Beech House Nursery
Day Care of Children
34 Balnagask Road
Torry
Aberdeen
AB11 8HR
Telephone: 01224 871411

Inspected by: Doreen Watson
Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 6 January 2012
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Service provided by:
Childcare (Scotland) Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003000726

Care service number:
CS2003053780

Contact details for the inspector who inspected this service:
Doreen Watson
Telephone  01224 793870
Email  enquiries@scswis.com
Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Care and Support</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Environment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Staffing</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Management and Leadership</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</table>

What the service does well
The manager and staff make children and their families feel very welcome. Staff are caring when working with children. They listen to children’s ideas and plan a range of activities which children enjoy.

What the service could do better
In the pre-school room staff need to find better ways of helping the children when they get a little too noisy. Children need to be given more responsibility at snack and meal times.

The nursery policy for medication and bottle feeding need to be updated.

The manager needs to further develop the ways in which staff practice is measured.

What the service has done since the last inspection
The manager and staff were continuing to develop their approach to recording children’s achievements. They had made some progress with this, and had introduced new profiles. These are folders where children’s work was stored. They were looking to improve this further to ensure staff could more easily record children’s achievements.
Conclusion
The manager and staff were working well together to encourage a warm caring environment where children could develop and learn. They recognised the need to further develop their approach to recording achievements to ensure children’s continued progress.

Parents and children we spoke to were very happy with the nursery.

Who did this inspection
Doreen Watson
1 About the service we inspected

Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS), known as the Care Inspectorate, regulates care services in Scotland. It awards grades for services based on the findings of inspections. These grades, including any that services were awarded by the Care Commission, are available on www.scswis.com.

Before 1 April 2011 this service was registered with the Care Commission. On this date the new scrutiny body, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS), took over the work of the Care Commission, including the registration of care services. This means that from 1 April 2011 this service continued its registration under the new body, SCSWIS.

The aims of the service are:
“To provide an attractive and appropriately structured environment that is conducive to providing every child with love, security, leadership, new experiences, stimulation, praise and recognition.”

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support – Grade 4 – Good
Quality of Environment – N/A
Quality of Staffing – Grade 4 – Good
Quality of Management and Leadership – N/A

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.scswis.com or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.
2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out
In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection
This report was written following an unannounced inspection which took place on 6 January 2012 between 8.30am and 6.00pm. Feedback was given to the manager following the inspection.

Before the Inspection

The Annual Return:
The service submitted a completed Annual Return as requested by SCSWIS.

The Self Assessment Form:
The service submitted a self assessment form as requested by SCSWIS.

Views of service users:
The service issued 20 service user questionnaires on behalf of SCSWIS, of which 16 were returned to SCSWIS prior to inspection.

During the inspection the inspector spoke with:
The manager
Nursery team
Children
Parents.

During the inspection, evidence was gathered from a number of sources including:
Previous inspection report
Annual Return
Self assessment
Aims
Assessment record keeping and reporting
Planning
Children’s records
Children’s evaluations
Complaints procedure
Displays/photographs
Staff appraisals
Staff training records
Staff qualifications
Risk assessments
Parent and staff interaction policy
Child protection policy
Equal opportunities policy
Snack and meal times policy
Information leaflet
Health and safety policy
Quality assurance
Development plan and audit
Newsletter
Medication policy and records
Accident records.

**Grading the service against quality themes and statements**

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call ‘quality themes’. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is ‘Quality of care and support’. Under each quality theme are ‘quality statements’ which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

**Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)**

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

**Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services’ responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org
What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

There were three recommendations made in relation to the previous inspection:

1. Staff and management should develop a consistent approach when dealing with children and extending learning.

The manager was working with staff in relation to this Recommendation. There had been some progress; however, as highlighted within the report, more attention was needed to the ongoing evaluation of staff practice. This recommendation has therefore been replaced with Recommendation 1 in Quality Theme 3 Statement 3

2. In order to provide children with a more positive dining experience, the provider should:
   * Review the timing of children sitting down in relation to food reaching the room.
   * More opportunities for staff to sit with the children during lunch.
   * Review the seating plan for children to help with the noise and disruption.
   * The removal of table cloths used for craft activities.
   * Staff to ensure that alternative foods are available for those children that do not like what is on offer.

The manager with staff had developed the dining experience for children: alternatives were available for those children who did not like what was on offer, craft tablecloths were no longer in use, meals were timed appropriately, and staff were encouraged to sit with the children. Overall this recommendation was met; however, the issue in relation to noise levels was still present throughout the day, not just at meal times, therefore this has been addressed within Quality Theme 3 Statement 3.

