

Strathclyde University Nursery Day Care of Children

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Unannounced

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Service provided by:
Childcare Scotland Properties Limited

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Service no:
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About the service

Strathclyde University Nursery is one of seven Daycare of Children services provided by Childcare Scotland Properties Ltd. The service is based in the city of Glasgow, and works in partnership with Glasgow City Council to provide funded early learning and childcare places. The service is provided from converted premises within the university campus. Playrooms are located on the ground floor and children have access to two outdoor play areas. The service is close to a range of amenities including a library, recycling centre and shops.

The nursery provides care to a maximum of 56 children, not yet of an age to attend primary school, at any one time. Of those 56, no more than 12 are aged under 2.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 28 March 2023 and 4 April 2023. 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 registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with several children using the service.
- Reviewed written information provided by nine families.
- Spoke with staff and management.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The management team was effectively supporting improvement across all aspects of the service.
- Staff were nurturing and responsive to children's needs.
- The management team worked hard to make the service inclusive for families.
- Children could make lots of choices about their play and learning.
- The nursery was bright, well maintained and welcoming.
- Parents were happy with the service they received.
- Quality assurance processes should continue to be developed to support the service's improvement journey.
- Planning processes should continue to be developed.

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?	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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this key question as good. as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Almost all children were confident, happy, settled and having fun. There was a relaxed, inclusive and happy atmosphere. Staff used kind and caring approaches, readily offering reassurance, encouragement and support to support children's well-being. Staff knew almost all children well and engaged with all children respectfully, for example, asking them if they would like help and respecting their views. Children were encouraged to think about how they were feeling and had pictorial prompts to help them express this. All parents commented favourably about relationships and nurture. One said: "The staff know my child very well. They are nurturing and responsive to my child's needs".

Some newer children were not yet confident and comfortable in the setting, and had not yet formed close attachments with staff. We asked the service to consider how to improve the settling in process, for example by gathering rich information about children's preferences and interests as early as possible. This will support staff to ensure children have positive early experiences.

Children enjoyed positive, relaxed and sociable lunch experiences. Staff created opportunities for children to develop language and social skills. Children were encouraged to be independent, for example by pouring their own drinks. Children appeared to enjoy their meals. If they did not like the first choice, they were offered soup or a sandwich. This ensured that all children were provided with a healthy and nutritious meal. Parents were happy with the meals and snacks, and particularly liked the recent introduction of hot meals. One parent told us: "The quality and range of the snacks/meals are great. There is a wide range of options and its good it varies every week so that it's not the same all the time. Also, if my child doesn't like what is on the menu that day then an alternative is always offered which is good".

Good opportunities for sleep meant children were appropriately rested and refreshed.

Staff knew almost all children's needs, preferences and interests well. A range of information for each child had been gathered to develop written personal plans. These demonstrated that children and their families were included in planning for children's care and development, and included individual target setting around Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators. Overall, personal plans provided an overview of children's progress. We highlighted the potential to improve consistently around how children's progress, next steps, and significant life events are recorded. This will help ensure everyone involved in children's care and learning has the right information to provide them with the right support at the right time.

Staff had an understanding of child protection procedures as a result of training that contributed to the safeguarding of children. The manager was aware of the process for recording and sharing information to ensure children's safety and well-being.

Medication and an audit of accidents were well managed overall, which helped to keep children safe and healthy. We advised that more detail should be recorded regarding the signs and symptoms that children may display, to indicate the need for medication.

1.3 Play and learning

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children experienced good quality play and learning that was fun and met their interests. They told us about their favourite things to do, which included playing with the magnets, cardboard tubes and cars. We observed younger children enjoying a good range of toys and resources including insert boards, cars and garage, ball pit, books, musical instruments and sand.

Staff were developing the playrooms and outdoor areas to provide children with opportunities to investigate and be creative during play. Materials such as water cardboard and wooden objects meant that children were able to develop their imagination and lead their own learning. For example, children had lots of fun learning about trajectory by making ramps for cars to travel down and joining tubes together. We observed staff interacting with children during play. They offered some suggestions about things to add and asked questions that supported children to develop their play. Management and staff told us about planned training which will help staff develop skills in using observations and effective questioning to extend children's play and learning. We agree that this will support positive outcomes for children.

The staff team was developing planning approaches that were play based, child centred and focused on children's interests and needs. This was helping to ensure that children were engaged in their play and progressing in their learning. Management told us about further planned developments to ensure that children have sufficient breadth and depth in their learning. We agree that this will improve play and learning experiences, and we made suggestions for developing opportunities for children to evaluate and celebrate their learning. Home link initiatives supported parents to share information about their child's experiences and learning at home, which staff built upon in nursery. All parents were happy with the nursery's approach to planning for children's learning. One told us "I feel there is a wide range of indoor toys that enables and encourages my child's development such as sensory/messy play. Outdoor activities are also offered when the weather is appropriate which my child loves exploring the outside and playing on the swing".

The service was developing opportunities for good quality outdoor play and learning in its designated outdoor areas. Children were developing links to their community through planned approaches including visits to the local recycling facility, local shops and train station. We found that children's opportunities for outdoor play and outings were sometimes inconsistent. Management agreed to review and improve arrangements.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The nursery was bright warm and welcoming for children and their families. Photographs of children and writing in families' first language helped to ensure everyone felt included and valued.

