Smiley Stars Nursery - Mansewood
Day Care of Children

15 Hillside Road
Manswood
Glasgow
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Telephone: 0141 649 6335

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 January 2025

Service provided by:
Nerlana Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2010010892

Service no:
CS2018363139

About the service

Smiley Stars Nursery - Mansewood is located in the southside of Glasgow. Care is provided from a large detached property with substantial outdoor play areas. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 71 children aged from birth to those not yet attending primary school.

The service is conveniently located close to public transport links, schools, nurseries, shops and green spaces.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 07 and 08 January 2025. The inspection was carried out by three 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 electronic feedback from 19 parents and carers whose children attended the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, safe and secure in the setting.
- Staff knew children well and were responsive in their care.
- The provider should consider providing a menu choice for all children.
- A more robust system for checking the cleanliness of the environment and suitability of changing areas needed to be introduced.
- The manager should ensure that all aspects of quality assurance are captured with her quality assurance plan and actioned.

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 key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Staff were kind and gentle towards children. Staff and children were pleased to see each other after the Christmas holidays. There was lovely chat about having missed each other and what they did over the holidays. The warm welcome children received from staff helped them feel safe and secure.

During our visit there were some children who had just joined the service and some children who were settling. We noted that, particularly in the younger baby room that staff managed this well and were comforting and reassuring towards children. Children were given lots of cuddles and gentle reassurance.

Staff were respectful of children and their rights. We observed staff over various playrooms seeking permission from children to change their nappies, blow their noses and have their faces cleaned. This highlighted to us how staff respected children and their wishes whilst meeting their needs.

Staff knew children well, we saw nice examples of when staff were asking children about their siblings, babies in the baby room and older children who were at school. Showing an awareness of children's families and what was important to them provided a feeling of security. Parents who provided feedback spoke positively about the connections they and their children had with staff. Some of their comments included:

"They seem to genuinely care about my son. They are interested about his life outside of nursery and have been helpful and understanding when he has had any changes in his life eg his younger sister being born. I feel I can discuss any issues with staff and they will be dealt with appropriately" and "Good, open and honest. I trust the staff to care for my child and they are very understanding of our family unit and commitments."

Lunchtime was a pleasant sociable experience for children. In the 3-5 rooms staff gave children the opportunity to be involved in preparing for lunch by inviting them to help set the table. Children counted how many plates, glasses, and cutlery they would need to set the table for their friends. Children sat together over two tables of six with a member of staff supporting them at each of the tables. Larger bowls of bread and macaroni and cauliflower cheese were placed in the middle of each table for children to self-serve. Children in the 3-5 room were very confident and respectful in doing this. They waited their turn and passed the bowl around to their friends. Two children did not want their meal. Staff contacted the kitchen, and both children were given beans on toast which they enjoyed. The children had to wait quite a while for this, all the other children had finished their meal and had left the table. To further improve the lunchtime experience the service should consider providing an option for lunch where children can choose what they want without having to wait.

Lunchtime within the 2-3 room was a calm, relaxed experience with staff and children chatting whilst sat at the table. A staff member sat with each group of children while they ate. To promote independence and self-help skills, children should be involved in the preparation of lunch and self-selection of food and water throughout the lunchtime experience.

Each child had a personal plan which detailed their needs, wants, and wishes. Personal plans were updated regularly and reflected the individual needs and interests of children. Those sampled provided clear information about what children needed and how staff planned to support children.

Children who required additional support were well supported. They had additional plans which highlighted their needs and strategies which would support them. We could see how the service collaborated closely with other professionals such as occupational therapists, health visitors and speech and language therapists to share information, develop and implement strategies to support children. The close working relationships and shared responsibility promoted positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had fun playing and learning across all playrooms, and outdoors. Training that staff had engaged in around curiosity and using loose parts and natural resources had impacted positively on the types of resources and experiences that were available for children.

The decision to implement a free flow play experience for children upstairs had improved experiences, opportunities and outcomes for children. Children were busy and having fun. All three rooms were busy and well resourced. We observed children confidently and safely leading their own learning across all rooms. The free flow experience gave children more independence to move about and engage in activities and resources which encouraged them to be curious and creative.

Our observations highlighted some staff skills in extending and challenging children's learning. Staff listened carefully to children and responded to their cues respectfully. Within the 2-3 rooms there were some missed opportunities to support children's learning. An example of this was when we observed a child wanting to transport sand from one area to another and was told no. This highlighted staffs' understanding of identifying and supporting schematic play. Schematic play is when children repeat certain actions. Schematic play helps children to develop and learn about the world around them.

