Ivy Kindergarten
Day Care of Children

12 Dornal Avenue
Yoker
Glasgow
G13 2HQ

Telephone: 01417 370 531

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
12 May 2023

Service provided by:
Dornal Childcare Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2020013601

Service no:
CS2020381522

About the service

Ivy Kindergarten is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 72 children not yet attending primary school at any one time. No more than 29 are aged under 3 years. Care is provided from a modern single storey property, located within a residential area of Yoker, Glasgow. The service is close to shops, schools, transport routes and other amenities. Children were accommodated within large age related playrooms that led directly to secure outdoor play spaces.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 3 May 2023 between 08:15 and 15:45. Two inspectors carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke with children using the service and reviewed survey responses from 4 parents whose children attend the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together and had created a welcoming, inclusive environment.
- Positive working relationships between the management team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children.
- Children experienced interesting and motivating play and learning opportunities within creative outdoor spaces.
- Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.
- The manager's leadership approach had helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care.
- Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes enabled the service to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and families particular needs and choices.

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?	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 where there was a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. The strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

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. Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together and had created a welcoming, inclusive environment. Their knowledge of child development, GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) and the well-being indicators resulted in children's individual needs being met. 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.

Staff worked closely with families, involving them in decisions about their child's care and development. This enabled the relevant staff to respond quickly, sensitively and compassionately to changes in a child's life. Staff were skilled in using the information in children's personal plans to meet their needs. Recently revised personal plans and learning story journals using the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) wellbeing indicators and the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence were regularly reviewed and included targets for achievement and next steps. Staff told us how they worked with parents to ensure personal plans included the key information needed to provide appropriate care, meet any medical needs and take forward children's learning and play interests. One parent commented: "All of the staff I have dealt with there have been incredibly supportive in their care of my daughter. They have consistently taken steps at my daughter's pace, while still encouraging her to progress and develop. They have been sensitive to her needs, as well as my own. They have supported both her education and development, and her wellbeing both in and outside of nursery. All staff have been consistently supportive and attentive, and I couldn't ask for more from the people who care for my child."

Plans and records for children with identified additional support needs took account of multidisciplinary assessments and inputs. These supported a personal planning approach which was solution focused and identified children's strengths, personal challenges and development outcomes.

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. This training enhanced the robust systems in place for monitoring and maintaining child protection records and supported the continued safeguarding of children.

1.3 Play and learning

We found that staff promoted a culture within the service that focussed on promoting the children's right to play, have fun and experience challenge. Staff worked hard to provide a rich variety of high quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice, children's interests, as well as tracking and reflecting on individual achievements. We found that children's voice was highly valued. Staff took time to extend conversations with children about their play and used well-timed open ended questioning to further extend and challenge thinking and learning. We found that staff used observations of children's significant play

interests to adapt their support for and resourcing of play experiences. Through discussion, it was evident that staff had a shared understanding of child development and early years pedagogy and used this to scaffold and shape the breadth and depth of children's learning. Staff had high aspirations to enable children to be successful. As a result, children were confident, happy and motivated to learn.

We discussed daily playroom and mealtime preparation routines with staff and found that these would be enhanced by increasing opportunities for children's free-flow play and reducing time spent on large group adult directed experiences.

We discussed with staff strategies for developing children's sense of ownership of leading change related to their self chosen play projects. Staff agreed that more flexible use of planning tools based on observations of children's most engaging and involving play experiences could strengthen existing opportunities for children to shape their play environments. This can extend 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.

We discussed the benefits of using digital video tools to support shared staff reflections on the quality of their interactions with children during play experiences. The manager agreed that tools such as Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP) that promotes critical analysis and creative thinking would support a professional dialogue within the team focused on improving and enhancing staff-child interactions.

We highlighted the value of more consistent linking staff observations of patterns of children's play behaviour or 'schemas' to children's individual journals. Staff agreed that by watching children closely and noticing the patterns of behaviour in their play, they were able to give them other activities and toys that matched that schema. This approach can help to identify what will hold individual children's interest as well as help them with the stage of development that they are currently working through. It can consolidate existing approaches to recognising children's achievements and demonstrate how the nursery's approach to supporting children's play is personalised.

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

The service made very good use of available resources to create a motivating environment for children to play together. 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 thinking. We found that staff shared their reflections on how setting up and monitoring of each play area can lead to challenging and engaging play opportunities for children. This helped to ensure that all play environments offered excitement, were richly resourced and appeared attractive to children. It supported children use resources to extend and develop their play in line with their own ideas. Wall displays contributed to a stimulating environment that celebrated children's creativity and achievements.

Since our last inspection in April 2022, the provider had invested heavily in the kindergarten's play resources to significantly enhance the quality, breadth and depth of children's outdoor play opportunities. New resources included: an outdoor classroom, climbing wall, covered sand pit, rubber tyres, chalk boards, rope

bridge, tunnel, mud kitchen, obstacle course, tuff trays, water troughs and a wooden seesaw. A self regulation area has been created to support children in managing their emotions and included a range of resources such as sensory bottles, fidget spinners, poppet toys, feelings cards, sensory balls. Children had also participated in yoga sessions that developed breathing skills, balance, strength, flexibility and enhanced children's body awareness and mindfulness.

We highlighted and staff agreed that regular planned outdoor play opportunities within parks or woodland spaces beyond the setting would further increase opportunities for children to experience fresh air and enjoy challenging play. The manager agreed to make this a focus of future improvement and professional development planning.

