Ardler Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Turnbery Avenue
Dundee
DD2 3TP

Telephone: 01382 436 533

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 March 2023

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2003042566

About the service

Ardler Primary School Nursery is registered to provide an early learning and childcare service to a maximum of 104 children at any one time who are not yet attending primary school. Of those 104 no more than 30 are aged 2 to under 3 years.

Ardler Nursery is located within Ardler Primary School, which is situated in a residential area of Dundee. The setting is close to parks, woods, the library, shops and other amenities. The nursery setting has been expanded and redeveloped since the last inspection.

Children aged 3-5 years have access to a large open plan playroom and the children aged 2-3 years have their own spacious playroom. There are nappy changing and toilet facilities within both playrooms. Children can access the outdoor spaces directly from the playrooms.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 6 March 2023. 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 and had one email questionnaire returned by a parent/carer;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and having fun in nursery.
- The staff team knew children well and warm, caring interactions took place.
- Management and staff were committed to providing high quality experiences for children to meet their individual needs and interests.
- Families were encouraged and supported to be involved in nursery life.

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?	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 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.

Quality Indicator 1:1 Nurturing care and support
Children were happy, settled and having fun at nursery. Children new to the setting were supported well by staff. All children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches by staff which supported their overall wellbeing.

Very good relationships had been developed with parents and carers which encouraged the sharing of daily information to support children's individual needs. Attachments had been developed between children and staff, as staff sat at children's eye level and children went to staff for cuddles and to involve staff in their play. These strong attachments supported children to feel loved, valued and secure. Staff knew children very well and had a good knowledge of how to support them as individuals.

Friendships were developing amongst the children and we observed children being kind, offering support and helping each other in their play and learning.

Personal plans gathered detailed information to support children's care and support needs. This information was routinely reviewed to ensure children's needs were supported and met daily. We saw that plans had been reviewed and updated where needed. We reminded management that personal plans should be signed and dated by parents upon review or update. Staff recorded observations of children's learning and development and shared these with parents. These consistent and effective procedures ensured positive outcomes for children and supported them to thrive and achieve their potential. The staff worked well with other professionals to support the children and their families. This partnership working ensured the service provided tailored approaches and strategies which were consistent and effective ensuring continuity of care and support.

Appropriate systems were in place for the storage and administration of medication ensuring children were kept safe. We suggested that the medication audit could be extended to include a check that paperwork had been completed and reviewed.

Snack and lunch time in the 2-3 year olds room were calm, social experiences. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent through pouring drinks and serving themselves. Staff sat with the children, providing a role model for social interactions and supporting with eating where needed. There were opportunities for further independence, with children serving more of their meal in both playrooms. The senior early years practitioner explained that lunchtime was a developing experience within the nursery. We agreed that staff should continue to reflect on lunchtime for 3-5 children, identifying and addressing further developments.

QI 1.3 Play and learning
Children were leading their own play and learning. They were having fun choosing where they wanted to play and what activities, experiences and resources they wished to participate in or play with. Children played with their friends or alone as they wanted, indoors and outside.

Staff planned responsively taking account of children's interests and their stages of development. Children

felt valued because they were being listened to and were having fun taking part in experiences that were planned around interests, for example, one child was very interested in dinosaurs and as the smartboard was not working, staff had located a large book about dinosaurs which had recently been brought in by the Head Teacher to support this interest. The child was excited to look at the book. Staff observed children during play and learning and knew when to support and 'scaffold' children's play or stand back. Children's independence and confidence was encouraged and supported when needed, for example, some of the 3-5 children followed a recipe to make playdough independently.

Staff interacted skilfully to support children's exploring and curiosities. Effective questioning encouraged children's understanding, problem solving and critical thinking.

Children enjoyed stories, singing and dancing during their nursery session. Staff introduced and repeated words and vocabulary for the children to become familiar with. One staff member clapped out the syllables of words to support children's speech and language development. Natural counting took place in the 2s room, from spoons of cereal, to a number line drawn with chalk outdoors. We discussed with management opportunities where literacy could be further developed outdoors, for example, at the mud kitchen with recipes, labels. Indoors the dinosaur book encouraged children to consider sizes of dinosaur and there was the opportunity for staff to extend this interest and incorporate measuring and estimating sizes.

Children were observed taking part in risky play, with high wooden block towers being built in the 2s and obstacle courses outdoors with one of the older children. Some staff should be supported to develop their confidence in supporting risky play with the children to ensure that children are supported to assess their own risk during play and learning to enable play to continue where possible.