Management and staff were vigilant in ensuring that the secure entry system was effectively monitored.

This helped ensure children were safe and secure.

The nursery furniture and resources were of a good quality. This helped create an attractive and homely environment and showed children that they mattered. Almost all children had developed a sense of ownership of the nursery and clearly felt very comfortable and at home there. They knew where toys and resources were and confidently moved around to access these.

The manager and staff were continuing to develop the spaces within the centre, to provide a calm and natural environment for children. Cosy spaces within the playrooms were being developed, which provided space for children to rest and relax. Families told us they felt their children were offered a suitable range of play and learning activities, indoors and outdoors, to support their individual development. Staff worked hard to overcome challenges presented by the layout of the nursery, for example having to pass through different playrooms to access toilets and cloakrooms. We made some suggestions in relation to the use and layout of spaces, which management agreed to consider. The service had made good improvements to the outdoor play areas, and planned to improve children's choice and access to the outdoors further. This will further enhance children's experiences.

Overall, effective infection prevention and control measures were in place, to help keep children safe and healthy. Staff were supporting children to develop good handwashing habits, which was helping them to learn important life skills and to be responsible. We did however note some inconsistencies in infection prevention and control practice. Management agreed to revisit procedures with staff to limit the risk of the spread of infection.

Risk assessments were in place which helped ensure a safe environment. We suggested that involvement of staff and children in reviewing and developing these would further enhance their effectiveness and support children to learn about being responsible and keeping themselves safe.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led.

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The service was led by an effective management team, who worked well together and had a clear vision for the development of the service. The manager was committed to developing meaningful family engagement and was working to ensure that everyone felt able to contribute their ideas and suggestions for improvement. An example of this was ensuring that newsletters were provided in a range of languages, and organising parent support evenings at times that were convenient for families. The service was also developing use of information technology to promote effective sharing of information and a parent committee had recently been established. This was supporting a culture where everyone felt valued and included. We asked the service to review and develop the wording of its complaints procedure to more effectively reflect this.

Parents were happy with opportunities to be involved in nursery life. A parent told us: "We have loads of opportunities to provide feedback and make suggestions. There is a comments box in the foyer, an online feedback form and they showcase a monthly policy. They also are encouraging parents to get involved in a parent committee. Parents are reminded every month about the methods we can feed back and are encouraged to do so".

Management and staff demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement. The service improvement plan was underpinned by relevant local and national guidance and legislative frameworks and was a useful tool for improvement. The management team routinely implemented quality assurance processes. However, some monitoring of practice and documentation missed opportunities to identify areas of improvement. The service was developing approaches to involve staff and their families in self evaluation processes. Staff were actively involved in self evaluation processes and valued these opportunities. However, we identified that a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to self evaluation would support a more detailed and critical process, leading to sustained improvement. See area for improvement 1.

Areas for improvement

1. To support the ongoing improvement of the service and ensure all children consistently receive quality play and learning experiences the provider, manager and staff should continue to develop and implement effective quality assurance systems. At a minimum, they should ensure;

- a) views are routinely sought from children, staff and parents on aspects of the service and that these views are used to inform improvement planning
- b) self-evaluation processes are developed which include the introduction of formal systems that support reflective practice across the setting
- c) ensure monitoring of staff practice and children's play and learning experiences is regularly carried out to identify strengths and any areas for further improvement
- d) monitor the quality of planning processes, children's personal plans and learning journals, to ensure these reflect children's current health, welfare and safety needs.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

4.3 Staff deployment.

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, when taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The staff team worked well together. They were pleasant and respectful to each other which created a positive atmosphere. Staff displayed warmth and kindness which helped children to feel valued, loved and secure.

The centre was appropriately staffed to meet children's individual health, wellbeing and safety needs. Continuity of care and effective communication was promoted by management and staff through effective key worker arrangements. Parents and children knew who their child's key worker was and the service promoted continuity of care by using the same staff where possible to cover staff absence. Children readily approached their key worker for support and reassurance. Parents told us that they knew all staff well in their playroom and some throughout the nursery. Parents valued that staff spent time sharing with them, what their child was doing that day.

There was a mixed range of staff skills and experience within the team. Good use was made of the national

induction resource to provide support and development for newer staff members. Staff spoke positively about the impact this had in helping them learn their roles and responsibilities. Staff continued their professional development throughout their employment. They embraced opportunities for self and service development and through leadership roles. Management and staff were keen to further develop of these roles to support continuous improvement. This demonstrated commitment and dedication.

Staff worked well together to ensure effective supervision and good quality engagement across the day. Busy times had been carefully considered to ensure children's had positive experiences. For example, management or designated staff managed the transportation of lunches and eating utensils from the kitchen, meaning staff were free to support children at their individual lunch tables. This helped to reduce the risk of choking and ensured children benefitted from a calm experiences and continuity of care.

Staff were happy and their work and felt well supported and valued by management. We observed staff engaging warmly with children individually and in small groups. This helped children feel valued and loved. One parent told us: "We have had such a good experience with this nursery. They are a great team and do an amazing job".

Staff caring for children were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. They are the regulatory body responsible for registering the social services workforce. They provide public protection by promoting high standards of conduct and practice and support the professional development of those registered with them.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the service's registration.

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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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