

Heron House Early Years Killearn Day Care of Children

Beech Drive
Killearn
Glasgow
G63 9SD

Telephone: 01360 550 162

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 March 2024

Service provided by:
Heron House Killearn Ltd.

Service provider number:
SP2003001120

Service no:
CS2003005383

About the service

Heron House Early Years Killearn is a privately owned nursery which also provides out of school care, and is situated in the village of Killearn.

The service is registered as a daycare of children service and may provide care to a maximum of 68 children at any one time. Of those 68 no more than 12 are aged under two; no more than 15 are aged two to three years; no more than 23 are aged three to those not yet of primary school age; no more than 18 are of primary school age.

The service has separate play rooms to accommodate each of the various age groups of children. Children have access to outdoor areas at the front and rear of the property. The service makes good use of the surrounding outdoor spaces which include a playpark, fields and a glen. There is space within the setting for children to play, rest and sleep. Playrooms offer children access to toilets and nappy changing facilities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 7 March and Friday 8 March 2024. The inspection was carried out by one 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 since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children in the service
- reviewed digital responses from nine families and nine staff
- spoke with two families in person
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced kind, compassionate and nurturing approaches to the care they received.
- Staff recognised the positive impact that being outdoors had on children's overall wellbeing
- Children's play and learning opportunities were further enhanced as they developed strong connections to their own and wider communities.
- Children benefitted from a positive ethos where an enthusiastic staff team were motivated to meeting their needs.
- Staff were responsive to children's needs and reflective in their practice.
- Children's natural curiosity could be further promoted through the use of interesting prompts and provocations.

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

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| How good is our care, play and learning? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our setting? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 5 - Very Good |
| How good is our staff team? | 5 - Very 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 found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this Quality Indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

The kind, caring and nurturing approaches experienced by children meant they were confident and happy as their wellbeing was supported. Staff had developed positive relationships with children and knew them very well. They were quick to respond to children's needs and requests, and supported them appropriately. Families told us that they were very happy with the care their children received. One family said, "They are a fantastic team, each member dedicated to their job and committed to doing their best for the children in their care." As a result, children felt valued and respected as individuals as their needs were being met.

The relaxed and unhurried atmosphere during mealtimes promoted a positive social experience for children. Snacks were provided by the service, and children brought lunches from home. We observed staff sitting with children and chatting with them as they ate. Staff gently encouraged them to eat their lunch, and were close by to support with feeding when required. This also helped to ensure children were safe. We discussed ways for children to further develop their independence and learn important life skills. For example, by pouring their own drinks, and by involving older children in the preparation of snack by washing and cutting fruit.

Personal plans had been developed and included the views of parents and children. Staff used this information, alongside information shared informally by families at drop off and pick up time, to support children's routines. Personal plans were updated regularly with families. As a result, staff could respond to changes in children's lives. This supported strong relationships and meant children experienced a consistent and continuous approach to their care.

Children's health and wellbeing needs were being met with appropriate systems in place for storing and recording medication. Several staff had undertaken training to support children with particular healthcare needs, and supportive relationships with their families had been established.

We evaluated this Quality Indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Children were busy and having fun as they happily explored play and learning experiences. Some children told us that they liked to "play" at nursery, and that "outside in the garden" was their favourite. We discussed with the service ways to support free flow access to outdoors. This would further enhance children's choice, independence and wellbeing. Older children attending after school told us that they enjoyed going to the park, as well as arts and craft activities. We suggested promoting children's natural curiosity through the use of interesting prompts and provocations. This would provide opportunities for all children to actively and meaningfully lead their play and learning.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's interests and needs. Their learning was recorded and possible next steps were identified by staff. Observations of children's learning were shared with families using online journals. One family told us, "The learning journals are fantastic in

keeping parents up-to-date with the child's learning and daily life at the nursery." Staff met with the management team regularly to discuss and assess children's progress and identify any support needs. This meant children were progressing well and were happy and confident.

Children's literacy and language skills were being encouraged as they enjoyed singing songs and listening to stories. We observed children excitedly retelling stories as they went on a bear hunt in the nursery garden. Children also had opportunities to visit the library bus when it stopped nearby. They chose some books and brought them back to nursery to share with friends.

Children's play and learning opportunities were further enhanced as they developed strong connections to their own and wider communities. For example, they regularly explored the surrounding countryside, such as walks in the glen and cow field. Links had also been established within the community, with visits to neighbours in nearby sheltered housing.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

Children and families were warmly greeted by staff as they arrived at the service. They benefitted from a setting that was homely, comfortable and offered lots of natural light. The entrance and cloakroom area was laid out in a way that immediately gave children and families a sense of belonging. The layout of each playroom had been well considered. They offered children cosy, quiet spaces to rest and relax, as well as areas to have fun as they played. This gave a strong message to children that they matter.