Staff were more skilled at supporting children's creativity through the use of more natural resources and loose parts. Art work displayed reflected children's work. Recent staff training around the use of loose parts and promoting curiosity and wonder had impacted positively on their practice. As a result children were more independent, confident and creative.

Parents who provided feedback were very positive about their child's development and learning. Some of their comments included:

"So many wonderful sensory activities for babies I never would have thought of. Both children's numeracy has especially been nurtured through play in a very positive way." and "There is a huge variety of experiences for the children and my son really enjoys these. He finds them challenging but also fun and often asks to replicate them at home. He also had a bag sent home from nursery with an activity they had made so he could practice counting and number recognition. He absolutely loved this and we enjoyed doing this with him. It was good to get an idea of what he's been learning at nursery."

Through children's learning journals and staff knowledge of children we could see how children were developing and achieving. Observations captured the types of experiences children had been involved in and how it supported their learning. Staff considered children's progression and interests when planning next steps.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The premises was found to be secure and safe. The facilities were generally clean, tidy and well presented. We pointed out some areas of the environment that required more thorough cleaning such as doors and skirting boards. The service entrance was welcoming and spacious. Displays and information boards were attractive and informative. A secure buzzer entry system with CCTV ensured that management and staff knew who was entering and exiting the premises.

Children were cared for in rooms according to their ages and stages of development. All rooms were comfortable and well resourced. The provider in an attempt to provide a calmer more nurturing environment had installed softer lighting in the 3-5 rooms. Staff we spoke to commented positively on how the lighting had helped to create a softer, calmer environment, The provider had plans to install softer lighting in all the playrooms. We discussed how the introduction of some softer furnishings and resources was required in the baby rooms. The provider agreed with this and shared their plans for future refurbishments.

Some playrooms had direct access to a secure outdoor play area. Children upstairs did not have direct access but children were regularly asked if they wanted to play outdoors. Outdoors was well resourced with a large amount of loose parts and natural resources to stimulate and excite children. Enclosed areas outdoors had been developed to provide shelter and light. This meant that children could play outdoors in all weather conditions and when it was getting dark. We asked the provider to consider if heating could be incorporated into the shelters to provide additional warmth and contribute to children's comfort. The provider agreed to look into this. We were concerned about the quality of experience younger, less mobile children had outdoors. On the two days of our inspection temperatures were particularly low and the youngest children became very cold very quickly. As they were less mobile it was more difficult for them to move about and regulate their temperature. We suggested that in these instances the youngest babies would have benefitted from being well wrapped up and being taken for a walk instead. The manager agreed to monitor temperatures to ensure babies received the best possible experience.

We raised some concerns relating to infection prevention and control. We highlighted to the manager and provider that one of the changing areas for the 2-3 room lacked privacy and dignity. The provider agreed to address this immediately. Across all changing areas children's personal creams were not being stored safely. The provider and manager provided assurances that these concerns would be addressed immediately. We also pointed out areas that were observed to be dirty, namely doors and skirting boards. The provider and manager agreed to discuss this with domestic staff and incorporate cleaning monitoring into their quality assurance tasks.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The service was led by an experienced manager and depute manager who had the support of other managers within the group, an operations manager and the managing director. There were clear areas of responsibility and leadership within the management team.

The vision value and aims of the service had been shared with and understood by staff and families. A copy of vision value and aims was displayed in the foyer of the service. The vision values and aims of the service reflected the day-to-day practice and aspirations of the service.

The manager valued and respected the opinions and ideas of children and families who attended the service. Children were consulted informally about the service and what they wanted to do. Examples in planning highlighted how children had been consulted and their ideas and opinions acted upon. Further evidence through minutes of meetings showed how staff valued and respected children's ideas and opinions. Children's views and comments recorded in learning journals.

A commitment to building and maintaining relationships with families was evident. As a result, parents had a variety of opportunities to offer feedback to inform change. Parents were welcomed into the setting each day so they could see their children at play. We saw examples of how the service involved parents in the development of the service. Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires agreed that they were involved in the development and improvement of the service. Some of their comments included:

"Frequently asked to share opinions on what the nursery can do better and asked to bring spare objects to help child development."

"Parents get invited in for stay and play sessions and we also get the opportunity for parent chats."