3. The provider should review the door entry procedure.

There were no issues in relation to the door entry system during the inspection. This Recommendation was met.

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an ‘annual return’ form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic
Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate. The management team had completed a very detailed self assessment prior to the inspection. This contained relevant information for the quality themes associated with the inspection. The overall assessment was representative of the findings on the day of the inspection.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

Children present during the course of the inspection appeared happy and secure in the setting. As it was the holidays, children were cared for across three rooms, ranging in age from a year to five.

Children were enjoying spending time outdoors, and shared some of their activities with the inspector. Three children took the inspector on a tour of their garden. This included playing in and out of the trees, and encouraging the inspector to slide down the hill and climb on the lower branches of the trees.

"Watch this, it's a slide."

"We hop in here, you go on the back, it's a motorbike, we're going to the sweetie shop."

"I've found a hoopy doopy (hula hoop)."

"I've got a duck in my bucket, I found it over there."

"We're digging for snails in the mud."

When asked if they enjoyed playing in the garden, the children told us they did. One four year old child when asked how much she enjoyed the garden stated: "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9!"

Children also chatted about their coats and bags and the weather.

"I've got a pink jacket - I've got a Peppa bag. I'm going to the 3-5 room now."

"It's very windy. I've got a Batman bag, it's a new one."

"It was very windy last night- C-o-o-l-d!"

The youngest children were very busy during the morning. They enjoyed playing with a range of different toys and had snack. One young child let the inspector know he
needed his lace tied, and returned to show off his newly tied shoe and take part in a
game of throw and catch.

Children in the Tweenies room were dressing up and practicing their skills with
scissors. One child was very proud of the purple hat he was dressing up in, but he did
allow the inspector to have a short turn.

Taking carers’ views into account

We spoke to three parents during the inspection and telephoned one other. Overall
these parents were very happy with the service provided at the nursery. In particular,
they had appreciated the welcome they received when visiting the nursery and the
atmosphere created within the nursery, which they said was “homely”. Parents also
told us they found the staff and, in particular, the manager approachable, and they
would have no hesitation raising any concerns with them should the need arise.

Additional comments included:

“My child has been coming for a year now; I found he settled in quite well, he was
taken into the group with the other children and teachers. He did cry a little at first
but he didn’t have much problems, and now goes in no bother. He asks to come to
nursery, he’s quite happy.”

“In all honesty I’ve had no issues, she’s been coming since she was nine months old.
Staff were good when she was weaning, they encouraged her to be independent and
ensures she eats all sorts of food. I would recommend the nursery, in fact I have done
and my friend now uses it.”

“Staff are really approachable, basically I’ve had no problems. I looked round a few
nurseries before this one and I was nearly in tears. When I came here it was
everything I thought a nursery should be, the staff, the look of it, I was so happy.”

Parents who responded to the Care Standards Questionnaires were overall happy with
the service. Comments included the following:

“The nursery provides a supportive learning environment. They have a flexible
approach to childcare which gives many working parents better options. The staff are
friendly toward parents and children.”

“It’s a great nursery with very good staff and the manager.”

“I am very happy about the quality of care and education my child receives. I find all
the staff supportive, I feel that they know my child well. I think the manager ensures
that the environment is nurturing, happy and open to parental suggestions.”
“My child has been at the nursery for almost two years, and I have never once had any issues or concerns about my child whilst in their care.”

“Both my children have attended Beech House for the last seven years. Very happy with staff.”

“Both of my children enjoy going to nursery, and always experience a whole range of activities from day to day. The staff are always friendly and helpful, and have a good relationship with the children.”

Within the questionnaires, parents highlighted that they did not all know about every aspect of their child’s care. This included how the service assessed children, encouraged positive behaviour, sought children’s views, and their engagement in the wider community. The manger, with staff, should look to develop ways of sharing this information with parents.

One questionnaire highlighted that they felt staff were not always welcoming in the morning, and that they believed that sometimes there were too many children to staff in one room. It is the practice first thing in the morning to care for the youngest children in one group, until such time as the numbers increase and the children split into their own rooms. There was no evidence on the day of the inspection that staff to child ratios were not being met, but the manager was advised of this concern to enable her to provide reassurance to parents as to this practice.
3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support
Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service strengths
Parents told us that they could be as involved with the development of the nursery as they wanted to be. They had the opportunity to respond to questionnaires, children’s reports and ongoing evaluations. If they wanted to be more involved they could join the parents’ committee. Details of their representatives were displayed on the notice board, should they wish to contact them directly with their views.

