

Westerton Nursery Day Care of Children

Westerton Nursery
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Telephone: 07779005107

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 April 2025

Service provided by:
Westerton Nursery Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2023000351

Service no:
CS2024000049

About the service

Westerton Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 24 children aged from 3 to 5 years. The nursery is in partnership with East Dunbartonshire Council, to provide funded early learning and childcare placements.

Westerton Nursery operates from the Westerton Lesser Halls in the Bearsden area of East Dunbartonshire. The accommodation has a secured entrance, two playrooms, toilet facilities and office/kitchen. There is an outdoor garden and play area for children. The children also have the use of the large hall within the community building. The service is close to shops, schools, transport links and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 17 March - 2 April 2025. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. 23 children were in attendance during both days of inspection.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about the service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the service registered as a new service in February 2024.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with visiting professionals.
- Gathered feedback from ten families through online questionnaires.
- Gathered views from 5 children.
- Spoke with staff and management.
- Observed daily practice.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled, and confident in the setting.
- Staff promoted a positive team ethos and were respectful in their interactions with each other, families, and the children in their care.
- Children were supported by a team that were patient, kind and compassionate.
- Daily opportunities for playing outdoors supported children's physical development.
- The service had developed and maintained strong relationships with the local community.

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?	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?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator - 1.1 - Nurturing care & support.

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children experienced warm, nurturing, and caring approaches from staff, which supported their wellbeing. Children were respected and valued which resulted in trusting relationships. We observed staff kindly responding to children's needs and wishes, sitting at children's level, engaging in conversations and showing an interest in children's ideas. This showed us that staff valued time with children and that attachments and relationships in the nursery were strong.

Mealtimes were sociable, unhurried and relaxed. We observed that children were familiar with the lunch time routine. Staff supported children's independence during mealtimes whilst providing support to children where required. For example, children chose their own bowls and spoons, independently served their own food, and cleared away their dishes. Children were provided with nutritious meals and snacks. We identified that hand washing routines were not always completed. Staff should continue to role model handwashing practices. Fresh water was available in the playroom throughout the day for children to remain hydrated.

We discussed that there were some missed opportunities for meaningful engagements between staff and children during mealtimes. Staff should continue to develop the lunch time experience and consider sitting with children. This would create a relaxed and homely atmosphere that nurtured and encouraged friendly social interactions. This would develop conversations, to support children's communication and language skills.

Staff knew the children in their care well. This was evident in the information within their personal plans. For example, likes, dislikes, thoughts and ideas, which captured children's voices and their rights. Staff should continuously update plans to include next steps.

Staff worked well with external professionals. For example, working with the Enhanced Learning Resource (ELR) team. The ELR team worked closely with staff and parents to develop strategies and resources to support and extend children's learning.

All staff had completed child protection as part of their mandatory training. Plans were in place to review this training when needed. We suggested that contingency plans are reviewed in the event that the child protection officers are unavailable. The management team should ensure staff are aware of safeguarding roles and responsibilities in order to keep children safe from potential harm.

We sampled medication records and found these were in line with current best practice guidance and medication policies were being followed. This supported a safe environment to meet children's health and wellbeing needs.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children used the indoor and outdoor area throughout the day, which provided a range of resources and a variety of interesting activities. We observed children indoors, who were confident accessing a range of resources available to them. Staff supported children to extend their learning with sensitive interactions and effective questioning. For example, creatively using materials to build pictures by investigating and exploring art outdoors with leaves, sticks and flower petals. One staff member shared 'It could be whatever you would like it to be'. This resulted in children using their imagination, whilst learning about the world around them, as well as developing children's thinking skills. Staff were on hand to respond to children's invitations to play, which showed staff valued children's learning and their role in extending this.

Children experienced meaningful play opportunities to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, we observed children using various coloured pom poms to organise and sort into categories and sizes. Children were using mathematical language, whilst developing an interest in numbers. Children confidently moved around all the play spaces available indoors which provided them with a variety of experiences from water play, storytelling, playdough, role play, and arts and crafts. One child told us 'I'm making a powerful storm with my picture'. Staff were responsive to children's ideas and helped to support learning by adding new resources. One parent shared 'They do so many interesting activities and my child loves going to nursery'.

We saw examples of risky play in the outdoor environment. 'I am making a ladder' one child shared with us, as they stacked crates together. This showed that children were developing a range of skills, including problem solving and innovation to build their structures. Staff acknowledged and praised children's achievements, which encouraged children to feel valued and develop confidence.

Access to the local community enhanced positive outcomes for children, as it helped develop their sense of belonging and confidence. The nursery had an atmosphere of being connected to the community, with pictures of community events that children participated in on display. Parents and grandparents also attended 'stay and play sessions'.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive. We asked the service to ensure they offer a balance of responsive and intentional planning approaches, to extend children's learning and development. Staff celebrated achievements using an online platform, where parents could review their child's learning. Although detailed, many observations were missing next steps. We asked the setting to consider how they are tracking children's learning and development through recorded observations, as well as providing individual next steps. One parent shared that they would like to see 'More detailed feedback about progression and a wider variety of observations'. This would support children to make progress in their learning to achieve their milestones.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children used the indoor and outdoor area well which meant children could easily access a range of activities and resources.

