

Menziesshill Nursery School Day Care of Children

160 Earn Crescent
Menziesshill
Dundee
DD2 4EE

Telephone: 01382 435 956

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 May 2024

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2003016942

About the service

Menzieshill Nursery School is registered to provide an early learning and childcare service to a maximum of 133 children at any one time, age from 2 years and not yet attending primary school. Of those 133 children no more than 30 children are age 2 to under 3.

There are two playrooms for children, one for children under 3 years and another playroom for children 3-5 years. Both playrooms have direct access to the garden areas.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 8 May 2024 between 09:15 and 15:15. The inspection was carried out by two 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:

- spoke with children using the service and one of their parent/carers. We reviewed feedback from 19 MS Forms;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, secure and had formed positive relationships with the staff team.
- Staff were kind, caring and nurturing. They were responsive to children's ideas, suggestions and requests.
- Children had a variety of planned and spontaneous opportunities to have fun and experience high quality play and learning.
- The staff team worked well together, communicating their movements and were respectful of each other in their interactions.

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

Children were happy, settled and enjoying their time at nursery. Staff knew children very well and were kind, caring and nurturing in their care and approach with the children. Most of the children were confident in their play and learning, supported well by the staff team. It was evident children had formed positive relationships with staff, inviting staff into their play, seeking them out for help and support. Staff were at children's eye level either sitting on the floor or on low level chairs. A parent commented "Staff build positive, nurturing relationships with all children".

Interactions between staff and children were warm and caring. Staff were responsive to the needs of children for example, giving comfort, reassurance and cuddles when children asked for them. Calm approaches were observed by staff when speaking with children, who were encouraged to resolve any issues themselves before staff intervened, supporting children's security and regulation. Children were encouraged and praised throughout the inspection which promoted independence and confidence.

We observed opportunities for promoting independence throughout our visit. Children chose where to play and what to play with. There was free flow play in both playrooms with children accessing outdoors as they wished. Children were putting on their own wellies and coats for play outside, they served themselves at snack and their sides and fruit at lunch time, poured their milk or water and tidied their dishes away when finished in both rooms. A group of children were keen to take responsibility in the 3-5 room to tidy up after making bread. Younger children were supported by staff to wash their hands before snack, choose where they wanted to play and collected their coats when they wanted to go outdoors.

Personal plans were in place for the children. They included detailed information required to support staff to fully meet the needs of the children in their care. Parents were involved in completing the information in the plans and regular review meetings took place to ensure the information remained current and relevant to the children. All plans had been reviewed by families within the last six months, ensuring they were up to date.

Medication was safely stored in locked cabinets. Appropriate consents were gathered from parents/carers before medication was administered and staff recorded when medication was given to children. Audits were carried out to ensure the safe management of medication. We discussed the confidentiality of allergies within the playrooms with management and staff.

Staff took part in annual child protection training to ensure their knowledge and understanding were up to date. Staff knew that head teacher was the Child Protection Officer (CPO) and shared that they would speak to the senior practitioners in the head teacher's absence. There were clear procedures in place for staff to follow should they have a concern.

Snack time in both rooms encouraged independence and social skills. Children chose what they wanted to eat and poured their drinks, supported by staff as needed. Lunch time was a calm, unhurried experience for the children, where they were encouraged and supported to serve their side dishes and pour their drinks. Staff supported the children and modelled self help skills, such as cutting up the food. A variety of

conversations were heard throughout lunch time which encouraged children's language, vocabulary and understanding.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children were leading their own play, choosing where to play and choosing which resources to access. They made good use of the construction area, moving blocks around and stacking them up high. Staff reminded children about safety as they played and we observed children risk assess their play. A group of children enjoyed role playing and using their imaginations in the home area, where they had a pretend picnic with a staff member.

Staff knew children's interests and ensured there were resources to meet these. Children were interested in bugs and had fun outside looking at a spider, then a fly with magnifying glasses. A parent said "Seems to be lots of fun and learning".

Staff used a responsive planning approach to children's learning with some adult initiated provocations and we observed effective questioning being used throughout our visit to extend and develop children's learning.

Children had access to a variety of resources and experiences which encouraged and supported investigation, curiosity, imagination and problem solving. Staff talked of ensuring there was challenge for children in their learning. They also planned to further develop the nursery environment to continue to support high quality play and learning experiences for the children.

Literacy and numeracy were observed within the setting. Books and print were across all areas of the nursery. Staff were heard introducing words to the children and repeating them so they became familiar, for example, ladle. There was singing from different members of staff, with children joining in. Children enjoyed Bookbug sessions with staff and parents, which encouraged language and literacy in nursery and the home environment. Staff communicated with board maker signs on lanyards to support children to understand what was happening next, for example, lunchtime. We discussed the possible use of boardmaker symbols within the nursery setting. Numeracy opportunities were throughout the nursery. We saw one child measuring her height against the large measuring tape on the wall, with a staff member helping to read the height. Children were heard counting outdoors as they investigated bugs and made cakes in the cake tins within the mud kitchen.

