

Carbon Footprints Nursery Day Care of Children

10 Duke Wynd
Glasgow
G4 0WX

Telephone: 01415 486 500

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 September 2022

Service provided by:
Milnbank Housing Association Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003000178

Service no:
CS2010270709

About the service

Carbon Footprints Nursery provides a care service to a maximum of 75 children in the following age categories: 27 children from six weeks to under three years, of whom no more than 12 will be aged six weeks to two years; 24 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school; 24 children of primary school age to 14 years of age. The service is based in a purpose-built accommodation in Duke Wynd near Glasgow city centre. The building layout comprises three ground floor playrooms for children aged under five years; and a first floor playroom and computing space for the provision of out of school care for older children. There are also appropriate children's toilets, changing areas, kitchen, office and staff facilities. There is a secure outdoor play space to the rear of the building. The service provider is Milnbank Housing Association Limited and operates in partnership with Glasgow City Council to provide early learning and childcare for children aged three to five years.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 22 September 2022 between 09:30 and 15:00. 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 throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with several children using the service and reviewed survey responses from four parents whose children attend the service
- spoke with the service provider, management team and six staff
- observed practice and staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced interesting and motivating play and learning opportunities within creative outdoor spaces.
- Staff worked with families, involving them in decisions about their child's care and development.
- Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.
- Staff should develop strategies for developing children's sense of ownership of leading change related to their self chosen play projects.
- The management team should continue to build on the variety of opportunities for staff to lead curriculum developments within the service.
- The providers to ensure they develop an approach to recruitment that builds stability in the staff team through the retention of experienced staff.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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 made an evaluation of good for this key question as we found performance where there was a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. The strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

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 sensitive 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.

Staff worked with families, involving them in decisions about their child's care and development. Children's personal plans reflected these discussions, and recorded strategies that were being used in practice to help children achieve their goals. One parent commented: "Staff always take time to speak to us when we collect our child at the end of the day." Another parent highlighted the "Very personal care between carers and my child." We noted that there were inconsistencies in information staff recorded about children within their individual personal plans. Staff told us they had worked hard to review and adopt a new record keeping system. This included some detailed observation entries of children's play and learning but they struggled to ensure they were consistently up to date. We discussed documentation approaches that would support staff to focus more on providing a clear summary of children's current key care support and learning needs with relevant support plans, personalised strategies or next steps. This will support staff to reflect on ongoing changes in the breadth and depth of children's learning through play while recording significant developments.

1.3 Play and learning

In the playrooms and outdoors there were some well considered open ended materials and creative approaches that successfully engaged children's imagination and enriched their play and learning. Children engaged in a range of role play and creative experiences that supported their imagination to flourish. The use of questions from staff helped children to extend their thinking and consolidate their thoughts and ideas through play.

A selection of natural and open ended materials challenged children's thinking and encouraged them to solve problems. Children used these resources to extend and develop play. Toys and materials were transported across the room and garden helping children develop their ideas and reach their goals. We observed children negotiating space and risk taking as they learned to use their body in different ways in the garden. Children were learning valuable skills through these varied experiences.

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.

We discussed with staff additional 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 this more responsive approach could help them to build on existing approaches for recognising children's play interests as well as extend opportunities for child-initiated play. This can enhance the flexibility of the planning systems that were followed. It will 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.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question as we found performance where identified strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

We looked at the nursery environment and resources within it in terms of how they were managed to support positive outcomes for children. The nursery play spaces included the provision of open-ended and natural resources. Spaces were set up in ways that were adaptable and had potential to encourage children's creativity. Staff told us that they regularly evaluated and reflected on the quality of children's play spaces.

We identified a need for these shared reflections to focus more closely on how setting up and monitoring of each play area can lead to challenging and engaging play opportunities for children. We discussed with staff the need to ensure that all outdoor play environments offer excitement, are richly resourced and appear attractive to children. The outdoor areas required to be monitored to ensure malleable materials such as sand, water 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 highlighted and staff agreed that regular planned outdoor play opportunities within park and woodland spaces beyond the nursery setting would further increase opportunities for children to experience fresh air and enjoy challenging play. Outdoor play in different environments can encourage young children to move their body in different ways and widen opportunities to learn through their sensory and physical experiences. The manager agreed to make this a focus of future improvement and professional development planning.

