

# Dens Road Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

77 Dens Road  
Dundee  
DD3 7HY

Telephone: 01382 436 368

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
8 March 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Dundee City Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003004034

**Service no:**  
CS2003015791

## About the service

Dens Road Primary School Nursery provides a daycare of children service in Dundee. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 94 children at any one time as follows: a maximum of 64 children aged three to those not yet attending primary school, a maximum of 30 children aged two years.

The service is based in a residential area of Dundee and is close to local shops, parks, and other amenities.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 07 March 2023 between 09:15 and 15:45. Feedback was shared with the service on 08 March 2023. The inspection was carried out by an inspector 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:

- observed practice and daily life
- spoke with staff and management
- reviewed documents
- spoke with children using the service and four of their family members.

## Key messages

- Positive attachments contributed to children feeling well supported, valued and loved.
- Children were happy and busy at play. They were actively leading their own learning.
- A natural and homely environment provided opportunities for children to develop their imaginations and curious minds.
- The lunchtime provision could be developed for younger children, to ensure a nurturing experience.
- A culture of continuous professional development supported staff to develop confidence, when providing positive outcomes for children.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
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?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality Indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

Staff were kind, caring and nurturing in their interactions with children. They were down at children's level and were observed using soft voices, as they spoke with children. One parent commented, 'I am extremely satisfied with the care and support both my children receive'. Children were observed to be happy, confident and secure in their environment. They were keen to share their play and learning experiences. One child approached both inspectors, at different times, and said, 'I will show you what we do here', sharing their learning and experiences both indoors and outdoors, with confidence. This demonstrated that children were secure within the service.

Children had established secure relationships with staff, as they sought affection through comfort and cuddles. This was evidenced as children were excited to greet a member of staff joining the session at lunch. Staff were observed praising children, giving them high-fives and providing reassurance, as required. This valued children's achievements and developed their sense of worth.

Staff were responsive to children's needs and interests. Warm, calm and respectful interactions were observed, with nurturing attachments supporting children to feel valued and loved. Staff knew children very well and used this knowledge to ensure children's individual needs and interests were met daily. Information was gathered for each child within their personal plans, to support their individual care and needs. Staff worked with other professionals to support children and families, to ensure they received the right support at the right time. One parent commented that they were 'unsure' what their child's personal plan was. Another parent said, 'I have been given loads of opportunities to see how my children's needs are being met'. We suggested that staff review their procedures for monitoring and updating personal plans with children and their families. This would further support effective partnership working with families in meeting children's needs.

Mealtimes provided opportunities for children to develop their life skills, as they were able to choose and serve the sides to accompany their food. Staff were knowledgeable of children's eating preferences and offered alternatives if food was refused or untouched. Children developed independence skills, as they cleared their plates once finished. Lunch provided a calm and unhurried experience, as children were given the space and time to eat and access more food, as they wished. This provided a relaxed experience, which children were very much in control of. We suggested that the lunchtime provision in the two year old room be further developed. Staff were, at times, task focussed, which meant there were missed opportunities to nurture and model conversations and skills with children. This would ensure that ratios were managed to provide an inclusive mealtime experience.

Systems for recording medication were in place, including parental permissions, storage information and records of administration. We suggested reviewing procedures to ensure a robust approach was in place to meet children's individual medical needs. These should detail signs and symptoms when children may require medication, actions to take in an emergency and ensuring forms are fully completed. This would provide accurate and relevant information to effectively meet children's health needs.

### Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and Learning

Children had fun as they engaged in high quality play and learning. They were leading their own play and learning through a balance of planned and spontaneous experiences. Children were observed developing their imaginations and critical thinking skills, which was enhanced through the provision of high-quality resources. One child in the two year old room enthusiastically engaged in play in the kitchen, using a range of real life resources, to extend their play, learning and life skills. The child used recipe cards, real potatoes and a pan to cook, commenting 'too hot' and 'cold, it's ready' during their play. Staff interacted skilfully to support children's curiosities. This meant that interests were responded to in the moment, as staff engaged with children to deepen their learning.

Children were empowered to lead their own play and learning. Skilled interactions from staff supported and extended children's thinking, curiosity, imaginations, decision making and learning. Numeracy and literacy were incorporated into the children's learning, leading from interests, such as, when exploring numbers on dice and playing games. Children's written words and marks were displayed across their play space, which provided meaningful opportunities to develop their emerging literacy skills. As a result, children had varied opportunities to progress their learning in literacy and numeracy.

Some staff extended children's learning through their use of effective questioning and pondering. For example, when playing in the shaving foam and play dough, children were asked what it felt and smelt like? Staff used phrases such as 'I wonder,' to develop children's thinking skills. Staff should continue to develop their confidence when engaging with children in learning, as some were observed quiet in play experiences. This meant opportunities were missed to develop and extend children's learning.

Planning approaches were child centred and children were actively involved in this. Displays were used effectively to highlight children's learning and visits within the community. Floor books evidenced children's voice being captured and used to inform the planning of their experiences. These reflected children's learning, skill development and activities participated in. Children's rights were upheld as they were regularly consulted on their opinions, which valued them as experts in designing their learning experiences. As a result, children were supported to reach their full potential.

