Caird View Nursery
Day Care of Children

Ambleside Avenue
Strathmartin
Dundee
DD3 0AD

Telephone: 01382 434 982

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 May 2022

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2019377188

About the service

Caird View Nursery is registered as a day care of children service. They are registered to provide care to a maximum of 74 children at any one time from the age of three years to those not yet attending primary school. This service is managed on a peripatetic basis, with the centre manager responsible for the day to day running of the service.

The service operates from a purpose-built premises, that is on one level, in a suburb of Dundee. It is in close proximity to amenities and public transport. The children's play space is open plan with direct access to a secure outdoor play area.

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 3 May 2022 between 09:30 and 15:30. Two inspectors carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with nine children using the service and four parents or carers,
- spoke with staff and management,
- observed practice and children's daily routines,
- reviewed documents.

What people told us

Most children were fully engaged in their play and learning. They were keen to speak with inspectors and show them around their nursery. They told us they loved their new quiet area, which had recently been developed. They thought their art area was exciting and were looking forward to planting all the seeds with their teachers.

Parents spoke very highly of the care and support they had received from staff. They told us they felt listened to, included and very much a part of their child's experiences, with staff going above and beyond to engage with them. They believed staff's biggest strength was their friendliness and approachability. They felt it was clear that staff were dedicated to improving outcomes for children and loved their jobs. More comments from parents and carers are included within the report.

Self assessment

N/A

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	6 - Excellent

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality theme as very good.

Children were supported by staff who knew them well. Parents told us that all staff made an effort to get to know their children and build good relationships. This supported children to form attachments and feel safe and secure in the setting. Staff promoted children's rights throughout the service. They used floorbooks, learning journals and secure online platforms to engage children and families in their learning experiences. This resulted in an inclusive ethos where everyone was encouraged to share their views and opinions to shape care, play and learning. We encouraged staff to consider how they could create further opportunities for children to take part in reviewing their personal plans. This would recognise them as experts in their experiences and include them further in how their care is delivered.

Children benefitted from learning journals that truly reflected their individual experiences and learning. These included photographs and described learning in the child's own words. This enabled them to have ownership of their learning and reflect on their achievements. Staff took time and care in presenting children's work, which resulted in children feeling valued and proud of what they had achieved. Parents told us they felt included in their children's development and could follow their child's progress well. As part of their improvement plan, staff were working towards more detailed next steps to improve how they captured progression of children's development.

Comprehensive support strategies enabled children and their families to have a clear understanding of their needs and how they will be met by staff. This ensured everyone, including the child, was involved in decisions about how their care was delivered. Staff worked well with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, bilingual support and health visitors to enable children to get the right support. Unique social stories were created for children who required focused support through difficult or challenging experiences, for example the death of a loved one or moving house. These stories allowed children time to process their experiences and emotions with the support of staff.

Mealtimes were found to be a social time, where children were provided with balanced and nutritious food. Parents commented that their "child was always well fed as the meals are very substantial". At times, the atmosphere was noisy, and a few children became unhappy in the lunch environment. The manager had previously carried out an evaluation of the lunchtime experience, including asking staff their views on mealtimes. Staff told us they supported children to share their views through a snack floorbook dedicated to the mealtime experience. As a result, a working group had been created to support improvement and they were in the early stages of introducing changes aimed to support a more positive experience for all children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality theme as very good.

Children benefitted from a warm and inclusive ethos, where staff valued children as individuals. Parents told us that their children were always happy when leaving the nursery, sharing stories of their day and experiences with passion and excitement.

Staff worked well as a team to continually adapt and develop areas within the environment to suit children's needs, wishes and interests. They skilfully used floorbooks in each play space to gather children's views, record experiences and highlight where future developments could take place. This provided consistency for children using the space and enabled different ideas to be tried and tested. The art area, for example, had evolved from a general messy area to a working art studio where children could fully engage and express themselves using a wide range of tools and art media. Children were seen to be fully immersed in their creativity and created unique, expressive art. Parents told us that staff were always putting out new activities and changing the layout outside for the children. This shows that parents were kept well informed of changes within the service, thus providing them with the opportunity to continue play and learning at home.

Children were provided with toys, games and equipment that encouraged their imagination and curiosity. Recycled goods, such as antique record players and natural materials contributed to a stimulating environment where children could explore. Staff had skilfully used different lighting to create inviting, soft and enclosed areas. This promoted a calm atmosphere and provided dedicated spaces for rest and relaxation.

Children benefitted from free flow access the outdoor area. Staff also invited the children outside at various intervals throughout the day and respected their choice. The outdoor space was welcoming and provided children with appropriate challenge and risk. Staff were passionate in providing children with a range of opportunities, which were a good balance of adult and child led. For example, planting was introduced, with children consulted on what they would like to plant, to broaden children's knowledge and understanding of where their food came from. Parents commented on the wide range of new experiences their children had received at the nursery, including learning to ride a pedal bike. These experiences impacted positively on children's development and supported them to achieve.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality theme as very good.

