St. Cadoc's Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

St. Cadoc's Primary School
Crookfur Road
Newton Mearns
Glasgow
G77 6TT

Telephone: 01415 707 340

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 November 2021

Service provided by:
East Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003372

Service no:
CS2019375091

About the service

St. Cadoc's Nursery Class registered with the Care Inspectorate in August 2019 to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children from three years of age to those not yet attending primary school. The service is provided by East Renfrewshire Council and operates from a large playroom located within St. Cadoc's Primary School, Newton Mearns, Glasgow. The aims of the nursery class include: "To provide a nurturing environment where children are supported and all achievements are celebrated. To provide children with rich, relevant experiences to enhance their play, both indoors and outdoors, in safe, stimulating environments. To provide an ethos of trust where children, families and staff feel valued and listened to."

We began the inspection of St. Cadoc's Nursery Class with an unannounced visit on Wednesday 3 November 2021. We continued the inspection virtually using Teams technology, telephone discussions and email exchange then concluded the inspection by providing feedback on Friday 5 November 2021.

This was a themed inspection where we evaluated the Quality of Care and Support, Quality of Environment, Quality of Staffing and the Quality of Management and Leadership. As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - "Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19" with a specific focus on Quality indicator 5.2: "Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff". We will report on the overall performance of this indicator within Quality Care and Support.

The inspection was carried out by one inspector. Our methodology for the inspection included:

- Observations of children's routines and staff interactions with children.
- Observations of infection prevention and control practice.
- Telephone discussions and email exchanges with the senior management team.
- Email exchanges with ten parents.
- Virtual discussions with six members of staff.
- Reviewing key records, policies, and written procedures relative to Covid-19.
- Evaluating procedures for the development and ongoing support for staff.

What people told us

During our inspection visit we observed children enjoying their play experiences, both inside and outdoors. They were happy, generally well settled and confident. Some of the children proudly shared their learning stories and explained what happened during their nursery day.

We asked the nursery to pass our contact details to parents so that they could share their experiences of the quality of care and support their children had experienced while attending the nursery class. Fourteen parents agreed to be contacted and exchanged emails with us. Most parents who responded were very happy with the quality of care provided by the nursery and believed staff worked hard to ensure their children felt happy, safe and secure. Examples of parents' comments included:

"St Cadoc's is a great little nursery. The staff team do an amazing job, they are friendly and nurturing, treat her as an individual and have helped our daughter to grow in confidence over the past year. We are very happy about the standard of education and care she receives."

"My daughter attends St Cadoc's nursery. I personally couldn't be any happier with the full experience. When starting my daughter wasn't good with the separation part. All staff were amazing worked so hard to settle her in and gave me ideas to help leading up to the days attending nursery. I love seeing all the pictures on seesaw that get upload from the teachers. Seeing my child's learning and having so much fun at the same time is lovely. The outdoor area in nursery is fab and so nice that they encourage the kids to be outside as much as possible. She brings home baking weekly which she loves."

"My daughter seems to really enjoy herself at nursery and always looks forward to attending nursery. I am very happy with the level of care provided by the nursery and feel she has come on a lot in her knowledge and understanding since she started nursery."

"My daughter loves the nursery and all the teachers and is so excited to attend. The teachers, from a parent's point of view, have been excellent engaging throughout lockdown as well as communicating and touching base with parents regularly. My child's speech, vocabulary and overall development has come on so well over the years. We are extremely happy with the positive introduction our child has had to her formal education and feel they have done a great job of preparing her for starting school next year."

"Our son is flourishing under the nursery's care and it is clear they know him well as an individual and that they can design interactions and invitations to play to engage his interests. Our interactions with staff are positive on the vast majority of occasions. We frequently speak to his care worker at the beginning and end of the day and are also provided the opportunity to discuss him through update phone calls. Our son is very fond of her and looks forward to his school days."

"My son has settled well in nursery, he mostly enjoys it. The staff are nice and mostly welcoming. Some staff have left since the start of term and some are on maternity leave. It feels as though the nursery is short staffed. I get some updates from nursery about what my son has been doing, mostly when he has been participating in an event for example wellbeing Wednesday. I would like to see more of what he is doing on regular days. My son has not experienced a trip to St Cadoc's Woods yet. I would love for him to explore the woods with the nursery. I am unsure if other nursery kids have had this opportunity yet."