### How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality Indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a setting that was clean, inviting and welcoming. The playroom benefitted from natural light and ventilation. Furniture and resources were of a high standard and organised to promote free flow play. Children had ample space to move around freely and made good use of the indoor environment. Staff shared that they had been developing the environment to promote a homely ethos, through the resources and provision provided. As a result, children experienced an environment tailored to develop their natural curiosities.

Play spaces took account of children's stages of development and learning. All environments reflected children's interests and curiosities and contained an extensive variety of high-quality provision, that supported play. A range of loose parts play and choice was available across experiences, which provided children with opportunities to develop their imaginations, curiosity and creativity. Books were effectively displayed around the room and were linked to children's experiences. These were further supported by the provision of puppets and props. Areas were well resourced, displayed and labelled with photographs, which promoted children's emerging literacy skills. Sensory spaces had been created to provide children with calm areas, where they could access quieter experiences with staff. Lighting was effectively used in some areas to further support a calm ethos. This meant that children's wellbeing needs were effectively met.

The outdoor area was currently under development and this was a major focus within the settings improvement plan. Children were safe and secure in the outdoor space. Access to the outdoors was limited, however staff recognised this and incorporated it into their daily plans, as best as possible. Children had fun painting under the canopy and running around and climbing on loose parts, which they used to create obstacle courses. We supported the services ongoing improvements within this area.

Risk assessments were in place and these were regularly reviewed by staff and the management team, to reflect their service. Children were supported to be healthy and safe through effective infection prevention and control routines. Children regularly washed their hands, at appropriate intervals throughout the day, including before and after mealtimes.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A shared vision, values and aims had recently been developed in partnership with children, families and staff. This focused on creating a happy and welcoming ethos and promoted a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn. Families shared that they had developed trusting relationships with staff. This ensured the service met children and families' needs in a way that was right for them.

Children and families views were actively sought to inform the development of the service. A range of methods had been used to gather their views and share learning with home, for example, ideas to develop the snack provision had been gathered. One parent commented, 'Information is shared by seesaw and through word of mouth and it works very well for me'. Children were active participants in shaping their play and learning through their involvement in different groups, such as the 'eco committee' and 'big voice, little people'. As a result, children were able to lead and influence change, as they contributed to their nursery and community. Families were welcomed back into the service with weekly opportunities to participate in stay and play sessions. These opportunities meant that families were consulted and valued within the service.

An improvement plan was in place with identified priorities to support the service's improvement agenda. Self-evaluation was being carried out with formal and informal monitoring taking place. Staff contributed effectively to the ongoing improvements within the service, as they were encouraged to critically review their own practice, identifying strengths and next steps. This demonstrated a reflective and considered approach to the development of the service.

Team meetings provided regular opportunities for staff to participate in training, discuss children's needs and plan for children's experiences. As a result, children experienced high quality play and learning that met their needs.

Policies and procedures were in place to provide safe practice within the service. These policies were written in line with current best practice and guidance. We suggested that the service should create an infection prevention and control policy, as well as an accident and incidents policy, to ensure they continued to adhere to current guidance.

### How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

#### Quality Indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

The team worked well together, which created a positive atmosphere, where staff were courteous and respectful to each other. This provided a happy, safe and relaxed environment for children. Staff displayed warmth and kindness which enabled children to feel valued, loved and secure. Staff recognised the importance of nurturing, warm, responsive attachments and interactions. Staff were in tune with children's needs and preferences and offered personalised support. They were committed to providing high quality care and support to the children and families. One parent commented, 'staff are absolutely brilliant with my daughter'. As a result, children and family's needs were met.

There was a range of staff skills and experience within the team to support children. Staff worked together effectively and were actively encouraged to recognise and praise good practice within the team, recording and sharing this with one another. Staff shared recent training that they had participated in including, 'Solihull' and 'grounds for learning'. Staff had identified championship roles and spoke passionately about these. These roles were regularly reviewed and audited by staff, highlighting progress and areas for development. This provided opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles, developing their professional knowledge and skills.

Staff were observed communicating well with each other when leaving areas of the environment, to maintain ratios and ensure children's safety. Children were well supervised, as staff regularly counted them and updated their noticeboards, to ensure everyone knew how many children were in the rooms. This meant that children experienced care in a service that worked together to keep children safe.

We observed a knowledgeable staff team who were respectful and supportive of each other. Positive role modelling between staff helped children develop and understand positive and supportive relationships. The National Induction resource was effectively used to guide new staff members to learn their roles and responsibilities. Staff were encouraged to participate in reflections, identifying their strengths and areas for development. One staff member shared that they felt well supported through regular check-ins and could approach anyone for help. Management regularly led 'coffee-catch up' meetings with staff, where their needs were a priority. This demonstrated that staffs' wellbeing needs were met, which led to positive outcomes for children.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).



## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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