

Woodlea Children's Centre Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 January 2023

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2003015785

About the service

Woodlea Children's Centre provides a daycare of children service in Dundee. The service is registered to provide a service to a maximum of 144 children, at any one time, not yet attending primary school. Of those 144 no more than 30 children are aged 2 to under 3 years.

The service is located within a residential area of Dundee and is provided by Dundee City Council. The service is close to local schools, shops and a library.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 24 January 2023 between 08:45 and 15:00 and 25 January 2023 between 08:30 and 12:00. Feedback was shared with the service on 25 January 2023. 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:

- observed practice and daily life
- spoke with management and the staff team
- reviewed documents
- spoke with all the children using the service and eight of their family members
- spoke with visiting professionals

Key messages

- Positive and nurturing attachments had been formed between staff and children.
- Parents were welcomed into the service to join groups and for stay and play sessions.
- Staff were highly skilled and experienced in meeting the needs of all children and supporting them to progress and achieve.
- Responsive planning was embedded within the service and staff confidently extended current interests of children.
- Parents felt well supported by the staff team.
- Effective information sharing with parents was evident and this promoted positive relationships between the service and families.

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?	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	6 - Excellent

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

6 - Excellent

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

Quality Indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Positive attachments had been formed and maintained with children and interactions were nurturing, warm and loving. Children and families were at the heart of this service, which enabled staff to know children well and develop positive relationships with parents. A parent shared that 'staff quickly built safe, trusting attachments that made my child feel safe and nurtured'. Children were encouraged to develop positive friendships with their peers and this was evident during discussions with children. Staff supported children with additional support needs and had developed their own skills and learning to use strategies and tools to support children. For example, there was consistent use of Makaton and visual aids to support children to achieve and progress. Children were respected and praised throughout their day.

Personal plans included detailed information to ensure children's needs were fully met. One parent commented that they were involved in developing these plans with their child, 'My child and I put it together and her teacher went through it with her. I can update the plan at any time as staff are always approachable'. These plans were reviewed at least six monthly to ensure all information held by the service is current. Some children were supported by ABLE plans which provided them with additional support. These plans were currently being enhanced through the creation of SCERTS (social communication, emotional regulation, and transactional support) plans to offer outstanding specific and tailored support to promote learning and progression.

Snack times and mealtimes were well thought out and offered valuable social experiences for children. Children were fully involved in the whole mealtime experience and the development of children's independence and life skills was embedded within practice. Staff joined children at the table and took part in high quality interactions. Promoting numeracy and literacy was naturally included within the experience through visual routines, discussions and interactions. Meals and snack were healthy and nutritious and dietary requirements were met.

Medication processes were robust and parents were supported to complete all required paperwork. Monthly reviews of medication and documents were completed by a senior member of the team to ensure safe practice. This also ensured that current information was held to meet all health and wellbeing needs of children.

Staff were responsive to routines from home and this was well supported during settling-in experiences. Settling-in was managed well and conducted at a pace to meet the children and families' needs. Cosy, sensory spaces were available to support quiet time during settling-in. These spaces were also regularly used for children to sleep or relax throughout their day. Nurturing care and quality interactions supported children to rest and fall asleep, at their own pace, in an inviting and safe space. This provided the opportunity to support children's wellbeing and ensure they had the rest they needed to prepare them for future fun, play and learning experiences.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and Learning

Children were leading their own play and were moving freely around the service, choosing where to play and which resources to access. Staff were highly skilled in observing children's play, extending their current interests and providing provocations to encourage intentional play and learning. Children engaged for extended periods of time within specific areas of the nursery, they collaborated with each other to create structures, design models, and develop their imaginations. Literacy, numeracy and mathematical language was developed by the children throughout this play, for example, children spoke about height, size, quantities and what would make a tower topple over. Numeracy and literacy were naturally incorporated into all play experiences. A parent shared that 'The environment was well set up for the children to explore play at their level whilst also giving them the encouragement to explore more formal learning experiences if and when they were ready.'

Children were appropriately challenged through a wide range of high quality resources both indoors and out. Critical thinking skills were developed through skilled and effective questioning, for example, staff started off their questioning with 'I'm wondering what.' This prompted children to think about what they were doing and what could happen next. The staff skills and knowledge of child development ensured that children were challenged, at all stages of their development, to support continued progression and achievement. Children who required additional support were provided with opportunities for one-to-one learning time, where strategies were used to develop speech and language skills through their play and learning. A parent shared 'I feel like Woodlea go above and beyond for families and there is such a wide variety of experiences on offer for the children.'

Staff had developed a robust and effective approach to planning, which provided a balance of adult initiated play and learning and extended children's current interests. Floor books showcased the child's voice, consultations with children, children's interests and the skills they had developed through a wide range of play and learning experiences. QR codes displayed in the floor books provided the opportunity for children to watch videos that had been shared with their families on Seesaw. Planning was evaluated and extended throughout the six-week cycle to ensure that children's play and learning was at the heart of the service and children were provided with valuable opportunities to learn through play.

Children were proud of their learning journals and enthusiastically showcased their observations, photographs and certificates. Children pointed out their friends in photographs and spoke about the play they had taken part in together. The child's voice was a major focus throughout the journals and parental involvement was highlighted through learning conversations. A parent shared that 'we regularly check back in at the amazing memories in the journal. The care and attention that the staff make to these is special.' Next steps within learning were clear and specific and were taken forward by the staff team to support children's progression and achievement.

Stay and play sessions had been re-introduced to encourage families to be a part of their child's learning experiences. This supported the sharing of learning between nursery and home. Parents confirmed that they had been attending these sessions and one shared that 'I have attended the sessions and love to see how my child gets on in nursery.' Learning groups regularly took place which families could join. These included Bookbug sessions and nurture groups, which focused on emotional regulation and forming positive attachments. Play and learning from these groups could be continued at home. These opportunities ensured that families were a big part of the nursery and could be a part of their child's play and learning.

