

Baltic Street Adventure Nursery Day Care of Children

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GLASGOW
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Telephone: 0141 554 4077

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 February 2025

Service provided by:
Baltic Street Adventure Playground a
Scottish Charitable Incorporated
Organisation

Service provider number:
SP2022000264

Service no:
CS2022000399

About the service

Baltic Street Adventure Nursery is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 24 children aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The service is provided by Baltic Street Adventure Playground, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It is located in the east end of Glasgow and provides a fully outdoor care service

The service is based on the grounds of Baltic Street Adventure Playground. The service uses sustainable and recycled materials to give children challenging opportunities in an outdoor natural setting. There is access to shelter and warm home cooked food is provided on site.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 and 26 February 2025. 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:

- observed practice and daily life
- spoke with children using the service
- gathered views of parents
- reviewed documents
- spoke with the manager and staff.

Key messages

- Staff were kind, caring and nurturing in their approach with children.
- Children were confident, having fun and deeply engaged in their play and learning.
- The manager and staff should continue to develop personal plans that reflect how children's individual needs are being met.
- Managers and staff should continue to develop planning approaches that capture and evidence children's progression in their development and learning.
- Managers should continue to embed self-evaluation processes to monitor and review the quality of the service and inform their improvement journey.

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?	5 - Very 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 confident and happy within the setting. They experienced warm, nurturing and kind interactions from staff who knew them well and were responsive to their needs. Children were given comfort and reassurance when they were upset and were sensitively supported by adults to manage conflict. Children and parents commented positively about the relationships they had with staff. Children told us, "It's about the loving" and "The adults are nice, they take us walks and we feed the swans." One parent shared, "All staff are friendly, approachable, fun and all have genuine care for the kids and the nursery." The positive relationships between children, staff and families supported children's wellbeing.

The low numbers of children in attendance meant mealtimes were relaxed and unhurried for children. A rolling lunch system supported minimal interruptions to children's play and learning. The onsite cook ensured children had warm, homemade nutritious meals and children's dietary needs, allergies and preferences were catered for. One child told us "I love the mac and cheese. It's my favourite." Staff sat alongside children to ensure their safety whilst eating and also ate with them whilst engaging them in meaningful conversations. This contributed to mealtimes being a positive social experience for children. Children had opportunities to develop their independence skills as they served their own food and poured their own drinks. When children had finished eating they were encouraged to be responsible for tasks, this included clearing away their items and washing their own dishes.

Personal plans were in place for children. Although staff knew children and their needs well, this was not always recorded in personal plans. This could potentially lead to children's care being compromised as staff did not always have the most up-to-date information they needed to meet children's needs. Managers shared with us they had recognised plans required to be reviewed and they were in the early stages of updating the format. We advised the service to make links with other early years settings and the local authority and signposted them to the Care Inspectorate guidance on personal planning. Over the course of the inspection, the manager contacted some local nurseries for support and was becoming familiar with Care Inspectorate guidance. The service should continue to monitor and review personal plans to ensure they meet the needs of children.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were fully engaged and highly motivated in their play and learning. Children were having fun and were confident in leading their own play and learning. This was further supported through the richly resourced play spaces. A small group of children were using open ended natural materials to independently support and extend their imaginative play. They were role playing family life and using sticks, mud, sand and leaves in the mud kitchen to make dinner and cakes. The play supported lovely two way interactions between children as they chatted to share ideas and worked together to extend their play. For example, "I'm making a cake", "you can make it hot in the oven", "wait I have lots of sprinkles to add on" and "it's ready, let's eat and feed the baby."

The play environment offered opportunities for the freedom and space to run and engage in risky and challenging play of climbing and swinging on apparatus. All children had created their own game of chasing each other up and down hills and around the garden. They helped and offered support to one another when climbing and using the tyre swing. This supported children's physical development and coordination skills and created trusting friendships between children. Parents were positive about the experiences their children had through attending a fully outdoor service. Comments included:

"The experiences provided here are ones they would not have without the service. I love them being able to participate in risky play in a controlled environment."

"I love the children's autonomy in how they play and what they do. The freedom they have within safe, caring boundaries."

Planning approaches were being developed and were in the early stages. Staff were developing their understanding of child development, relevant theory and practice. They were using a responsive planning approach to support children's play and learning. We advised managers how observations of children's interests and needs, and how this information is shared between staff would support adults to extend children's learning. We found there was a need for staff to further develop their skills in the identification of personalised next steps for children's play and learning. During discussions, staff displayed high levels of motivation towards developing their skills to support high quality play and learning experiences. We advised managers to continue developing planning systems that documented and demonstrated clear progression in children's development and learning.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The service was part of a wider community project, Baltic Street Adventure Playground. The community project was open to children and families from the local area and provided them with a natural adventure playground space, animal area and community food hub. There were procedures in place to keep children safe whilst they accessed their nursery sessions. This included, established operating times, public gates being locked, a secure buzzer entry system and clear procedures for visitors to the service. This helped to safeguard children that accessed the nursery provision and contributed to their safety.

