Fair City Munchkins Day Nursery
Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 September 2023

Service provided by:
Fair City Munchkins Day Nursery Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2014012264

Service no:
CS2014324244

About the service

Fair City Munchkins Day Nursery operates from a refurbished self-contained building near to the centre of Perth and provides a daycare of children service for a maximum of 83 children at any one-time, aged birth up to 10 years. There were no school aged children attending at the time of the inspection.

The premises consist of a large playroom for children under two years, with a sleep room and changing facilities directly accessible from the playroom. A playroom for children aged two to three years with separate change area, sleep room and toilets. A playroom for children aged three to five years, with access to their own toilet area. All playrooms have direct access to large, secure, outdoor areas.

The service is in partnership with Perth and Kinross council to provided funded places.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 12 and 13 September 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 we reviewed 12 responses to our surveys from family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

• Children experienced warm, caring, and nurturing interactions which supported their wellbeing very well.

• Children had fun as they experienced interesting play experiences both indoors and outside in the nursery gardens.

• Staff facilitated play well and interacted skilfully to support and extend children's imaginative thinking and problem-solving skills.

• Children benefitted from high quality mealtime experiences which provided them with positive learning opportunities.

• Some Floor books were in the early stages and could be further developed to evidence children's depth in learning

• Children and their families benefitted from a culture of continuous improvement which was having a positive effect on improving outcomes for all.

• Staff morale was high, they were confident within their roles and a positive team ethos was evident.

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?	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? 4 - Good

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

1.1 Nurturing Care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and kind interactions from staff which supported them to feel safe and secure. Staff were friendly, kind and compassionate which resulted in children feeling secure, settled and enabled them to build confidence.

Staff effectively used information shared by families to meet children's needs which meant their care and support needs were effectively met at a time that was right for them. For example, comprehensive, abbreviated versions of children's care plans in all playrooms provided staff with accessible and clear information of current likes, dislikes, and preferences. Additionally, large attractive displays in playrooms of children's families, the staff and their friends at nursery meant children were surrounded by people that loved and cared for them. This contributed to children feeling respected and valued and provided them with a sense of emotional security and belonging.

Mealtimes provided children with opportunities for a sociable and positive learning experience. Children benefited from high quality snack and lunchtime experiences which promoted opportunities to develop their independence, responsibility, and self-help skills. Babies enjoyed warm and nurturing interactions as they received support with feeding. Younger children experienced a mealtime that supported them to eat and drink at a pace that was right for them. Older children were supported to become learn new skills during lunchtime as they used tongs, poured their own drinks, and self-served from dishes in the centre of the table. Staff sat with children, engaging them in conversations on healthy eating which provided opportunities to promote close attachments and further develop language skills. Staff confidently told us how they would respond to a choking episode which contributed to keeping children safe.

Children's rights were respected as personal care routines were carried out using sensitive and warm interactions. For example, children chose a song from a visual song board to be sung with staff as they were supported through their routines. This helped children to feel comfortable and secure. Sleep arrangements respected children's needs and preferences. Younger children slept based on their individual routines and on waking from sleep were cuddled and nurtured by staff until they were ready to make the transition to play. Soft lighting, relaxing music provided a calm ambience for children to rest and relax. Staff supervised children while they slept which contributed to keeping them safe.

1.3. Play and Learning

Children were achieving as they experienced a good balance of planned and spontaneous play opportunities which were in response to their interests. Staff provided children with a range of play experiences that supported them to be engaged in their play in a meaningful way. Resources and activities were age and stage appropriate in all playrooms. We found children were empowered to choose where they played and moved confidently around play spaces that were well presented in an inviting and welcoming way.

Babies benefitted from sensory and schematic play as their core provision which provided them with experiences for them to thrive and grow. We suggested that younger and older children's planning be

reviewed to ensure evaluations of learning and next steps identified are not overlooked and continue into the next planning cycle. This would help contribute to children being fully supported to reach their full potential.

Staff were skilled at effective questioning and interacting in children's play which supported children very well to think, and problem solve for themselves. Additionally, staff had developed 'Pledges' within their rooms on how best to support children through skilled interactions. We found these were developed with careful consideration of children's interests and stages of development. This approach was having a positive effect on supporting children's language and communication skills and their overall wellbeing.

