

Balgay Hill Nursery School Day Care of Children

1 Glenagnes Road
Dundee
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Telephone: 01382 435 345

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 May 2024

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2003015782

About the service

Balgay Hill Nursery School is provided by Dundee City Council. The nursery has its own secure entry for children and their parents. The large, bright playroom gives opportunities for indoor play. The children have access to a large, well equipped outdoor space.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 114 children from the age of 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 15 May 2024 from 09:15 to 15:45. Two inspectors carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received feedback from 32 families
- received feedback from staff
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff were responsive to children's needs and cues.
- Children benefited from skilled, knowledgeable and passionate staff.
- Children were appropriately challenged from a well resources environment.
- Staff knew children and their families well, providing additional support when required.
- Children could lead their own play and follow their interests with a range of stimulating resources.

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 people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, nurturing and caring interactions from kind staff. Staff were responsive to children's needs and cues. They were down at children's level engaging in conversations or play. Children were confident to engage with staff, seek comfort or help when needed. Comfort and cuddles were freely given from staff. A parent told us "My child is really happy with his nursery. The staff are very approachable and understandable." We concluded that staff consistently showed children that they mattered.

Children's emotional wellbeing was well considered and cosy spaces were woven throughout the environment. Relaxing music, cushions, books, mirrors and sensory items allowed children to relax in a way that suited them. The use of the colour monster story promoted discussions around emotions and feelings. Children shared with each other what colour they were feeling that day. This showed that children were beginning to become confident understanding their own and others' emotions.

Children had individual personal plans in place, where they reflected children's care needs and preferences. Children's plans were updated regularly and documented the development and progress they had made and what they would like to learn next. Children and families were involved in discussing progress and agreed how they would work together. Detailed chronologies were in place that ensured any changes to children's lives were captured and documented. This ensured staff were fully aware of what children were going through and how to support them appropriately.

Meal and snack times were relaxed, sociable and unhurried. Children had opportunities to develop their independence skills through self-service meal times. Children were able to serve themselves their side dishes, drinks and clear their dishes away when finished. Children's developmental stages were well considered when supporting children with opportunities to eat. Strategies used for individual children were consistent across the team. This resulted in children who benefitted from this social experience, allowing them to chat with friends and staff while being able to relax and eat at their own pace.

Staff were confident in child protection procedures, annual training and refresher training were completed. A child protection flow chart was displayed for all staff to view and regular discussions took place at meetings. This supported staff to feel confident in identifying different types of abuse and how to manage these concerns. This kept children and their families safe from harm.

Medication was stored appropriately, including lifesaving medication. Medication forms gathered important information and reviewed monthly in consultation with parents. The senior team carried out robust audits of medication each month. This ensured children were kept safe in the event that medication is required.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were seen to be having fun with a variety of resources, both indoors and outdoors. Children led their own play and learning and engaged in their play for extended periods of time. Children chose where they wanted to play and were supported to follow their own interests. For example, children were interested in pirates and role play opportunities allowed them to create a ship, treasure maps and treasure boxes. Children were encouraged to explore this interest in all areas of their play for example, making a treasure chest with junk modelling at the crafts area. Children were encouraged to explore their imagination and creativity where they wished to.

A range of resources and experiences were available for children to take part in for example, still life painting of fruit and a water tray with different colours and ice. A large sandpit on the floor supported children to explore their sensory needs, children could be seen rolling around in the sand happily. Resources were at children's height, easily accessible and additional resources were added to support children's interests. All children were able to explore their environment freely and independently.

Language, literacy and numeracy were woven throughout the learning environment. Signs and symbols were displayed, including areas descriptions and name tags. Signs and symbols held meaning to the children, for example board maker symbol sequences throughout areas for hand washing. This allowed children to develop their problem solving skills, supported by these tools. Signs were used to support children's communication skills and understanding of routines. One child shared that she was a Makaton leader and proudly showed the signs they have been working on. A natural literacy and numeracy rich environment has allowed children to be confident in sharing their learning and knowledge.

Planning approaches were child centred and followed children's interests. There was a balance of intentional promotions and spontaneous learning documented. Floorbooks were used to capture children's interests, what they have learned and what next steps were identified to extend learning further.

