenhill Nursery Class Day Care of Children

Maidenhill Primary School
2 Maidenhill Grove
Newton Mearns
Glasgow
G77 5GW

Telephone: 01415 773 288

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
East Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003372

Service no:
CS2019374509

About the service

Maidenhill Nursery Class registered with the Care Inspectorate in August 2019 to provide a care service to a maximum of 120 children from three years of age to those not yet attending primary school. The service is provided by East Renfrewshire Council and operates from a large playroom located within the newly built Maidenhill Primary School, Newton Mearns, Glasgow. The accommodation includes a large purpose built outdoor play area to the rear, which is safely enclosed. The aims of the nursery include to: "Engage children in opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge enabling them to be successful learners. Promote respect and social justice for all, encouraging our children to be responsible citizens. Build on our learner's capacity to lead their own learning and recognise and celebrate the diversity of their abilities and achievements, supporting them to be confident individuals".

This was a themed inspection where we evaluated the Quality of Care and Support, Quality of Environment, Quality of Staffing and the Quality of 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 Care and Support.

The inspection was carried out by one inspector. 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 senior management team.
- Email exchanges with six parents.
- Virtual discussions with six members of staff.
- Reviewing key records, policies, and written procedures relative to Covid-19 - Evaluating procedures for the development and ongoing support for staff.

What people told us

During our inspection visit we observed children enjoying their play experiences, both inside and outdoors. They were happy, generally well settled and confident. Some of the children proudly talked about their play experiences and explained what happened during their nursery day.

We sent a request through the nursery to the families who used the service asking them to provide us with feedback about their experience of using the service. Six parents responded to our request and generally spoke highly of staff and appreciated the care and support given to their children. Most parents who responded were very happy with the quality of care provided by the nursery and believed staff worked hard to ensure their children felt happy, safe and secure. Some parents identified areas for future improvement and development (see comments below). Examples of parents' comments included:

"Since the reopening of the nursery, our son has felt very happy to go there 3 days a week. The communication is fantastic - we have a weekly email by the headteacher as well as nursery news flash regularly. Twitter and regular phone calls give us a better idea of what he is doing while at nursery. He is able to speak about his learning and has gained in independence and confidence. We are also handed his learning journal regularly. We haven't managed to attend the neighbourhood walk with the children and staff but think this is a great idea and would like to join next time."

"My daughter is at Maidenhill Nursery and has been for a year. She absolutely loves it. It's a shame not to be able to go inside, but she tells me all about the friends that she plays with and some of the experiences she has had, like visiting the school library, using the gym hall, playing It's a Bear Hunt with torches outdoors and all the lovely meals they have. She runs in excited for the day to start and is often in a huff that I've interrupted her playing when I collect her. She has a good relationship with the staff."

"From the outset Maidenhill, namely the Depute Head went above any expectations we had. It was clear they had thought about my son and his needs but also about us as parents and what they could do to alleviate any concerns we had during a pandemic. The Depute Head suggested a garden visit to meet our son and spend some time with him and she also visited him in the nursery he was attending. She also invited us to the nursery when it was shut so we could see the space my son would be learning in. All this totally put us at ease and from day one, my son has went to nursery very happy and we can see a massive difference in his strength, speech, signing and confidence. Communication in the beginning was hard as my son couldn't tell me what his day looked like but after a meeting with the nursery we agreed a communication book would be introduced so I knew what happened that day and I can also write in it if I feel they need to know anything. We have nothing but the highest praise for Maidenhill Nursery and the staff who have made the transition so much easier for our son and also his very anxious parents."

"My husband and I can see our child is thriving with his personality shining through. Its understandable that with the ongoing pandemic there has to be limitations and we fully accept this but we basically hand our child over from outside the door and take him back at home time with very little or no interaction about his day. On a very positive note, the staff are all lovely and friendly. We have had one keeping in touch phone call from the key worker which was fantastic. The only issue we personally have is we feel communication could be improved. As this is our first experience, we feel we are so out of the loop with what the children do on a daily basis. The twitter feed is good and has been updated more often in recent weeks which has been great but other than this and trying to prise information from our three year old we know nothing or have no other means of knowing about their progression/day to day activities."

