

Woodland Outdoor Kindergartens – Eastwood Day Care of Children

Eastwood Parish Church
5 Mansewood Road
Glasgow
G43 1TW

Telephone: 08081962588

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
1 September 2022

Service provided by:
Debison Albie Limited

Service provider number:
SP2009010399

Service no:
CS2009228879

About the service

Woodland Outdoor Kindergartens - Eastwood is registered to provide early learning and childcare to a maximum of 60 children at any one time. The age range of the children is from three years to those not yet attending Primary School.

The service is deemed nomadic as staff and children travel to Woodlands within nearby Pollok Country Park. The service has an established base in Eastwood Parish Church Hall from where parents drop off and collect their child. The accommodation comprises of two playrooms which have been divided into smaller based where children can begin their day.

A bus takes children from the base to the woodland environment, a short distance away.

The service offers full day sessions, throughout the year. Children present had various patterns of attendance over a week.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 30 and 31 August 2022. We gave feedback to the providers and managers on 1 September 2022. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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:

- spoke with five people using the service and received completed questionnaires from 30 families.
- spoke with six staff and management.
- observed practice and daily life.
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

There was a caring, nurturing ethos, where children were respectful and kind to the environment and those around them.

Children were encouraged to play and learn through building trust, confidence and independence. Self-regulation and social development are at the heart of the service.

Staff are professional and equipped for the role they undertake. All are either qualified or undertaking training.

The staff were enthusiastic and wanted to share their love of the outdoors with children and their families.

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?	4 - 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

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality indicator as good, as a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

We observed confident children, having fun, following their own interests and leading their own learning. They were cared for by adults who knew them well, engaged with them warmly and supported their learning and interests.

Staff were familiar with children's differing personal care needs and showed sensitivity when helping them.

Staff encouraged children to be independent as they took responsibility for their own belongings, and accessed the environment freely.

Each of the children had a personal plan which was online and shared with their families through a personal newsfeed. The plans included contact information, details of children's individual needs including any allergies or dietary requirements.

The app supported two way communication with families which meant they could share observations and children's experiences both in the nursery and at home.

Most of the parents who contacted us welcomed the new app and the ongoing communication it provided. A few parents told us that they did not receive updates regularly which meant that they were not always informed of their child's day or their learning. We shared this with the service and they agreed to check that all families had access to the system.

1.3 Play and learning

The focus of the setting was child-led play and this was evident during our visit. Children were encouraged to share their ideas and follow their own interests at both the bases and camps.

On arrival at the camps, most of the children quickly became immersed in the outdoor environment. Staff supported some of the newer children as they settled into the camp and became more confident in the setting.

Children were confident in following their own interests, but knew that adults were on hand to give them support when they needed it. The setting gave children ample opportunities to develop their skills and confidence and to follow where their curiosity took them.

Children were very considerate and respectful of one another, and the environment. Staff described how children had flourished over their time at the nursery and how the older ones had grown in confidence as they became role models for the younger ones. We watched as they patiently helped them with tasks, showed them how to tackle some of the physical challenges and understand queuing for the swing.

Staff observed children at play and were on hand to respond to requests for help, read stories, soothe them to sleep. We saw that at the time staff intervened appropriately to extend children's learning. However, we also saw some missed opportunities when they could have become more involved in children's play to help further develop children's interest and learning.

We discussed this with the manager who agreed that they would continue to support staff to develop their skills in observing children and supporting their interests and learning.

Children were given a hot, freshly cooked lunch which was brought to the camp. Meals took account of children's different dietary requirements and were clearly labelled. Lunches were well organised and relaxed. Children could spend as much time as they wanted to eat their lunch and sit with their friends.

There were suitable procedures in place for giving medicines to children. The new app enabled staff to gather consent for medication from parents and to share records of when it had been administered.

All staff clearly understood their role and responsibility to safeguard children. They had accessed training and had opportunities to discuss it as a team.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good, performance that demonstrates major strengths supporting positive outcomes for children.

2.1 Quality of the setting for care, play and learning

Children gathered in small groups at the start of the day spending time with familiar friends and adults. Each group has their own designated area where staff had planned activities and resources in discussion with the children, so they captured their interest.

Most of the children were happily engaged in play at this time and we discussed the benefit of all children having similar opportunities which would enable them to have calm, quieter environment. This would provide younger and newer children with support to settle and allow them to become familiar with nursery environment.

The nursery provision is nomadic. Children are taken to a local country park where the service have identified several areas as suitable camps.

