Sandaig Nursery School
Day Care of Children

Usmore Place
Barlanark
Glasgow
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Telephone: 01417 711 898

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

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8 May 2024

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003014928

About the service

Sandaig Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 70 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school. The service is provided by Glasgow City Council.

The service is based within a purpose-built building comprised of two large playrooms, a dining area, cloakroom area, appropriate changing areas and children's toilets. Children can access a large outdoor area for outdoor play and learning.

The service is based in Barlanark in Glasgow and is easily accessible by foot and car and is near to local bus routes. Local primary schools are only a short distance from the setting.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 7 May and Wednesday 8 May 2024. 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 18 children using the service and 12 of their families
- spoke with 12 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children were empowered to be fully involved in their play and learning through the skilled interactions and actions of staff.

One requirement and three areas for improvement made at the last inspection have been met, and we have identified a further two from this visit.

The manager's passion and dedication was evident. This helped to promote a culture of reflective practice to help children achieve their full potential.

Staff communicated very well with one another to ensure that children's wellbeing needs were met effectively.

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?	4 - 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? 4 - Good

1.1 Nurturing Care and Support

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Strong relationships and effective communication with parents contributed to children's needs being met. Children experienced kind and caring interactions from staff who took time to listen and respond to their needs. Staff were able to respond quickly to any changes in children's behaviour that told them they needed some support. Children we spoke with told us they enjoyed nursery. Parents commented positively on the very good relationships staff had with their children. They told us they received lots of information and that they felt supported by the staff. One parent told us "For me it's that my child is more than happy to go to nursery, it's one of his favourite places to be. He runs in, hugs his friends and gets busy with."

Children were very happy, settled and secure in the setting. They approached staff comfortably and made requests, which were quickly responded to and supported. Children had ownership of the playrooms and outdoors as they were able to give their views regularly. This empowered children and contributed to them feeling respected and valued. One child told us "The ladies are really nice and I get to play with my friends. I like the big building blocks and there are some indoors and outside."

Children were involved in reviewing and shopping for some snacks. Cultural, dietary, medication and allergy needs were well communicated to ensure all relevant staff are aware. We saw staff encouraging choice, responsibility and independence at this time, while also sensitively helping them make healthy choices for their lunch. Where appropriate, children were included in the overall meal or snack experience with others in the setting, by setting the table and adding a tablecloth and flowers to each table. Fresh water was available throughout the day and children were encouraged to remain hydrated.

Medication was stored and administered appropriately and appropriate permissions were obtained. The service should now develop individual procedures for children who may require further medical treatment as a result of not consuming the medication offered to them.

Children's wellbeing was supported through staff knowledge and understanding of their role in identifying, recording and referring any concerns. This was supported by policy and attendance at child protection training. Staff were working well with other agencies, such as the primary school and health professionals to promote a continuity of care and access to further support if necessary. One staff member told us "I understand how to respond to concerns about the safety and welfare of children in my care, I feel comfortable and confident."

The needs of the individual children were identified and support provided, where required. We sampled five personal plans and found they reflected the holistic needs of each child. Children's care and learning routines were recorded, and staff cared for children with kindness and compassion. All children received a personal plan drawn together using wellbeing Indicators; Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (SHANARRI).

We could see developments had been made to personal plans to include celebrating children's achievements. Plans were created in partnership with parents but they were not always reviewed and updated in line with current best practice guidance. We asked the manager to ensure these were all audited more frequently. All parents we spoke with, told us that they were fully involved in sharing with staff their child's care and knew about their personal plan.

All parents that we spoke with, confirmed that they were always welcomed warmly into the service and had the opportunity to discuss their child's care, play and learning. They enjoyed the stay and play programme along with big chef little cooking opportunities, that were provided by the service. Staff had begun to carry out home visits prior to the child commencing nursery. This will support children and parents security and confidence, before starting nursery and will ensure positive relationships with nursery staff.

Communication with families was strong, we reviewed evidence and received feedback that demonstrated parents felt their views were respected and they were kept informed of their children's progress and the life of the centre. One Parent told us "I would like to just point out that every single teacher in Sandaig including janitor dinner lady they are all so welcoming into the the nursery"

1.3 Play and Learning

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children were experiencing positive outdoor play opportunities as the service was committed to developing this. Children were regularly active in the playground, in response to their wishes. Risky play experiences were available through sessions indoors and out to the rear of the building and loose parts play resources were well used by thechildren.

Children benefitted from a mixture of planned and spontaneous play activities. Planned activities followed children's interests and staff were continuing to develop their approaches to planning. The service was developing planning approaches that were play-based, child-centred and focused on children's interests and needs, through meaningful observations. This was helping to ensure that children were engaged in their play and progressing in their learning. Ongoing training and support helped staff to develop skills in carrying out meaningful observations and evaluations. We found some staff still needed support to fully understand and embed the planning cycle linked to children's stages of development (see area for improvement 1).