"The nursery environment is really amazing and our son liked it a lot. It took a while for him to settle down due to different reasons because he was not given full time to nursery and also he was sick for a while and often. Even then his carers have taken a monumental effort to provide an amazing environment to make him comfortable. We used to have a chat once a month to discuss my son's improvement which helped a lot knowing what's happening in the nursery and based on this we changed our approach on the home side too. Overall we are happy about the things progressing and carers are taking such good care. We are happy that our son is in good hands."

"I will start with the positives which are the great Child Development Officers in the Nursery. However my overall experience with Maidenhill has been disappointing. I have been disappointed with the induction process. I was being asked to put my child into a new building she had never been before, leave her with staff she had never met, never seen a photo of nor spoken to before. It was very daunting for my child. In terms of settling, my child's key worker has been fantastic and has kept in as much contact with me as possible given the Covid restrictions. It has been challenging not having the daily key worker contact due to Covid. However, after discussion the key worker put in place a communication diary which has been great and enables me to know personal information about my child's days when she is at nursery. When this comes home this works well, however this does not regularly come home which is frustrating and disappointing. I have had to ask for more contact and information. It is not freely given. I find the overall communication from the nursery to be lacking."

Self assessment

We had requested a self evaluation prior to our inspection. The service had used "Key Question 5: Covid-19 Operating an early learning and childcare setting during Covid-19" very effectively as a self evaluation tool. We looked at their findings to cross reference with our own observations and assessment of the quality of service provision. The self evaluation demonstrated a very good understanding of 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	4 - 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

We looked at how the nursery's infection prevention and control practices supported a safe environment for children and staff during the pandemic. We found there were clear policies and procedures in place to ensure consistent approaches across the setting. A particular strength of the nursery's risk management approach was that the staff had voluntarily agreed to participate in the Scottish Government routine asymptomatic at-home testing programme using lateral flow devices (LFD). The Scottish Government had asked that early learning and childcare staff be encouraged to participate in this scheme to minimise the risks of Covid-19 spread and contribute to the wellbeing of everyone in their setting.

The staff we spoke to had participated in infection prevention and control training and understood the arrangements for enhanced cleaning within the setting. Risk assessments had been undertaken that addressed the areas within national Covid-19 guidance for keeping people safe. Staff told us they were encouraged to access risk assessments to keep up to date with any changes.

We looked at how the nursery's planning approaches for children's care, learning and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. Throughout the various play sessions we observed it was clear that children experienced warm and respectful caregiving. We observed staff being responsive to children's changeable interests and demands. Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.

We discussed with staff observation and planning approaches that focus on capturing and responding to the play interest of a child or group of children in the present moment. Staff agreed that adapting their existing approach would increase opportunities for staff to reflect on when children display deep level engagement in their play and support them to provide greater autonomy and choice as to how this will be taken forward.

We discussed with staff the need to ensure record keeping is manageable at the same time as making sure it is focused on supporting children's progress. We found children's learning journal entries could be further developed by enhancing the frequency and detail of recording of next steps for children. This can ensure that personal planning records more closely reflect ongoing changes in the breadth and depth of children's learning through play.

Staff demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the policies and procedures in place to ensure care and welfare of children including children protection. All staff received regular professional learning in safeguarding and told us they were confident in dealing with child protection concerns.

We found that quality of communication from the service to parents was not always consistent. The senior management team manager was aware of this and was working towards making communication better and increasing opportunities for parental involvement. This will help parents feel their views are respected and contribute to continuity in children's care between home and nursery.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We looked at the nursery environment and resources within it in terms of how they were managed to support positive outcomes for children. We found the accommodation provided a safe, secure and stimulating play environment that was of a high standard of cleanliness. Each play area was set out around a flexibly used community stage area which included a spiral staircase that led to an elevated children's reading area. The design of the main playroom contributed to free flow play. It helped promote children's sense of ownership within the nursery by providing opportunities for them make decisions about linking their play ideas and experiences across different areas. Wall displays contributed to a stimulating environment that celebrated children's achievements. Play spaces included a range of open-ended and natural resources to stimulate children's creativity and problem solving. Staff ensured spaces were set up in ways that were adaptable and had potential to encourage children's sustained shared thinking.

