

Grand-y-Care Academy Day Care of Children

Hyndford Manor
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 September 2024

Service provided by:
Grand-y-Care

Service provider number:
SP2003001507

Service no:
CS2003006600

About the service

Grand-y-Care Academy is a daycare of children service and is registered to provide care for 101 children aged from birth to those not yet attending high school. The service is located in a residential area of Lanark, South Lanarkshire.

Children are cared for in a double storey building, across six playrooms with access to toilets and garden spaces. At the time of the inspection, 34 children were in attendance. There were no school aged children present.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 3 and 4 September 2024 between 9:30 and 17:45. The inspection was carried out by three 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 received feedback from 11 of their family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were settled and happy within the setting.
- Staff interactions during play helped children feel safe and secure.
- Children experienced a bright and welcoming environment.
- Children enjoyed exploring toys and materials that supported their interests.
- Ongoing plans for refurbishments will contribute to improved facilities for children.
- Reviewing quality assurance systems will help to identify where actions are needed.
- Good communication with families helped ensure they felt included within their child's early years setting.
- Daily routines needed to improve to help ensure these were supportive of children's individual needs.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - 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 evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.

Children were settled, content and confident within the service. Staff interacted in a kind and caring way with children, responding to their cues and requests. For example, helping to put their outdoor clothing on or when children requested a song/story. Parents commented positively on their child's care and told us "they always talk and tell me about their day. They talk about my child in a very caring manner."

Staff knew children well and each child had a personal plan in place which contained important information. For example, likes, dislikes, family details and medical information. This helped staff to get to know children and meet their individual needs. We discussed with management on reviewing the organisation of personal plans, to ensure these are easily accessed and utilised. Parents commented positively on the care their children received and told us "the staff know my child very well and are always looking out for [their] best interests" and "I feel like I can ask [the staff] questions, they are interested in my child and their development."

Children enjoyed nutritious food options at mealtimes, influenced by best practice guidance, helping to promote a healthy balanced diet. Recent changes had been made to the presentation of food and this meant children had more opportunities to choose from items based on their preferences. We discussed with management and staff on further reviewing these changes to help ensure staff could sit with children during mealtimes, helping to support their social development and safe eating practices. Before the end of the inspection site visit, staff had made changes to address this.

Children's personal care needs were sensitively responded to. For example, children were asked if they wanted to have their nappy changed. In addition, children's wellbeing needs were supported. For example, children were cuddled and sung to when going for a sleep. Children had their own individual bedding and regular sleep checks were carried out, helping to promote safe sleeping practices.

Medication was stored safely, out of reach of children. We discussed with management on ensuring paperwork for medicine was easily accessible and consistently completed. This included ensuring the signs and symptoms are clearly recorded and reviewing with parents. Management agreed to review this.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children engaged in a variety of experiences that supported their learning and development. This included younger children climbing in and out of wicker baskets, whilst older children transferred sand into the water, creating new sensory materials. Children showed joy and delight during these experiences and staff recognised these play behaviours as schematic play. We offered some suggestions for staff to develop this further, helping to deepen children's learning. Schematic play, or schemas, is when children repeat the same actions or ideas during their play. This helps them to learn about the world around them.

Children had fun during their play, using the toys and materials available to them, supporting their interests, choices and wishes. This included drawing, painting, playdough, figures, animals and natural materials.

Children told us "I like painting and using these little stampers" and "I like the dinosaurs." However, at times experiences were adult-led due to the pace of day, with children having limited choices. We asked management to review this to ensure children experience periods of uninterrupted play, allowing them to lead their own learning and make choices. We discussed with management on reviewing the pace of the day to ensure children experienced uninterrupted play. We report on this under 4.3 Staff deployment.

Children's literacy and numeracy development was supported through a variety of ways. For example, songs, stories, Bookbug sessions and building blocks. Children enjoyed staff interactions during these experiences and sought more of these. This helped support children's language development and new concepts.

Opportunities to support children's imagination and curiosity included the use of real materials. For example, real crockery and cutlery in role play areas, which children enjoyed exploring and engaging in imaginative play. For example, a younger child using a sieve as a hat. In addition, the use of natural materials such as, wooden rings, woven balls, knitted puppets and wooden tubes supported children's curiosity and play. Parents commented their children enjoyed "role play, reading, painting and other craft play."

Planning systems were in place to help support children in their play and learning. Staff used floorbooks to record experiences. These were accessible for children to share their views and ideas on their learning. Next steps for children were recorded in a variety of documents, helping to identify their individual needs and strategies needed. We discussed with management on ensuring these were clear, relevant to individual children and located in one place. This will help ensure children are supported to achieve. Management agreed to review paperwork systems.

All children had opportunities to explore outdoor experiences. Younger children were supported by staff to access the garden area, whilst older children had access to these areas from their playrooms. Opportunities outdoors included, a mud kitchen, hills, small treehouse, planting, tunnels and building. These provided children opportunities for exploration, physical play and problem solving. Children told us "I have just been jumping, jumping and jumping. I am going back outside now" and "I love the garden and playing on the tyre swing." Parents commented "[my child] loves playing outside and they often have sensory trays inside too" and "regularly outside cuddling about in the tent, tunnels, garden and climbing frame."

