

The Glasgow Academy - Newlands Nursery Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 September 2022

Service provided by:
Glasgow Academics War Memorial
Trust

Service provider number:
SP2003003598

Service no:
CS2005101325

About the service

The Glasgow Academy – Newlands Nursery is one of several services operated by Glasgow Academicals War Memorial Trust in partnership with Glasgow City Council. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 75 children at any one time of whom: no more than 51 children are aged three years to those not attending primary school, all year round; no more than 24 children are attending primary school, school terms only. The nursery offers full and part day, early learning and childcare either term time or throughout the year. A before and after school care service also operates from the converted former bowling club premises. Designated nursery and kindergarten playrooms for children in each of the age groups were available. A large secure outdoor area offered children daily opportunities for outdoor play and learning. The service is close to transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 7 September 2022. 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 throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with some of the children using the service and reviewed survey responses from 16 parents whose children attend the service.
- Spoke with the service provider, manager and staff. We also reviewed survey responses from seven staff.
- Observed practice and staff interactions with children.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together and had created a welcoming, inclusive environment.
- Positive working relationships between the manager team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children.
- The staff routinely engaged in a range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice.
- Children experienced interesting and motivating play and learning opportunities within creative outdoor spaces.
- Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.
- The manager's leadership approach had helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care.
- We identified an example of sector leading practice from which other early learning and childcare services could 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?	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
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?

6 - Excellent

We made an evaluation of excellent for this key question as we found innovative, effective practice and very high-quality performance across a range of the nursery's activities from which other services could learn. We were confident that this level of performance was sustainable and that it will be maintained.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

We looked at how the service's planning approaches for children's care, learning and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together and had created a welcoming, inclusive environment. Their sound knowledge of child development, GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) and the well-being indicators resulted in children's individual needs being met. We observed staff being responsive to children's changeable interests and demands. Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.

Staff worked closely with families, involving them in decisions about their child's care and development. This enabled the relevant staff to respond quickly, sensitively and compassionately to changes in a child's life. Staff were highly skilled in using the information in children's personal plans to meet their needs. Personal plans and learning story journals using the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) wellbeing indicators and the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence were regularly reviewed and included targets for achievement and next steps. Staff told us how they worked with parents to ensure children's personal plans included the key information needed to provide appropriate care, meet any medical needs and support the individual styles of learning and play interests. One parent commented: "The staff are exceptional, knowledgeable and take the time to learn about your child. They go above and beyond what I expected. Every day when I pick up my son, his usual comment is "mummy I had a lovely day". Another parent told us: "The care, play and learning is amazing. The children are all treated as individuals and get lots of time to explore their age limits and have access to first class learning opportunities. Newlands is the perfect environment for my four-year-old."

Staff were clear about their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children. They had completed refresher training in child protection and were confident about recognising and reporting any concerns they had.

1.3 Play and learning

We found that staff promoted a culture within the service that focussed on promoting the children's right to play, have fun and experience challenge. Staff told us they worked hard to provide a rich variety of high quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice, children's interests, as well as tracking and reflecting on individual achievements. Through discussion with staff it was evident they shared a clear understanding of the resulting impact of this approach on the breadth and depth of children's learning.

Staff had high aspirations to enable children to be successful. Children's voice was highly valued, and they were empowered to lead their own play and learning. As a result, children were confident, happy and motivated to learn. Highly effective questioning provided an abundance of opportunities for children's thinking, widening their skills and consolidated their learning through play experiences. This supported children to achieve their potential. A range of strategies and regular opportunities through structured activities and programmes supported children to flourish and achieve.

This significantly contributed to the inclusive ethos of the service. One parent commented: "We have been so pleased with the variety and ingenuity of the types of activities the staff are doing with my child and the other kids in nursery. He loves doing the fitness or exercise classes. He comes home full of stories of everything he's been doing, and he's building in confidence every day."

