Pollokshields Early Years Centre
Day Care of Children

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Glasgow
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 July 2023

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
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About the service

Pollokshields Early Years Centre is a day care of children service in a suburban area in the Southside of Glasgow. The service is provided by Glasgow City Council.

The service can accommodate 148 children at any one time. This includes 18 children under two years old, 20 children two to under three years old and 70 children three years to those not yet attending primary school. The service has an annexe at Darnley Street which includes 40 children from three years to those not yet attending primary school.

The accommodation consists of four playrooms, a sensory room and access to the gym hall for mealtimes for older children. Outdoor play spaces are accessible from playrooms for children under three years of age and older children have access to an outdoor play area at the entrance to the nursery. There is changing and toilet facilities for children and office, catering, staff facilities and a parent's room. The service is close to schools, transport routes, shops and community services.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 and 25 July 2023. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. This inspection took place as a response to notifications that required further scrutiny. As part of our inspection, we assessed the actions taken by the service to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children.

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:

- spoke with children using the service
- spoke with two parents and carers whose children use the service
- reviewed feedback from 17 parents and carers whose children use the service
- reviewed feedback from 18 staff members employed in the service
- spoke with management and staff
- observed practice and staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Following notification activity from the service, we found that the provider had taken action to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children. Further areas of improvement in childcare practice continue to be developed.
- Staff used kind and nurturing approaches which made children feel welcome and contributed to positive relationships.
- Staff were passionate about supporting children with additional support needs.
- We identified improvements that would minimise infection risks and enhance the safety of the environment for children's health and wellbeing.
- The manager was confident and knowledgeable, had a clear improvement vision and was leading with improved changes to the service.
- There was an ethos of distributed leadership within the service.
- Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together.

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

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support
Staff had developed a nurturing and inclusive ethos in the service, and this was evidenced through their very warm and caring approach towards children. The interactions between staff and children were responsive and engaging. This helped children feel loved, safe and secure. Respectful interactions took place from staff at the children's level. We observed a staff member gently approaching a child and having a discussion about changing a nappy prior to this taking place. This helped children to feel respected and valued.

Children and their families were warmly welcomed into the service by staff. We observed staff talking to parents which was personal to the individual family, and we could see the positive relationships staff had formed with them. A staff member shared with us she was learning British Sign Language to support and improve communication with parents and children. One parent who provided feedback shared with us, "Kind, caring, fun. My little girl has learned so much in her time with PEYC and obviously loves the people who take care of her." Another parent shared with us, "Such a welcoming, supportive and friendly service. The staff and management have gone above and beyond to support my family during difficult times".

Staff valued the importance of children's wellbeing, and this was promoted within the service. Staff told us they had rolled out a six week mental health programme for children. Older children joined in experiences of yoga and 'belly breathing' to support children to explore and express their emotions in a positive way. This contributed to learning to use techniques to provide a feeling of calm.

Parents and carers were being encouraged to be involved in the service through a range of methods for example cookery classes, open days and lending libraries. Families had been involved in the set-up of the lending library. Parents had been asked to read in different languages. These were recorded to enable families to scan a quick response (QR) code and listen in their first language or English. Home visits took place for new children under three years old in the service. This supported partnership with parents and carers. One parent who provided feedback shared with us, "Management are very approachable and take time to talk when required. I like the lending library that has been created and that parents can help maintain this".

Lunch was a relaxed, unhurried and a sociable experience with children engaging in quality conversations with staff. Children were given a choice of meals and were encouraged to be independent in serving, pouring and clearing used lunch items. Support was provided by staff for children requiring this. Real cutlery was being used and we discussed with management extending this to real crockery for older children. Staff confidently shared children's dietary requirements and tables for older children had a photo of children and a note of their dietary requirements as a reminder. This contributes to children's health and wellbeing by minimising the risk of children being given food they are not permitted.

Children's medicine was clearly labelled and administered safely. We discussed with management how some health care plans should be updated and contain more detail. We asked management to have a section to confirm children had received a first dose of the medication at home for non-emergency medication to ensure the child's health and wellbeing. This was actioned by management during the inspection. The service had recently identified through their monitoring, improvements were needed to be

made to medication.

Personal plans were in place for children. Plans were created in partnership with parents and carers and included a range of information about children's needs. Plans contained the information staff needed to support children and meet their needs and these were reviewed regularly reviewed.