Children were very keen to share their learning journals. They fondly spoke about observations in their journals and expressed what they had fun doing. One child told us that she knew the difference between the illustrator, author and blurb in books. It was clear to see these learning discussions took place with children and staff. Journals captured significant observations, progress, achievements and reflection points. Families had opportunities to take the journals home and feed back information about their children's learning. As a result, children could take ownership of their own learning and look back at past experiences with their peers and families.

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 people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The environment was bright with plenty of natural light, clean and homely. The use of plants and low lighting with lamps throughout the setting, including in the corridors, created a calming environment for the children and their families.

Free flow access between indoors and outdoors was provided for the children throughout the whole session, including at lunch time. One child shared "I just went outside for a bit to get some fresh air. It is healthy for you to do that". This provided children with healthy opportunities to explore physical play as they wished.

There was ample space for children to extend their learning and interests with their chosen activities. Books and print were spread throughout the play spaces and children were seen exploring these spaces with confidence.

Risk assessments were in place that ensured the building, resources and activities were safe for the children to use and explore. Risk assessments were reviewed annually or sooner if changes occurred. Any changes made were shared with the staff team to ensure they were up to date with current assessments. A daily risk assessment took place of the whole environment before children arrived. This allowed staff time to evaluate the space and log any hazards and act appropriately before children entered the space, keeping them safe.

Children showed an understanding of how to keep themselves and their peers safe. For example, one child told us that they must wear helmets when they were on the bikes because that is what keeps you safe. Children were supported and encouraged to manage their own risk through outdoor play, where they had opportunities to develop their gross motor skills. This resulted in children who are beginning to understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

Accident and incident forms gathered appropriate information and were shared with parents at the end of the session. If a child has a head bump or a more serious injury, their parents are contacted and made aware. This ensured that parents were kept informed if their child was hurt. Robust auditing systems were in place to monitor accidents and incidents. This supported staff to identify trends or to take further action if required.

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 people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children and families were meaningfully involved in the service. A shared vision, values and aims had recently been reviewed in consultation with staff, parents and children. Families were able to share with the staff what the service means to them. This provided opportunities for the staff team to reflect on what they offer children and their families and adapt their vision accordingly. This ensured a shared vision and children and families felt involved in this process.

Regular communications with families took place in the form of questionnaires, feedback notes, emails, seesaw and stay and play sessions. A display board was set up every day that shares children's learning and interests for that day. This kept families informed of their children's daily activities and interests. This approach ensured all families were able to receive communications in a way that suited them.

A quality assurance calendar was in place to support improvements and staff development. The Improvement plan was outcome focused with priorities where staff took leadership roles. For example digital technologies was developed by staff, going on to win an award. Self-evaluation took place and further areas for development were identified as a team. This meant children benefitted from a service that continued to improve.

New staff were well supported with mentors, information packs and core training opportunities. The national induction resource was used to support this. This was adapted to reflect how the service operated and to keep staff fully informed. This helped staff to feel valued, respected and included within the team from the start.

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 people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

The staff team had a mix of knowledge, skills and experience. Staff were kind, caring and nurturing. They knew children and their families very well. One parent shared with us "The staff members make the nursery the best place it can be. They seem happy to be at work and this relates into a welcoming happy nursery." As a result positive relationships had been formed with families and children.

Staff were deployed appropriately throughout the day. Busier times of the day, such as staff lunches, did not impact on experiences for children. Staff moved around the area to support other staff members. Staff communicated well with each other, asking for cover or letting others know where they were going. This ensured children were supervised and were still offered support if they needed it.

Children's needs were well supported, staff practice was developed and enhanced by further training staff had undertaken, for example SCERTS training. Staff shared that they felt this was helpful and improved their practice to ensure that they were supporting all children to reach their full potential.

Staff knowledge and confidence in their practice was further developed through leadership roles. They were able to take ownership of their training and learning opportunities. Staff shared this with their team at regular team meetings and learning walks around their environment. As a result, children were cared for by passionate and skilled practitioners who wanted to get it right for them.

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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