

# Wallacetown Nursery School Day Care of Children

Crescent Street  
Dundee  
DD4 6DR

Telephone: 01382 438 868

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
6 February 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Dundee City Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003004034

**Service no:**  
CS2003015798

## About the service

Wallacetown Nursery School provides a daycare of children service in Dundee. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 74 children aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

The service is located within a residential area of Dundee and is close to local parks, shops and libraries. The nursery consists of one large playroom, a sensory room, a family room and a secure outdoor play area.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 February 2024 between 08:45 and 17:15. Feedback was shared with the service on 6 February 2024. 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 registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the service was registered.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service and 14 of their family members
- spoke with staff and the management team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

## Key messages

- Staff had developed positive relationships with families and were involving them in the daily life of the service.
- Interactions between staff and children were warm, caring and nurturing.
- Children were confident and had fun leading their own play both indoors and outdoors.
- Staff were passionate about their roles within the service and fully meeting children's needs.
- Well thought out and well-resourced play areas supported quality play and learning experiences for children.
- Children were excited to share their learning journals with us and talk about their play and learning experiences.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very 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?

## 5 - Very Good

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

### Quality Indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Interactions between staff and children were warm, caring and nurturing. Staff ensured that they were down at the child's level during most interactions and were responsive to children's needs. Children were happy, settled and having fun in nursery. A parent shared 'Staff are always very welcoming and friendly. All staff acknowledge my child every morning by name. His key worker is a lovely, warm, caring and nurturing person'. There were opportunities throughout the day for children to develop their independence; they self-registered on arrival in nursery, dressed themselves for outdoor play and independently chose where to play. These opportunities developed children's confidence.

Personal plans were in place for all children and included detailed information to ensure staff could fully meet the needs of children in their care. Children with additional support needs were well supported and strategies were in place to support them to progress within their play and learning. Effective links with other agencies and professionals had been developed and maintained to support children's changing needs. Staff confidently discussed children's needs and the strategies in place to support them. Parents were involved in the creation and regular review of all personal plans.

The storage and administration of medication was well managed by the service. All required paperwork was in place and was reviewed monthly to keep it current and up to date. We discussed that it would be beneficial to record more detailed information relating to how to deal with an emergency situation. This would ensure that the staff team had all the required information to fully meet children's health and wellbeing needs.

Children were fully involved in their mealtime experiences. They created menus, were supported to order snack choices online to be delivered to the service and they prepared snack daily. One child shared that grapes had to be sliced because 'they might get stuck in your throat'. This highlighted that children understood the risks associated with choking. Mealtimes were a valuable social experience for children and quality interactions took place between the staff and children. There were opportunities for independence and life skills to be developed through children pouring their own drinks, self-serving their meals and clearing away their food and used plates. Allergies were well managed and there were effective communications between catering and nursery staff.

Children had the opportunity to sleep, rest and relax in a cosy space within the playroom. This area was well used throughout the day and provided a cosy safe space for children.

Nappy changing was a nurturing experience for children, throughout which staff spoke to children and ensured they knew what was happening next within this routine. Infection prevention and control measures were in place and were followed throughout this process. We did highlight that it would be beneficial for children to wash their hands after having their nappy changed, which would further minimise any risk of spread of infection.

Staff were confident about the child protection process and procedures in place within the service. All staff had completed child protection training and had taken part in regular refresher training.

### Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and Learning

Children were confident in leading their own play and learning and staff ensured that resources were available to extend play experiences. Children chose where to play and were engaged for extended periods of time in quality play and learning experiences in well-resourced environments. Well thought out provocations promoted children learning new skills and enhanced their learning. The creative area was a hive of activity, where children worked well together to develop their imaginations and creative skills. For example, children made paper fans and experimented by mixing colours using paint. Staff acted as role models to scaffold and develop children's play and learning experiences. Effective questioning was skilfully used to support and develop children's critical thinking and extend their play and learning.

Children explored their outdoor play environment; they used a pulley system to move buckets around and used twigs to clean dirt from tree trunks. Outdoor play experiences naturally incorporated counting and measuring. They provided the opportunity for children to develop language and literacy skills through a broad range of quality play and learning experiences. Staff were motivated and keen to develop children's learning within the outdoor environment. A parent shared 'my child loves the outdoors and there are lots of learning opportunities available both outside and inside. I can see from looking through his learning journal and photos on seesaw that he is interested and involved in lots of different learning experiences'.

Group time provided a valuable opportunity to develop language, literacy and numeracy. Staff were skilled in using a variety of fun approaches to encourage children to recognise and identify numbers, shapes, colours and develop counting skills. Next steps within children's learning were taken forward during group time to support and encourage children to progress and achieve within their learning.

The service had recently developed their approach to planning and had implemented a six-week cycle which focused on planned intentional learning and developed and extended children's current interests. Planning was evaluated at the three-week mid-point and again at the end of the six-week cycle. Evaluations identified what had worked well, what didn't work so well and identified areas that could be further developed. A visual planning sheet was shared electronically with parents, who were encouraged to take forward some of the learning at home.

