Rowena Nursery School
Day Care of Children

20 Knightscliffe Avenue
Knightswood
Glasgow
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Telephone: 01419 599 056

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
1 November 2022

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003390

Service no:
CS2003014926

About the service

Rowena Nursery School is provided by Glasgow City Council. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 93 children aged from 2 years to those not yet attending primary school with no more than 15 children aged 2 to under 3 years. Rowena Nursery School is a stand alone setting.

The nursery provides English language and Gaelic early learning and childcare in separate playrooms.

The service had reviewed its vision, values and aims after full consultation with staff and families and had written a vision to underpin the important work they do with children, families and community.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 October 2022 and 31 October 2022. Feedback was given to the manager, depute manager and Glasgow City Council area manager on 01 November 2022. 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:

- spoke with children using the service
- received feedback electronically from 18 parents
- received feedback electronically from 17 staff
- spoke with staff including support staff
- spoke with the manager, depute manager, team leader and lead practitioner of attainment
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documentation

Key messages

- Children benefitted from warm, caring, nurturing interactions and engagement with staff.
- Children's rights were embedded in the ethos of the service. Children were able to make independent choices about what they wanted to do.
- There was a strong ethos of continuous improvement, leading to improved outcomes for children.
- Children's health and well being as well as their physical and mental development was strongly supported through the service's commitment to the delivery of high quality play and learning opportunities outdoors.

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?	4 - 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 because there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff who knew them well and could respond to their individual needs. High quality interactions and engagement took place between staff and children.

Staff could confidently describe the individual needs of children and how they met them. Where children required additional support, this was planned for with parents and external professionals where necessary. Staff told us that they met with parents and other professionals to discuss individual children's progress and plan future strategies for support. Children who required more specific support were supported by a health and wellbeing worker.

Personal plans were in place for children. On the whole plans contained the information required for staff to support children and meet their needs effectively. We shared examples with the manager of where key dates and pieces of information had not been reviewed or updated. The manager agreed to support staff in the monitoring and developing of personal plans.

The service had implemented a rolling lunchtime experience for children. Children were able to choose when to have their lunch, this meant that children were experiencing a natural end to their play before lunch. Lunchtime was a relaxed, unhurried nurturing and sociable experience. We observed high quality conversations and questioning taking place between staff and children. Children were involved in self-serving of meals encouraging responsibility and independence. Support was provided to younger children to meet their individual needs. The provision of a separate mealtime space, soft lights and real crockery provided a homely, nurturing experience. Staff shared with us the benefits of the changes to the experience and a staff member told us "we are lucky to have the additional space".

Children who required medication were well supported. Staff were aware of children's medical and health needs. Appropriate consent forms were completed which included signs and symptoms of when medication should be administered. There were effective labelling of medication and robust systems in place for monitoring. We noted that medication, including potentially life-saving medications such as asthma inhalers and epi pens were stored in the office. We advised that medication should be stored safely in playrooms where staff could have easy access without time delay. The management team actioned this during the inspection.

Effective procedures were in place to safeguard children. Staff had a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities to keep children safe and had received child protection training which was re-visited annually.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and Learning

Children were having fun and were engaged in a variety of experiences, leading their own play and learning. Children were happy to tell us about their experiences at nursery. Some of their quotes included "I like the other room, playing in the home corner being mums and dads." "I like playing with my friend. She is over there" and "I like the games".

There was a very good balance of spontaneous and planned high quality experiences. Children had the freedom and choice to move between and access all areas of playrooms as well as free flow to the outdoor space which promoted children's choice and independence. Play experiences both indoors and out developed children's skills in language, literacy, and numeracy. We observed older children exploring, experimenting, being creative, and problem solving. They predicted what would happen if they mixed paint colours and washed pumpkins to re-paint over and over again. Children demonstrated skill and perseverance.

Children were also counting from one to 10 when playing games, recognising numbers, pouring and filling when hiding dinosaurs in the sand and discussing the depth of the puddle outside. Staff's skilled interactions promoted children's learning.

Planning for children's learning was child centred and responsive to children's interests. Staff shared their planning approaches with us. Staff consulted with children and captured the information on mind maps. Children could make informed choices about leading their play and learning within a stimulating, challenging and creative setting.

Staff recorded children's progress. Effective recording systems were used to recognise children's progress and achievements. Staff used the information to plan for next steps for individual children this encouraged an ethos of continuous learning and reflection.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good because there were major strengths in supporting 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, this created a calm nurturing environment for children. Child led displays helped children feel welcome and included in the nursery. Regular consultation and auditing of the environment and how it was used ensured that children were able to lead their own learning independently and access resources and experiences which were of interest to them. Of the parents who responded to our online questionnaire all strongly agreed or agreed that the service is well furnished, comfortable and homely.

The continuous development of the outdoor learning environment was a particular strength of the service. Children had lots of opportunities to play, learn and be challenged outdoors. The very good use of loose parts and natural resources outdoors meant that children were interested in exploring and learning outdoors. Many of the children spent most of their day outdoors. This contributed to their health and wellbeing.