Children benefitted from a wealth of opportunities to further develop their skills in language and early math. For example, staff used Makaton signs when communicating with babies which was naturally woven into their daily experiences. Signs and symbols were shared regularly with families on a digital platform which encouraged family learning and promoted children's confidence in using sign language. Younger and older children played at attractively displayed mixing stations, they followed visual recipes, measuring out and mixing real-life experiences to make their own fairy dough. Literacy sheds in the nursery gardens provided children with sheltered and comfortable areas, where they looked at books with staff and created pictures with their peers. Staff had effectively considered how to incorporate language, literacy, and numeracy into planned experiences.

Overall, floor books were child centred and demonstrated that children's views and opinions mattered as staff responded to their questions and enquiries with interesting play experiences. Staff who worked with older children had a good understanding of how floor books captured and evidenced learning, however, they appeared to be in the early stages, and we found some missed opportunities to explore learning further through children's comments. We suggested ways in which these could be recorded better to evidence children's breadth of learning.

Observations of learning had improved since the last inspection. They were shared with families on a digital platform and were focused on children as individuals and recognised their successes. One parent told us, 'They have really improved their use of SeeSaw, it makes it so much easier to talk to my child about what they have been doing at nursery and build on the skills they have been working on'.

Next steps in learning were identified and displayed in a child friendly format. We found that some children's next steps were too vast to be developmentally achievable. For example, 'Support (child name) to take part in activities and develop confidence' and '(Child's name) to recognise familiar letters. We suggested identified next steps include strategies on how staff will support children to achieve. This would result in children being appropriately challenged in their learning and progress with achievable next steps. The manager told us, this had been identified through monitoring processes and was included in their improvement work.

How good is our setting? 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.

2.2. Children experience high quality facilities

The nursery offered children calm, interesting and welcoming environments. The playrooms were tidy, and well maintained. Resources were attractively displayed and accessible to children. Playroom's provided lots

of natural light, were well-ventilated, and, the use of natural furnishings, fairy lights and creative ceiling mobiles created a calm and nurturing ambience throughout. We found children moved seamlessly around play spaces were engaged in their experiences and supported each other very well to play and learn. Their artwork, ideas and thoughts were displayed in a respectful way which contributed to them feeling valued. The indoor and outdoor environments were well thought out and supported quality play and learning experiences. We found children were very engaged and playing purposefully in all areas of the nursery.

Children experienced an environment that smelt fresh and was very clean which supported their wellbeing. Staff undertook regular cleaning throughout the day which helped support cleanliness. Staff effectively implemented infection, prevention, and control routines to minimise the potential spread of infection. Children were confident in washing their hands after playing outside and before mealtimes. Robust and effective routines meant children were supported to be safe and healthy.

Younger children were enabled to rest and relax. Cosy and nurturing areas were provided, and we found these were well used by the children. This resulted in children seeking out a quiet space where they could have some individual time when needed and contributed to them feeling safe. Older children had been consulted on what they liked best at nursery and what could be improved. A few children had commented, 'It can be noisy, and 'it could be quiet'. We discussed with staff how they could further develop their comfortable and snug areas for children to retreat to and self-regulate if needed. This would contribute further to children feeling valued and secure.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported as they had free flow access to the outdoors for fresh air and exercise. The garden areas were interesting and exciting spaces for children to play. They ran up and down hills, explored, climbed trees, and used large loose parts in their imaginary play. These opportunities supported the development of children's larger motor and physical skills. We found, children played happily independently or cooperatively together rolling small rings down a hill and hunting for insects in the secret garden. One child told us, 'We've found worms you know, they wriggle'. Children were having fun.

Staff supported children to take part in risky play and to learn about their own boundaries and how to keep themselves and others safe. The service had focused on our SIMOA (Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) campaign and incorporated this into daily experiences. Children were eager to tell us how SIMOA the elephant kept them safe. One child told us, 'He's the elephant that counts us all'.

We reviewed CCTV which was used for maintaining the security of garden areas only and promoted children's safety without impinging on their rights. We suggested that a policy be developed and shared with families to ensure they are aware of CCTV usage and purpose within the service. The manager addressed this before the inspection had been concluded.

