Barlanark Family Learning Centre
Day Care of Children

343 Hallhill Road
Glasgow
G33 4RY

Telephone: 01417 731 022

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

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Glasgow City Council

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About the service

Barlanark Family Learning Centre is a day care of children service in a suburban area of Glasgow. The service is provided by Glasgow City Council and operates from premises within Our Lady of Peace Primary School Campus in Barlanark.

The centre can accommodate 117 children. The age range of the children is from birth to those not yet attending primary school. This includes a maximum of 12 children aged from zero to under two years, 45 children aged two to three years and 60 children aged three to not yet attending primary school. The accommodation consists of:

- three large playrooms, outdoor play spaces are accessible from the playrooms
- one room used for mealtimes for younger children
- reception area
- changing and toilet facilities for children
- office, catering and staff facilities
- access to the school dining hall and gym hall.

The service is close to schools, transport routes, shops and community services.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 and 26 April 2023. The inspection was carried out by three 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:

- spoke with children using the service
- reviewed feedback from 21 parents and carers whose children attend the service
- reviewed feedback from 15 staff members employed in the service
- spoke with management and staff
- observed practice and staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff and management had very good relationships with parents and carers.
- Staff used kind and nurturing approaches which made children feel welcome and contributed to positive relationships.
- The management team were visible, friendly and approachable to children, families and staff.
- The service had recently implemented a free flow lunch for older children contributing to a positive experience for children.
- Management and staff should review and improve the opportunities available for free flow play to the outdoor environment for older children.
- The recording of children's experiences within personal plans should be improved to reflect children's learning and progression.
- 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?	4 - 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? 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 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. We observed one child approached a staff member and said, 'I want a hug'. The staff member replied, 'I will definitely give you a hug' and responded by doing so. 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, helping to build positive and trusting relationships. Staff shared with us they felt a strength of the service was their relationships with children and their families. Parents were kept informed through discussion at drop-off and pick-up times, newsletters, and most recently use of the Seesaw app. We observed staff providing feedback to parents and carers of the child's day at nursery which was personal to the individual child and we could see the positive relationships staff had formed with parents and carers. Almost all parents who provided feedback strongly agreed they were confident staff were nurturing and responsive to their child's needs. One parent who provided feedback told us, "The staff team in the room my child attends are wonderful. They are very attentive to my child's needs and have all made an effort to bond and ensure my child is comfortable and confident in their care. They understand her needs fully and have great communication at handover times. I feel very happy and confident that my child is in safe, caring and nurturing hands when she is left in the teams care."

Parents and carers were being encouraged to be involved in the service through a range of methods for example home link bags and attending a tidying the garden day with children and staff. This supported partnership with parents and carers. The manager shared with us her plans to continue to develop relationships and her vision of true partnership with the local community.

Staff knew the children well and confidently described children's individual needs and how they are supported. Staff worked collaboratively with external professionals to meet children's needs. Keyworkers were involved in discussions and meetings with parents and professionals to discuss and share next steps and strategies to support children.

Rolling lunch had very recently been implemented in the service. The lunch experience worked well for older children. Lunch was a relaxed, unhurried and sociable experience with children engaging in quality conversations with staff who were sitting at their table. Soft music was playing in the background and table decorations, as centre pieces, were used to contribute to creating a relaxing environment. Children were encouraged to be independent in serving, pouring and clearing used lunch items and 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 kept a record of children having lunch to ensure all children were provided with a meal. We discussed

with management how staff engagement, interactions and children's independence could be improved for some younger children when having their lunch.

Children with medical conditions were well supported. Children's medicine was clearly labelled and administered safely. We observed a child being administered medication in a gentle and caring manner. The child was involved by helping to count the length of time to keep their spacer on. Effective, safe procedures were in place to ensure that children's health care plans were reviewed and kept up to date. We asked management to include a section on medication permission records to confirm the child had received a first dose of the medication at home for non-emergency medication to ensure the child's safety and well-being. This was actioned by management during the inspection.