Children had daily access to the outdoor garden areas which were appropriately staffed to ensure children's safety. We discussed with the service ways to improve the space to ensure it was fully enclosed and secure. The manager had started this process by requesting quotes to repair or replace fencing. They had also purchased additional locks which were to be fitted to garden gates.

Staff recognised the positive impact being outdoors had on children's overall wellbeing. Children had opportunities to develop gross motor skills as they climbed and played on the tyre frame, and happily slid down the slide. Part of the back garden area was cordoned off at the time of inspection. Children told us that they couldn't go on it at that time because they had scattered grass seeds to grow new grass. Involving children in this meant they were developing an understanding of planting and growing. It also encouraged a sense of responsibility as they took care of the nursery environment. Outdoor experiences meant children were learning about the benefits of an active lifestyle that promoted their health and wellbeing.

Playrooms were clean and ventilated throughout the day. Children were encouraged to wash their hands at key times. Regular cleaning procedures meant that the spread of infection was kept to a minimum. We found that catches on some kitchen cupboard doors were worn and therefore not secure. We highlighted this to the manager and asked that the service ensured all cleaning products are stored safely out of children's reach. (See area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children are safe and protected from harm, the service should securely store cleaning products out of children's reach.

This is to ensure I experience a high quality environment and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, 'My environment is secure and safe.' (HSCS 5.19).

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvements are led well

The shared vision, aim and values of the service were evident in the warm, compassionate and nurturing interactions witnessed throughout our visit. Staff and families told us that Heron House was like a "home from home," and had a "family feel."

Leadership and training opportunities encouraged staff to develop confidence in their capacity to support children and families. Staff told us, "We all work together, support each other, keep on learning in order to support families." The dedicated management team had attended self-evaluation training sessions delivered by the Care Inspectorate Improvement Team. They committed to the course, and shared learning from these sessions with their team. As a result, children benefitted from a positive ethos where an enthusiastic staff team were motivated to meeting their needs.

The service had created an improvement plan which had been developed through self-evaluation, and considering the views of staff, children and families. Effective policies, procedures and quality assurance processes were in place and also supported the development of the service. This meant that an environment of continuous improvement was promoted and further secured positive experiences for children.

Staff were responsive to children's needs and reflective in their practice. They shared important information throughout the day, and made the most of opportunities to discuss and plan at quieter times. Staff meetings, where the whole team could come together, were challenging for the service due to staff working patterns and service operating hours. However, we found that positive relationships and good communication within the staff and management teams supported everyone to feel involved, valued and informed.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

Staff knew children well and secure relationships between them had been established. We asked families for their comments about the staff team. One family told us, "Staff are brilliant and know the children in their care very well. My child loves all the members of staff even if they are not always cared for by them in the rooms which again shows the 'family vibe' of the setting!" Other parents said, "All the staff are wonderful and seem really engaged. It feels a lovely warm place to leave my kids." "I really love heron house, I think the staff are amazing and my son adores them. They are a very special bunch." As a result, children felt safe, secure and happy in a service where a caring staff team nurtured and supported them.

Effective use was made of staff experience, knowledge and skills to ensure children's experiences across the

day were positive. Staff communicated well with each other and worked together to keep children safe and engaged in learning opportunities. They were proactive when anticipating where and when support might be needed. This created a respectful atmosphere which ensured children were appropriately cared for throughout the day.

The staff team were committed to their own continual professional development. Some had embarked upon additional training and further qualifications. They understood that children's experiences and outcomes improved as they developed their own skills and knowledge.

Staff wellbeing was a priority for the management team. They made time to meet with staff regularly. Staff told us that as a result they had a positive relationship with the manager and felt valued and supported.

The manager recognised the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed at all times. Staff were flexible and breaks were planned to minimise the impact on children, whilst making sure staff had time to rest.

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 provider should review the safer recruitment procedures and ensure that these are adhered to consistently from now on. More information can be found at <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/resources/national-safer-recruitment-guidance/>

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 10 May 2019.

Action taken since then

Policies and procedures are being followed during recruitment process.

This area for improvement has been met.

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

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| 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 |

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| How good is our setting? | 4 - Good |
| 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities | 4 - Good |

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|--|---------------|
| How good is our leadership? | 5 - Very Good |
| 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well | 5 - Very Good |

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|-----------------------------|---------------|
| How good is our staff team? | 5 - Very Good |
| 4.3 Staff deployment | 5 - Very Good |

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