Acoustic arrangements within the baby room were not conducive to a calm environment which supported children's sleep routines. We discussed with staff resources, layouts and sound dampening measures that could help to ensure these playrooms were more relaxed, inviting and peaceful with reduced levels of intrusive noise.

Staff understood the arrangements for cleaning within the service and risk assessing play spaces. However, some areas such as use of sinks, storage of hand towels and laundry, fire exit blockages presented levels of potential risk to children's health and safety. These issues were addressed by staff during the course of our inspection. We highlighted to the management team the need to continue to ensure risk assessments, cleaning schedules and fire procedures were monitored and implemented to contribute to everyone's health and safety.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question as we found performance where there was a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. The service's improvement plan reflected their key priorities. A child centred and play based ethos was evident throughout the setting and staff practice.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We discussed with the manager how she supported her team to reach their potential through the use of appraisals, peer observations, and the staff development and review process. We found that shared reflections and development opportunities were beginning to support the management team and staff to influence and lead positive change. Staff told us of their enthusiasm for implementing play-based initiatives linked to observation, responsive planning, children's emotional, personal and social development, early literacy, numeracy, and outdoor play. The manager agreed to develop monitoring systems to ensure these initiatives were being implemented, progressing well and having positive impact on the experiences of children. We highlighted how this approach could enhance the on-going development of the service as well as its capacity to secure the best possible outcomes for children and families.

We found that the service's leadership approach supported improvement planning and professional reflection across the staff team. All staff contributed to the service's improvement plan that set out the service priorities and expectations for improvement. The collaborative approach to self-evaluation ensured staff engaged in regular discussion of the impacts of recent improvements and changes within the nursery.

Some work was at an early stage and there was a need to continue to develop approaches to self-evaluation. For example, staff were becoming familiar with the Care Inspectorate "A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare" (Care Inspectorate, 2022). Overall the approaches we found in place supported everyone involved within the service to develop a shared understanding of its vision, values, strengths and improvement needs.

The management team should build on the variety of opportunities for staff to lead curriculum developments within the service. We discussed with the management team the value of extending training opportunities linked to wider champion roles for staff. The management team agreed that this would support more staff to lead developments in child centred planning as well as play based learning. This approach has the potential to enhance the depth and range of children's learning.

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We made an evaluation of adequate for this key question as we found performance where there was some strengths, but these just outweighed weaknesses. The strengths had a positive impact but the likelihood of achieving positive outcomes for children was reduced because key areas of performance needed to improve

4.3 Staff Deployment

The staff routinely engaged in a range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice. We found staff were confident in discussing how they had improved their practice as a result of their own professional learning activities. We found that this learning had a positive impact on the quality of experiences for children, their progress and wider improvements in the setting.

Staff felt well supported by the manager. They told us that they felt able to approach them with any concerns, and that they had been proactive in ensuring their well-being throughout the pandemic. Staff worked well together and supported each other. This helped to contribute to a happy and welcoming atmosphere. Recently appointed staff told us that they had been made to feel welcome. Recently recruited staff told us about their positive initial induction experiences and how this had helped them feel part of the wider nursery team. We highlighted the value of extending the length of the staff induction programme to provide more time for new staff to develop a fuller awareness of current best practice guidance, what was expected of them and how they would be supported and expected to meet the needs of the children. We signposted the manager to Scottish Government early learning and childcare national induction resource available on the Care Inspectorate online Hub to support this process.