Camps were named and older children were familiar with the features of each one. They told us of the experiences they offered them, for example climbing on a fallen tree or digging in mud.

Children were able to explore and engage with nature within set boundaries. In some camps they drew smiley faces with chalk on to the trees to make the boundary more visible for the children. This gave children confidence to explore independently. Staff positioned themselves so that can see children at play.

We saw that children were capable, confident, and happy outdoors. They had great fun exploring the environment, playing with their friends. They used the natural resources in different ways, making tools from sticks or leaves and mud into cooking ingredients. Among many valuable opportunities, they climbed on fallen trees or relaxed on them, enjoyed playing on swings erected by the staff, drew in the mud and made mud cakes, examined insects with magnifying glasses and talked about their habitats and food.

There were areas for children to rest, hear stories or have a nap in a hammock.

Children were involved in determining safety and rules. Staff involved them in carrying out risk assessments when they arrived at camp and reviewed them during the day. Children explained risks to each other and supported their friends by telling them to take care on slippery surfaces and the best way to climb the tree.

Staff had all completed a first aid course which had been adapted to ensure it took account of caring for children outdoors. They had also received updated training, monitoring children outdoors.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good, performance that demonstrates major strengths supporting positive outcomes for children.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

The providers, managers and staff team had a shared vision for the nursery.

The management team provided strong leadership within the service. Each member of the team had an area of responsibility which they were active in monitoring and developing.

The service improvement plans clearly set out their priorities for development and their aspirations for the service.

There were robust monitoring systems in place to support improvement within the nursery. We found that these had been effective in identifying areas of the service that were in need of development which the management team had already taken action to address.

This had led them to make changes to staff deployment and training opportunities which had positive impact on the staff team. Staff told us of the benefits of the new working groups as they were able to share their practice with others and take on some new responsibilities.

Another priority was to re-establish their face-to-face work with families as they valued close working relationships with parents and carers.

They had scheduled a meeting of their parents' steering group and planned family activities for families as a way of rebuilding their involvement in the nursery again.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality indicator as good, as a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement.

4.3 Staff deployment

Adults working with the children were professional, knowledgeable and skilled. Almost all of them held a childcare qualification or were studying. Some had completed further advanced training which supported them in leading aspects of the nursery provision. Those we spoke with welcomed these new opportunities. All staff shared a love of the outdoors which was evident when they spoke of how much they enjoyed their work.

Staff mainly worked in pairs, caring for a small group of children. This provided children with continuity as they were cared for by a familiar adult each day.

They each had designated responsibilities within the camp which they either choose or were delegated to them by managers. They described how they monitored children when outdoors and recent training they had attended to enhance their skills.

There had been changes to the staff team, partly due to the demand for experienced outdoor practitioners within the early years sector. This meant that the service lost some of their most experienced staff. However, they had worked hard to build their new team, this included working with them to change staff deployment so that staff now worked in groups with differing skills, experience and training. Those we spoke with agreed that this had been very beneficial in creating valuable opportunities for them to learn from one another and build their confidence.

During our visit we found that overall staff were suitably deployed within the nursery. The management team supported staff by providing cover during lunchtimes and other busy times in the day. We did find that there were moments in the day when some staff struggled to respond to children's needs. The manager told us that they were in the process of employing an additional member of staff who would be able to support different groups of children throughout most of the day. We welcomed this as a very positive development.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

This requirement was the result of an upheld complaint.

The provider must make sure that children are safe and protected at all times. In order to achieve this the provider must ensure that:-

- (a) there is enough staff to meet children's needs while supervising the forest kindergarten;
- (b) there is mix of staff skill and experience when supervising the forest kindergarten camps;
- (c) the risk assessment is reviewed and updated to include children who are known to be a flight risk;
- (d) children who are known to be a flight risk should have an individualised risk assessment;
- (e) all staff understand their responsibility for effectively supervising children.

This requirement was made on 15 July 2022.

Action taken on previous requirement

The provider/manager had improved staff deployment to ensure there is a mix of staff skills and experience at all times. They had reviewed and updated risk assessments.

They had implemented staff training on monitoring children and escorting them while outdoors.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

This Area for Improvement was the result of an upheld complaint.

The provider should ensure that the service inform the Care Inspectorate of all notifiable events.

This area for improvement was made on 15 July 2022.

Action taken since then

The manager had updated procedures in the service to ensure that they inform the Care Inspectorate of all notifiable events

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.1 Quality of the setting for care, play and learning	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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.