How good is our leadership? 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.

3.1. Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The manager was committed and conscientious and the senior management team were all visible leaders with high aspirations for children, staff, and the overall service. They worked very well together and had

successfully created a shared responsibility to improving outcomes. Their commitment to service development promoted a shared vision and supported positive outcomes for children and their families.

The vision, values and aims of the service had been developed through consultation with staff, children, and families. The service valued the opinions of children and their families which ensured their values, vision and aims represented their community. This contributed to the positive ethos of the setting.

Children and their families benefitted from a culture of continuous improvement which was having a positive effect on improving outcomes for all. It was evident the staff team had worked hard since the last inspection to ensure that significant improvements had been made and embedded in the service provided. Staff reflected well together to bring about positive change, they were knowledgeable that high quality learning through play needs to be at the heart of the service they provided. For example, they had prioritised areas for development highlighted at their previous inspection around interactions and partnerships with families while maintaining the good practice that was already established.

Realistic improvement planning with a strong focus on self-evaluation ensured performance was measured and reflected upon by the staff team on a regular basis. The staff team were committed and could confidently tell of us of their roles and responsibilities within improvement priorities. Effective policies, procedures, self-evaluation, and robust quality assurance processes were in place to support the development and improvement of the service. Quality assurance processes had significantly improved since the last inspection, a 'two stars and a wish' approach was supporting staff well to reflect on their practice, improve outcomes and to grow professionally.

Families had been welcomed back into the service for parent and contact visits where children showed them around their playroom, and they engaged in activities together. They were yet to be welcomed back into the service at drop off and pick up times. The manager told us they had considered this; however, safety was their main priority. We discussed how the benefits outweighed the risks and suggested ways in which this could be managed ensuring everyone was kept safe. This area of development was part of the services ongoing improvement work. Families were complimentary of the staff team and their comments included, 'The staff are all lovely and show compassion towards my child' and 'My child is at the heart of everything happening within the service'.

How good is our staff team? 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.

4.3.Satff Deployment

Staff worked well together to create a welcoming environment for children. They were enthusiastic about their roles and spoke confidently and positively about their work. They valued the positive relationships that had developed within their team, they felt very well supported by leaders and each other and most staff told us they were part of a 'family'.

Staff communicated very well throughout the day to ensure children's routines were not disrupted with daily tasks or unplanned events. They worked effectively together to ensure continuity of children's care was consistent. We found there was a good mix of skills and knowledge, and staff were motivated and committed to providing positive outcomes for children. The positive team ethos was very evident.

Staff had a very good understanding of current guidance and how they used this to enhance children's experiences. Staff confidently told us of their learning and how they shared this with their colleagues. Some staff had taken on leadership roles and were eager to share with us the positive changes and outcomes these were having for the children. They were committed to their roles in providing experiences that enhanced children's lives and helped them to reach their full potential.

Effective staff deployment across the service meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff, consistently throughout the day. The management of staff shifts and breaks was seamless. This ensured appropriate staffing ratios met the needs of the children during busier times such as lunchtime and the end of the nursery day which contributed positively to children's safety.

Parents were kept informed of who was caring for their children through verbal and written updates on their online digital platform. Staff absences were very well managed as staff that knew the children and their routines were available to cover for any unplanned absences. New staff to the service were inducted well and told us they felt very much part of the existing team. Careful consideration of new staff working with more experienced staff ensured they had good role models and were fully supported in their roles.

The staff team identified strongly with the service and a strong team ethos was evident which supported children to feel happy, safe, and secure.

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 ensure children receive high quality experiences through interactions, the manager should support staff to develop their skills in quality interactions. This should include, but not limited to

(a) Ensure all children receive responsive care and support from staff at the right time.
(b) Support and extend children's thinking and problem-solving skills during their play and learning experiences.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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 5 August 2022.

Action taken since then

The service had focused on improving interactions since the previous inspection. Staff were skilled at supporting children through interactions to think and problem solve. Staff were kind, warm and caring when they interacted in children's play. Staff had considered 'Pledges' within the playrooms as to how interactions

would be developed and implemented. We found these were appropriate to children's ages and stages of development. Through improved interactions and personal planning children recieved the right care and support at a time that was right for them.

This improvement has been 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	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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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