

Glenwood Family Centre Day Care of Children

Rouken Glen Road
Giffnock
Glasgow
G46 6UG

Telephone: 01415 707 520

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Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
East Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003014614

About the service

Glenwood Family Centre provides a care service to a maximum of 180 children not yet attending primary school at any one time. The care service provider is East Renfrewshire Council. Glenwood Family Centre operates from new purpose-built premises in the Thornliebank area of East Renfrewshire. The modern designed accommodation includes three large playrooms, a spacious children's cloakroom area, reception area, offices, staff room, kitchen, toilets, covered outdoor boot room and changing space. The facilities provide children with free-flow access to large secure enclosed outdoor play areas and support regular access to a nearby woodland areas within Eastwood Park. The service is close to shops, schools, transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 23 February 2023 between 09:30 and 15:45. 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 8 parents whose children attend the service
- spoke with the senior management team and 10 staff
- observed practice and staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The provider's investment in the development of the new family centre facilities supported experiences and outcomes for children which were of an outstandingly high quality.
- Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together and had created a welcoming, inclusive environment.
- Positive working relationships between the manager team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children.
- Children experienced interesting and motivating play and learning opportunities within creative outdoor spaces.
- Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.
- The manager's leadership approach had helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care.
- Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes enabled the service to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and families particular needs and choices.
- We identified examples of sector leading practice from which other early learning and childcare services could learn.

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?	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

6 - Excellent

We made an evaluation of excellent for this key question as we found innovative, effective practice and very high-quality performance across a range of the nursery's activities from which other services could learn. We were confident that this level of performance was sustainable and that it will be maintained.

1.1 Nurture, care and support

We looked at how the service's planning approaches for children's care, learning and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together and had created a welcoming, inclusive environment. Their sound knowledge of child development, GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) and the well-being indicators resulted in children's individual needs being met. 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 closely with families, involving them in decisions about their child's care and development. This enabled the relevant staff to respond quickly, sensitively and compassionately to changes in a child's life. Staff were highly skilled in using the information in children's personal plans to meet their needs. Personal plans and learning story journals using the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) wellbeing indicators and the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence were regularly reviewed and included targets for achievement and next steps. Staff told us how they worked with parents to ensure personal plans included the key information needed to provide appropriate care, meet any medical needs, recognise their cultural heritage and take forward children's learning and play interests. One parent commented: "The level of support my child has been given has been excellent. Staff have been very flexible with my son to meet his individualised needs and support his transition to the nursery routine. This support from nursery staff is totally individualised for my son. He is being supported to learn about his own personal identity through various tasks which he has taken part in at nursery and as part of set home learning." Another parent told us: "Communication between the nursery and my family has been excellent. Before my son started officially a staff member really took the time to find out about my son, his likes and dislikes, areas of strength and areas for development, as well as what was important to him and us as parents. Staff have regular conversations with us about our child's progress and play and friendship choices he has made."

Children's wellbeing plans and additional support needs were closely monitored to ensure progress in relation to targets. A specialist Hanen program was provided by staff to support children's varied communication needs including children language delays, autism and literacy development. Relevant staff work proactively with children, families, and other professionals to identify appropriate next steps and strategies based on individual needs. This information was used consistently and effectively by all staff to ensure outcomes were of outstandingly high quality.

1.3 Play and learning

We found that staff promoted a culture within the service that focussed on promoting the children's right to play, have fun and experience challenge. Staff told us they worked hard to provide a rich variety of high quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice, children's interests, as well as tracking and reflecting on individual achievements. Through discussion with staff it was evident they shared a clear understanding of the resulting impact of this approach on the breadth and depth of children's learning.