"We have found the communication from the nursery excellent and staff have made time to talk directly to us about our specific concerns regarding our child settling in. They have been thorough and reassuring. Overall, we think that his time at St Cadoc's will be positive and will prepare him well for school, and we feel that he is safe and happy when he is there."

Self assessment

We had requested a self evaluation prior to our inspection. The service had used "Key Question 5: Covid-19 Operating an early learning and childcare setting during Covid-19" very effectively as a self evaluation tool. We looked at their findings to cross reference with our own observations and assessment of the quality of service provision. The self evaluation demonstrated a very good understanding of how to support children's health and wellbeing and operate safely during the Covid-19 pandemic.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The nursery's planning approaches for children's care, learning and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. 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.

We discussed with staff flexible approaches to their use of talking and thinking big books that would support more meaningful discussion with children about their play and development. Staff agreed that such planning approaches could enhance the systems in place for recognising children's learning as well as extend children's sense of ownership of play experiences. This can increase opportunities for staff to reflect on when children display deep level engagement in their play and support them to provide greater autonomy and choice as to how this will be taken forward.

Staff demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the policies and procedures in place to ensure care and welfare of children including children protection. All staff received regular professional learning in safeguarding and told us they were confident in dealing with child protection concerns. We discussed the Care Inspectorate's "Practice guide to Chronologies" (2017) and how this can be used to help create effective child protection records. We found that some of the chronology recording systems we looked at focused mainly on adult behaviour and did not always make clear the impact and risks to the child of particular life events. This can enhance the robust processes already in place ensuring continued safeguarding of children within the nursery.

We looked at how the nursery's infection prevention and control practices supported a safe environment for children and staff during the pandemic. We found there were clear policies and procedures in place to ensure consistent approaches across the setting. A particular strength of the nursery's risk management approach was that the staff had voluntarily agreed to participate in the Scottish Government routine asymptomatic at-home testing programme using lateral flow devices (LFD). The Scottish Government had asked that early learning and childcare staff be encouraged to participate in this scheme to minimise the risks of Covid-19 spread and contribute to the wellbeing of everyone in their setting.

The staff we spoke to had participated in infection prevention and control training and understood the new arrangements for enhanced cleaning within the setting. Risk assessments had been undertaken that addressed the areas within national Covid-19 guidance for keeping people safe. Staff told us they were encouraged to access risk assessments to keep up to date with any changes. We identified a need for more robust ongoing playroom safety checks in relation to potential hazards.

For example, some signage needed to be restored to a small staff room space to make clear maximum safe occupancy levels. We highlighted to staff the importance of widening the opening of windows, where it was safe to do so, to increase natural ventilation. We advised the senior management team to work with East Renfrewshire Council to ensure that staff have access to CO2 monitoring via either mobile or fixed devices. This can help staff to consider areas of the setting where air flow (including pockets of stagnant air in occupied spaces) and/or temperature may be problematic, and put in place strategies that may be used to address these issues and reduce any potential risk of the spread of infection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We looked at the nursery environment and resources within it in terms of how they were managed to support positive outcomes for children. We found the accommodation provided a safe, secure and stimulating play environment that was of a high standard of cleanliness. We saw that displays contributed to a stimulating environment that celebrated children's achievements. There were well-appointed areas for children to experience a range of different type of play activities inside and out as well as for them to engage in less physically demanding and quieter floor and tabletop activities. Play spaces included a range of open-ended and natural resources to stimulate children's creativity and problem solving. Staff ensured spaces were set up in ways that were adaptable and had potential to encourage children's sustained shared thinking.

Staff told us that they regularly evaluated and reflected on the quality of children's play spaces. We identified a need for these shared reflections to focus more closely on how setting up and monitoring of each play area can lead to challenging and engaging shared play opportunities for children across the whole of the nursery day. We identified a need for staff to monitor play resources and experiences to ensure they consistently promote equity and reflect diversity. This can help develop the nursery vision of offering children's play experiences where everyone feels valued and included.

