

Clarence House Nursery Day Care of Children

112 - 114 Hotspur Street
Glasgow
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Telephone: 01419 455 847

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 March 2025

Service provided by:
Shirley Hexley

Service provider number:
SP2003001292

Service no:
CS2003005959

About the service

Clarence House Nursery is located in the Maryhill area of Glasgow. The service is registered to provide a day care service to a maximum of 29 children aged from birth to not yet attending primary school as follows:

- 6 children aged 0-2 years to be accommodated on the upper floor
- 23 children aged 2 to those yet attending primary school, (of whom no more than 8 children are aged 2 to under 3 years) to be accommodated on the ground floor in a shared playroom.

The children are cared for over two levels and have access to a secure, private outdoor space. The service also makes good use of local amenities to support children's learning and development including North Kelvin Meadow, the Kelvin Walkway and Glasgow Botanic Gardens.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 4 and 6 March 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:

- spoke with people using the service
- gathered the views of parents/carers
- spoke with staff and the provider
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Staff were caring, nurturing and loving in their interactions with children.
- Children were happy, confident and having fun.
- Children's learning and development was enhanced through access to natural spaces in the local community.
- The manager and staff should continue with their plans to further develop the outdoor environment.
- Facilities for the youngest children needed to improve to protect their dignity and reduce the potential spread of infection.

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

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|--|---------------|
| 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 found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were cared for by staff who were warm, caring and loving in their interactions. Staff knew children well and were attentive to their needs. When children needed support, staff offered cuddles and reassurance. This contributed to a nurturing ethos that supported strong attachments between children and staff. Parents, staff and children commented positively on this and told us:

"The nursery is very cosy and gives my child a homey atmosphere. All staff are super supportive, understanding and friendly. Feels like all the team goes out their way to make sure the children are looked after."

"Staff are very warm and welcoming. They understand my children's individual needs."

"All children are equally loved, valued and respected as well as the parents and it's why I enjoy working in this establishment."

"The adults are kind. They look after us and give us hugs."

Mealtimes were a relaxed and unhurried experience for all children. Children in the 2-5 playroom helped to set the tables attractively with table cloths, flowers and individual name cards. They had opportunities to develop independence skills through self-serving food, pouring drinks and using cutlery. Children's individual dietary needs, allergies and preferences were catered for. Children enjoyed a warm, home cooked meal and one child told us: "I like lunch, I like fish fingers." In both playrooms staff sat alongside children to ensure safety whilst eating and engaged children in social conversations and meaningful interactions. This made it an enjoyable and sociable experience for children of all ages.

Personal plans were in place for all children and had been created in partnership with parents. They contained key information staff needed to meet children's individual needs. Plans were regularly updated in collaboration with parents to reflect changes in children's lives. This was used to inform actions and strategies to support children's current needs. This meant children received the right care at the right time to support their wellbeing and development.

Children with additional support needs were well-supported within the setting. One parent told us: "Clarence have been amazing in supporting my child and adapting to their needs. They have attended further training to support their speech, play and food routines. We have seen a massive improvement with my child. They are loving and caring and listen well. I trust them fully with my child." Ongoing collaboration with families and other professionals helped staff meet children's needs in a way that supported their individual learning and progress.

Medication was stored and administered safely in line with current best practice guidance. Policies and instructions provided clear procedures for staff to follow and a medication inventory supported staff to track medication when it entered and left the service. Medication was audited regularly by management. This supported children's health and wellbeing needs.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun and were fully engaged in their play and learning. They experienced a balance of planned and spontaneous activities and had opportunities to lead their own play and learning. For example, one child had used chairs to make a separate area to create a house and transported dolls and other resources to the area. They were deeply engaged in tasks to care for their 'babies' and put them to sleep. The freedom to transport resources supported children to extend their own learning in ways that were meaningful to them.

Play opportunities supported children's development in literacy and numeracy. At the time of inspection, children were celebrating World Book Day with a variety of experiences and events throughout the week. Children were dressed as story characters and staff responded by finding and sharing stories that related to their outfits. For example, a child was dressed as a tiger so staff and children snuggled together to share the story of *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*. Another child was dressed as *The Hungry Caterpillar*. Staff brought the story to life through encouraging children to find resources in the playroom and make props to retell the story. This captivated children and fully immersed them in the story. A well-resourced numeracy area supported children's knowledge of numbers, shapes and colour. The area provided children with resources such as coloured shape blocks, books and chunky wooden numbers to discover numbers, shapes and colour at an exploratory level. Whilst threading numbers, puzzles and a matching and pairing gloves task provided opportunities for challenge.

Children were supported to make good use of the outdoor space. A large wooden climbing frame with slide provided opportunities for children to develop their physical skills and coordination through climbing, balancing and jumping. One child told us: "I like the garden. I like the slide." Children were supported to work together to play a team game of 'What's the Time Mr Wolf?' and adults ensured all children that wanted to play were included. This contributed to positive friendships between children.