We found that the current national staff recruitment and retention crisis affecting the early learning and childcare sector in Scotland had directly impacted on the mix of skills and experience within the staff team. The provider told us of the challenges she had experienced in recruiting a deputy manager and fully qualified practitioners to fill current team vacancies. This meant that some staff were working towards initial training qualifications relevant to their post. Full completion of the training will lead to their unconditional registration as qualified practitioners with the Scottish Social Services Council. There were also an agency worker present on the day of the inspection. We discussed the importance to children's emotional health and sense of security of intimate care, including feeding of babies, being delivered by familiar key adults who are perceived as consistent, reliable, trustworthy, and responsive to their needs. The manager highlighted the steps she had taken to restructure the service to maximise opportunities for children to experience consistency and continuity in their care from key workers who knew them well.

Areas for improvement

1. In order to ensure children experience stability in their care and support from people who know their needs, the provider should ensure they develop an approach to recruitment that builds stability in the staff team through the retention of experienced staff.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I experience stability in my care and support from people who know my needs, choices and wishes, even if there are changes in the service or organisation". (HSCS 4.15)

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

The manager and staff should review children's personal plans to ensure they are reflective of current health, welfare and safety needs. Plans should clearly outline how the service will support individual children and should identify any next steps in learning. Plans should be reviewed with parents within a six monthly period, or before if required.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "My personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices" (HSCS 1.15).

This area for improvement was made on 14 September 2020.

Action taken since then

We found that staff had worked hard to introduce a new record keeping system to support personal planning and children's learning profiles. These included some detailed observations of children's play and learning.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children's health and wellbeing, the service provider and manager should identify and plan child protection training, and annual updates, for all staff. This training should include a focus on emerging issues within society, such as trafficking and online safety.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities" (HSCS 3.20).

This area for improvement was made on 14 September 2020.

Action taken since then

Staff were clear about their role in safeguarding children and had attended training to keep their knowledge up to date. This meant they felt confident about the procedures to follow in the event of concerns for children's welfare.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The management team and staff should continue to develop opportunities for children to access a high quality outdoor experience every day throughout the year.

This will ensure the quality of the environment is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors." (HSCS 1.25) and

"As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment." (HSCS 1.32)

This area for improvement was made on 14 September 2020.

Action taken since then

Playroom routines had been reviewed and revised to ensure that children had daily opportunities to experienced outdoor play.

Staff agreed that regular planned outdoor play opportunities within park and woodland spaces beyond the nursery setting would further increase opportunities for children to experience fresh air and enjoy challenging play. The manager agreed to make this a focus of future improvement and professional development planning.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

In order to support children's choices and promote their wellbeing through play, the provider should ensure staff engage in professional development in observation and responsive planning approaches that help children to experience developmentally appropriate levels of challenge.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: "As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling." (HSCS 1.30) and

"As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials.' (HSCS 1.31).

This area for improvement was made on 7 May 2021.

Action taken since then

Staff had undertaken professional development and learning in numeracy, literacy, creative use of digital technology, block play, drama through outdoor play, Pre-birth to Three curriculum. This had supported staff observations and shared reflections on children's play and helped them plan more meaningful and challenging daily play experiences.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 5

In order to ensure staff follow child-centred approaches to planning for children's learning and development the provider should ensure that entries made to children's learning journals and profiles fully reflect children's progress, achievements and next steps.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: "As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity." (HSCS 2.27).

This area for improvement was made on 7 May 2021.

Action taken since then

We discussed documentation approaches that would support staff to focus more on providing a clear summary of children's current key care support and learning needs with relevant support plans, personalised strategies or next steps. Staff agreed that this would support them to reflect on ongoing changes in the breadth and depth of children's learning through play while recording significant developments.

This area for improvement is not met and will be reviewed at the next inspection

Previous area for improvement 6

The provider should strengthen the knowledge, skills and competence mix within the staff team to support children's experience of the Pre-birth to Three and early level of Curriculum for Excellence. This should increase the staff team's capacity to help children experience challenge, enjoyment, breadth progression, depth, personalisation and choice in their play and learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: "I am supported to achieve my potential in education" (HSCS 1.27) and

"As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity." (HSCS 2.27).

This area for improvement was made on 7 May 2021.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement has been overtaken by a revised and consolidated area for improvement set out in the section above entitled 'How good is our staff team?'.

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	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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