Staff we spoke to were clear about their role in safeguarding and protecting children. They knew who the safeguarding leads were within the service and how they would record and report any concerns. Regular safeguarding training helped keep staff up to date and confident in their roles. We reviewed safeguarding records within the service which were completed and shared with relevant professionals in accordance with their policy and procedure.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun and engaged in a variety of experiences. They had good opportunities to lead their own play and learning which impacted positively on their development and well-being. Most 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.

Play experiences provided opportunities for children to develop their skills in language, literacy and numeracy. We observed children joining in play experience where a child recognised the shapes oval and cube from an experience the previous day. The child's achievements were recognised and being celebrated. The story corner was a popular area of the playroom and children chose to listen to stories read by a staff member. There were opportunities for mask making and children had access to creative and malleable materials. Staff also shared with us their plans for extending literacy opportunities in the outdoor play area. However, there were missed opportunities for children's play and learning. We observed older children playing in the sand area and a staff member discussed if things could be built with dry sand. Water was added by a staff member using a small watering can. This was a missed opportunity for children's involvement and learning in not being able to have filled and poured the water themselves.

Three to five year old children had a door within the playroom leading to the outdoor space enabling for free flow access. This door was not being used and we observed children being taken outdoors in groups together using a door outwith the playroom. This limited the opportunity and choice for children to access the outdoor environment as they pleased. The service had also identified free flow play to the outdoors for older children was an area for improvement. We observed two to three year old children were maximising opportunities for free flow to outdoors. The management and staff team should review outdoor play to allow for true free flow to outdoors to meet the children's wants and needs. When children were playing outdoors, we saw at times they were restricted to the areas they could use, for example a child indicated they wished to go to another area using the bike however was not able to do so. This limited the child's freedom and opportunity for play.

A staff member had attended fire safety training during the inspection. She shared with us her plans for re-introducing forest schools and was passionate about doing so. These visits will enable opportunities for children to take positive risks and to be challenged in their play outdoors.

Personal plans were in place for children. Dependant on children's needs there were various strands to personal plans for example; registration forms, care plans, wellbeing assessment plans and online learning journals. On the whole plans contained the information staff needed to support children and meet their needs. Staff were passionate about supporting children with additional support needs and had a good understanding of children's individual needs and learning and development. Some staff shared with us they would like to attend more training on additional support needs. The manager shared with us plans for further training and discussed the training staff had previously attended.

The service had recently introduced a digital platform using the Seesaw app. Staff shared with us their journey and continued plans in using the technology to plan for children and record children's learning and progression. Staff spoke positively of the changes and how this had led to improvements in sharing children's learning and progression with parents and carers and receiving feedback. Management told us they were monitoring the recording of planning and observations and reflecting on this to continue to make improvements. In addition, they were looking to improve the tracking of children's learning and development with the use of the app. We sampled children's plans and saw that observations noted varied across the staff team. We discussed with the management team how some of these could go into more breadth and depth of the children's experience to capture the learning taking place.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in an environment that was clean, bright, welcoming and well ventilated. Playrooms were homely and furnished to a high standard. There was ample space for children to play independently or in groups. Children from the two to three year room and three to five room were free flowing confidently and independently between the adjoining spaces within their playrooms. This contributed to supporting children to lead their own play. Toys and resources including natural materials were easily accessible and organised to support children's choices.

The indoor and outdoor environment was secure. Staff ensured children were accounted for at all times. Staff used registers and updated numbers of children on noticeboards throughout the day contributing to the safety of children. We discussed with management areas we identified where safety could be improved. We saw a fire extinguisher within the baby room was not secured on the wall contributing to a risk of a baby being injured should it fall. The manager took steps to resolve this and it was repaired prior to the completion of the inspection. When children were playing outside and using the bikes, the wearing of helmets was inconsistent. This could lead to confusion for children and the wearing a helmet would minimise an injury to a child's head should they fall. The management team agreed to discuss this with staff.

