

Munro House Nursery and Kindergarten Day Care of Children

Munro House
Unit 42 - 46 Munro Business Centre
Munro Place, Anniesland
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Telephone: 01419 598 85

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 January 2025

Service provided by:
Mackin Childcare Limited

Service provider number:
SP2010011143

Service no:
CS2010272598

About the service

Munro House Nursery is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 63 children in the following age ranges: 30 children aged 0 to under two years; 33 children aged two to under three years. Munro House Kindergarten is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 48 children aged 3 years and over, but not yet attending primary school. The service operates from purpose built premises within the Anniesland area of Glasgow. The accommodation consists of two separate buildings. One for the nursery and the other for the kindergarten. The service has secure outdoor play space. The service is close to public transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place between 22 and 24 January 2025. Two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with 18 children and received survey responses from 19 parents or carers
- spoke with nine staff as well as the senior management team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were cared for by staff who showed warm and nurturing approaches.
- We found that staff were motivated, well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children.
- Staff worked hard to provide a variety of quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice and children's interests.
- Planning approaches for children's care, learning and development provided a clear structure for gathering personal information about children's care, support, health, well-being and learning needs.
- Children had fun as they explored play and learning opportunities and resources within playrooms.
- Indoor playroom spaces were richly resourced and set up in ways that were adaptable.
- In general, effective staff deployment within the nursery meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff.
- We identified a need to improve children's opportunities to access to high quality outdoor play each day.
- We identified a need to ensure there were more opportunities for communication and relationship building at meal times for older children.
- We identified a need for staff to develop more responsive observation and planning approaches to promote children's ownership and leadership of their play experiences.
- We identified measures that had the potential to improve children's nappy changing 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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

3 - Adequate

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator as we found performance where there was a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. The strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

Throughout the various play sessions we observed it was clear that children experienced sensitive and respectful caregiving. The staff team worked flexibly, were adaptable and worked well together to meet children's changing needs and care demands. Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included. Children appeared safe, secure, happy and confident. One parent commented: "My daughter is well looked after and learns so many things every day. The staff take the time to get to know her well and she feels happy and loved when she is there." Another parent told us: "My child is thriving and she loves nursery. My daughter has made strong relationships with staff and other children." We found staff were friendly in their approach and committed to supporting the best possible outcomes for children.

We looked at how the nursery's planning approaches for children's care, learning and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. We found these had been recently reviewed and provided a clear structure for gathering personal information about children's care, support, health, well-being and learning needs. This was supported by "All About Me" personalised summaries accessible to all staff within playrooms. A smart target system was in place that set out each child's progress in relation to SHANARRI wellbeing indicators including current priorities for their support. Additional support for learning records, including assessments of children's developmental progress in areas such as speech and language. An online learning journal application recorded children's progress through play and shared observations about play and other nursery experiences with parents. One parent commented: "We are regularly given the opportunity to provide input and feedback to our child's care plan and informed daily about activities." Another parent told us: "I get daily updates in person and regular updates on the parenting app. Staff go over and above to try and accommodate me e.g. giving prescribed medicines, working with me on my availability for parents evening." A third parent told us: "The app is updated with observations etc but not very consistent. More face to face with key worker meetings about plans would be an advantage." We highlighted strategies for streamlining the personal planning system to avoid any duplication and to ensure all staff had more immediate access to children's key current individual care support and learning strategies within each playroom. This will help to ensure all children receive the right support, from the right people, at the right time.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas needed to improve.

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. In our survey, when asked about the quality of play experiences available to children one parent commented: "The list is too varied to begin to compile. We are always impressed by this variety and the creative approach taken along with how educational and fun the activities seem to be."

In the playrooms there were some well considered open ended materials and creative approaches that successfully engaged children's imagination and enriched their play 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 reviewed observation entries within the online learning journals for each child. We identified a need for observations for children aged three to five years to be more detailed, individualised and focused on children's next steps for progressing through play. This will ensure that learning experiences provide children with more breadth and depth across the range of subject areas within the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence. We highlighted the value of staff continuing to develop their skills in identifying the significant learning of each child as they observe them at play. This can help to ensure that children's progress is measurable and individual learning targets are more personal.

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. 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. We asked the senior management team to review the balance between adult directed structured large group experiences and opportunities for free flow play across the course of the nursery day. This can help to ensure all children reach their full potential through play.