Staff knew the children well and confidently described children's individual needs and how they were supported. They were passionate about supporting children with additional support needs and worked collaboratively with external professionals to meet children's needs. Staff engaged in discussions and meetings with parents and professionals to share next steps and strategies to support children.

Management and staff told us they had worked hard to establish very good links with schools for transition visits for all children. Staff had visited schools, shared information and had been supporting some children and families with enhanced transition visits. This contributes to effective partnership working, supporting settling children into the school environment and the continuation of children's care and leaning.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun and engaged in a variety of experiences. They had very good opportunities to lead their own play and learning which impacted positively on their development and wellbeing. Almost all children were happy and confident. We saw children playing and interacting with each other and used a range of resources that supported their curiosity, creativity and problem solving skills.

We observed opportunities to extend language, literacy and numeracy. Staff were skilful in knowing when to step back from play and join in again to spark children's play and curiosity. Staff used effective questioning to take children's learning forward and were responsive to children's interests. Older children were filling toy cement mixer vehicles with sand and water and talking about the properties and consistency of cement and how it makes things "go hard" and they were going to use it to "make the nursery all hard." Children were caring for their stick insects and discussing how the insects had been eating the leaves and would need some more food. Children were talking about how fast they were, as they moved along their hand/ arm. There were opportunities for mark making and children had access to creative and malleable materials. We observed younger children washing baby dolls in water. Staff had a very good understanding of child development and provided opportunities for their schematic play within this experience. Schematic play is repeated actions or behaviours that children display as they explore the world around them.

Children's learning journals contained general information and would benefit from being more specific to children's individual learning and progression. We discussed how the use of next steps for all children could contribute to continued progression in learning. The service had recently identified through their monitoring improvements were needed to be made to children's learning journals.

All playrooms had opportunities to play outside, and children enjoyed being outdoors. There were opportunities for positive risky play for older children who were skilful in identifying what was safe for them and when for example they may need some help from a friend when using the apparatus. We observed two to three year aged children were maximising opportunities for free flow to outdoors and choosing when to play indoors and out as they pleased. On the first day of our inspection older children were not provided with the opportunity to go outdoors until later in the morning, limiting their play. We discussed this with management and on our return visit the children were playing outside from early in the morning. One parent who provided feedback shared with us, "More outside play" would make the service better and another parent shared, "They encourage outside play," when asked about what they like about the service.

Staff had designated zones of responsibility for five weeks and planned experiences for children. Staff

consulted with children on the use of play spaces, for example what they liked, anything they would like to be changed or added to spaces. Staff considered this information and made relevant changes, most recently when the children asked for an additional area to draw that was not on a table. Children are also involved in evaluating their experiences and staff use this information to inform and plan future experiences which capture their interests and enable continued learning and progression.

The service had established positive and strong links with the community. Staff told us weekly intergenerational visits took place at their local care home and the benefits of the visits for the care home residents and the children. The service was also supporting the community to fundraise for a defibrillator. The manager shared with us her plans to continue to develop involvement and relationships in the local area and for the service to be the heart of the community.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in an environment that was bright, welcoming and well ventilated. There was ample space for children to play independently or in groups and join in experiences which were of interest to them. We observed the organisation and storage of toys and resources including natural materials promoted curiosity and supported children's choices. Children of three years and above had opportunities to move between two playrooms, one of which contained soft play apparatus. Some children told us this was their favourite. One child said, "I always like to play in the soft play. I love it!" The children had created a risk assessment for using the area to keep each other safe. One child told us, "only three children in, so we do not get a bump".

Following notification activity from the service we found that the provider had taken action to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children. Staff updated whiteboards as children entered and left playrooms and staff communicated with each other when taking groups of children outdoors or for lunch. We reviewed risk assessments and discussed with the manager how procedures could improve with additional headcounts for older children when coming and going outdoors to ensure all children are accounted for.

Playrooms were homely with cosy spaces for children to rest and relax, contributing to a calm environment. The provision of nurturing spaces to children and parents was important for management and the staff team to support with children's health and wellbeing. All age groups of children benefitted from use of a sensory room. We observed children aged two to three years used a nurturing space in their playroom to read stories together with a staff member. The manager and staff also told us of plans to develop the parent's room into a nurture space and we observed the room was being decorated. Children also benefitted from using the gym/dining all as a quiet space when not being used for lunch.