Staff recorded children's learning and achievements within their learning journals, which were shared with families, to keep them informed and included in their child's nursery experience. It was evident children had ownership of their journals, as they revisited activities and learning experiences while sharing their journals with staff and inspectors. Floor books were used to highlight play and learning experiences the children had participated in. The child's voice was evident within these through art work, mark making and comments.

Children had opportunities to make links with their local community through nature walks. The older children had weekly visits to the nearby care home where they took part in intergenerational activities. There was excitement within the nursery as they had recently been put forward for an award for their intergenerational work. Staff working with the younger children talked of developing opportunities and making more use of the local community.

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.

Quality Indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The nursery was well furnished, welcoming and homely for children and their families. The setting had several nurturing and cosy spaces where children could rest and relax or take part in quieter activities. Artwork was displayed around the nursery which supported children to feel valued and respected.

The service was well maintained, safe and secure. Risk assessments were in place for all areas of the service both indoors and out. Written risk assessments were reviewed regularly to ensure all hazards and risks were identified minimised and addressed.

There was ample space for children to move around, take part in floor play activities and table top play indoors. Outdoors provided space and opportunities for active play, exploration, investigation and problem solving. The two playrooms had their own gardens which allowed the children to have their own spaces to play and learn.

The indoor and outdoor environments were age and stage appropriate and provided a wide range of resources to support and develop interests and curiosities. A wide range of loose parts and natural resources were available indoors for children to explore. A variety of construction resources supported children to design and create structures and models. We observed the creative areas were well resourced to provide choice, with children having fun as they used their imaginations with paint, glue and craft materials. A parent commented "High quality provisions with a wide variety of experiences available to all children. My child feels happy to come to nursery".

A wide range of loose parts and open-ended resources outdoors were available to support critical thinking and develop imaginations. We observed staff access further resources to extend children's learning throughout the inspection. Children's interests were supported well by staff, who joined in play and learning when appropriate to do so. Children had fun bug hunting using their magnifying glasses, they helped staff clean out the sandy water tray and a child was making 'food' in the mud kitchen, breaking pieces of celery into the muffin tray. A group of boys enjoyed a game of football with a member of staff and went to look for resources to make goalposts encouraging their problem solving and decision making skills.

Infection prevention and control measures were in place. Staff washed their hands regularly throughout the day and at all appropriate times. Children washed their hands before and after mealtimes, after messy play and after toileting, supported and supervised by staff when needed.

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.

Quality Indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led

The vision and values of the service ensured that there was a shared vision, with a clear direction for the service, where everyone felt valued and respected. The vision and values were displayed around the nursery.

Management and staff were using various self evaluation tools to identify and further improve areas within

the nursery. Regular monitoring and auditing, along with consultations with children, families and staff supported the improvement agenda.

A QA calendar was in place to inform the quality assurance systems and improvement plan. The Improvement Plan identified priorities to further develop and improve the service, supporting and meeting the needs of children and families.

Staff had all recently had appraisals/annual conversations to support their own professional development. Staff groups had been given ownership of specific areas within the nursery or specific improvements to be taken forward, empowering the team and developing their knowledge and skills.

Positive relationships have been developed with families. Effective sharing of information takes place face to face, through emails and an online App. Families were encouraged to be part of nursery life through stay and play sessions, pop into play and Bookbug sessions. A parent commented "Good communication with the parents." Home learning was also encouraged and supported by the staff team.

Policies and procedures were in place which underpinned the service and supported staff practice. These policies were reviewed at least annually to ensure they remained relevant to the service and continued to follow best practice guidance.

Staff had completed core training which included child protection training. They had also taken part in a range of professional development opportunities which enhanced their knowledge skills and practice, such as play on pedals, nursery narrative, ABC and Beyond and outdoor learning.

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.

Quality Indicator 4.3 Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a caring, nurturing staff team who knew them and their families well. Staff were committed to providing high quality care and support to the children and families. A parent told us "The staff are amazing and deserve to be praised. They all look after my child and help with his developments and safeguard him". Staff were warm and responsive in their approach, joined in children's play when invited or appropriate to do so and followed children's interests.

There was a mix of experience and knowledge within the staff team, with staff having a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff communicated very well with each other and worked well as a team, ensuring effective supervision and quality engagement with children.

Effective staff deployment within the service ensured that children's individual needs were met by the appropriate number of staff, consistently throughout the day. We observed staff to be flexible across the setting, which meant there was no negative impact on children's outcomes when key tasks or responsibilities were carried out. The pace of day was not interrupted for the children.

There was a wide range of training opportunities that had been carried out by staff which supported them in providing quality care, support and learning opportunities for children and families.

Arrangements were in place for planned and unplanned absences, which ensured ratios were maintained and children were kept safe and well supervised by familiar staff, encouraging and promoting a sense of security. A parent said "I really like that the team is always consistent I think that says a lot about them itself. It brings stability to kids and parents as well as give parents confidence".

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?	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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