Children were cared for by a compassionate and dedicated staff team. Children were consistently listened to and supported throughout their day. For example, staff used effective questioning to support play and learning and provide warmth and comfort when needed. This ensured children felt valued and genuinely cared for. Parents also told us that their children were genuinely fond of all of the staff and often spoke about them at home. This shows the positive relationship and strong bond between staff and children.

Staff were skilled in respectfully challenging practice. Peer reviews were carried out regularly to evaluate children's outcomes as a result of staff interactions. This was carried out by observing a colleague's practice or by videoing their own practice and self-evaluating their performance. We found that these reviews were genuine and honest, with a true focus on improving outcomes for children. This resulted in a positive working relationship within the staff team and inspired an outstanding culture of improvement.

Children's care, play and learning was designed by staff who were highly knowledgeable and implement theory and good practice guidance into their work. The manager supported the team to share their knowledge and understanding of various aspects of care across the team. This resulted in children receiving consistent care. This also had a direct impact on families, as staff created digital stories to support parents with a range of topics relating to their children's care. These stories included support with transitions, co-regulation, and social skills. Parents told us they felt that staff always went out of their way to help them, providing tailored support to families if required.

Staff were supported well by their manager who continually raised standards within the service. They regularly took part in professional discussions that aimed to support staff development and celebrate successes. As a result, training opportunities were identified, and leadership roles were established. All staff development discussions considered how staff's learning would impact on children's outcomes. This strong leadership supported staff to have high aspirations and confidence in their capacity to support children to reach their full potential.

An effective mentoring programme ensured that new staff had the appropriate support from an experienced member of the team. A variety of shadowing opportunities were provided, such as reviewing personal plans with parents, to ensure consistency in the delivery of care and provide staff with time to understand their roles and how this impacts on children and families.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this quality theme as excellent, where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

Children, families, and staff benefitted from a fully embedded culture of improvement within the setting. The manager led with an excellent approach to supporting, challenging and engaging staff to realise their full potential. This resulted in staff feeling empowered, enthusiastic and proud of their contributions to children's experiences and outcomes. Parents commented that staff showed an "obvious love of their jobs, which, in turn made better play and learning for the children".

Several working groups ran harmoniously together throughout the nursery to provide focussed, targeted attention to nursery developments and areas for improvement. Staff of all abilities and experiences adopted leadership roles which promoted inclusion and diversity. This approach to leadership at all levels contributed to high levels of satisfaction for staff and professional growth that built on individual strengths. Children's care, play and learning was of a high standard as a result, as the manager empowered staff and motivated them to make decisions and lead on initiatives.

An example of one such project, had an outstanding impact on children, both in the service and the wider community, as well as staff practice and learning at home. Following some professional reading, one staff member identified gaps in children's access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (also referred to as STEM). After discussions with their manager, they were supported to lead a project group dedicated to enhancing children's access to STEM. This led to a partnership with Dundee Science Centre. Their work supported a deeper understanding of child development, enhanced staff engagement of STEM and together, they developed an ELC programme that supported an open ended, child led approach to STEM within the two services. This project is an excellent example of how a supportive atmosphere that embraces leadership at all levels, inspires and empowers staff, which in turn, provides children with continual opportunities to thrive.

Parents and carers played a key role as influencers within the service. Parent focus groups were running successfully to support children's outcomes. They were a key part of driving improvement within the service. Staff met with the focus groups regularly to review impact of nursery developments on children's outcome and to discuss their views on next steps. The groups included, but were not limited to, STEM and supporting transition to schools. Staff monitored the success of the groups well and were committed to enabling them to grow and develop as interest grew and children's needs changed. For example, the original parent group for STEM was extended to accommodate a targeted group of parents who had an interest in developing STEM at home with their children. As a result, those families received informative videos and resources to support further learning at home. This excellent level of engagement and partnership working with parents created a truly inclusive setting that ensured children and families voices were heard, listened to and acted upon.

Staff were committed to sharing their professional knowledge to improve outcomes for children. Parents commented that children felt empowered to share their learning and experiences because they knew they will be listened to by staff. They told us that staff "went above and beyond, sending out surveys and sways" to support them with their child's care and development. Another parent told us that they had concerns about their child's knowledge of road safety. As a result, staff then dedicated a session to road safety, providing child-friendly information about road safety which they could then use to support learning at home. Another parent told us that "staff went out their way to make charts to help my child have a better bedtime routine". Such tailored support provided parents with a deeper knowledge and understanding of child development, as it was delivered to them in ways that suited them, such as videos, activities or reading materials. This resulted in children having consistent care that was designed around their needs and interests, by those who knew them best.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 - excellent

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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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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