Innocence Nursery
Day Care of Children

Parklands Country Club
196 Ayr Road
Newton Mearns
Glasgow
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Telephone: 01416 397 111

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 January 2024

Service provided by:
Innocence Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2013012054

Service no:
CS2013316736

About the service

Innocence Nursery provides a care service to a maximum of: 16 children aged 0 - 2 years; 24 children aged 2 years to 3 years; 23 children aged 3 years to those not yet at primary school. The nursery is situated within Parklands Country Club in Newton Mearns. The nursery has its own security controlled entrance within the building. Accommodation consists of a large open play space which has been divided into three separate play areas, toilets, kitchen, office space and an outdoor balcony. The service provider is Innocence Nursery Limited and operates in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council to provide early learning and childcare for children aged three to five years. The service is close to shops, transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 24 January 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 throughout the inspection year. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with 18 of the children using the service and reviewed survey responses from 19 parents whose children attend the service.

- Spoke with the manager and seven staff and reviewed survey responses from six members of staff.

- Observed practice and staff interactions with children.

- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced sensitive and respectful caregiving from staff who were responsive to children's changeable interests.

- Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.

- Staff were motivated, well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children.

- Staff communicated well together and supported each other in their shared work roles.

- We found that staff worked hard to provide a variety of quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice, children's interests, as well as tracking and reflecting on individual achievements.

- The staff routinely engaged in a range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice.

- The outdoor play space required to be monitored to ensure its accessibility and suitability for children's stage of development.

- Staff should develop their approaches to supporting children's collaborative play projects and promoting child led planning for play.

- We identified a need for staff to review daily routines to increase available time and opportunities for young children to experience outdoor play every day.

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?	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? 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good as we found performance demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require any significant adjustment.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We looked at how the nursery's planning approaches for children's care, learning and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. Detailed and regularly reviewed personal planning systems were in place for all children. Children's personal planning records included: "All About Me" information; photo based learning journal observations with links to SHANARRI wellbeing indicators, "Realising the Ambition" benchmark; developmental milestone trackers; parental review sheets; transition documentation and initial assessment reports; records of children's achievements. Staff used this personal planning information to involve families in decisions about their child's care and development. Individual children's tracking of learning information was related to developmental milestones across a variety of educational subject areas drawn from Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence. This helped to promote parental awareness of actions that were being used in practice to help individual children achieve their learning goals. We noted that effective systems were in place to support children with additional support needs. This included positive examples of multi agency involvement serving to maximise potential outcomes for children's learning and development. The planning systems we found in place enabled the relevant staff to respond quickly, sensitively and compassionately to changes in a child's life.

Throughout the various play sessions we observed it was clear that children experienced sensitive and respectful caregiving. We observed staff being responsive to children's changeable interests and demands. Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included. All of the parents who completed our survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "Overall, I am happy with care and support my child receives in the setting". One parent told us: "The staff are personable and caring. My children love the staff and talk about them regularly at home so they have clearly created a nurturing and caring environment". Another parent commented: "They know the children really well and my children have formed strong bonds with many of the workers." Staff used the information in children's personal plans to meet the needs of children requiring additional levels of support. A parent commented: "They have went above and beyond to help my son settle in since he first started. He absolutely loves it in nursery."

Quality indicator 1:3: Play and learning

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator as we found performance where identified strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes. We found that staff worked hard to provide a variety of quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice, children's interests, as well as tracking and reflecting on individual achievements. Staff took time to extend conversations with children about their play and used some well-timed open ended questioning to further extend and challenge thinking and learning. We found that staff used observations of children's significant play interests to adapt their support for and resourcing of play experiences. Through discussion, it was evident that experienced staff had a shared understanding of child development and early years pedagogy and used this to scaffold and shape the breadth and depth of children's learning. We highlighted the value of staff continuing to develop their skills in identifying the significant learning of each child as they observe them at play. This will ensure that they are consistently able to identify what each child needs to learn next.

We identified a need to ensure the next steps for children's play and learning within individual learning journal observations were specific to each child's particular learning needs. This can enhance the systems in place for highlighting the developmental progress children are making through planned play and learning experiences.

In each indoor play space there were some well considered open ended materials and creative approaches that at times engaged children's imagination and enriched their play and learning. Children engaged in a range of role play and creative experiences that supported their imagination to flourish. The use of questions from staff helped children to extend their thinking and consolidate their thoughts and ideas through play. All the parents who completed our survey told us that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "My child has opportunities to be involved in meaningful, interesting and fun play experiences." One parent commented: "The daily activities are well thought out and varied which provide lots of learning opportunities for the children." Another parent told us: "There is a good structure to their day but also children are not forced to do activities and there is free time allocated to do as they wish." A third parent commented: "The team clearly work hard and provide a wide range of activities that are age and stage appropriate." A parental engagement programme led by the staff team had contributed to strengthening partnership working with families. These sessions promoted parental awareness of the value of play based learning and its links to early literacy and numeracy and other key areas of children's development.