At the time of the inspection, the nursery was working in an international partnership with Nehru World School to develop an innovative research based early years curricular programme in Noida, India. Noida is a satellite city of Delhi and is a part of the National Capital Region (NCR) of India. The aim is to marry high-quality early years education alongside extended care for up to 250 Indian children. The forest kindergarten coordinator had been targeted to play a key role in development of the outdoor play curriculum which was being adapted from the highly successful forest kindergarten programme he had introduced across the provider's Glasgow services. This work had the potential to support wellbeing and promote positive outcomes for children across international boundaries. It represents sector leading practice from which other early learning and childcare services could learn.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We made an evaluation of very good for this key question as we found performance that demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require significant adjustment.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The service made very good use of available resources to create a motivating environment for children to play together. Play spaces included a range of open-ended and natural resources to stimulate children's creativity and problem solving. Staff ensured spaces were set up in ways that were adaptable and had potential to encourage children's sustained thinking. Wall displays contributed to a stimulating environment that celebrated children's creativity and achievements.

In the playrooms and outdoors there were plenty of well-considered open ended materials and creative approaches that successfully engaged children's imagination and enriched their play and learning. Children used these resources to extend and develop play in line with their self-chosen plans.

We found that children had regular daily access to outdoor play as well as opportunities to experience a well considered programme of forest kindergarten activities. Parents told us: "There is brilliant use of outdoor space and wonderful mix of pedagogy and free play" and "The facilities are fantastic with a huge outdoor space which is continually being improved". Another parent particularly liked "the teachers, the outside area, the play based learning, the sports, the learning opportunities for the children." We highlighted and staff agreed that regular planned outdoor play opportunities within parks or woodland spaces beyond the setting would further increase opportunities for children to experience fresh air and enjoy challenging play. The senior management team agreed to make this a focus of future improvement and professional development planning.

We found that staff shared their reflections on how setting up and monitoring of each play area can lead to challenging and engaging play opportunities for children. This helped to ensure that all play environments offered excitement, were richly resourced and appeared attractive to children.

How good is our leadership?

6 - Excellent

We made an evaluation of excellent for this key question as we identified outstanding levels of performance across a range of the nursery's quality assurance and improvement activities.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Positive working relationships between the manager, team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children. Staff told us how the manager provided a clear focus for their shared team work including setting out clear responsibilities and expectations. One member of staff told us "the manager was an excellent communicator that strived to create and uphold a very happy, inclusive working environment". Another staff member commented: "our manager continues to recognise the individual qualities, strengths and interests of each member of staff and will support them in sourcing CPD opportunities to further develop their professional interest and enable improvements in their planning." We found that the manager's leadership approach had helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care. It had contributed to children's emotional health and wellbeing by ensuring the care they experienced was delivered by familiar key adults who were perceived as consistent, reliable, trustworthy, and responsive to their needs.

The staff team worked together very effectively to evaluate and reflect on their practice. They were keen to take forward current ideas, develop and implement best practice guidance. We found that staff were highly motivated, very well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children. This resulted in children experiencing high quality interactions and a broad range of stimulating play experiences centred around their emerging interests.

The 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. Staff were becoming familiar with the Care Inspectorate 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' (Care Inspectorate, 2022). The manager highlighted how this tool had been used to support staff and children's contributions to the development of an improvement plan that clearly set out the service priorities and targets for change. One parent commented: "Newlands is first class and there is very little in the way of negative comments if at all I could leave. It's fantastic."

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

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

4.3 Staff Deployment

Effective staff deployment across the service meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff, consistently throughout 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 at the right time. Children who required additional support were well supported by staff to feel respected and included in daily experiences. This was enhanced through effective working relationships with families.

A robust induction process supported newly appointed staff to meet children's needs. The induction programme helped new staff to settle into their role and become part of the staff team. As a result, they were clear about their roles and responsibilities which supported children's experiences.

One member of staff told us: "The team is currently made up of long established professionals and younger practitioners. This combination creates a varied team with different strengths and interests which in turn helps form a respecting, reflecting and energetic workforce."

The staff routinely engaged in a range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice. We found staff were confident in discussing how they had improved their practice as a result of their own professional learning activities. We found that this learning had a positive impact on the quality of experiences for children, their progress and wider improvements in the setting.

All staff felt very well supported as they had opportunities to talk about their work through team meetings, 1:1 supervision discussions and monitoring of their practice. The manager had created conditions where all staff felt confident to initiate informed change and share responsibility for the process. Staff were able to implement their ideas as they were listened to and felt their contributions were valued. This resulted in a staff team who were involved in the improvement journey of the service and worked well together to ensure outcomes for children were of very high quality.

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?	6 - Excellent
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
1.3 Play and learning	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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