Staff had high aspirations to enable children to be successful. Children's voice was highly valued, and they were empowered to lead their own play and learning. As a result, children were confident, happy and motivated to learn. Highly effective questioning provided an abundance of opportunities for children's thinking, widening their skills and consolidated their learning through play experiences. This supported children to achieve their potential. A range of strategies and regular opportunities through structured activities and programmes supported children to flourish and achieve. This significantly contributed to the inclusive ethos of the service. One parent commented: "The nursery hosted a curriculum night for parents at which the family centre's values and aims were shared. This was so informative. Each staff member spoke clearly about their area of strength/interest/developments, and they explained how the resources and activities set up in the nursery support children to make progress and achieve the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. Staff spoke with such passion and enthusiasm towards creating positive, engaging learning experiences for children."

We found children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality experiences that promoted choice and independence. Well considered innovations such as a 'Digi Dome' to support digital literacy and creative approaches successfully engaged children's imagination and enrich their play and learning. Family fun bags and maths home bags had been distributed as home learning initiatives linked to maths week and British science week. These helped to engage families in the life of the nursery and extend their involvement in children's learning.

Children had opportunities to link their learning and play ideas across different play spaces as they moved freely between the indoors and well resourced and secure outdoor spaces. The staff had established a woodland adventures programme within Eastwood park that provided children with opportunities to explore and experience nature based learning challenges. These experiences promoted children's health and wellbeing and develop their understanding of the changing seasons and the natural world.

How good is our setting?

6 - Excellent

We made an evaluation of excellent for this key question as we found the providers investment in the redevelopment, resourcing and building of the new family centre facilities supported experiences and outcomes for children which were of an outstandingly high quality.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The service made excellent use of available resources to create a motivating environment for children to play together. 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 thinking. The family centre had had successfully achieved the Education Scotland' STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) Nation Award as result of the innovative ways that staff had encouraged children to use play based resources that broadened their learning across the curriculum. At the time of the inspection, staff had planned open sessions for professionals within the Education Sector in Scotland to promote an understanding of how children and parents/carers and the wider community had been engaged in promoting STEM and skills across learning within the setting.

The family centre had also achieved a nationally recognised Digital Schools Award in recognition of the how the service promoted, recognised and encouraged children's innovative engagement with digital technology in the centre. Since achieving this award and the creation of digital learning spaces within the setting staff

had been contacted by early learning and childcare services from around the country to share their practice through visits to the centre. Staff told us how digital software tools were used extensively within the centre to support communication access for all children. We found digital resources including QR codes were utilised very effectively within the centre, and supported the targeting and challenging of learning for children. Digital technologies also played a significant role in the creation of the children's Learning Journals, with iPads being used to photograph and record their learning achievements. Staff and children's plans for the development of digital learning were shared through a digital working party. This had led to staff and children developing skills in use of digital smart boards to promote collaborative learning centred around children's play interests.

In the playrooms and outdoors there were plenty of well-considered open ended materials and creative approaches that successfully engaged children's imagination and enriched their play and learning. Children used these resources to extend and develop play in line with their self-chosen plans. We found that staff shared their reflections on how setting up and monitoring of each play area led to challenging and engaging play opportunities for children. This helped to ensure that all play environments offered excitement, were richly resourced and appeared attractive to children. Staff told us how STEM grant funding had been used to support staff training on growing plants and led to adaptations to the outdoor play space including the addition of raised growing beds that widened children's experience of growing vegetables and fruit. A parent commented: "There are a huge variety of resources and activities available to the children My daughter gets involved in so many great activities along with lots of outdoor time. She often gets trips to the woods and she loves this." We discussed with staff how these regular planned outdoor play opportunities within parks and woodland spaces increased opportunities for children to experience fresh air and enjoy challenging play. The senior management team agreed to make this an ongoing focus of future improvement and professional development planning.

How good is our leadership?