Staff were beginning to develop children’s profiles, to help them plan activities which reflected children’s own ideas and interests. They were using mind maps as another tool to gather children’s views.

Children had also been involved in evaluating the activities informally, and also through completing questionnaires with their parents’ help.

Parents told us that they could speak to staff if they had any concerns, and they were confident they would be listened to. They told us they received feedback on their child’s day. We also saw daily report sheets being completed by staff, to enable parents to be informed and make any comments, should they wish.

When children first arrived in nursery, parents were encouraged to complete “All about me forms” which include details of children’s likes and dislikes, to help staff plan for their interests. They were also asked to complete details of their child’s daily routine to enable staff to incorporate this into the day.

Newsletters and the notice board provided additional opportunities to keep parents informed.

Areas for improvement
The manager and staff should build on the strengths in relation to this statement, and look to further develop participation within the service. More use could be made
of informal opportunities to seek views more routinely across the year, in addition to the regular planned events.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Statement 3**
We ensure that service user’s health and wellbeing needs are met.

**Service strengths**
The nursery had a number of policies to support staff in meeting the children’s health and wellbeing needs. This included policies to prevent infection, and on medication and child protection. There was also evidence available to show that outside agencies had been contacted where appropriate to support children’s development, such as speech and language therapy.

Staff knew their children well, and were kind and caring when working with them. They had developed positive relationships with the children and their families, which enabled them to share information to ensure children’s needs continued to be met. During the inspection we saw a parent talking to staff about their child’s ongoing medical needs. She confirmed that the staff had followed her instructions regarding her child’s care, and that she was very happy with the staff.

Staff within the youngest age group demonstrated their knowledge of supporting children at meal times, and parents confirmed that the staff had helped children when weaning. Staff were also confident in supporting children with milk feeds: they understood the need to store milk safely to minimise risk to children.

An audit of the medication stored in the nursery highlighted that overall there was an appropriate procedure in place. Medications were clearly named, dated and stored safely. Prior written consent was also in place before administering any medication.

Children had also been learning about their health and wellbeing through the activities they took part in. This had included a project on people who help us, where they were visited by a nurse and also police officers. Children had enjoyed trying out the various different pieces of equipment they may see if in the hospital, as well as discussing road safety. Children also took part in tooth brushing and were learning about healthy foods.

Arrangements were in place for children to benefit from sleep, and also access to the outdoors.

During the inspection, children enjoyed baked potatoes and beans for their lunch and
pancakes and fruit for their morning snack. Menus were prepared in advance to enable parents to plan children’s meals accordingly.

Areas for improvement

The children’s learning journeys did not fully reflect children’s participation in activities. A review of the floor books demonstrated a wider range of learning which was happening in the nursery. This positive work should be reflected in the children’s learning journals. In particular, the layout of these documents did not allow staff sufficient space to fully record their observations. Staff were therefore making evaluations with insufficient detail to support their findings. Detailed feedback was provided to the manager in relation to this area. (See Recommendation 1)

During the inspection, children within the youngest age group did not have the same access to the outdoors as the older children, and this should be addressed. Staff needed to plan to ensure children enjoyed outings in their local area as well as playing in the nursery garden. (See Recommendation 2)

The service policy in relation to milk feeds needed to be updated to reflect the current practice in the service, in line with advice from the Food Standards Agency. In particular, times should be added to the policy in relation to unfinished feeds.

A review of the medication records highlighted that although overall practice was appropriate, in some cases parents had stated lunch time as the time for administration of medication, a specific time should be recorded on the medication permission form. Staff should also ensure they have clear details recorded about the specific arrangements for as and when medications. These are medications that are not required every day therefore clear guidance should be completed in relation to children’s possible symptoms. The following document, available within the publications section of our website at www.careinspectorate.com, may be helpful when reviewing and updating medication procedures: Health Guidance, The Management of Medication in Day Care and Childminding Services.

The manager recognised the need to encourage children to be more independent at lunch and snack time. This view was raised by a parent following their child’s induction into primary one. More work was required to ensure staff supported children to gain the confidence and skills to be more self sufficient at meal times. (See Recommendation 3)

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 3
Recommendations

1. The manager, with staff, should develop the use of observation and assessment to more accurately reflect children’s participation and next steps.

