

# Cosmic Coppers at Merrylee Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
3 May 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Cosmic Coppers Childcare Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2011011550

**Service no:**  
CS2011289581

## About the service

Cosmic Coppers at Merrylee is registered to provide a day care of children service. There are two parts to the premises. In the nursery, the service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 12 children aged 0 to under two years and 35 children aged two years to under three years. In the play village, the service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 68 children aged two years to those not attending primary school with no more than 20 children aged two years to under three years. The service is in partnership with Glasgow City Council to provide early learning and childcare places for children from three years of age. There is a secure entrance area, playrooms, toilet facilities, office and staff room. There are secured large outdoor areas adjacent to the nursery and play village. The service is close to shops, transport routes and other amenities.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Friday 3 May 2024. 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 throughout the inspection year. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with 17 of the children using the service and reviewed survey responses from 20 parents whose children attend the service.
- Spoke with the manager and nine staff and reviewed survey responses from 17 members of staff.
- Observed practice and staff interactions with children.
- Reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experienced sensitive and respectful caregiving from staff who were responsive to children's changeable interests.
- Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.
- Staff were motivated, well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children.
- Staff communicated well together and supported each other in their shared work roles.
- We found that staff worked hard to provide a variety of quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice, children's interests, as well as tracking and reflecting on individual achievements.
- Staff should develop their approaches to supporting children's collaborative play projects and promoting child led planning for play.
- Effective staff deployment within the nursery meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff throughout each element of the day.

## 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?	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?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good as we found performance demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require any significant adjustment.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We looked at how the nursery's planning approaches for children's care, learning and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. Detailed and regularly reviewed personal planning systems were in place for all children. Children's personal planning records included: "All About Me" information; photo based learning journal observations; allergy and health information; parental review sheets; wellbeing profiles; and records of children's achievements. Staff used this personal planning information to involve families in decisions about their child's care and development. One parent told us: "We regularly sit down with our son's key worker to go over his personal plan and update it when necessary. Very happy with how often they do this with us in case of any changes. We were fully involved in developing our child's plan when they started." Individual children's tracking of learning information was related to developmental milestones across a variety of educational subject areas drawn from Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence. This helped to promote parental awareness of actions that were being used in practice to help individual children achieve their learning goals. We discussed with staff how personal planning approaches could be enhanced for all children by extending the use of SHANARRI wellbeing indicators to provide an up to date summary of ongoing key support, care and learning needs for every child.

We noted that effective systems were in place to support children with additional support needs. Staff were skilled in using the information in children's personal plans to meet the needs of children requiring additional levels of support. This included positive examples of multi-agency involvement serving to maximise potential outcomes for children's learning and development. A parent commented: "When my child had surgery and needed a special diet for six weeks, the staff went out of their way to ensure they had lots of options and variety which meant a great deal to me and to their recovery." Another parent told us: "The staff have helped me and my child unbelievably with our separation issues. They have taken time to listen and talk, nothing has been a problem especially the time that has been required." Overall, the planning systems we found in place enabled the relevant staff to respond quickly, sensitively and compassionately to changes in a child's life.

Throughout the various play sessions we observed it was clear that children experienced sensitive and respectful caregiving. We observed staff being responsive to children's changeable interests and demands. Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included. All of the parents who completed our survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "Overall, I am happy with care and support my child receives in the setting". One parent told us: "The staff are fantastic, they are kind and caring and really form a nurturing connection with my son. They know my child very well which reassures me. They always respond quickly to any queries I have and are very friendly when I drop off and pick up." Another parent commented: "The staff really care about my child and us as a family. We feel secure and happy that our child got into Cosmic Coppers. The things that the staff do are remarkable and my wee one has come along so well since starting."

We highlighted how administration of medication systems could be improved to include children's pictures, consent forms and administration guidance within each child's medical box. These changes were taken forward by staff during the course of our inspection.

### Quality indicator 1:3: Play and learning

We found that staff worked hard to provide a variety of quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice, children's interests, as well as tracking and reflecting on individual achievements. Staff had high aspirations to enable children to be successful. Children's voices were highly valued, as a result, children were confident, happy and motivated to learn. Staff took time to extend conversations with children about their play and used some well-timed open ended questioning to further extend and challenge thinking and learning. We found that staff used observations of children's significant play interests to adapt their support for and resourcing of play experiences. We identified a need to ensure the next steps for children's play and learning within individual learning journal observations were consistently recorded and specific to each child's particular learning needs. This can enhance the systems in place for highlighting the developmental progress children are making through planned play and learning experiences.

In each indoor play space there were well considered open ended materials and creative approaches that at times engaged children's imagination and enriched their play and learning. Children engaged in a range of role play and creative experiences that supported their imagination to flourish. The use of questions from staff helped children to extend their thinking and consolidate their thoughts and ideas through play. All the parents who completed our survey told us that their children's development was consistently supported by fun and interesting play experiences. One parent commented: "The nursery always has thought out and fun activities planned both indoors and outdoors for my child which he fully engages in and wholeheartedly enjoys. This ranges from structured to creative play through art (painting, drawing, baking) to free play with friends where he learns to share toys, play as part of a group or individually." Another parent told us: "My child knows more about space and the planets than I do thanks to the incredible work the staff did on this topic. There was singing, arts and crafts, physical play (building rockets) even snacks based on the space theme. It was truly amazing."

We discussed with staff observation approaches that could help identify and evaluate play experiences that children found particularly engaging and challenging. We highlighted how this could help foster meaningful discussion between children and staff about play and development. We discussed with staff how this would enhance the systems already in place for recognising children's achievements as well as further promote children's sense of ownership and leadership of play. In particular, we identified a need for staff to take forward and implement strategies for developing children's sense of ownership of leading change related to their self chosen play projects. Staff agreed that more flexible use of big books or similar planning tools that were based on observations of children's most engaging and involving play experiences could strengthen existing opportunities for children to shape their play environments.

