

St. Andrews Primary School Nursery Class Day Care of Children

45 St. Leonard Place
Dundee
DD3 9HD

Telephone: 01382 307 830

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 August 2023

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2003015793

About the service

St. Andrews Primary School Nursery provides a daycare of children service in Dundee. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 44 children age from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

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 21 August 2023 between 08:45 and 16:00. Feedback was shared with the service on 22 August 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 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 the nursery leadership team
- spoke with children
- reviewed documents
- gathered the views of eight families through MS Forms.

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and settled.
- An inclusive learning environment, which respected children's communication styles, had been established.
- Children were leaders of their own play and learning and could transport resources to meet their interests.
- The nursery leadership team had a clear vision of the priorities to support positive outcomes for children and families.
- Robust monitoring of practice and the environment would develop staff skills and ensure high quality spaces for children to play and learn.
- The staff team worked well together to meet children's needs.

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

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|--|---------------|
| How good is our care, play and learning? | 5 - Very Good |
| How good is our setting? | 5 - Very Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 4 - 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

A nurturing and inclusive ethos had been established within the service. This was evidenced through the warm and caring approach staff shared with children. Interactions between staff and children were responsive and engaging, with cuddles and reassurance offered as required. Staff were down at children's eye level and actively joined in with their play. Children were given the time and space to settle within the nursery space and staff spoke knowledgeably about children's differing needs. One parent commented, 'My child always comes out happy, expressing how they have enjoyed their day'. This meant children felt loved, safe and secure.

Children's independence skills were promoted at the stage that was right for each individual. Staff encouraged and supported children to 'have a go' and tailored this dependent on the child's abilities. Children sought out staff for help and happily shared their experiences with inspectors. This demonstrated that children were happy and confident.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported by the effective use of personal plans. Staff knew children well and the information gathered enabled children to progress and achieve. Chronologies captured significant events in children's lives, which meant that staff had the right information to meet children's wellbeing needs. Personal plans were completed in full and we asked staff to ensure that these were consistently signed and dated by families.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported through well managed systems and processes. Staff were clear about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. Regular audits meant that children's health needs were current. We asked that the service review the information they gathered, in relation to the dose of medication and the signs and symptoms, that may lead to a child requiring medication. This would further support staff in meeting children's health needs.

Mealtimes provided children with opportunities to develop their independence and life skills. At snack, children could choose to spread their own toast, whilst there was ready prepared toast and spread for newer children. Children's life skills were further embedded during lunch, as children could self-serve from the side dishes in the middle of the table. Staff supported newer children learn to pour their own drinks and helped them to learn the lunch routines. Staff sat with children during mealtimes promoting conversation, which created a nurturing experience. We suggested that extra staff could be provided to support the children settling into the lunch routine during the initial transition period. This would further support a nurturing lunchtime experience.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun across a variety of experiences. Children were observed working together to build dens using blankets and staff were responsive when supporting them to learn to share and take turns. We observed children choosing where to play and having the freedom to transport resources to extend their interests. For example, one child enthusiastically engaged their imagination as they pretended to feed the dinosaur the play dough. As a result, children were leaders in play and learning.

The development of children's language, literacy and numeracy learning was promoted across their play experiences. Children were observed pretending that shapes outside were phones and staff extended this play by talking to them about the numbers they might be pressing. An inclusive communication environment had been established, as staff were observed using Makaton and other communication tools, to support children to participate in conversation, follow routines and share their ideas. One parent commented, 'We are already seeing improvements in our child's confidence socially, as well as communication and happiness'. This meant that children's rights were respected.

Skilled interactions supported children's interests in the moment. Staff were observed responsive to children's interest in exploring minibeasts outside. Children's problem-solving skills were extended, as staff encouraged them to work together, using the iPad, to find out what kind of minibeast they had found. Children enthusiastically engaged in this experience, which demonstrated that their interests were valued.

Termly meetings were held to discuss children's strengths, progress and identify areas for development. These meetings supported staff to plan experiences within the nursery, which enabled children to progress and reach their potential. We discussed how these next steps could be evidenced within children's learning journals. This would support children to have more ownership and awareness of their next steps.

Children's learning journals and Seesaw were used to capture children's experiences. Staff were observed sharing children's achievements, in the moment on Seesaw, praising the child and letting them know what they were doing. Written journals recorded regular observations and next steps. These were linked to the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators which are, safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included. Floor books effectively captured children's interests, voice and learning. These were accessible for children within the play space and were of high quality. As a result, children's journey in nursery was well documented.

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 and families benefited from a welcoming environment that was furnished to a good standard with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Children had ample space to move freely between areas and take part in floor play or tabletop activities. Quiet areas had been developed to support children's wellbeing and provided a space for rest or relaxation. Displays around the room highlighted children's work, interests and their voice. This helped to give children the message that they mattered.