Planning for children's learning was based on their interests and individual learning needs. There were clear planning systems in place to support all children. Planning linked with national curriculum frameworks and guidance, such as, Curriculum for Excellence and Realising the Ambition. Learning was tracked to establish children's progress and used to inform next steps and planning for their learning. Observations in online journals and digital floor books highlighted skills learned and progression made in children's learning and development. Progress was regularly shared with parents through online platforms and meetings. This supported parents to feel involved in their child's care, play and learning.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a clean, comfortable and welcoming environment. Children had cosy areas where they could rest and relax and have time on their own should they want it. Children in the 2-5 playroom had free flow access between two playrooms and further access to a 'music' room, used for music, dancing and Bookbug story and singing sessions. This was also used as a quiet area where children could sleep safely. The 0-2 playroom was furnished to create a home from home environment. This included soft furnishings and an adult sized sofa for sitting together to share stories, songs and cuddles. This supported children to feel safe and secure within the nursery environment.

Indoor environments were structured to take account of children's different stages of development and learning. Children's choice and independence in play was promoted through well-resourced areas. Resources were developmentally appropriate and were easily accessible to children. This sent the message to children that they mattered.

Children had access to a secure, private outdoor space. A large wooden climbing frame and sheltered mud kitchen area offered opportunities for older children to engage in physical play and imaginative play. Opportunities for younger children were limited due to equipment not being re-built after a severe storm. Managers and staff had recognised improvements could be made to further develop and enhance the outdoor play space. Staff were motivated to make changes to the outdoor space and this had been identified in the improvement plan as an area of priority. There were clear plans in place for staff to access training and use best practice guidance to support them with this. We agreed the setting should continue with its plans to develop the outdoor space for children of all ages.

Children benefited from daily access to outdoor, natural spaces in the local community. This included local woodland at North Kelvin Meadow, the Kelvin Walkway and the Glasgow Botanic Gardens. The setting had its own minibus which meant children had opportunities to explore other natural areas such as Mugdock Country Park and Loch Lomond shores. This contributed positively to children's wellbeing and learning.

We found that improvements were needed to the youngest children's nappy changing facilities. At the time of inspection, nappy changing was taking place in a space within the main playroom. This had the potential to contribute to the potential spread of infection and compromise children's dignity. We had a positive discussion with the provider and we were encouraged to see them take immediate steps to address this. We will review progress made in relation to this at the next inspection (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing needs, the provider should ensure changing facilities promote privacy and reduce the risk of spread of infection.

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

"I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

"If I require intimate, personal care, there is a suitable area for this, including a sink if needed" (HSCS 5.4).

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

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The setting had a clear vision, values and aims that were created in partnership with children and families and clearly valued relationships. This helped all staff know what was important for the setting to meet the needs of children and families. We observed some aspects of this in practice as children and their families were warmly welcomed into the setting. Staff spent time chatting with parents about their children's day and individual needs. This contributed to positive relationships between staff, children and families.

Managers understood the importance of including staff, families and children in self-evaluation of the service. Consultation took place through email, paper questionnaires and online questionnaires. Information gathered from consultation was shared and discussed at team meetings. This supported staff to reflect as a team and put plans in place to support improvement within the service. Information from consultation, and improvements actioned from this, was shared with parents through email. This demonstrated to parents and staff that feedback was valued and used to influence improvement within the service.

Children were regularly consulted in choices for their environment and their ideas were responded to. For example, children's questions of the jobs people do, led to a focussed learning topic which was enhanced by changes to resources and areas in the environment. Children's thoughts, ideas and learning were captured in a variety of ways such as, wall displays, digital learning books, online observations and voice recordings on iPads. This sent the message to children that their voice mattered.

Self-evaluation had taken place against key national documents and guidance such as, National Standard self-evaluation document, How good is our early learning and childcare? and the Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors. Information from self-evaluation was used to identify strengths and areas for improvement and linked with priorities in the service improvement plan. This meant a meaningful improvement plan was in place with relevant priorities for continuous improvement. Staff were highly motivated to deliver positive outcomes for children. We observed aspects of the plan had progressed in practice. This included developing staff and children's digital awareness. The team had been working alongside a member of Glasgow City Council's leaders of learning team to develop their skills in digital systems and how to use them to support children's learning and development. The leader of learning shared with us, "Staff were fully engaged in the programme and were asking questions to support their own knowledge and learning so they could support children. The team are committed to doing their best for children and families using the service."

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

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

At the time of inspection we found that effective staff deployment within the setting meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff. The management team had an active role in the playroom to support children and staff. This ensured continuity of care and minimal disruption to children's routines when staff were on breaks or not in the service.

A keyworker system helped parents and carers know who was caring for their children and helped children feel emotionally secure. This supported positive attachments and relationships between children and staff and families. Parents commented positively about the staff team sharing with us: "I feel very comfortable with all staff at the nursery, all welcoming and very loving towards the children" and "The staff are excellent and we have complete trust in them. They really prioritise the children. The nursery provides an amazing service overall."

Staff were observed to work well together as a team to ensure positive outcomes for children. This was enhanced through continuous communication between staff. They shared information that was relevant to ensure children's interests were followed and their individual care needs were met throughout the session.

Staff development was actively encouraged within the service. A distributed leadership system supported staff confidence and professional development as they led aspects of improvement through champion roles. Staff had access to a range of training opportunities to support them in their role. This included training on digital awareness, literacy and child protection. Staff could confidently discuss how training had positively impacted their practice and how this supported children. They shared with us: "Training and learning has made me more confident in what I can offer to children in terms of creativity and imagination. Training has also taught me more about my role that I can use daily" and "Training gives me new and exciting ideas that I can take back to the children to encourage them to be enthusiastic about learning."

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

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| 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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