Children were asked for ideas for activities, they would like to take part in. This helped children feel valued and supported them to lead their own play. We seen evidence of children being consulted about resources in the art area, block play and sand area. Staff told us that children's play was more meaningful now, as they choose what resources go out in the playroom areas. Staff were skilled at building resilience and supporting children with any additional support needs, to allow children to access all experiences that were carefully presented by staff.

Staff promoted positive use of language and vocabulary during conversations with children. Staff interacted well with children during play. They joined in play in a fun way and at children's level, for example sitting on the floor with a group of children in the construction area. One staff member was developing opportunities for children to learn about literacy and numeracy through play based approaches. They used good questioning techniques effectively to help children to think about what to do next to extend their play. For example, children were recalling with staff, how they were going to build the house for the 3 little pigs. Together they discussed how to resource the equipment they needed for building this village.

Children enjoyed lots of varied learning experiences through the use of the local environment, particularly the local parks and supermarkets. There was a local group coming into the service to plant out the troughs and children would have the opportunity to plant and also take seeds home to plant in their own garden.

Parents were updated through face to face communication with their keyworker. The nursery was in the early stages of using online platforms to showcase the experiences children would have at nursery. One parent told us "I'd just like some more photos or updates on the socials."
The manager confirmed that more effective use of online platforms to communicate with parents was high on their agenda, however they were keen not to drop the one to one chats with parents at collection and drop off time.

Areas for improvement

1. The manager should enable staff to further build on their awareness of child development, to ensure children are supported to achieve the best possible outcomes. Further learning and development on quality observations, assessing progress and using this knowledge to inform their planning, will further enhance this area,

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Playrooms were clean, bright, and furnished with natural furniture which helped create calm and relaxing environments. Indoors and out were welcoming and inviting spaces and they all provided children with ample space to play. We saw children making good use of the space available and played happily, independently or cooperatively in groups which helped them to build positive relationships with their peers and develop their social skills. We noted that the environment in the playrooms had been reviewed by staff to ensure more effective opportunities. The service had plans in place to continue to improve the environments for children's care play and learning in all play areas.

Children were enabled to rest and relax as each playroom had cosy and nurturing areas which were well accessed by the children. The service benefitted from a cosy and nurturing space leading off the playrooms, which children regularly used to help extend their play. This resulted in children seeking out a quiet space where they could have some individual time when needed and contributed to them feeling safe. Staff told us of their plans to incorporate more shaded areas outdoors, to ensure that children had more safe spaces outdoors to relax as they wished.

Children experienced an environment that smelt fresh and was clean as staff undertook regular cleaning throughout the day which helped support cleanliness and children's wellbeing. We saw that staff and children washed their hands regularly which minimised the spread of infection.

Staff carried out daily checks of rooms to ensure spaces were safe for children. Some risk assessments were in place and provided detail of potential hazards and measures they would take to minimise any risks.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported as they had free flow access to the outdoors for fresh air and exercise. All children embraced this opportunity. Many children chose to play outdoors which was facilitated well by staff. The service had safety measures in place to support a secure environment for children. Maintenance records ensured that any equipment and damaged items were repaired or replaced. Playroom registers, policies, risk assessments and fire safety drills kept children protected.

A good range of toys and games were set up for children and they were able to make requests for other resources. Storage of resources were clearly accessible and thought out, which ensured that children could choose the right play experiences to suit their needs and interests.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Parents were given regular information on the service through an online platform and face to face chats. Staff took the time to have discussions with parents upon collection and drop off, which were relaxed and unhurried. This supported sharing of information to meet children's needs. The manager and staff recognised the importance of consultation with children and their families to meet their needs and wishes. Children's views were regularly sought through the use of mind-maps and discussion. Parental views were gathered using emails and questionnaires. This promoted positive relationships and partnership working.

The service was committed to promoting a nurturing ethos and had introduced a comprehensive nurture based programme to help achieve this. This involved assessing staff knowledge and skills and carrying out environmental audits. We recognised the positive impact on children's experiences. For example, observations of staff carried out by the management team highlighted warm, nurturing interactions with children. The management team were empowered to have courageous conversations with staff to develop staff self awareness
and the impact of their actions on outcomes for children.