How good is our setting?

6 - Excellent

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

QI 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was warm, welcoming and inviting for the children and families. The environment had been well thought out and planned, to sensitively meet the needs of all children and their families. It was evident that children mattered and they had been valued and respected throughout the development of this high quality learning environment. Children were proud of their play environment and confidently showed us around the five spacious rooms that provided the three- to five-year-olds with free flow movement between each learning environment. A quiet nurturing room offered opportunities for quiet activities and for rest and relaxation. There were excellent opportunities for children to take part in high quality play experiences within all play areas. This included construction, design, architecture, creativity and critical thinking. This indoor environment provided free flow access to the outdoors to support additional planned and spontaneous high quality play experiences.

Outdoors provided a safe and secure space for children to play and learn. Children took part in creative play, exploration, construction and active play experiences during their outdoor play. Further opportunities to promote numeracy and literacy were on offer outdoors. Children benefitted from a range of surfaces outdoors to support their play. Children could access grass, paved areas, concrete surfaces, mud areas and a decked area. A large road track had been created and children were involved in a consultation, through voting, to name their road system. Children were taking part in planting and growing and had been to the shops to purchase seeds. This opportunity provided the children with a greater awareness of the seed to plate concept.

The two-year-old environment was nurturing, warm and inviting and provided a spacious environment for children to develop gross motor skills, develop curiosities and be creative. A welcoming sensory room provided a valuable space for small group activities, one to one sessions, and offered a safe and secure space for children to rest and sleep when required. High quality resources which were appropriate for the children's age and stage of development provided a vast array of learning opportunities to support play and learning.

The service had re-developed valuable links with their local community. Children regularly visited the local library and local shops. They had been invited to a Halloween party by the senior pupils at a local high school. The children also benefited from the senior pupils visiting the nursery to take part in story sharing with them. This supported the children to develop a greater awareness of their local community and allowed them to share experiences with pupils from a local school which promoted the development and literacy and communication.

Risk assessments were in place for all areas of the service and were reviewed regularly to minimise any possible risks. This ensured a safe environment for children, staff and families. Accidents and incidents were recorded in detail and were shared with families. These were regularly audited to highlight any patterns and trends. The service submitted notifications to the Care Inspectorate, when required, to inform us of specific accidents or incidents.

How good is our leadership?**6 - Excellent**

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

QI 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children and families had been involved in the review of the vision, values, and aims for the setting. The staff and children had created a song which incorporated the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators to reflect the vision of the service. Children and families were now being consulted on developing a new badge for the service. These opportunities ensured that children and families felt valued and listened to as part of the service's ongoing improvement work.

Staff were at the heart of the ongoing improvements within the service. An improvement plan showed clear areas for development which included developing more robust tracking of children's learning and next steps within their learning. Staff had meaningful roles within the plan, which included clear goals and their impact, success criteria, regular reviews and successes and achievements. The plan was linked to current best practice. This approach ensured that staff were fully involved in all ongoing improvements to further enhance positive outcomes for children.

Self-evaluation of the service was well led and of outstandingly high quality to support ongoing reflections and development of practice, interactions and the environment. Children, families and staff were highly involved in this approach through discussions, surveys, questionnaires and voting systems. Information was collated and suggestions taken forward were shared with everyone involved. Parents confirmed their involvement in the development of the service and one parent commented that 'the nursery do everything very well; we are impressed with almost every aspect.'

Staff were passionate and enthusiastic about their ongoing professional development to improve their practice and outcomes for children. The team had taken part in a wide range of training which included Solihull Approach, trauma training, sensory training and training events which supported emotional regulation. Staff linked the training they had completed to further support their professional development and they confidently evaluated and reflected on the impact of this training to develop their practice. This had a positive impact on enhancing outcomes for children. A parent said, 'the staff at Woodlea are truly amazing'.

How good is our staff team?

6 - Excellent

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

QI 4.3 Staff deployment

A passionate and eager team provided consistency for children and families. Familiar and consistent staff cared for and supported children throughout their day. This ensured positive attachments could be developed and maintained. Staff were readily available to speak to families at any time to share information and provide support. Busier times of the day were professionally managed and appropriately staffed to ensure children continued to receive high quality care. A parent commented that 'staff were fantastic and a credit to early years education.'

The service was well staffed, which ensured staff ratios were maintained consistently. During times of staff absence, the management team supported staff to care for children and provide consistent care. The service also had the option for staff from another local authority setting to provide cover during periods of staff absence. This maintained ratios and provided consistency for children and families.

Staff were motivated and keen to take on training to support their professional development. Staff confidently linked their key learning from each training event to highlight the impact for children. This was evident within staff practice and staff shared which training had influenced aspects of the care and support they provided. The staff team were highly skilled in liaising with other professionals to ensure effective strategies and support were put in place to meet the changing needs of children. This ensured that high quality, appropriate play and learning experiences and challenging and stimulating environments were consistently provided throughout the service. This enhanced positive outcomes for children.

Effective communications were consistently maintained with families within the service. Staff shared observations of play and learning through the Seesaw App and regularly took part in face-to-face discussions with families. Staff shared children's learning journals with families, which provided the opportunity for children to showcase and share their play and learning experiences. Families shared that the quality of communication and sharing of learning was 'top class.' This high quality and effective sharing of information ensured that children's needs were consistently met to a high standard.

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?	6 - Excellent
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
1.3 Play and learning	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	6 - Excellent
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	6 - Excellent
4.3 Staff deployment	6 - Excellent

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