Children were encouraged and supported by staff to resolve conflicts. Staff also supported children with sharing and turn taking in both rooms.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through the use of the wider community. There were visits to the library, the nearby woodland and effective transitions to Primary 1. The nursery were also looking to build relationships with the nearby community centre and were considering accessing the Lego club for the children who attend extended hours.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

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.

Children benefitted from a bright, well maintained nursery environment that was furnished to a high standard, clean, comfortable and safe. Children were confident moving around the spaces available, both indoors and outside. This supported children to lead their own play and have fun.

Risk assessments were carried out to ensure a safe environment. They were reviewed regularly and updated when necessary.

The inside play areas were spacious and well laid out, allowing children to move around freely accessing resources which were easily available to them. Children benefitted from free flow access to the nursery gardens which were both secure.

A variety of quality resources to support different play experiences were available to children in both rooms. We saw children busy and motivated building with the blocks, involved in imaginative play with friends, playing in the water tray and painting.

There were cosy areas within the playrooms where children could relax, be comfortable and rest/sleep if needed. Other areas were set up to offer sensory play experiences. There was very good quality furniture and furnishings throughout the service which was appropriate for the differing heights and needs of the children attending.

Wall displays reflect children's current interests and observations of their engagement and learning in play, for example, hairdressers, learning to share, money and job roles, photographs of the children in 2-3 room and some artwork.

Children had opportunities to play and learn outdoors daily in all weathers. There was direct access to the gardens from both playrooms, with a variety of resources available to support play and learning, including open ended resources such as wooden planks, reels, crates, mud kitchens, wheeled toys and shelters for the children. The younger children enjoyed blowing bubbles with the wands, counting with the chalked numbers and playing on the wheeled toys. The older children had fun building houses from loose parts, digging mud and gathering resources for the mud kitchen and climbing and jumping from equipment. Developing the outdoor space was an identified priority for staff this year and we encouraged management to continue with this development.

Infection control measures were in place throughout the service to minimise the spread of infection. Children were reminded and supported where needed to wash their hands. We saw staff wash their hands often, role modelling for the children the importance of good hygiene to keep children and staff well. Staff were respectful of children and asked if children would like to have their nappies changed, which was carried out sensitively with staff wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Staff made changing time fun through chatting with children and ensuring the task was not hurried.

Children's information was stored safely. Staff were fully aware of the importance of confidentiality and this was respected.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led

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.

The vision and values of the service were currently being reviewed with staff, families and children to ensure that there was a shared vision with clear direction for the service where everyone felt valued and respected.

An improvement plan was in place with identified priorities to support the nursery improvement agenda. Management discussed having had conversations with staff to develop understanding about nurturing interactions and responses with parents and children. They had also recognised risk benefit as an area for development outside.

Quality assurance processes in place helped ensure continuous improvement of the service through informal

and formal monitoring and auditing. Key strengths and areas for improvement were identified, with consultation from staff, families and children.

Management had recently introduced daily huddles for staff in the morning to support the sharing and discussion of key information to support the day ahead. Regular staff meetings also ensured that communication within the team was effective and all staff were informed and had current information to aid them in caring for and supporting children and families' needs. Professional discussions during staff meetings also supported staff practice.

Communication with families was valued by staff and a variety of methods were in place to gather feedback and share information, for example, informal daily chats as children were dropped off/collected, questionnaires, newsletters and keyworker meetings. Management had identified more robust recording of informal chats with parents/carers as an area for development to ensure all feedback and suggestions were recorded and information available for future reference, if needed.

Policies and procedures which underpinned the service were in place and supported staff practice. We advised the complaints policy should be updated as the Care Inspectorate telephone number is now the Contact Centre telephone number.

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.

Children benefitted from a caring, nurturing staff team who knew them and their families well. They were committed to providing high quality care and support to the children and families.

Staff were warm and responsive in their approach. They joined in children's play when invited or appropriate to do so and followed children's interests.

There was a mix of experience, knowledge and skills within the staff team, with staff having a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff communicated very well with each other and worked well as a team, ensuring effective supervision and quality engagement with children. Effective staff deployment within the service ensured that children's individual needs were being met by the appropriate number of staff, consistently throughout the day. We observed staff to be flexible across the setting, which meant there was no negative impact on children's outcomes when key tasks or responsibilities were carried out. The pace of day was not interrupted for the children.

Arrangements were in place for planned and unplanned absences, which ensured ratios were maintained and children were kept safe and well supervised by familiar staff, encouraging and promoting a sense of security.

There was a wide range of training opportunities that had been carried out by staff which supported them in providing quality care, support and learning opportunities for children and families.

Staff told us they felt supported by management and were involved in the continued evaluation and development of the service.

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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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