The setting indoors was comfortably furnished and welcoming for children. The room had natural light and was ventilated with open windows. The indoor area consisted of one large, and one smaller room. A more relaxed space was created in the smaller of the two rooms, under a small den with soft furnishings. Children were seen reading books, relaxing, and chatting together. This enabled children to relax in a comfortable space away from the main room, which allowed children to spend time alone.

Although there was no direct access to the outdoor area from the playroom, staff had a system in place, to ensure safe and easy access for children through the use of walkie talkies. Resources in the outdoor area had been developed to provide a variety of play and learning experiences. Children were enjoying climbing, running, playing football. The outdoor area was well used, and children engaged and extended their play for prolonged periods of time. Natural, open-ended materials were available to stimulate children's curiosities and extend their play. We sampled floor book evidence that highlighted how staff had worked hard to enhance the outdoor area. This supported children's learning and development and offered a range of interesting activities. One parent told us that 'There is a great garden set up, children go out daily'.

Risk assessments were in place for both indoor and outdoor areas which promoted keeping children safe from potential harm. We saw that keeping children safe was a priority within the improvement plan. We suggested that the service review risk assessment dates, to ensure children's health and safety needs are more frequently supported.

Staff and children were aware of the care inspectorate's SIMOA (Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) campaign, to promote children's safety within the service and local community. This was a priority identified in the improvement plan, which we observed within the service through posters on doors, SIMOA home bag and wall display which shared that these safety messages were important. We saw staff were security conscious as they ensured they accounted for children throughout the day. This helped keep children safe.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The service's aim was to 'Provide high quality early learning and childcare to our families'. There was a shared vision of welcoming families, being inclusive and providing children with opportunities to have fun, grow, learn and develop. This included values of promoting respect, and fostering a community where every child feels valued and supported.

We could see that children and families participated in the life of the service. This was evident within the improvement plan priority of family engagement, where families attended stay and play sessions, community outings and service celebrations.

An improvement plan was in place which was in the process of being reviewed. Plans were being developed with a focus on parental engagement, community connections and improvements to the outdoor area. Continuous reflections on the progress of the improvement plan would ensure outcomes were measured clearly, and the impact of changes to support children's learning and development would be identified.

A culture of staff being valued and respected was evident in the positive relationships the manager had developed within the staff team. We found that the manager and depute engaged well during the inspection process, and demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement. This resulted in a positive working environment where staff felt confident to initiate well-informed changes. For example, staff had reviewed the outdoor area to offer further opportunities for children to play and learn.

Some quality assurance processes were in place to support improvement. For example, audits of the environment were undertaken, to ensure equipment and resources were well maintained and children experienced high quality spaces.

We observed staff in practice, who through their skilful interactions with children have an understanding of child development, which has been further supported through online training such as trauma informed practice. A development timetable was created to support staff to get weekly protected time, to reflect on children's observations, update wall displays and complete training. This allowed staff to review and monitor the impact of training and delivery of the service, as well as have time to reflect on children's learning and development.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment.

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.

Staffing arrangements promoted continuity of care across the day. The staff worked very well together as a team during periods of transition. For example, staff lunches were planned to minimise the impact on children, where staff communicated well together. We observed staff being responsive to children's needs and although area based, they were aware of where children needed them most. This flexible approach meant that children received the best support possible throughout their day.

Staff were motivated and worked well together as a team and used their different skills and knowledge to complement one another, which resulted in quality interactions with children. One parent shared that there are 'Friendly and well-trained staff, involved management and regular community involvement'. This told us that parents valued staff's knowledge and skills.

Staff communicated effectively and with each other throughout the inspection. They were respectful in their engagement with each other and supported a positive culture within the service. Walkie talkies were used effectively which meant children could move between the areas more freely i.e. staff asked for support in an area or to support children's toileting needs. This meant that children's play was disturbed less as staff managed areas well.

All families who completed our online survey were very positive in their feedback of staff and comments included, 'I think that the staff are all amazing. They have a genuine interest and care for the children'. and 'The staff are what make this such a great nursery'.

Staff engaged in professional discussion and one to one meetings with a member of management. This supported continuous professional development and enabled staff to discuss their ongoing training and development needs. Staff shared that this made them feel valued.

Staff were safely recruited through the organisation following best practice guidance 'Safer recruitment through better recruitment' as all safer recruitment checks were undertaken prior to staff starting in the service. Staff were registered with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), and newly appointed staff were supported as part of their induction. This supported the safety of children, families, and staff. We directed the manager to the 'Early Learning and Childcare- National Induction Resource', to support best practice.

Training and learning opportunities had been achieved through online courses and in service training. Staff were enthusiastic about their role and spoke positively about their work. They valued the positive relationships that had developed within their team and felt well supported in their work. Staff worked well together to create a positive and welcoming environment for children. They were kind, caring and nurturing in their interactions with the children. Staff spoke positively about working at Westerton Nursery and told us they felt supported, listened to and able to share their ideas with colleagues and the manager/ depute.

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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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