   National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 4: Engaging with Children, and Standard 5: Quality of Experience.

2. All children should benefit from regular daily opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, both in the nursery garden and further afield.

   National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.

3. The manager to develop the policy and procedure to encourage children’s independence at meal times.

   National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment - NOT ASSESSED
Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service strengths
Parents told us they found the staff very approachable. They had been involved in giving feedback to the manager about staff performance through the employee of the month award. They also told us that staff photographs helped them to identify individual members of staff should they need to speak to them.

Children had been involved in the evaluation of staff performance through a number of basic questions relating to how staff made them feel, happy or sad, or whether staff made them laugh etc.

Additional information in relation to service user participation is contained within Quality Theme 1 Statement 1.

Areas for improvement
The nursery self assessment highlighted that parents could be involved in identifying the type of person they would want to fill a vacancy. With additional thought this could be developed to give parents a direct role in recruitment.

See Quality Theme 1 Statement 1 for additional information relating to this statement.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of recommendations: 0
Number of requirements: 0

Statement 3
We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service strengths
The manager and staff had established a warm friendly atmosphere where parents and children felt welcomed. Staff demonstrated a willingness to develop their practice and attend training. When speaking with the inspector they demonstrated a reflective approach to their work. They were committed to the aims of the nursery and wanted to do well.
Parents told us that the staff were approachable and they had confidence in them. The children were clearly happy and demonstrated close relationships with staff.

Most staff had or were working toward an appropriate qualification. Staff who had completed SVQ training had their achievements recognised and celebrated. They also had the opportunity to attend a range of different training courses to support their work. These included infection control, child protection, improvement through self evaluation, introduction to infant mental health, and pre-birth to three, among others.

The manager was registered with the Scottish Social Services Council, and was aware of her responsibility to ensure staff all registered at the appropriate time.

Time was set aside for staff to take part in team meetings, where the overall practice of the nursery could be evaluated.

Appropriate areas for development had been highlighted within staff annual appraisals.

Areas for improvement

When we looked at some of the areas for improvement in relation to staff practice, it was clear that issues identified by the inspector had previously been highlighted through the service’s own quality assurance procedures. In order to ensure that any areas highlighted are improved upon and are maintained, access to regular supervision, where an individual’s practice is looked at in more detail, would be helpful.

One example of this was in relation to the noise level within one of the play rooms. Staff were tending to raise their voices to make themselves heard when children got noisy; there are other more effective techniques to get children to listen, which would reduce the noise overall and promote a calmer environment. This issue had been raised through appraisals, but had not been effectively addressed.

The manager also needed to regularly review staff records, planning and assessments etc, and provide written comments to enable staff performance to be measured and improved upon where necessary. As detailed within Quality Theme 1 Statement 3, staff were still getting to grips with the profiles in use in the service, and would benefit form more help in relation to what and how to record effectively to enable them to build on children’s achievements. (See Recommendation 1)

See Quality Theme 1 Statement 3 for more information in relation to staff practice.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 1
Recommendations

1. The manager should develop the systems of evaluation within the nursery to include individual support and supervision for staff.


Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership - NOT ASSESSED
4 Other information

Complaints
There was one upheld complaint made in relation to this service since the previous inspection. This related to the management of accidents, including record keeping and, where appropriate, seeking additional advice. As a result, the Care Inspectorate made one Requirement and one Recommendation. This complaint had just been finalised at the time of the inspection, and the manager has since submitted an action plan to address these issues. The service compliance will be followed up fully at the next inspection; however, the inspector was satisfied that action was being taken by the service at the time of the inspection.

Enforcements
We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

Additional Information

Action Plan
Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in SCWSIS re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).
5 Summary of grades

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<th>Quality of Care and Support - 4 - Good</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement 1</td>
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<td>Statement 3</td>
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<tr>
<th>Quality of Environment - Not Assessed</th>
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<th>Quality of Staffing - 4 - Good</th>
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<tr>
<th>Quality of Management and Leadership - Not Assessed</th>
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6 Inspection and grading history

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<td>26 Jul 2010</td>
<td>Unannounced</td>
<td>Care and support 4 - Good</td>
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<td>Environment 4 - Good</td>
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<td>Staffing 4 - Good</td>
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<td>Management and Leadership 4 - Good</td>
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<td>Management and Leadership 3 - Adequate</td>
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All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.
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Email: enquiries@scswis.com
Web: www.scswis.com