We identified an area for improvement around infection, prevention and control in relation to the wearing of gloves when nappy changing. Management amended their nappy changing policy and told us they would share this with staff to be implemented in practice. On the whole staff managed infection prevention and control practices effectively. We observed staff washing their own hands at key points and encouraging children to do the same. We also observed staff cleaning main touch points on doors throughout the service. Staff had received infection prevention control training and managed infection control practices. This protected children, staff and parents and carers health and wellbeing.

Children, parents and carers were welcomed into the service by a staff member in the reception area. The area was well organised to make parents and carers 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 outside on boards to the entrance of the nursery to include newsletters. This contributed to helping parents feel well informed and included.

The service had implemented a system for the sharing of confidential paper documents to go home with children. Staff told us these were clearly labelled with the child's name, kept in a confidential drawer and then passed to the parent and carer on collection from nursery. This was in place to ensure the protection of children's personal information.

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. The manager of the service was very committed to initiate change by involving and recognising the contributions of staff. Self-evaluation was embedded in practice and used to identify where improvements could be made. Staff were supported to engage in the settings improvement journey. They shared examples with us of their contribution and involvement with the implementation of a rolling lunch experience. Prior to this being rolled out management and staff researched this and visited other services to observe the lunch experience. On return they discussed together how best to move forward with this and continuously reflected on the steps taken. Staff told us their thoughts and opinions were listened to and they valued and recognised how reflection improved outcomes for children and families.

There was an ethos of distributed leadership with staff having responsibility and champion roles in areas to include numeracy and digital learning. Staff were confident to tell us their responsibilities and the positive impact the partnership working was having on children and families. Staff and management were very proud to have achieved seven eco schools' green flag awards. Management and staff told us they plan to progress onto their eighth flag. The eco schools champion was passionate in her role and led the eco schools group with the involvement and contribution of children and staff. The services commitment to eco schools was impacting positively on the environmental health of the service and children had learned important life skills.

The management team had empowered staff to reflect on their own and each others practice. Peer observations supported team building and professional dialogue amongst the staff team. Staff shared strengths as well as areas for improvement to improve outcomes for children and families. The manager shared with us her plans to extend her self-evaluation by using the quality indicators from Care Inspectorate A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged children.

Management understood the importance of involving children and families to inform planning and the development of the service and shared with us examples of 'questions of the month'. The manager provided examples of how this information was used when planning for changes. One parent who provided feedback told us, "My experience with the management team has been extremely positive. The

management team are very open and transparent and set clear expectations for parents whilst having a very approachable set up".

Children's opinions were also sought, valued and taken forward. We discussed with the manager how these could be improved further by capturing how the information is used, the outcome and the impact on the outcomes for children.

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 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. They worked very well as a team and told us one of their strengths was they were like a family. One parent who provided feedback told us, "The staff are well trained & amazing, I am very grateful for the time and effort they have put in with my daughter, I have seen a massive change in her while being at nursery & am very thankful of this." Staff shared with us they felt supported by the management team both professionally and personally. This contributed to staff feeling valued and their health and wellbeing was important.

Effective communication between staff ensured children were still provided with the support they needed when staff were engaged in other activities. The addition of lunchtime support staff for older children and catering staff enabled children's independence, wellbeing and safety at this critical time of the day.

Some staff shared with us recent room moves that had taken place. They told us they had been supported throughout this transition by their colleagues and management. This contributed to staff adjusting to providing care and support to children of a different age group.

Staff breaks were planned to minimise the impact on children whilst enabling staff to rest and be refreshed. Staff shared with 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.

Key working arrangements ensured there was consistency in individual children's care across the day. When the keyworker was not available, for example, because of annual leave, staff shared with us the service had a buddy system in place. For this period of time another member of staff would take on the role of a keyworker ensuring continuity of care and learning for the children.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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