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 experienced a bright, welcoming and inviting environment. Individual coat pegs and shoe storage meant there was space for children to store their personal items, promoting a sense of belonging. The provider and manager shared their plans to update the décor throughout nursery in the near future and were receptive to our suggestions to soften wall displays. This would include the amount of items displayed and the height of displays. This would reduce the potential risk of children being overstimulated.

Plans were in place for refurbishments to improve toilet facilities for children aged two to five. The provider and management had shared drawings and plans, and were committed to keeping the Care Inspectorate up to date with progress. We agreed these upgrades would be beneficial and reflective of current best practice.

Safety measures were in place, helping to protect children from harm. For example, regular handwashing before meals and after the toilet, cleaning of floors and surfaces, secure main entrance and good supervision of children. Staff were aware of the Care Inspectorate's 'Keeping Children Safe' initiative called SIMOA and had developed tools to introduce this to children. This included elephant teddies and songs. Children told us "Sammy (the elephant) keeps us safe." Information on 'Keeping Children Safe' can be found on the Care Inspectorate Hub.

Children had access to large garden spaces, helping to support their play and learning, as well as their choices. One spaces was enclosed and the other was at the front of the building. Whilst there was a low perimeter fence around the green space, we discussed with management children being able to easily climb over this. Management agreed to review this, to ensure children are safe when using the front garden. In addition, whilst most children had direct access to the enclosed garden from their playroom, we discussed with management and staff on ensuring children could choose to go outside or stay inside based on their preferences.

How good is our leadership?

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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

The provider and manager were welcoming during the inspection and receptive to feedback given. They were committed to their role and eager to get it right for children. They engaged in open and transparent discussions and this helped support improvement conversations.

Management and staff engaged in self-evaluation processes, helping to evaluate their service and identify the strengths and areas for improvement. This included reviewing national frameworks to support their thinking and influence positive changes. For example, the Care Inspectorates 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare.' We discussed with management on reviewing how these reflections were recorded, to help ensure these were meaningful and easily accessible to support practice.

Staff communicated well as a team, helping to ensure important information was shared. This included regular staff meetings and verbal conversations. One-to-one meetings for staff to have with management provided opportunities for staff to share their aspirations and any concerns, helping to support staff to feel heard and supported at their work.

Robust safer recruitment processes were in place, helping to ensure the right people were employed to care for children. Staff were supported through induction processes, which helped develop their knowledge and skills in their role to care for children. This included the use of 'The National Induction Resource' and support from leaders.

Quality assurance processes were in place to help management review and identify gaps in practice. We discussed how these could be improved to ensure these are effective in identifying where action is needed. Improvements to these would help address areas identified at this inspection. For example, personal plans, medication and pace of the day. Management agreed with this and before the end of the inspection, shared their initial thoughts on plans moving forward.

Parents were regularly asked for their views and ideas to help support the service to make improvements. This included questionnaires and evaluations following events. Parents felt positive about their involvement and told us "I always provide feedback after events, and believe this is taken on board" and "we are frequently asked for feedback and then I can see the changes following the feedback have been implemented."

How good is our staff team?

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 4.3: Staff deployment.

Staff engaged well during the inspection and were open to receiving feedback to support their practice. They interacted during children's play in a supportive way and children enjoyed their involvement during experiences. Children were comfortable in the care of adults and sought support and reassurance if needed. Parents commented positively on the relationships their children had with staff and told us "the staff are so kind and welcoming to the children and their families" and "staff are always welcoming and friendly and take the time to get to know the families individually."

There was a mix of staff skills and knowledge throughout the service. Training opportunities included child protection, sensitivity training and forest school. Staff kept records on these and reflections on the impact on their practice. We encouraged the service to continue with this to promote good outcomes for children.

The service had recognised the importance of staff wellbeing and had a number of measures in place to support this. For example, a named wellbeing person, positivity display boards in the staff room and wellbeing information. This all contributed to staff feeling safe and supported at their work.

The pace of the day needed to be reviewed to ensure this was supportive of children's individual needs. At times, daily routines were too rigid and resulted in children waiting too long for their lunch meal or limited play choices. Management agreed with this and provided assurances that these would be looked at to ensure children's play is not unnecessarily interrupted and they continue to have choices throughout the day.

Staff communicated well with families, helping to ensure they developed positive relationships. Parents were welcomed into the building at drop off and collection times, supporting strong connections. We signposted the manager to the Care Inspectorates document 'Me, my family and my childcare setting' for further reading and sharing. Parents commented positively on communication and told us "parents are invited in regularly for parent's evening appointments in every room" and "we can go and observe in the rooms at any time while our child is in attendance and are often encouraged to go into the room to pick up our child rather than having them brought to us at the end of the day."

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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