Children's health, safety and wellbeing was a priority of the service. Staff and children completed daily risk assessments and camp maintenance completed weekly checks to ensure play spaces, structures and equipment were safe and well-maintained. Any potential hazards and risks identified were addressed immediately by the onsite camp maintenance officer. This helped protect children from harm or injury.

We observed staff following infection prevention and control procedures to minimise the risk of the spread of infection. The onsite kitchen and cook followed food safety practices. There was effective handwashing in place for children and adults throughout the session and at key times, such as feeding the animals and mealtimes. There were clear procedures in place to clean toilets and changing areas between nursery sessions and local community sessions. These practices contributed positively to high levels of safety for children's health and wellbeing.

The fully outdoor environment provided children with a dynamic play space. Children had access to tree houses, jumping platforms, monkey bars and climbing apparatus that offered them physical challenge and opportunities for risky play. Staff had created a variety of smaller play spaces throughout the large environment. This included a sandpit area with mud kitchen, art station and dinosaur land. These areas included interesting materials and open ended resources that supported children to be imaginative, creative and use their problem solving skills in their play. One child commented "I like this nursery, I like the sandpit. I build sand castles, look the sand has changed colour because of the rain."

The fire shed provided a warm, cosy space for children to rest, relax and eat during times of inclement weather. Parents also commented positively on the environment, sharing with us "My [child] can be a child and explore the service as they like. Play with reusable items, get dirty. If they are tired and need a rest they have a den they can rest in." The consideration given to the layout and resources within the play environment supported children to realise their full potential through play.

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 manager promoted a shared vision for the setting that reflected the aspirations of children, families, partners and the wider community. This supported staff to know what was important for the setting to meet the needs of children and families.

Managers were friendly, approachable and fully engaged with the inspection process. They were receptive to feedback and were committed to making improvements to ensure positive outcomes for children and families.

Managers understood the importance of involving parents in self-evaluation and sought their views through questionnaires. Parents spoke positively about their involvement in the service, commenting, "The nursery staff are always doing their best but also always striving for more and are happy to listen and take on board any ideas" and "Myself and staff have great communication about the development of the service." We discussed with managers that a wider range of consultation methods that included families and children could help inform change within the service. This would support them to have ownership of the service.

An improvement plan had been created which reflected some current needs of the service and highlighted strengths and areas of development. We observed some evidence of progress being made within the plan. For example, managers had recently completed qualifications and told us this had made them feel more confident in leading the newly established early years team. This enabled them to mentor staff and support them to develop their knowledge and skills through times of induction and in daily practice. This meant staff were supported and motivated to provide care to children and their families.

Systems for monitoring and auditing key aspects of the service were in the early stages. A quality assurance calendar had been developed to support this. We discussed with managers how this could be improved by auditing some additional areas, such as, accidents, personal plans and online learning journals more frequently. This would support management to identify missing information and implement strategies that support children's care, wellbeing and development needs.

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

There were fewer numbers of children attending the service than the registered capacity. 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. Parents commented positively about the staff team. One parent shared with us, "I have a great relationship with all the staff, they are all so welcoming, helpful, kind and caring. Couldn't do anymore for me."

We observed examples of effective communication taking place between staff. Staff were using ongoing radio communication to communicate with each other across the service. This supported them to ensure children were effectively supervised and information was shared to support children's needs. This contributed positively to team work to meet the needs of children.

Continuous professional learning was valued by managers and staff. Staff supervision was taking place and highlighted individuals' professional and personal development targets and goals. Staff had attended training to enable them to meet children's needs and help offer positive outcomes. This included training on child protection, communication, early literacy outdoors and Curriculum for Excellence. Staff shared the impact of their training with us and one told us; "My training and learning have increased my knowledge of children within the early years and also helped me encourage alternative activities to support them." We discussed with managers, the importance of staff participating in training of formal qualifications relevant to their current roles. The manager had recognised this and shared plans that were in place for staff to work towards formal qualifications in the near future. We were satisfied this would help identify any gaps in knowledge and practice and support the development of a well-skilled early years team, which provides a quality service for children and their families.

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 manager should implement an effective system for monitoring, evaluating and quality assuring the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19) and "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 7 March 2024.

Action taken since then

A quality assurance calendar had been implemented and monitoring of key information was being carried out. Self-evaluation was taking place using national frameworks to monitor and review the quality of the service being provided and to inform changes for improvement.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The provider should ensure that safer recruitment checks follow best practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited" (HSCS 4.24).

This area for improvement was made on 7 March 2024.

Action taken since then

The manager had a clear understanding of safe recruitment guidance. There were processes in place to ensure best practice would be followed when staff recruitment was taking place.

This area for improvement has been met.

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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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