Staff told us how they had been actively involved in self-evaluating their outdoor play provision. They told us that outdoor play had become a major focus of their improvement discussions and had been prioritised as a key target in their improvement plan. Staff told us that play beyond the setting was not a regular or major feature of children's experience. Staff told us the children in the three to five room accessed the secure outdoor play space for a limited window each day. Overall, we found that children had too few opportunities to have fun and be actively involved in leading their outdoor play and learning (see Area for improvement 1). We found there were missed opportunities to support children's creativity and choices through connecting their indoor and outdoor play experiences. We discussed a variety of strategies for encouraging children's free-flow access to outdoor play throughout the day. We highlighted national health and social care standards which set out children's right to engage in outdoor play every day they attended the setting. We discussed the value of recruiting more staff to support outdoor play provision for children. We discussed the value of forest kindergarten training for staff to allow them to effectively increase the range of challenge children experience in outdoor play. We highlighted the need to ensure the outdoor play was - within reason - always accessible to children throughout the course of the nursery day.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children to reach their potential and support their learning, wellbeing and development the provider should ensure:

- Improvements are made to children's daily free flow access to stimulating and challenging outdoor play opportunities.

- Staff undertake training that will further support them to follow observation and planning approaches that focus on recording and responding to children's individual development needs including identifying suitably challenging next steps for their play.
- Develop approaches for responsive planning for play to promote children's ownership and leadership of their play experiences.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:

"I am supported to achieve my potential in education." (HSCS 1.27); and

"As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity." (HSCS 2.27)

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

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.

We looked at the nursery environment and resources within it in terms of how they were managed to support positive outcomes for children. 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. We found that the playrooms were comfortable, furnished to a high standard, with plenty of natural light. A range of wall displays celebrated children's backgrounds and achievements. This gave a strong message to children that they matter. The indoor and outdoor environments for younger children were sensitively structured and took account of their stages of development. Indoor environments offered cosy places to rest and relax. Children were able to make use of a "zen" space where they could explore a variety of natural resources to promote their curiosity and imagination. A soft play room offered children the opportunity to participate in physical play indoors. Younger children had direct access to a safe and secure outdoor area. Outdoors offered opportunities for risky and physical play through climbing frame, bikes, balls and balance equipment. Staff worked well together to identify and remove risks to children within the setting both indoors and outdoors. They ensured children were accounted for at all times and that the environment is secure and safe.

Staff had received appropriate training on infection prevention and control. There were clear policies and procedures in place to ensure consistent approaches across the setting. We identified a need to ensure that sinks within the toddler room were being used for a single designated purpose such as hand cleaning. We discussed with staff the need to ensure that paper towels were accessible to children in handwashing areas and that they were contained in secure covered dispensers. We discussed with the senior management team they need to ensure that baby room nappy changing resources were adapted to protect children's privacy and dignity at times when children were being changed together. We required the service to adapt the entrance to the three to five building to ensure it was monitored and provided a secure entry system. We identified a need to ensure that paper towels were accessible to children in handwashing areas and that they were contained in secure dispensers. These measures can help strengthen the nursery and kindergarten's approaches to ensuring children's health, safety and wellbeing.

How good is our leadership?**4 - Good****Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

We made an evaluation of good for this indicator as we found performance that demonstrated a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

We found that staff were motivated, well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children. Staff told us how the manager 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. Staff told us they had participated in team meetings where layouts of playrooms, hand washing approaches, and outdoor play provision had been reviewed. We found this had contributed to improvements in the quality of children's experiences. This included a significant increase in children's active participation in construction and block play within the three to five years room and the benchmarking of handwashing approaches in the baby room in line with national guidance on infection control.

The senior management team 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 nursery and kindergarten's priorities and targets for change. We identified a need for wider children's engagement in the improvement planning process. We discussed how the future implementation of the area for improvement (see section 1.3 "How good is our care, play and learning?") set out within this report would provide more opportunities for capturing children's voice in shaping change. Overall, we found the improvement plan was detailed and reflected staff and parents' shared aspirations for developing the service.

We highlighted practical consultation strategies for widening parental engagement in the improvement planning process. The staff agreed these would 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?**3 - Adequate****Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment**

We made an evaluation of adequate for this key question as we found performance where there was some strengths, but these just outweighed weaknesses. The strengths had a positive impact but the likelihood of achieving positive outcomes for children was reduced because key areas of performance needed to improve.