Children's safety was promoted through detailed risk assessments for all environments and activities accessed by them. These were regularly reviewed and staff were aware of their responsibility to identify and remove any new hazards in the way of children's safety and wellbeing. Children were also kept safe and healthy because of the robust infection control practices that were in place within the setting.

How good is our leadership? 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.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We found that staff were highly motivated, very well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children. Positive working relationships between the manager, team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children.

Staff told us how the manager provided a clear focus for their shared team work including setting out clear responsibilities and expectations. Staff talked positively about the manager's communication and leadership style describing it as open, honest, balanced and solution focussed. Through regular, ongoing feedback the manager promoted staff skills and strengths and supported their individual well-being. She had created conditions where experienced staff felt confident to initiate well-informed change and share responsibility for the process. We found that the manager's leadership approach had helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care. This resulted in children experiencing high quality interactions and a broad range of stimulating play experiences centred around their emerging interests.

The staff team worked together very effectively to evaluate and reflect on their practice. They were keen to take forward current ideas, develop and implement best practice guidance. The manager had attended leadership training that focused on self-evaluation processes and this has been integrated into everyday practice through modelling to the staff team. She understood the importance of using the views of children and families to inform planning and development of the service. The Care Inspectorate's Quality framework was used to support extensive monitoring and reflection on quality indicators and was focussed on identifying areas for improvement. We found that the robust and systematic self-evaluation processes in place enabled the service to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children and families' particular needs and choices.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question as we found performance where there was a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. The strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

4.3 Staff Deployment

Effective staff deployment across the service meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff throughout almost all elements of the day. The staff to child ratio allowed staff to be responsive to individual needs which enhanced children's experiences and ensured children had the right support at the right time. Children who required additional support were well supported by staff to feel respected and included in daily experiences. This was enhanced through effective working relationships with families. A robust induction process supported newly appointed staff to meet children's needs. The induction programme helped new staff to settle into their role and become part of the staff team. As a result, they were clear about their roles and responsibilities which supported children's experiences.

The staff routinely engaged in a range of 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 professional learning activities. Staff told us how their professional learning was linked to leadership roles within the team including: outdoor play; early literacy; early numeracy; and health and wellbeing. We found that this learning had a positive impact on the quality of experiences for children, their progress and wider improvements in the setting.

We identified a number of adaptations to staffing arrangements and practices during lunchtime routines which would help realise the kindergarten's commitment to providing a safe, more relaxed and nurturing environment for children during lunchtimes. This will increase opportunities for staff to be responsive to individual needs and support children to develop positive attachments with key adults. We signposted the manager to our practice note 'Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare (ELC)' to support professional reflection on mealtime improvements within the staff team (see Area for Improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To support high quality interaction and engagement with children across the nursery day the provider must review and improve the lunch time experience. This should promote opportunities to build relationships between children and key workers, encourage communication as well as ensure children receive the support they need.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as a relaxed atmosphere as possible" (HSCS 1.35); "People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me" (HSCS 3.16).

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

The staff team should engage in training that strengthens their professional skills in planning, observing and evaluating children's ownership of play experiences and projects.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "as a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity" (HSC 2.27).

This area for improvement was made on 21 April 2022.

Action taken since then

Staff had undertaken staff development on 'Realising the Ambition' with a focus on planning, observations and interactions with young children in in ELC settings.

Through partnership working with Glasgow City council the manager had attended leadership training with two key modules focussing on making observations purposeful and meaningful. This had enhanced her professional knowledge of child led pedagogy through observation, the assessment and planning cycle, responsive planning as well as supporting attainment through child led learning. Significant points from this learning had been shared with the staff team. The manager team had modelled best practice and provided continuous support and ongoing CPD opportunities for the staff team. Staff had extended the inventory of existing resources with a focus on loose parts to offer more scope for investigation and promote curiosity and creativity through play and learning indoors and outdoors.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support high quality interaction and engagement with children across the nursery day the provider must review and improve the lunch time experience. This should promote opportunities to build relationships between children and key workers, encourage communication as well as ensure children receive the support they need.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as a relaxed atmosphere as possible" (HSCS 1.35); "People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me" (HSCS 3.16).

This area for improvement was made on 21 April 2022.

Action taken since then

An experienced member of the team led lunch and snack times to model best practice. A daily quality lunch time monitoring sheet was used as to support practitioners to follow best practice and ensure there was consistency in this approach. Staff had engaged in shared professional reflection on best practice documentation 'Setting the table' and 'Food Matters'. On the day of the inspection, we identified a number of adaptations to staffing arrangements and practices during lunchtime routines which would help realise

the kindergarten's commitment to providing a safe, more relaxed and nurturing environment for children during lunchtimes. This area for improvement has been continued (see section 'Staff deployment' - Area for Improvement 1).

Previous area for improvement 3

To provide personalised support for children's wellbeing, learning and development the provider should ensure all staff are aware of and understand the information within the personal plans and use this to effectively meet each child's needs.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices" (HSCS 1.15) and "My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected" (HSCS 1.23).

This area for improvement was made on 21 April 2022.

Action taken since then

Staff had engaged in professional learning on national practice guidance on personal planning in early learning and childcare. Key information from children's personal plans was shared among all relevant staff to better target individualised support strategies for children. Personal plans were monitored regularly by the manager to ensure appropriate strategies were in place to support children's individual needs. Management were involved in room planning meetings to ensure there was further support available in supporting staff in prioritising key targets from personal plans.

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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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