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

Children moved freely around the playrooms and outdoors. The service had truly embraced an ethos of a free flow experience. Children were at the centre of staff's planning. High quality resources were available to support independent choices. There was ample space for children to play independently or in groups. Toys and resources were well organised to support children's choices. A variety of open ended loose parts play materials encouraged children to develop their imagination, work together and problem solve.

We identified minor areas for improvement around infection, prevention and control such as; dirty step stools and bare flaking plaster above a changing area where a unit had been removed. The management team addressed these areas for improvement during our inspection. 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.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, as a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement..

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The management team promoted a clear vision for the service and culture of learning and reflection. The service had recently consulted with staff, children, and families to review and update their vision, values, and aims. Involving staff and families in this consultation ensured that everyone knew what was important to the setting. This approach to involvement provided opportunities for management and staff to reflect and work effectively in partnership with children and families.

Staff shared with us they have opportunities to express their views and opinions. However, some staff felt that these are not always considered or acted on, leading to a feeling of a lack of genuine involvement at times in decision making for the service. Some staff told us that "There are opportunities for staff to share feedback and have their opinions on matters of nursery life, we are involved in action plans and carrying out evaluations. However, opinions are heard but not necessarily listened to. Ideas and opinions have been put forward and questioned, misheard, or not acted upon, leading to staff developing a low sense of self-esteem and questioning professional judgement". "In terms of staff opinions I feel this is a tick box exercise. Staff express views and opinions but these aren't considered or actioned."

The management team were visible, friendly, and approachable to children, families, and staff. They had a presence in the playrooms when needed and to cover staff and role model good practice. The management team comprising manager, deputy manager, lead practitioner of attainment and team leaders had well defined individual responsibilities, promoting an ethos of shared leadership.

The manager told us that self-evaluation was the responsibility of all and not a managerial task. She had a strong commitment to leading improvement and was confident using improvement methodologies. Staff were supported to engage in the settings improvement journey. Staff confirmed that they had been supported and were engaged in self-evaluation exercises using documents "How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare" and "Care Inspectorate Quality Framework." All staff were involved in improvement projects.

Staff were confident in their task and recognised how honest reflection could improve outcomes for children and families.

The management team felt that they had empowered staff to reflect on their own and each other's practice. Recent peer assessment tasks supported team building and professional dialogue amongst the staff team. Having sampled some of the peer assessment records we discussed with management how these could be further improved. Some staff needed more direction to ensure that the exercise was worthwhile and improved outcomes and experiences for children. The manager acknowledged this and shared with us plans to support staff to include further discussions around peer evaluation.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, as a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement.

4.3 Staff deployment

Parents who provided feedback were very positive about the staff team. Some of their comments included:

"I just love this nursery school. I would highly recommend this nursery to anyone."

"The staff are all just amazing."

"Every staff member go above and beyond for the children."

"Staff are always very friendly and warm, the kids love them."

"My son has thrived since joining and loves going to nursery he's learning loads while still having so much fun."

Overall, staff were deployed in a way that promoted positive experiences for children across the day. On the days of our visits there were enough staff to meet the children's needs. However the manager told us that the service was recruiting for additional support staff and had two vacancies at the time of the inspection. This meant that staffing was stretched, and at times this impacted on their ability to meet children's needs.

Staff we spoke to confirmed that at critical times, such as lunchtimes and when staff were on holiday or absent it was difficult to fully meet the needs of all children. Some staff we met with, and who provided feedback were concerned about this. Some of their comments included; "due to the vast number of children in our setting with complex needs and insufficient amount of support for learning workers, resources and training required to best support the children and CDOs, there are times where the best possible learning environment isn't a possibility. Some children can be over shadowed due to the amount of children needing a lot more one to one support" and "we have a high number of complex needs ASN children with little or sometimes no support or training methods, due to lack of support for learning workers. This is having a negative effect on the day to day running of the room and staff feel that other children get overlooked."

The manager reassured us that the management team are always available to provide cover and support staff, on the day we provided feedback the manager confirmed that the service had been successful in their recruitment of additional support for learning workers. The manager should continue to monitor the deployment of staff, in particular support for learning staff to ensure children's individual needs are met at all times.

As well as child development officers and support workers children and families benefitted from a health and wellbeing worker and the lead practitioner for attainment. Roles and responsibilities were clearly defined. We observed staff working well together and supporting each other to deliver high quality care and learning experiences for children.

The management team understood the need for flexibility in shift patterns to support the needs of children and families. On the whole staff were responsive to changes in rotas and shift patterns to meet the needs of the service.

There had been significant changes to the staff over recent months. This had created unsettlement amongst the team. The management team had worked hard to try and build and gel the team. New staff to the service told us that they had been warmly welcomed and supported.

An induction programme was supporting new staff to develop a better understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and best ways of working to meet children's needs. More use of the national induction resource would further improve the induction process.

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?	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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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