### How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question as we found performance where identified strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

### Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

We looked at the nursery environment and resources within it in terms of how they were managed to support positive outcomes for children. Children were cared for in a welcoming, comfortable environment which was bright and well ventilated. Rooms were well furnished with space for children to participate in a variety of activities. The nursery play spaces included the provision of open-ended and natural resources. Spaces were set up in ways that were adaptable and had potential to encourage children's creativity.

The layout of the nursery buildings and related access arrangements from playrooms provided opportunities for children to freely lead their own play between indoor and outdoor play spaces. A variety of open ended and loose parts experiences were used by children to extend and develop their learning. The children told us they particularly liked using the mud kitchen, where we observed staff using creative ways to extend children's interests. Outdoor play experiences were further supported by children's trips on the service's minibus to a range of local parks and places of interest within the wider community. One parent commented: "The environment is amazing but the staff makes Cosmic the absolute best. The activities, the thought that goes in to them, the imagination, the magic that surrounds the fun is outstanding and I know not replicated in any other nursery in this area." Another parent told us: "My son loves outdoors and we choose Cosmic Coppers because of the space that it has. The app shows photos of the things that they get up to and of course they have the added extra of the minibus. There is no additional charges and the trips are fab." A third parent suggested improvements they would like to see taken forward in the children's outdoor space including: "More natural shade, shelter and green or biodiversity friendly features."

We noted staff including children in risk assessment discussions. For example, asking children why they would need a helmet when playing on bikes outside. This supported children to be risk aware and to feel secure in their play environment.

We identified a number of improvements that needed to be made to the cleaning, decoration and maintenance of some areas and resources. These include areas within a toilet and nappy changing area as well as a children's tent where surfaces had become either worn, marked or flaked. The provider took action to address these issues during the course of the inspection process. This helped to ensure children's right to experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.

Children's information was generally stored safely and securely and complied with best practice guidance. Electronic information was protected through appropriate systems and met general data protection requirements. We identified changes that were needed to the display of allergen information on playroom walls. This was to help maintain children's right to confidentiality about their health care needs. These changes were implemented during the course of our inspection.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good as we found performance demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require any significant adjustment.

### **Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

The senior management team promoted a shared vision for the setting that reflected the aspirations of children and families. We found that staff were motivated, well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children. One parent commented: "From a management perspective the communication and running of the nursery is perfect. I recommend Cosmic Coppers to everyone I speak to. We couldn't have asked for better for our child's nursery experience." Another parent told us: "The management staff are engaging and I have no hesitation in approaching them to discuss anything to do with my child's care, play and learning." Staff told us how the management team provided a clear focus for their shared team work including setting out clear responsibilities and expectations. We found that the team worked together effectively to evaluate and reflect on their practice. They were keen to take forward current ideas, develop and implement best practice guidance.

We found that team meetings took place regularly and staff had the opportunity to take part in one to one meetings with management. These provided an opportunity to discuss any improvement ideas and identify any related training needs. This resulted in children experiencing quality interactions and a broad range of stimulating play experiences centred around their emerging interests.

The leadership team had developed a wealth of improvement planning documentation. We saw that parents' views were respected, and that efforts had been made to widen parental engagement with the life of the setting through stay and play sessions and a variety of improvement planning approaches. One parent commented: "The nursery continually ask for feedback on how they can do better through various ways. I remember giving feedback via a QR code posted in the nursery which is really innovative." Another parent told us: "Staff are very approachable particularly the overall manager if you have anything you need to discuss." The manager told us how they dedicated time to analysing children's, staff and parents' contributions to any consultations and extracting the key messages or themes. This feedback had been used to support the development of an improvement plan that clearly set out the service priorities and targets for change.

Positive working relationships between the manager and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children. The manager had created conditions where all staff felt confident to initiate well-informed change and share responsibility for the process. A variety of curriculum related initiatives were led by different staff to encourage their professional development. This supported ongoing improvements in the nursery's approaches to children's health and wellbeing, digital learning, literacy, numeracy and promoting children's rights.

We highlighted practical consultation strategies for further extending the high levels of parental engagement in the improvement planning process. The staff agreed these had the potential to help strengthen the capacity of service to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and families' particular needs and choices.

## How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good as we found performance demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require any significant adjustment.

### Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Effective staff deployment within the nursery meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff throughout each element of the day. The staff to child ratio allowed staff to be responsive to individual needs which enhanced children's experiences and ensured children had the right support at the right time. This was enhanced through effective working relationships with families. One parent commented: "I can see the numbers of staff in the service is high. I can always reach my child's key worker. I see photos of my children's group work activities and see the groups are small enough for the staff member to give them all individual attention if required." Another parent told us: "The staff are incredibly dedicated and knowledgeable. In the years I've used the service, there has been very little staff turnover, allowing both children and parents to get to know the staff really well." We found staff worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with the children across the day. Staff communicated well with their colleagues when a personal care task took away from their play area based responsibilities. Children who required additional support were well supported by staff to feel respected and included in daily experiences.

A robust induction process supported newly appointed staff to meet children's needs. The induction programme had helped new staff to settle into their role and become part of the staff team. As a result, they were clear about their roles and responsibilities which supported children's experiences.

The staff routinely engaged in a range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice. This included: early literacy strategies; listening and talking; physical activity in the early years; sign language; STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths); block play; children's schematic play; phonological awareness; storytelling; conflict management; food safety; outdoor play. We found staff were confident in discussing how they had improved their practice as a result of their own professional learning activities. We found that this learning had a positive impact on the quality of experiences for children, their progress and wider improvements in the setting.

## Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website ([www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.



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?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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