

Healthy Steps Organic Nursery Day Care of Children

c/o The Church of the Good Shepherd
Hillington Road South
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 February 2025

Service provided by:
Healthy Steps

Service provider number:
SP2006008611

Service no:
CS2006136758

About the service

Healthy Steps Organic Nursery is registered as a day care of children service. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 33 children not yet attending primary school, no more than six are aged under two years and no more than 27 are aged two years to not yet attending primary school.

The service was based within a section of a renovated church and children had access to three main playrooms, a sensory room and a large, enclosed garden. The service was based within the Cardonald area of Glasgow.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 and 27 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:

- spoke with people using the service and their families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, engaged and having fun in the outdoor area.
- Staff had developed good relationships with children and families.
- The provider was committed to regular training and development opportunities for staff to ensure a confident and skilled staff team.
- Parents were happy with the service provided and further opportunities for them to links with staff at the beginning and end of sessions would benefit relationships.
- Playrooms and play spaces were bright, clean, well-resourced and engaging places for children to play and learn.

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?	5 - Very 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 important strengths, taken together, outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.

Children were confident and happy in the nursery setting. Staff were warm, kind and nurturing in their approach with children. Staff knew children well and were attentive to their individual needs. Staff fitted well with the age range of children they were designated with. Good role modelling from senior experienced staff and clear guidance and expectations for all staff ensured staff were respectful of children's rights in their interactions. Children had formed strong bonds with the staff caring for them. Staff had built positive relationships with families using the service, through regular stay and play opportunities, and Scarefest, a Halloween event. Staff commented on how this had helped them build relationships and form bonds. It would support relationships with further opportunities for engagement at the beginning and end of sessions, either in playrooms or in the garden.

Each child had a personal plan in place. Plans contained information that supported staff to care for children. Parents were involved in creating the plans alongside staff and this supported transition to the service and changes in children's lives. Where children needed additional support to meet their needs, strategies had been identified and implemented. Plans should contain more information with strategies to support all children to progress and develop.

There were policies and procedures in place for the safe storage and administration of medication. There were additional forms in relation to staff judgement which should be discontinued.

Staff had attended child protection training annually as part of their core learning and development. Staff told us they had completed training and been assessed on this. Quizzes were used to assess the impact of training to ensure people were skilled at keeping children safe. Records of concern forms in rooms for staff to complete were available and clear guidance of who to contact and what to do was displayed throughout the building.

The lunchtime experience for children was a relaxed and sociable experience. Children 3-5 years chose to have lunch outdoors, where it was service at bench style tables and children could self-serve and pour their own drinks. Staff sat with children throughout their meal, engaging them in conversation, sharing a meal with them and supporting children with serving food, pouring drinks and being helpers. Younger children were supported to feed themselves independently, where appropriate. Older children had opportunity to develop independence through self-serving. We saw a positive, engaging lunch experience for children. Children were engaged in conversation, and staff encouraged counting, rhyming, talking and listening. Children knew the routine well and identified themselves when everyone should start. The children were also encouraged to have good manners, be kind and share with their peers.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children were having fun and were engaged in their play and learning, both indoors and outdoors. They could freely access the outdoor space and this is where the majority of children chose to play. Children were independent in their play and learning and signed themselves in and out of the room. The play spaces were

well structured with covered areas outdoors, loose parts indoors and outdoors, a fire pit area, and space for children to play on bikes and scooters. The bikes were particularly popular and children were using gross motor skills, learning balance and coordination. There was access to literacy and maths across the areas, enhancing the children's learning experience.

In the garden there was also a designated space for younger children. The space for younger children could be further extended to maximise the outdoor space for younger children. Children experienced a balance of planned and spontaneous learning experiences throughout the session, and they had lots of opportunities to lead their own play. Children enjoyed stories and singing round the fire pit; the children were well versed in the safety rules with having an open fire and they found the experience exciting, they engaged well and also enjoyed cooking food on the fire. The children enjoyed adult-led play opportunities that offered challenge. They were eager to learn new skills and take forward ideas. Staff were skilled at engaging with children and extending their play and learning.

Each child had a learning journal online, shared through the 'family app'. The learning journal observations were shared with parents supporting families to be involved in their child's life at the service. There were opportunities for home links to extend children's play and learning. Observations of children's learning were focused and reflective of individual children's needs. Planning was based on children's needs and interests; the children's voice was threaded through planning, the thinking tree allowed children to share ideas and thoughts, floor books showed engagement, and progression in learning and the wow wall celebrated children's successes.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2: Children have access to high quality facilities.