The indoor and outdoor areas were sensitively structured and mostly took account of children's age and stage of development. We suggested that areas of the indoor environment could be reviewed to ensure they motivated and challenged children's interests. Resources were easily accessible and at child height, which promoted children's ownership of their chosen play experiences. This was evidenced as children who had only just transitioned into the nursery appeared confident when accessing resources to extend their play.

Children had free flow to the outdoors and were observed enjoying their time in the garden. A good balance of natural and loose parts materials in the outdoor environment supported children to develop their imaginations, creativity and curiosities. Children were observed creating their own obstacle courses, moving boards onto pallets and balancing to walk across. One parent commented, 'I love that the kids can play outside every day'. This meant children had regular access to fresh air and exercise. Staff shared that they would like to continue to develop the outdoors and were working together to improve this space for the children.

Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection, for example children were confident in their hand washing routines at snack and lunchtimes and after outdoor play. Risk assessments were in place and implemented effectively by staff to ensure that the environment was safe for the children attending. Staff were observed encouraging children to remain safe when using the bikes outside, asking them to put on their helmets. As a result, children's safety was maintained.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A shared vision and values were displayed within the corridor and promoted the settings happy and welcoming ethos.

Children and their families were warmly welcomed into the service by staff. We observed staff talking with families and could see that positive relationships had been formed. One parent commented that they found the service to be, 'Very well managed and all staff have the relevant skills and knowledge'. The nursery leadership team shared that family engagement was a priority within their improvement plan for this session. Some families shared mixed feedback regarding the communication received from the nursery. As family engagement was a priority for this session, we were confident that the nursery leadership team had plans to address this. This would support families to have their views listened to and acted upon, to effectively contribute to the ongoing improvement of the service.

The service had previously led stay and play sessions where they gathered positive feedback from families about their experiences. Some parents commented that they were unsure about their child's learning, development and experience whilst in the nursery. SeeSaw had previously been used to share learning and questionnaires with families and plans were in place to reimplement this again this session. This would enable families to feel fully involved and knowledgeable of their child's learning and progress.

Quality assurance processes had been developed to support the continuous improvement of the service. A quality assurance calendar was in place and had identified priorities to support developments. Monitoring of various areas of the nursery had previously taken place and it would be beneficial for these to be reintroduced, to support the development of the service. This would ensure a consistent approach in meeting children's learning and wellbeing needs.

An improvement plan with identified actions was in place and the nursery leadership team were mindful of the need to ensure these were realistic and manageable. These currently included, family engagement, supporting inclusion and the outdoor environment. Staff had previously engaged in self-evaluation and we discussed how this could be improved to support the direction of ongoing developments. This would enable the service to have clear aims in leading positive outcomes for children and their families.

Policies and procedures were in place and these were regularly reviewed and shared with staff, to ensure a consistent approach. The policies reviewed reflected best practice and were regularly audited to ensure they remained relevant to the service.

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 service was appropriately staffed throughout the day to support children's wellbeing. Staff positioned themselves well inside and outdoors to ensure children were safe within their play and learning. There was a good mix of skills with newer staff confident to approach more experienced staff for advice and support. Staff were respectful towards one another and worked well together. They were motivated and enthusiastic about their roles and responsibilities and spoke fondly about their team working. This created a positive environment for children in which they felt safe and secure.

Staff communicated and worked well together, to ensure children were safe and engaged in quality experiences, throughout the session. The vast outdoor space was managed well, with staff ensuring that they were aware of children's whereabouts, whilst providing them with freedom and choice of where to play. Staff were flexible and deployed effectively, which meant that children were always well supervised.

Children benefitted from staff who were courteous and respectful to one another which created a relaxed and happy environment. They placed children at the heart of their work and were observed to be responsive to their learning and wellbeing needs. New children to the service were settled, happy and explored the environment freely. Staff displayed warmth and kindness, which enabled children to feel valued, loved and secure. One parent commented that they felt staff were, 'very welcoming, happy and enthusiastic'.

An induction checklist was in place and staff ticked or initialled this to highlight that they were aware of the required information. Staff shared that they participated in informal check-ins with the nursery leadership team. We suggested that the service review the National Induction toolkit and consider introducing more formal and regular reviews. This would ensure staff were well supported and had any potential needs met in a timely manner.

Staff had participated in a range of training and spoke enthusiastically about their learning and the impact on their practice. Staff had lead roles in sharing their learning at team meetings, which helped to move practice forward and provided quality experiences for children. Staff evaluated their training using the SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council) recording platform. This meant that training was meaningful and embedded within practice.

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

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| 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? | 4 - Good |
| 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well | 4 - Good |
| How good is our staff team? | 5 - Very Good |
| 4.3 Staff deployment | 5 - Very Good |

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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