Penilee Nursery School
Day Care of Children

23 Inkerman Road
Penilee
Glasgow
G52 2RW

Telephone: 01418 827 605

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 April 2021

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003390

Service no:
CS2003014918

About the service

Penilee Nursery School registered with the Care Inspectorate in April 2011. It provides a care service to a maximum of 80 children at any one time aged between three years to school age. The nursery school is situated in the Penilee area of Glasgow and the provider is Glasgow City Council. The accommodation comprises three playrooms/area for children and an additional space to support children's nurture and sensory play. Children also had access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery aims include: "To provide the highest quality early years experiences for children. We work hard to deliver an interesting, exciting and imaginative programme full of planned, purposeful play indoors and outside that will encourage children to achieve their potential as a learner."

We started the inspection of Penilee Nursery School with an unannounced visit on Tuesday 20 April 2021. We continued the inspection virtually using Teams technology and telephone discussions. We concluded the inspection by giving feedback on Friday 23 April 2021 via Teams technology.

This was a focussed inspection to evaluate how well children were being supported during the Covid-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of children experiencing care during the pandemic. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

Our methodology for the inspection included:

- Observations of children's routines and staff interactions with children
- Observations of infection prevention and control practice
- Telephone discussions and email exchanges with the manager
- Emails from 11 parents
- Virtual discussions with six members of staff
- Reviewing key records, policies, and written procedures relative to Covid-19.

What people told us

Eleven parents contacted the Care Inspectorate by email to provide their views on how the nursery had delivered care and support to their children during the pandemic. All of the parents were very happy with the support given to their children as well as their families. Parents told us that nursery staff had communicated effectively with them during the Covid-19 pandemic and appreciated personal touches such as taking opportunities to wave to and chat with isolating children when on group walks in the local area; home learning activity ideas promoted via social media; regular phone calls from keyworkers to children. Parents told us this helped children to maintain positive relationships with staff. Any updates to public health guidance and nursery practice were shared quickly with parents as well as newsletter reminders of their own responsibilities, including wearing face coverings and maintaining appropriate social distance. This had given parents confidence that their children were safe and being well cared for.

Their comments included:

"The help and support given to my family during the lockdown was fantastic. The packs that were supplied for my child had great content and we all enjoyed singing the songs or playing the games as a family. When the children went walks they always looked out for my child as they passed the house, which helped my daughter as she would have a wee talk to the children from the window or door.

I was worried that my child would lose a lot of important time in nursery for getting ready for primary one but the staff reassured me that she is ready and to continue with the games we were doing and also gave a few more ideas which really helped."

"I feel that the nursery has been great throughout the year, during the pandemic we got regular phone calls from my child's keyworker and other staff to see how our family were coping during the lockdown. They kept us further informed via twitter and emails. We were given homework packs as well to help us keep our children busy as well as activities on the twitter page."

"As a parent I feel very content sending my daughter to nursery as I feel the nursery go above and beyond keeping the kids safe. The drop off and pick up system is great and the kids use sanitiser when entering and exiting the building. They keep me up to date on everything and it's great to see the constant updates on Twitter although I miss the interaction inside the building and getting to see her in her nursery setting - such as stay and plays and things like that - although I understand why at the moment we can't."

"I feel we were supported well, weekly calls to check in, my child enjoyed the interaction on YouTube when he was unable to attend nursery. At nursery, my child has mentioned the bubbles and importance of washing hands and sticking to his bubble so I feel this shows the kids have been well educated on safety measures."

"My two children attend Penilee Nursery and I feel the team exceeded my expectations in supporting families during the pandemic. Staff were regularly making phone calls to ask how my children were getting on and coping. Activity ideas were being sent out and updates on social media pages helping parents support the children's learning during the time when we were asked to stay home. I am grateful for the support I received and I am delighted my child's nursery years are at Penilee - great team."

"Throughout Covid and as a key worker I would be seriously lost without them. Regularly updated and communication on processes, the regular cleaning and use of hand sanitiser has made it easier for me to enforce this at home with my child. Communication has been exceptional but through it all my daughter has still been developing her skills and education thanks to the team."

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 and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic? 5 - Very Good

Quality indicator 5.1: Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during Covid-19.

We found the service to be operating to a very good level in relation to this indicator. Changes which had been implemented to keep children, staff and families safe during the pandemic had been explained and implemented well. The setting had remained open throughout the pandemic to support key workers and vulnerable families. It opened more fully to all children as restrictions eased. Throughout, communication had been maintained with parents and children so that everyone felt included. The management and staff team engaged parents in telephone calls, emails, social media and newsletters prior to families returning to the service. Staff acknowledged the challenge around parents not entering playrooms but were confident that they continued to gather and share information with parents at drop off and collection times.

As children returned to the setting, sensitive settling-in procedures, built on this contact and contributed to children feeling safe and secure. We observed happy children who had opportunities to shape their play and learning experiences indoors and outdoors, despite the changes in how the setting was organised. Children were supported to understand the need for the changes to their nursery experience. Staff used fun and imaginative ideas to engage children in a positive way while establishing new routines. The playrooms and handwashing areas had visual prompts reminding children about coronavirus and how to keep themselves safe.