6 - Excellent

We made an evaluation of excellent for this key question as we identified outstanding levels of performance across a range of the family centre's quality assurance and improvement activities.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Positive working relationships between the manager, team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children. Staff told us how the manager provided a clear focus for their shared team work including setting out clear responsibilities and expectations. We found that the manager's leadership approach had helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care. It had contributed to children's emotional health and wellbeing by ensuring the care they experienced was delivered by familiar key adults who were perceived as consistent, reliable, trustworthy, and responsive to their needs. A parent commented; "I have complete confidence in the leadership skills of the Head teacher. She is always available, very approachable and extremely prompt in taking action when necessary and providing reassurance when needed." We found that very strong leadership of the service supported staff to have high aspirations and confidence in their capacity to support children and families to reach their full potential.

The staff team worked together very effectively to evaluate and reflect on their practice. They were keen to take forward current ideas, develop and implement best practice guidance. We found that staff were highly motivated, very well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children. This resulted in children experiencing high quality interactions and a broad range of stimulating play experiences centred around their emerging interests.

The management team told us how they dedicated time to analysing children's, staff and parents' contributions to any consultations and extracting the key messages or themes. We found that these self-evaluation processes enabled the service to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and families particular needs and choices. A parent told us: "I really feel that the family centre has done an excellent job in working with parents as partners. There are so many opportunities and invitations for parents and wider family members to join in with the learning and wider life of the nursery. The nursery is excellent at considering protected characteristics of children and families and has taken active steps towards ensuring an inclusive, anti-racist approach."

The manager promoted a shared vision for the setting that reflected the aspirations of children, families, partners and the wider community. The senior management team had created conditions where all staff and parents felt confident to initiate well-informed change and share responsibility for the process. Children and families' views were actively sought to inform the development of the centre. A parent told us: "I am invited to regular meetings in which management share information about the nursery, discuss any issues etc and discuss next steps in various areas. At these meetings I am asked for my opinions and ideas and I am given the opportunity to contribute towards the decisions that are made. All parents are invited to join in with these meetings even if they are not members of the committee." We found that the family centre's approach encouraged all stakeholders to be meaningful participants in discussions about improvements and the quality of outcomes for children attending the service.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

4.3 Staff Deployment

Effective staff deployment across the service meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff throughout almost all elements of the day. The staff to child ratio allowed staff to be responsive to individual needs which enhanced children's experiences and ensured children had the right support at the right time. Children who required additional support were well supported by staff to feel respected and included in daily experiences. This was enhanced through effective working relationships with families. One parent commented: "My son has two cousins at the nursery who are in different groups, and he is regularly supported by staff across all three rooms so that he can spend time with his family members. This level of personalisation and choice supported my son in developing greater confidence at nursery and reduced his anxieties." Another parent told us: "Staff are supporting my son with toilet training and transitioning from pull-ups into pants. I use a pom-pom reward system at home and staff approached us to offer their support in setting up this same reward system for my son to encourage him to use the toilet when he is at nursery. This support from nursery staff is totally individualised."

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. The capacity of the team to deliver sector leading initiatives linked to nationally recognised awards was enhanced by the number of staff holding or undertaking advanced leadership qualifications in childhood practice.

A robust induction process supported newly appointed staff to meet children's needs. The induction programme helped new staff to settle into their role and become part of the staff team. As a result, they were clear about their roles and responsibilities which supported children's experiences.

All staff felt very well supported in their roles as they had opportunities to talk about their work through team meetings, 1:1 supervision discussions and monitoring of their practice. The manager had created conditions where staff felt confident to take on additional remits that promoted children's wellbeing and broadened the range and depth of children's learning experiences. These included leadership roles in the use of digital smartboards, virtual nature schools, outdoor play and woodland adventures, Book Bug, Child Smile and paediatric first aid.

We highlighted and the manager agreed that staffing and room layout arrangements during mealtimes could be enhanced to ensure they provided richer opportunities for children to connect and engage in conversations with staff. We signposted the manager to our practice note 'Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare (ELC)' to support professional reflection on mealtime improvements within the 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?	6 - Excellent
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
1.3 Play and learning	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	6 - Excellent
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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