Cosy spaces for children were continued outdoors and there were sheltered areas for children to play. The space for older children was mostly concrete and staff were developing the area by adding more greenery with the use of plants, trees and plots of grass. Outdoor environments were safe and secure for children and younger children under two years of age had free flow access to their spaces. Staff told us the babies are also taken on walks in buggies to the local park.

Staff told us they had attended forest school training and some children were provided with the opportunity

to visit the forest one day a week for a six-week block. The service had plans for more staff members to receive training which would enable more children to experience the forest. This would enable children greater opportunities for children to take positive risks and to be challenged in their play outdoors.

Children and staff were observed handwashing and children were being supported with tables cleaned prior to mealtimes. However, we identified areas for improvement around infection, prevention and control. We asked for improvements to be made to the cleanliness of some toilet/changing areas, the storage of items and the use of Personal Protective Equipment of aprons. (See area for improvement 1).

The service had procedures in place for the recording and reporting of maintenance issues. A light was not working in the downstairs toilet and had been reported to maintenance the previous day. Whilst waiting for this to be repaired a torch was being used. Janitorial and management staff were following up for an update to the repair which was still ongoing at the end of our inspection.

The reception area was well organised to make parents and children feel welcome. Staff photographs were in the reception area so that parents and carers knew who was caring for children. Key information about the service was displayed to help parents feel well informed and included.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, improvements should be made to the infection, prevention and control procedures. Priority should be given to, but not limited to the following areas:

- ensuring toileting and changing areas are maintained to a high level of cleanliness
- improved procedures for the organisation and storage of items within toileting and changing areas
- appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment, such as, aprons
- management and staff receive infection, prevention and control training
- audits of toileting and changing areas

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.17).

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and Improvement are led well

Strong leadership within the service promoted a culture of continuous improvement. Management and staff were very clear about improvement priorities and staff were supported to engage in the settings improvement journey. The management team were very committed to initiate change by involving and recognising the contributions of staff, children and families. The service was in the process of developing a shared vision, values and aims. This had included involvement from parents and carers who were asked to share three words that best describe the nursery as a whole.

There was an ethos of distributed leadership with staff having responsibility and champion roles in areas to include children's mindfulness and wellbeing, digital learning and forest schools. Staff engaged in working groups to include home links and outdoor learning. They were confident to tell us their responsibilities and

the positive impact these were having on children and families.

The manager recognised that self-evaluation was the responsibility of all. Self-evaluation was embedded in practice and used to identify where improvements could be made. The management teams quality assurance systems included audits of accident and incidents, medication and personal plans. This contributed to having identified strengths and areas where improvements were required. As a result of monitoring accidents and incidents, the service identified a high number of accidents outdoors and decided to cap the number of children in the space to minimise accidents.

The management team were visible, friendly and approachable to children, families, and staff and knew them well. Staff told us they felt supported by management, professionally and personally. All staff had opportunities to meet with the manager on a one to one basis and was an opportunity to look at individual's progress, support and learning. Representative room meetings took place and staff told us the value of attending these. They told us they were listened to, had opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas and were included in decision making.

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.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff Deployment
The service had reduced numbers of children attending. The annex building on Darnley Street operates term time and was closed for the summer holiday period at the time of our inspection.

The management team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring the service was always appropriately staffed. Staff deployment worked well to support the needs of the children. The staff team provided a wide range of skills and experience to the service within and across playrooms. Staff worked very well together to provide high quality care and learning. The service benefitted from support for learning staff who provided one to one support for children with additional support and complex needs. They worked in partnership with child development officers to support learning and progression for children.

The Early Learning and Childcare - National Induction Resource had been used with new and existing staff to help reflect on practice and have professional dialogue. Staff told us this was very beneficial and they recognised how reflection improved outcomes for children and families. The service will continue to use this document for new staff. Staff told us of their commitment and motivation to enhance their knowledge and practice. Some staff were undertaking additional qualifications to include their Bachelor of Arts.

We observed examples of communication and team working taking place between and within play spaces. Staff told us they worked well as team and we observed the staff team communicated when a task took them away from their designated area. They informed each other when leaving the room or attending to a child's needs.

Staff breaks were planned to minimise the impact on children whilst enabling staff to rest and be refreshed. Staff told us they had protected time off the playroom floor for planning and observations. This enabled staff to plan for continued support, learning and progression 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.

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?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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