We discussed with staff observation approaches that could help identify and evaluate play experiences that children found particularly engaging and challenging. We highlighted how this could help foster meaningful discussion between children and staff about play and development. We discussed with staff how this would enhance the systems already in place for recognising children's achievements as well as further promote children's sense of ownership and leadership of play. In particular, we identified a need for staff to take forward and implement strategies for developing children's sense of ownership of leading change related to their self chosen play projects. Staff agreed that more flexible use of big books or similar planning tools that were based on observations of children's most engaging and involving play experiences could strengthen existing opportunities for children to shape their play environments.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator as we found performance where identified strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

We looked at the nursery environment and resources within it in terms of how they were managed to support positive outcomes for children. Children were cared for in a welcoming, comfortable environment which was bright and well ventilated. Rooms were well furnished with space for children to participate in a variety of activities. The nursery play spaces included the provision of open-ended and natural resources. Spaces were set up in ways that were adaptable and had potential to encourage children's creativity. All parents who completed our survey agreed or strongly agreed with the survey statements: "My child has access to a good range of quality toys and play materials" and "The setting is well furnished, comfortable and homely". One parent commented: "Think the facilities are great, like the large rooms and areas they have dedicated to different styles of play." Another parent stated: "I like the open plan layout as it ensures all children can be watched easily." A third parent told us: "The facilities are great, rooms are large with lots of different play stations and areas to suit varying needs."

Staff told us the limited size of the outdoor balcony play space restricted the number of children who could access it at the same time. The layout of the nursery building and related access arrangements from playrooms restricted opportunities for children to freely lead their own play between indoor and outdoor play spaces. We found that the nursery outdoor area required to be monitored to ensure play materials are regularly set up, available and presented in more innovative and engaging ways to support children's collaborative play. This can help to ensure that play environments motivate children to be creative by linking their play ideas across different contexts.

One parent told us: "Sometimes it is really noisy as they do very loud dance classes next door - not the nursery's fault but I find it overwhelming and wonder if the children do." We discussed with staff strategies to help ensure children had the right balance of stimulating and calming indoor and outdoor environments to suit their needs. We highlighted acoustic management strategies within the setting with the potential to minimise disruptions to children's rest periods and concentration during play activities.

We identified a need for staff to review daily routines to increase available time and opportunities for young children to experience outdoor play every day. Staff told us how they made use of outdoor play and woodland spaces to encourage young children to explore the natural world, move their body in different ways and widen opportunities to learn through their sensory and physical experiences. We highlighted and staff agreed that more regular planned outdoor play opportunities within park and woodland spaces beyond the limitations of the nursery setting would further increase opportunities for children to experience fresh air and enjoy challenging play. The senior management team agreed to make this a focus of future staff resourcing as well as improvement and professional development planning.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator as we found performance that demonstrated a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We found that staff were motivated, well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children. Staff told us how the manager team provided a clear focus for their shared team work including setting out clear responsibilities and expectations. We found that the team worked together effectively to evaluate and reflect on their practice. They were keen to take forward current ideas, develop and implement best practice guidance. We found that team meetings took placed regularly and staff had the opportunity to take part in one to one meetings with management. These provided an opportunity to discuss any improvement ideas and identify any related training needs. This resulted in children experiencing quality interactions and a broad range of stimulating play experiences centred around their emerging interests.

The manager had established a parent group to support the shared self evaluation and improvement planning for the nursery. More than half of the parents we surveyed and all staff told us that they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the setting. They told us that their ideas and suggestions were used to influence change. We highlighted practical consultation strategies for widening the levels of parental engagement in the improvement planning process. The staff agreed these would help strengthen the capacity of service to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and families' particular needs and choices. The manager told us how they dedicated time to analysing children's, staff and parents' contributions to any consultations and extracting the key messages or themes. This feedback had been used to support the development of an improvement plan that clearly set out the service priorities and targets for change.

We found the manager had a good understanding of the strengths of the service and what was needed for improvement. They confirmed to us during our feedback that staff team would reflect on the findings of the inspection to help shape future priorities and embed suggested improvement approaches within the nursery's future improvement planning.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator as we found performance that demonstrated a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff communicated well together and supported each other in their shared work roles. This helped to contribute to a happy and welcoming atmosphere. A robust induction process supported newly appointed staff to meet children's needs. The induction programme helped new staff to settle into their role and become part of the staff team. As a result, they were clear about their roles and responsibilities which supported children's experiences. Staff told us they had regular daily discussions about how best to meet children's individual needs, ensuring that they felt included and cared for. Children who required additional support were well supported by staff to feel respected and included in daily experiences. One parent commented: "There are always members of staff available to speak to us if needed and to answer any questions. The information between the staff members seem to flow well so the relevant carer gets the message regardless of whoever I speak to in the team."

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. We found that this learning had a positive impact on the quality of experiences for children, their progress and wider improvements in the setting. We discussed the potential value to outcomes for children of implementing current staff training plans in forest kindergarten approaches as well as extending professional learning and development opportunities in child led planning and observation approaches. We identified a need to review staff deployment arrangements across each play space - and the three to five years room in particular - to ensure that at least one member of staff is available to support children's outdoor play at all times. Overall these strategies can increase the opportunities for children to be challenged, involved and deeply engaged across the range of available play opportunities and experiences. They have potential to widen opportunities for staff to become confident in progressing new developments and enhance positive outcomes by increasing the range of approaches available to meet children's individual needs.

We identified potential adaptations to staff deployment arrangements during lunchtime routines for children which would maximise opportunities for children to communicate with and experience consistency and continuity in their care from key workers who knew them well. This will help to ensure that key workers have more time to sit with children and engage in meaningful personalised conversations about their daily experiences and strengthen existing relationships. The manager agreed that these changes would support the nursery's commitment to providing a relaxed and nurturing environment for children during lunchtimes. It will increase opportunities for staff to be responsive to individual needs and support children to develop positive attachments with key adults. We signposted the manager to our practice note "Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare (ELC)" to support continued professional reflection on mealtime improvements within the staff team.

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	5 - Very 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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