"They often ask for input from parents such as to come in to talk about our jobs and recently asked for parent ideas for new meals for the children which were then put in place immediately which was nice. Also, any time I have asked them to do anything specific for our son they have been more than happy to help accommodate this."

Following our last inspection the service had developed and implemented an action plan for improvement. The manager had compiled a PowerPoint presentation which highlighted the improvements that were required and what the service were doing to meet these improvements. The service had worked hard to improve and develop the service. A key area of improvement was the move to a free flow approach for children in the 3-5 room. As a result of the change to free flow children had many more opportunities to engage and learn in an environment which encouraged curiosity and investigation.

Quality assurance processes were developing and were leading to improvements in the environment and improved outcomes for children. Formal quality assurance tasks were scheduled and carried out formally. Tasks such as staff monitoring and practice were carried out with feedback shared with staff. The staff team were beginning to carry peer assessment and review. Involving staff in quality assurance tasks promoted staffs' understanding of quality assurance, shared leadership and responsibility. The manager should ensure that quality assurance covers all aspects of the service including cleaning and staff recruitment.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

The level of staffing was effective in ensuring good quality outcomes for children. Management demonstrated a commitment to ensure the staffing was right to meet the needs of children. Contingency plans were in place to ensure the right number of staff were present. This was being further developed to include ensuring consistent care and learning children at times of staff absences. To support continuity of care, the manager had introduced a buddy system where only staff from the buddy room would cover absence or breaks. This limited the number of staff involved in the children's care and provided continuity and familiarity of care. This helped children to feel safe and secure. Parents and carers who provided feedback confirmed that there was enough staff to care for their children. Some of their comments included:

"The staff are very aware of all the children and their needs. When new faces appear for new starts or cover, they make it a priority to know the children and make sure they're happy and comfortable for any changes. My child can take a while to warm up to unknown faces, but we don't have any issues with staff changes I believe this is because staff in different rooms make it a priority to know all children not just set rooms." and "When we've been dropping off/ picking up the room always seems in control and settled. Our daughter seems very content and happy." Some parents and carers were less positive about staff deployment, commenting:

"Ratio of kids in Dragonflies room is obviously as per guidance, but I get the sense it can be a bit unruly at times - I question whether staff have the same approach to discipline, safety etc - some seem more lenient or slower to step in based on stories my child sometimes tells me. This could be down to staff individual style/experience and/or confidence in dealing with the kids." and "Sometimes it feels like staff turnover is high, particularly around relationship building. In the 3+ room toilet and hand washing supervision is poor (potentially worryingly completely absent)."

We observed staff to be careful in their positioning within playrooms and outdoors. They ensured that they positioned themselves in such a way that they could see and were aware of children's movements. This was particularly important upstairs in the 3-5 rooms where children moved independently between rooms. Staff monitored which rooms were becoming busier and moved with the children. As a result, staff were able to support children's interests, meet their needs and keep them safe.

The provider employed a mix of qualified and unqualified staff. Qualified staff were good role models and provided effective mentoring to unqualified and less experienced staff. Staff told us that they felt well supported by the management and their mentors. The provider should continue to support all staff in their learning and development. They should ensure that unqualified staff who are working towards childcare qualifications are given the support and time to achieve their qualification.

The provider had employed some new staff since our last inspection. We looked to see how these staff had been selected and recruited. Each staff member had an electronic file which held their information and induction plan. We found that although the provider ensured that appropriate safety checks, such as references and disclosures had been obtained prior to employment, there were some inconsistencies in the information sought and gathered from prospective employees. For example, we noted that not all staff had completed application forms. The provider should ensure a more consistent approach to staff recruitment.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 1 June 2024, the provider must ensure that children's needs are being met at all times.

In order to achieve this, the provider must ensure that there is sufficient staff deployed in each of the nursery playrooms to meet the individual needs of all children. They must ensure that children are supervised at all times and that staff breaks and rotas are planned in such a way that children receive continuity of care

This is in order to comply with Regulations 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI/2011/210) Make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: "My needs are met by the right number of staff" (HSCS 3.15), "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11), and "I am supported and cared for by people I know so that I experience consistency and continuity" (HSCS 4.16).

This requirement was made on 12 April 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement
The service employed enough staff to safely supervise and meet the individual needs of children. Systems had been introduced to ensure children received continuity in their care.

Met - outwith timescales

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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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