In general, 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 across the day. One parent commented: "Plenty of staff to answer door at drop off, pick up. We are kept informed of staffing levels and of staff to children ratios and can clearly see the children are being well looked after." We found that the staffing arrangements that were in place ensured staff could be deployed flexibly across each age and stage to cover for any absences. A low staff turnover contributed to continuity in children's care and learning. It helped to ensure positive transitions and consistent communication with families. We found staff worked together to ensure effective supervision of 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.

In general, effective staff deployment across the service meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff, throughout almost all parts of the day.

We highlighted to the management team the value of introducing a more distributive leadership and management approach to further support the delivery of improvement initiatives (see Area for improvement 1). We discussed the value of introducing a staff development program that was linked to champion roles across the staff team such as: STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths); PATHs (a child centred emotional self regulation program); numeracy; literacy; health and well-being; outdoor play; observation approaches; responsive of planning and children's ownership of play. This can help to foster a shared sense of ownership and responsibility for delivering future improvements across the staff team. It can help ensure initiatives are extended and positive impacts on outcomes for children are maintained.

We highlighted the value of deploying extra staff to support children's free flow access between indoors and outdoors and widen children's access to forest kindergarten experiences (see Area for improvement 2). We identified a need to review staff deployment arrangements across each play space to ensure that at least one member of staff was available to support children's outdoor play at all times. This can strengthen opportunities for children to meet their entitlement to play outdoors every day. This can help to support children to regularly explore a natural environment at all times of the year.

We highlighted the value of adapting the nursery and kindergarten's current recruitment plans to ensure this was focussed on adding more experienced qualified staff. We discussed how this could help the team deliver improvement planning successes in outdoor play, forest kindergarten approaches, child led planning and support more effective use of observation approaches.

We noted in the three to five room that during meal times there were not enough staff to sit with children at their table for the duration of the lunchtime experience. This represented a missed opportunity for communication and relationship building. We signposted staff to our practice note guidance: Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare (ELC). This encourages services to provide time for staff to use meal times to respond to each child as an individual, with an understanding of where they are in their own developmental journey. We asked the management team to review staff deployment arrangements at this time (see Area for improvement 2). We highlighted the value of recruiting lunchtime cover staff. This will allow practitioners to focus on providing a more familiar lunchtime experience with consistent and extended engagement with each group of children throughout the lunch experience.

Areas for improvement

1. In order to maximise outcomes for children across a wide range of play experiences the provider should ensure:

- (i) the individual interests and skills of staff are identified and used as a basis to take forward lead roles to motivate, support and inspire others;
- (ii) all staff access training to enhance their practice and implement strategies to ensure the learning from training has a positive impact on outcomes for children;
- (iii) staff development and training opportunities are provided in outdoor play, observation approaches, responsive of planning and children's ownership and leadership of play.

This ensures the quality of staffing is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

"I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes." (HSCS 3.14)

2. In order to ensure children's mealtimes are a nurturing and social experience and ensure children have access to suitably challenging outdoor play experiences the provider should review and implement staffing arrangements that:

- (i) ensure lunchtime experiences for children reflect Care Inspectorate Practice note guidance Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare (ELC);
- (ii) maximise children's experience and engagement with suitably challenging outdoor play experiences every day.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as a relaxed atmosphere as possible" (HSCS 1.35); "People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me" (HSCS 3.16); "I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors" (HSCS 1.25); "As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment." (HSCS 1.32)

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The provider should ensure that personal plans for children contain relevant information about their individual care needs, particularly where a need for additional support has been identified. This information will ensure staff can tailor care appropriately to meet children's individual needs.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices." (HSCS 1.15)

This area for improvement was made on 13 June 2018.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The provider should ensure that:

- (i) all staff access training to enhance their practice and implement strategies to ensure the learning from training has a positive impact on outcomes for children;

(ii) where possible, the individual interests and skills of staff are identified and used as a basis for staff to take forward lead roles to motivate, support and inspire others.

This ensures the quality of staffing is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes." (HSCS 3.14)

This area for improvement was made on 13 June 2018.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement has not been met and has been continued and reconfigured (see Area for improvement 1 "How good is our staff team").

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate

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?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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