Staff told us that they regularly evaluated and reflected on the quality of children's play spaces. We identified a need for increased use of play props outdoors to support areas designed to foster children's imaginative play. We found loose parts materials could have been available in greater quantity to support children's collaborative play. The outdoor areas required to be monitored to ensure malleable materials such as sand and mud are available in sufficient quantities and regularly replenished. This can ensure that play environments motivate children to be creative by linking their play ideas across different contexts.

We discussed with staff their future plans for the development of the outdoor play spaces. We highlighted the need for children to have more regular access to challenging outdoor play beyond the setting. The senior management team agreed to develop and implement a programme for children to experience play in local woodland spaces. This will involve extending staff training in the forest schools approach and provide children with more opportunities or children to explore the natural world.

We discussed with staff how the expansion of funded childcare hours has led to new challenges for ELC settings to provide meals and snacks for children over the extended session times. We observed the newly established lunch time routine. Children sat at long tables to enjoy hot cooked meals across a rolling programme of sittings. We identified a number of adaptations to the environment and playroom routines which would help staff better realise East Renfrewshire Council's commitment to providing a more relaxed and nurturing environment during lunchtimes. The staff agreed that they needed to do more to ensure that children were joined at the table by the same key staff in small groups for the duration of the lunchtime experience. This can help create a more homely lunchtime experience for children. It will increase opportunities for staff to be responsive to individual needs. It will enhance the systems already in place that support children to develop positive attachments with key adults where they feel listened to, valued and included.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The staff routinely engaged in a wide range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice. This included: supporting emotional regulation in young children; literacy through play; sleep safety; supporting children's transitions; numeracy and mathematics outdoors; virtual nature school; ChildSmile toothbrush training; manual handling awareness; early years attachment. This helped to ensure the team's professional competencies and skills were up to date and staff felt confident in their different roles. Planned training and development opportunities supported staff to reflect on their practice and follow their professional codes and effectively implement nursery policies and procedures.

We found that core values and beliefs about early learning and care were shared by all staff. Staff told us of meetings through which they actively and openly shared their professional knowledge and ideas around the whole team. Staff told us that the team culture was fostered within a climate of asking questions, checking understandings and reflecting on practice. Staff told us of their shared desire to effect change and influence the quality of provision in the setting. The senior management team should continue to build the ethos of continuous improvement within the staff team.

They should widen the range of opportunities for staff to lead curriculum developments within the service. The staff team should consider how current initiatives, for example, in responsive planning, wellbeing, mindfulness, loose parts and outdoor play can be further consolidated and how their learning can be used to inform future parental involvement activities.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The senior management team demonstrated a clear vision for continuous improvement and were committed to including staff and families in that journey. We found that senior staff dedicated time to analysing parents' contributions to consultations and extracting the key messages, themes or ideas put forward. The nursery's improvement plan set out targets for delivering improvements in key areas, such as parental and family engagement, professional learning, and children's emotional wellbeing. Staff worked effectively together to ensure they had the resources and information necessary to complete improvement tasks. For example, staff approaches to observing and evaluating children's play were being developed through planned professional development opportunities. This had led to shared reflection on how this information would support outcomes for children.

Senior staff had carried out monitoring of playroom practice and environments and offered feedback so that staff could take action as needed. Staff told us they were encouraged to contribute to evaluating the quality of the service and were beginning to identify areas of practice where they could lead developments. These management approaches and leadership approaches helped build a sense of common ownership of practice developments. It improved the capacity of staff to meet the needs of all children in their care.

We discussed with staff strategies for developing children's sense of ownership of leading change related to their self chosen play projects. Staff agreed that more flexible use of big books or similar planning tools that were based on observations of children's most engaging and involving play experiences could strengthen existing opportunities for children to shape their play environments.

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

There are no outstanding recommendations.

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

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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