We observed warm, sensitive, nurturing interactions between staff and children. Staff led a PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) programme for children designed to facilitate the development of self-control and promote emotional awareness. Staff told us how this programme had been adapted to respond to children's anxieties and emotions during the pandemic, thus helping to build children's resilience. Parents commented on the benefits of these group sessions in terms of enhancing their children's emotional wellbeing.

We could see that staff were very familiar with children's individual personalities, interests and abilities and used this for planning next steps for learning. We sampled children's personal plans and found these had been collated in consultation with parents, giving a very good overview of children's individual needs. The plans allowed staff to personalise support for children on their return to nursery.

Staff told us how existing relationships with professionals had been maintained to ensure families received support with any challenges they might experience during the pandemic. Staff were confident in their roles in safeguarding children and understood how the vulnerability of some children may have increased because of the additional pressures placed on families and communities by the Covid-19 outbreak. They regularly participated in child protection training and this had been updated to take account of any concerns that may arise due to Covid-19.

Quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. Children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

We found the service to be operating to a very good level in relation to this indicator. We observed that the environment was clean and well maintained. Staff we spoke to had participated in infection prevention and control training and understood the new arrangements for enhanced cleaning within the setting.

Children were being cared for in consistent groups or 'bubbles', which helped minimise contacts and further reduced the risk of infection. We found that indoor spaces were well ventilated by keeping windows open and staff were confident in how to maintain a comfortable temperature for children. Children spent a lot of their day outdoors and we observed them having fun with their friends in the fresh air. Evidence suggests that outdoor environments can limit transmission of Covid-19, as well as more easily allowing for appropriate physical distancing between adults.

We discussed with staff how additional hand washing stations could be made available outdoors for children. We advised that staff should insulate any containers to ensure that the water stayed at a warm, comfortable temperature for a longer period of time. This will provide children with greater access to hand washing opportunities and increase their sense of control and ownership of the experience. It also has the potential to make staff management of this aspect of a children's daily experience more efficient.

Risk assessments had been undertaken that addressed the areas within national Covid-19 guidance for keeping people safe. Staff told us they were encouraged to access risk assessments to keep up to date with any changes. We found a particular strength of the nursery's risk management approach was that the staff had voluntarily agreed to participate in the Scottish Government routine asymptomatic at-home testing programme using lateral flow devices (LFD). The Scottish Government had asked that early learning and childcare staff be encouraged to participate in this scheme to minimise the risks of Covid-19 spread and contribute to the wellbeing of everyone in their setting.

The management and staff team had a clear understanding of how and when personal protective equipment (PPE) should be worn and disposed of. We observed staff wearing PPE when they entered communal areas of the building. Parents were seen to be wearing face coverings when dropping off their children. The service had ample additional PPE available if required and the supply level was monitored effectively.

The service had introduced different entrances to playroom areas to limit contact in line with Scottish Government Guidance. Staff were aware that they should maintain a two metre physical distance from each other. Careful planning of staff breaks and the introduction of separate staff rooms supported this. Throughout our visit we could see that staff were vigilant in their practice of maintaining physical distancing.

We discussed with staff the arrangements in place If a child developed symptoms of Covid-19 while in the setting. We highlighted, and staff agreed, how a better ventilated space could be made available for the child to wait in until they can be collected by their parent or carer.

Parents told us they were regularly reminded by staff to comply with the Test-and-Protect programme. This helped make sure that everyone understood the guidance in respect of isolating when a family member had Covid-19 symptoms.

Quality indicator 5.3: Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during Covid-19.

We found the service to be operating to a very good level in relation to this indicator. We found that the staff team possessed the right mix of knowledge, skills and competence to support children throughout their shared experience of the coronavirus pandemic. This ensured that staff were very responsive to the changing needs of children and families. Parents spoke highly of the invaluable support offered by staff to their child and family during the pandemic.

We observed staff respond positively to children's contributions and encourage them to achieve and progress. We found staff to be motivated, enthusiastic and interested in their role in supporting children. This resulted in children being actively engaged in a range of stimulating play experiences, facilitated by resources that promoted interest, creativity and problem solving.

Staff felt well supported by the senior management team. They told us that they felt able to approach them with any concerns, and that they had been proactive in ensuring their well-being throughout the pandemic. Staff worked well together and supported each other. This helped to contribute to a happy and welcoming atmosphere. Most of the team was well established but more recently appointed staff had been made to feel welcome. Appropriate induction processes were in place so that new staff understood their role, particularly under Covid-19 restrictions.

Staff had been meaningfully involved in decision-making within the setting, including risk assessments through the different stages of lockdown and re-opening. For example, in the formation of zones and new ways of working. This had helped staff to meet new expectations and feel respected. We highlighted the value of developing a specific Covid-19 policy for the nursery. This has the potential to act as a focal point for sharing staff understandings, reflections and evaluations of their changed and evolving practices during the different levels of the pandemic.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	5 - Very Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	5 - Very Good
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	5 - Very Good

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