Observations and photographs of play and learning were recorded in children's learning journals. Children were excited to share their journals with us, pointing out photographs and confidently speaking about their play and learning. One child said 'that's my daddy at stay and play'. The child's voice was evident within their journals and children were regularly involved in updating these. A parent commented 'love the journals which we can not only read about their day but add to from a family and home perspective'. Floor books were developed for each area of the nursery which recorded and identified children's play and learning and how play had been extended. The children were highly involved in the creation of these books.

Children's play and learning was further developed through regular trips to the local library. Children also frequently visited the play park behind the nursery, which provided alternative active play experiences. The service was in the process of developing further opportunities for more trips and outings to expand play and learning opportunities.

## How good is our setting?

## 5 - Very Good

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

### QI 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The play and learning environment was well furnished and welcoming. There was ample space for children to move freely between areas and free flow access was provided to the outdoor environment throughout the day. A homely ethos was provided through a variety of lighting, plants and a cosy space for children to relax and rest. Children's artwork and photographs were displayed, which ensured children felt valued and respected. A parent commented that it was an 'inclusive and welcoming environment'.

All areas were well thought out and well-resourced to support children's play and learning. A sensory room provided a space for one-to-one time with children and provided a calm and relaxing environment for children, to promote their wellbeing. Children transported resources between areas to extend their play. A wide range of natural and open-ended resources were available for children to access which developed their curiosity, imagination and critical thinking skills. The service was currently developing planting and growing opportunities to promote children's understanding of the seed to plate concept. A parent highlighted that 'the setting makes use of the available space well. It is always attractive and nurturing'.

The nursery environment was safe and secure and the main door was monitored and supervised at all times when parents and visitors were entering the building. The nursery was clean and well maintained. Infection control procedures were in place and were followed by staff, for example, hand washing took place at appropriate times, cleaning was well managed and staff used personal protective equipment (PPE) when appropriate. This minimised any potential risk of spread of infection.

Risk assessments were in place for all areas of the nursery environment, including trips and outings. Accidents and incidents were recorded and shared with parents. Detailed audits were completed each week, which highlighted any potential patterns. These audits provided the opportunity to update risk assessments and make changes to the environment to keep children safe.

Staff maintained effective supervision of children at all times, both indoors and outdoors. A whiteboard was used to record how many children were attending and this was updated throughout the day. Headcounts were regularly carried out by staff to ensure all children were accounted for.

**How good is our leadership?****5 - Very Good**

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

**QI 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

The service had a vision, values and aims in place, which were shared with families. These were embedded in practice and had been reviewed in consultation with staff, children and parents. This ensured that families felt included and valued.

Children and families were meaningfully involved in changes and developments within the service. The child's voice was evident throughout the nursery. Surveys were used to gain feedback from families and results were shared with them using a you said, we did approach. Effective communications took place with families using Seesaw, emails, newsletters, learning journals and stay and play sessions. The service was in the process of further developing parental involvement. A parent shared 'that the nursery have such good communication and let us know what is going on'.

A quality assurance calendar was in place which identified a range of reviews, audits, training and observations of environment and practice. The calendar was broken down into short time frames and was shared with staff to highlight who was responsible for completing and taking forward tasks.

An improvement plan was in place, which identified and focused on three main priorities. Working groups had been developed to take forward these priorities. Staff were confident in discussing their roles in the improvements and were passionate about developing relationships with children and families.

Regular self-evaluation took place within the service and was linked to main benchmarking tools and best practice documents. Monitoring and supervision was a regular aspect of self-evaluation, which included auditing of journals and monitoring and reviewing of environments and staff practice. Staff used PDSA (plan, do, study, act) cycles to take forward actions and focus areas to support ongoing improvement. Staff visited other settings to share knowledge and skills and reflect on their own practice to further develop outcomes and experiences for children.

The service had policies and procedures in place which adhered to current guidance and best practice.

Staff had completed all core training and had taken part in a range of additional training to further support their own professional development. Staff were keen to extend their skills and knowledge to support them to fully meet the needs of all children in their care and improve outcomes for children. Staff were confident in sharing their learning with us and identified how it had developed their practice.

Newly recruited staff were supported to work through an induction process, which was implemented and delivered using the National Induction Resource. Staff had regular review meetings to support them in their roles. Annual appraisal meetings were used to support professional development and staff now also benefitted from regular wellbeing meetings.

## How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

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

### QI 4.3 Staff deployment

The service was appropriately staffed throughout the day and ratios were maintained at all times. Staff breaks were well managed, which ensured there was no impact on children's mealtimes or play experiences. Transitions were managed well throughout the day and children were supported through the appropriate use of specific strategies. This ensured positive outcomes and experiences for children.

Consistent staff worked within the nursery each day. They had a good knowledge of the children they cared for and had developed positive relationships with them. The consistent staff team also ensured that positive relationships were developed with families, who were welcomed into the service during drop off and pick up times. This provided valuable opportunities for effective communication to be developed and maintained. Contingency plans were in place to minimise any disruption during staff absence.

Staff were flexible and proactive and worked well together as a team to provide quality experiences and engagement with children. The staff were passionate about their roles and meeting the changing needs of children in their care. Staff felt that they communicated well with each other and they felt well supported by the management team. A parent commented that 'the nursery management are very skilled, warm, caring and approachable. The nursery and staff are well led by the management team'. Staff were proud of the relationships they had developed with children and families and were keen to further develop these relationships. Staff were eager to continue to develop and support change and improvement within the service.



## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very 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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

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