Quality assurance audits had been introduced. We noticed differences in approaches used across the management team and staff; some were more extensive than others. This highlighted the need for more consistency. This would help make quality assurance systems more robust and meaningful, so staff can be empowered to build upon strengths in their practice and take forward areas for improvement to enhance outcomes for children. The manager was generally aware of the gaps in practice highlighted within our feedback and was taking action to make improvements. This helped to provide us with confidence in the service's capacity for improvement. The manager was aware that they needed to protect their time to ensure quality assurance processes were carried out effectively. This would help demonstrate the service's improvement journey and the impact on outcomes for children (see area for improvement one).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the provider should develop and embed robust quality assurance systems. This should include, but is not limited to, ensuring a thorough, consistent approach to undertaking, making sure support strategies within children's personal planning and personal risk assessment are explicit and have a positive impact on children's development and promoting high quality and value based practice within all staff member's interactions with children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

Quality indicator 4.3 -Staff deployment

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.

Staff told us that they were happy at their work and have enjoyed working together to improve the environment and resources to increase outcomes for children. One staff member told us
"I feel the nursery has improved to the best we can achieve at the moment. Staff are determined to ensure this continues with the continued support from local authority."

The service was appropriately staffed to meet children's individual health, wellbeing and safety needs. Staff worked well as a team and communicated with each other to meet children's needs. Staff deployed themselves to meet children's individual needs and ensured areas were supervised well. Regular meetings enabled staff to discuss play, learning and care, which supported children's wellbeing, learning and development. Continuity of care was promoted by management and staff through effective key worker arrangements. Staff were very supportive of each other and were flexible in their work to consider how best to support children in the moment. Almost all parents we spoke with agreed, or strongly agreed that there was always enough staff in place to look after their child.

Almost all staff told us they felt well-supported in their roles. They felt that they received regular feedback on their work and felt able to approach management for support, or with ideas to improve the service. Staff told us that their views were respected and that they were included in decision-making processes, particularly relating to playroom and practice developments based on their professional learning. Staff knew children very well and secure relationships between them had been established. We witnessed children being supported by staff in ways which were appropriate to meet their needs. This meant that children felt safe, secure, and happy in a service where a caring staff team nurtured and supported them.

The staff routinely engaged in a range of professional learning activities that built on, and sustained their practice. We found staff were confident in discussing how they had improved their practice as a result of their own professional learning activities. Staff told us how their professional learning was linked to a wide variety of leadership roles within the team including: digital learning; outdoor play; early literacy and numeracy; supporting transitions; children's rights. We found that this learning had a positive impact on the quality of experiences for children, their progress and wider improvements in the setting.

Staff caring for children were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. They are the regulatory body responsible for registering the social services workforce. They provide public protection by promoting high standards of conduct and practice and support the professional development of those registered with them. It was clear that there were effective relationships between staff, parents and children.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 31 October 2023, the provider must ensure children are able to play and rest in an environment where the temperature is well-regulated.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place to lower the temperature within the playrooms when needed.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) and 10(2)(c) (Fitness of premises) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that the environment is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My environment has plenty of natural light and fresh air, and the lighting, ventilation and heating can be adjusted to meet my needs and wishes" (HSCS 5.21).

This requirement was made on 7 September 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

On the day of inspection the temperature was pleasant. The manager shared with us that the provider will be installing an air conditioning unit to ensure the service is always able to control the temperature on the days that the sun would be strong.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To support children's play and learning, the provider should ensure that staff:

a) offer children more opportunities for independence and decision making

b) offer children more autonomy to explore the environment

c) revise the routine and pace of the day to support children's needs.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials" (HSCS 1.31) and "As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity" (HSCS 2.27).

This area for improvement was made on 7 September 2023.

Action taken since then

Each element of this area for improvement has been actioned. Children are now choosing freely, where they would like to play throughout all the playrooms independently and in response to their needs and wishes.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children to have high quality experiences, the local authority should improve resources in the playrooms. This should include, but is not limited to providing resources that encourage investigation, creativity and exploration.

This is to ensure that the environment is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: "I am able to access a range of good quality equipment and furnishings to meet my needs, wishes and choices" (HSCS 5.21).

This area for improvement was made on 7 September 2023.

Action taken since then

The local authority recently identified funding to extend children's play.
Children's investigation, creativity and exploration, were now supported and extended. Children were actively taking part in choosing new resources for the playrooms.

Previous area for improvement 3

To improve outcomes for children, the service provider should support the current leadership team to implement robust quality assurance systems which will improve the quality of the provision in line with best practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 7 September 2023.

Action taken since then

Although quality assurances had been developed since last inspection, these have not yet been fully embedded in practice, so this has not been fully met. This will be noted again under 3.1 of this inspection report.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support children's wellbeing and safety, the provider should ensure that staff understand the importance of good communication and appropriate deployment to ensure children are supervised at all times.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes" (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 7 September 2023.

Action taken since then

Staff were very well deployed throughout the session, to support and extend children's experiences along with ensuring their wellbeing needs were met.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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