Children were cared for in a bright, clean and welcoming environment. Spaces children accessed were well maintained with good ventilation. There was direct access from the main 2-5 playroom to a large, enclosed garden. The deck area was covered with tables available for lunch or access to maths resources and crafts.

Playrooms included a cosy baby room and a small, cosy room accessed by children 2-3 which was off the main 2-5 playroom. This created zones and areas to allow children the opportunity to play with age appropriate toys and resources, playrooms were adaptable to meet the needs of children. They also had a sensory room with a relaxing ambience to allow small groups to play and rest in this space. Playrooms had a range of interesting resources to spark curiosity, and there were lots of sensory and exploratory play opportunities, soft music and calming smells set a relaxing tone for play spaces. Children mostly chose to play outdoors in the large garden. A covered area allowed children to eat lunch outdoors and the environments took account of children's ages and stages of development. The baby room walls could be more interesting with displays or photographs; this will help create a cosier, more personalised environment. Resources were stage appropriate and easily accessible by children, which supported their independence and ability to lead their own play.

The outdoor space was well used daily by children. Lots of opportunities for open-ended play with loose parts engaged children. Children also enjoyed the bikes and scooters. There was a space designated for a fire pit. The fire was lit by staff and staff and children sat on small logs round this to sing songs. Staff were

trained in providing fires safely. Children were well supported by staff during this experience to be safe and follow the rules. Where children were not sure of the fire area, staff should spend time one-to-one with them getting used to the space.

The changing space for the baby room was based within the room. To minimise the spread of infection, the area should be enclosed fully. This will ensure there is a designated space away from where children were playing and eating meals. The service were in the process of changing radiator covers to mesh covers from wooden enclosed covers. This will allow them to maximise the warmth from the central heating system.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant aspects of strength and how these supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well.

There was a clear vision of values and aims for the service, based on an ethos of developing and improving the service. The management team engaged well with the inspection process. Staff told us they found the management to be approachable and supportive. We saw a range of ways that they had put in place measures to support and upskill the staff team. Some of the workforce were completing practice-based qualifications and there was a clear plan in place to ensure apprentices had access to resources to support their training and development. This included good role modelling from the staff team.

The service understood the value of parents, children and staff input in self-evaluation. When parents' views and opinions were sought, the service fed back to help parents to understand the impact of their suggestions and ideas. Children's voices were heard through planning, thinking tree and wow moments. Children were able to express their thoughts and ideas and took part in discussions regarding their rights. An improvement plan was in place which identified areas for development within the service. We could see progress of some aspects including the development of numeracy resources outdoors, welcome packs for new staff and QR codes to support children and adults digital literacy. This was impacting on the quality of experience for families using the service.

A quality assurance calendar was in place which supported management and staff to monitor and audit aspects of the service including medication, accidents, planning and environments. This meant that there was key times that management audited the service.

Opportunities for one-to-one meetings between management and staff gave staff the opportunity to reflect on their practice, identify goals and training needs as well as assess the service and identify areas for improvements.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment.

The service had enough staff across the playrooms to meet the needs of children. They were well supported by the management team and the depute worked closely with the team on the floor to deploy staff where needed throughout the day. This meant that most staff worked across all age ranges of children where needed. Staff worked a four-day week and this meant continuity for children at the beginning and end of days.

Staff worked well together as a team. They communicated well when leaving areas and used telephone communication between rooms when they required support. Staff used a head count system to support their vigilance of children when moving between indoors and outdoors. Older children had responsibility for this too, using their own photographs. This supported children to be safe.

Professional development was encouraged within the service and staff had attended a variety of training including child protection, creating rich environments, and numeracy and literacy. We could see the impact of training within the service. Good role modelling was supporting apprentices within rooms and they had plans in place for further recruitment to ease the burden on staff. This will support the balance of qualified and unqualified staff. There were systems for staff to evaluate their learning in relation to their own development and practice. Visual ways to learn, through videos and using standard operating procedures and quizzes for staff to learn, meant that staff were well supported to develop as practitioners.

Staff were recruited safely and recruitment procedures were in line with best practice guidance. Staff were valued as part of the team. There was a clear emphasis on retention of staff. Incentives for staff as part of their package was to boost morale and support staff to feel valued. There had been some changes to the staff team due to turnover of staff. Parents commented that they would like to see the staff turnover settle down to support continuity for children.

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

Management and staff should review infection prevention processes in the under 3 age group to ensure that procedures comply with current guidance with regard to, "Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings".

This is to ensure the environment is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states:

- 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).
- experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources"(HSCS 4.27).

This area for improvement was made on 17 February 2020.

Action taken since then

Handwashing sinks had been installed within playrooms. We saw good handwashing practice across the service.

Therefore, 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	5 - Very 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?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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