Star Academy Scotland Ltd
Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 August 2022

Service provided by:
Star Academy Scotland Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2019013314

Service no:
CS2019375138

About the service

Star Academy Scotland Ltd provides a care service to a maximum of 40 children of primary school age at any one time. The play and activity based programme operates during school holidays between the hours of 08:30 and 17:30. During the operating times, the service has the exclusive use of the two large halls, and enclosed garden playground areas of a scout hall in Whitecraigs, Glasgow. The service is close to transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 28 July 2022 between 10:00 and 14:30. The inspection was carried out by an inspector 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 some of the children using the service and reviewed survey responses from 15 parents whose children attend the service.
- Spoke with the service provider, managers, and staff. We also reviewed survey responses from seven staff.
- Observed practice and staff interactions with children.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children received support from highly motivated staff.
- Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included
- Children of all ages and abilities were developing their teamwork, creativity and problem solving skills through high quality play experiences.
- Children's wellbeing and general health were supported through plentiful opportunities to experience energetic play, sports and games indoors and outdoors.
- Staff were flexible and supported each other to work as a team to benefit children.
- Staff should continue to develop strategies for developing children's sense of ownership of leading change related to their self chosen play projects.
- The management team agreed that auditing processes for children's medication could be strengthened to support children's health and safety.
- The providers to ensure they develop an approach to recruitment that builds stability in the staff team through the retention of experienced staff.

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?	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 made an evaluation of good for this key question as we found performance that demonstrated a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed any areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

We looked at how the service'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 adapting daily planned activities and 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 approaches that may make a gathering of personal planning information more collaborative and provide children with a greater sense of ownership of their next steps for play and development. Staff agreed that this would provide time and space for children to regularly review, evaluate and adapt their plans. It can enhance the existing approach to personal plans by ensuring they become a meaningful forward-looking planning tool that supports children's ownership of developmentally challenging play opportunities.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the policies and procedures in place to ensure care and welfare of children including child protection. All staff received regular professional learning in safeguarding and understood the indicators that may suggest a child is at risk of suffering harm. We signposted the management team to our organisation's "Practice guide to Chronologies" and discussed how this could be used to enhance the robust systems already in place for monitoring and maintaining child protection records and support the continued safeguarding of children.

We highlighted to the management team steps to take to fully implement current national guidance associated with the recording and administration of children's medication. We have provided the link for the guidance here: https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/1549/management-of-medication-in-daycare-of-children-and-childminding.pdf. This can further enhance the development of the staff's understanding of the appropriate procedures to follow to ensure the safe administration of medication including the need for accurate, accessible records of parental consent.

1:3 Play and learning

We found that staff promoted a culture within the service that focussed on promoting the children's physical play, opportunity to engage in a variety of games and access to play materials that could be used in numerous ways indoors and outdoors. Through discussion with staff it was evident they shared an understanding of the resulting impact this had on children's sense of fun, enjoyment as well as learning and development. Staff told us how they placed the interests of children at the centre of their planning approaches for play and learning.

We observed children participate in a variety of den building, movement and ball game sessions where they had the opportunity to learn about teamwork, body coordination and control, practice ball skills, and build awareness of the body in space. The energetic activities we observed were engaged in enthusiastically by the children providing wider benefits associated with aerobic activity such as supporting weight control and cardiovascular health.

We found that the range of creative art activities offered provided an outlet for expression and creativity that enhanced learning. Staff told us how the art experiences they provided helped support children's attention as well as to provide acceptable, enjoyable ways to express their feelings. It was clear that the personalised support, praise and encouragement staff offered children during these experiences promoted self-esteem and increase their motivation to succeed. One parent commented: "My daughter loved the full experience and freedom to make choices. She has learned so much especially in the art classes."

We found evidence of a wide range of experiences that have been implemented including splash days, arts and crafts, small scale three-dimensional adaptable construction kits, an extensive range of sports as well as forest school play in the garden. There were also opportunities for children to develop their understanding of science, technology, engineering and maths through the use of plug and play electronic kits. Through discussion we could see that staff recognised that children's rights were central to their care, play and learning.

We discussed with staff additional observation and planning approaches that focus on capturing and responding to the play interest of a child or group of children. Staff agreed that this responsive approach could help them to build on existing approaches for recognising children's play interests as well as extend opportunities for child-initiated play.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We made an evaluation of very good for this key question as we found performance that demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require significant adjustment.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

We found the accommodation to be bright and airy, with well-considered organisation and layouts of play spaces that were attractive to children and reflected their interests. Staff ensured the health and safety of children's environments by keeping logs for risk assessments and cleaning. The service effectively implemented relevant health and safety legislation and removed or minimised any potential play hazards. The management team explained the process for reporting any maintenance issues and also negotiating improvements to children's environment and storage facilities with the local scout association that leased the premises.

We found the environment and resources within it were effectively managed to support positive outcomes for children. The staff consulted with children to jointly evaluate the extent to which resources were effectively supporting their enjoyment of play. Children and parents confirmed there were frequent opportunities to take part in active play opportunities, indoors and outdoors. The main halls and outdoor areas were regularly used for energetic activities, sports and group games. The management team had recruited sports specialists to work with children to plan and implement a variety of challenging team-based and individual physical activities including football and indoor tennis.

We were able to see systems were in place for maintaining and monitoring children's accidents. The manager told us how they were collated so that they could identify any patterns and make necessary adjustments to the environment. Staff told us that accident records were shared with the child's parents to provide reassurance that their child had been cared for by staff and to make sure there was continuity in their child's care.

We discussed with staff approaches that would enhance the room layouts and organisation. We highlighted the value of developing quiet, relaxing areas for older children to increase opportunities to socialise together and build their sense of identity within the group. The management team told us they were committed to widening the range of materials available to support children's play both indoors and outdoors. This can extend the opportunities for children to learn actively through play, be creative and think critically.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

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

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Positive working relationships between the management team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children. The management team had created conditions where most experienced staff felt confident to initiate well-informed change and share responsibility for the process. For example, staff discussed sports activity initiatives they had introduced and felt passionate about and talked positively about how these experiences had been enjoyed by children.

The management team told us how they dedicated time to analysing children's, staff and parents' contributions to any consultations and extracting the key messages, themes or ideas put forward. Some improvement planning work was at an early stage and there was a need to continue to develop more formal approaches to self-evaluation. For example, staff were becoming familiar with the Care Inspectorate "A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare" (Care Inspectorate, 2022). We highlighted how this tool could be used to support staff and children's contributions to the development of a service improvement plan that clearly set out the service priorities and expectations for improvement.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

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

Staff felt very supported by management both formally and informally through their open door approach. The management team regularly undertook observations of staff to support practice.

The model of recruitment followed by the provider had led to the recruitment of a number of highly motivated school leavers and full-time students undertaking a range of relevant university degree courses. The team were led by a highly qualified management team who held professional qualifications in primary teaching. We found that six out of seven staff who responded to our survey had worked in the service for less than six months. The management team told us that every opportunity would be taken to support staff to work towards initial SSSC recognised training qualifications relevant to their posts.

We discussed with the management team how this would increase the capacity of the service to support the children to experience continuity in their care and over time help build relationships with familiar key staff.

We highlighted the value of extending the length of the staff induction programme to provide more time for new staff to develop a fuller awareness of national health and social care standards, current best practice guidance, what was expected of them and how they would be supported and expected to meet the needs of the children.

The staff engaged in 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 learning activities. We found that this learning had a positive impact on the quality of experiences for children in the setting.

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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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