We highlighted the need for children to have more regular access to challenging outdoor play beyond the setting. The senior management team agreed to develop and implement a programme for children to experience play in a local woodland space. This will involve extending staff training in the forest schools' approach and extending the use of loose part materials to create challenging outdoor environments for children.

We discussed with staff how the expansion of funded childcare hours has led to new challenges for ELC settings to provide meals and snacks for children over the extended session times. We observed the newly established lunch time rota. Children sat in a noisy playroom environment at long tables to eat both hot cooked meals and packed lunches over different timetabled sittings. We identified a number of adaptations to the environment and playroom routines which would help staff better realise East Renfrewshire Council's commitment to providing a more relaxed and nurturing environment during lunchtimes. The staff agreed that they needed to do more to ensure that children were joined at the table by the same key staff in small groups for the duration of the lunchtime experience. Staff agreed to expand opportunities for children's outdoor play in parallel with the daily lunchtime experience. This can help reduce background levels of noise and support staff to create a quieter, more relaxed homely lunchtime experience for each group sitting of children. It will increase opportunities for staff to be responsive to individual needs and support children to develop positive attachments with key adults where they feel listened to, valued and included.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The staff routinely engaged in a wide range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice. This included: paediatric first aid; playful pedagogy; virtual nature schools; nurturing approaches; role play; Froebel in childhood practice; experimental play; oral language skills; outdoor learning and risk assessment; adverse childhood experiences. This help to ensure the team's professional competencies and skills were up to date and staff felt confident in their different roles. Planned training and development opportunities supported staff to reflect on their practice and follow their professional codes and effectively implement nursery policies and procedures.

Staff felt valued by the senior management team who gave them opportunities to take on leadership roles in areas of the curriculum in which they had identified a particular interest or strength. The devolved management style contributed to positive outcomes by increasing the range of approaches available to meet children's individual needs. For example, we found that a staff leadership role in creativity had increased the ways children expressed their thoughts and ideas. Staff discussed how these creative experiences were used as the basis for children's future learning. We highlighted the value to staff of continuing to develop leadership roles within the team.

Staff told us of meetings through which they actively and openly shared their professional knowledge and ideas around the whole team. Staff told us that the team culture was fostered within a comfortable climate of asking questions, checking understandings and reflecting on practice. We found evidence of divergent views being welcomed as a source of energy and a spur to the team's creative problem-solving.

The team followed a collaborative approach to self evaluation. All staff understood that self evaluation was a key aspect of their approach to continuous improvement. Staff told us relationships within the team were increasingly based on familiarity, honesty, and mutual trust. This contributed to a values-driven work environment that helped the team to achieve its goals.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The senior management team had established systems for working with staff to support them in incorporating "How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare" (HGIOELC) national guidance and best practice within the service improvement plan. We discussed with staff approaches to exploring the challenge questions within this document to reflect on how they are doing, how do they know, and what are they going to do now. Staff worked effectively together to ensure they had the resources and information necessary to complete improvement tasks. For example, staff approaches to observing and documenting play had been developed through planned professional development opportunities. This had led to the trialling of different approaches and reflecting together on how this information supported outcomes for children. This helped build a sense of common ownership of practice developments. It improved the capacity of staff to meet the needs of all children in their care.

The staff team were good at taking account of the views of parents and carers to support the continuous evaluation of the service. Staff told parents why their views were important and explained how these had impacted on the quality of children's experiences. We found that staff dedicated time to analysing parents' contributions and extracting key messages, themes or ideas put forward. This approach supported everyone involved with the nursery to develop a shared understanding of its vision, values, strengths and improvement needs.

We found that as a newly registered service, the senior management team were developing their understanding of the information care services are legally required to supply to the Care Inspectorate via our online notification portal. For example, we highlighted a need to notify us separately of every individual case of confirmed Covid-19 infection involving a child who uses the service, or staff members, as they occur.

We discussed how this information was shared with Scottish Government so that they have a clear picture of the challenges care services are facing during the pandemic and can provide the best possible response. Between the inspection visit and the writing of this report this notification issue was fully addressed by the senior management team.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

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

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

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

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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