

Care service inspection report

Noah's Ark Day Care

Day Care of Children

Balnageith Road

Forres

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Telephone: 01309 672296

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 12 November 2014



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Service provided by:

Noah's Ark Day Care

Service provider number:

SP2003001946

Care service number:

CS2003008947

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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

Quality of Care and Support	5	Very Good
Quality of Environment	5	Very Good
Quality of Staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership	5	Very Good

What the service does well

The nursery provided a very good day care service to the children and their families.

The nursery staff worked closely with parents and other professionals to meet the needs of the children.

The premises were very welcoming, bright and child friendly and there was a very good range of appropriate resources and equipment to meet the needs of the children attending.

What the service could do better

The manager and staff remain very committed to the service and its on-going development.

Staff should continue to be supported to access relevant training and keep up to date with current best practice.

What the service has done since the last inspection

At the start of the new term there was a change of manager. There was a smooth transition when the new manager took over the post and this has not impacted on the quality of the service provided.

Since the last inspection, there has been an extension added to the side of the building which has created a new quiet room as well as a large walk in cupboard for storage of resources. The new room has provided more space to work with individual children or small groups in a quieter environment.

Conclusion

The nursery continues to offer a service of a very high standard to the children and their families.

The committee, manager and staff were all very proactive in ensuring that they met the needs of all children attending.

The staff were enthusiastic, professional and provided a service where the children could have fun and learn.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Requirements and recommendations

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve, we may make a recommendation or requirement.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement.

- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Public Services Reforms (Scotland) Act 2010 and Regulations or Orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Inspectorate.

The service is registered to provide day care for up to a maximum of 36 children at any one time. The service offers a developmental playgroup for pre-school children with additional needs in addition to day care.

A voluntary committee made up of directors employ a full time manager to take day to day responsibility for the service.

The service is provided from a purpose built premises in the town of Forres. The environment is bright, spacious and well thought out for the needs of the children in their care. The premises comprised of one large playroom, a quiet room, a soft play room, toilet facilities, kitchen and office accommodation. The service also had a large garden to the rear as well as play areas to the side and front of the building.

The aims and objectives of the service included:

- * to provide a safe, secure, caring and stimulating environment where children can grow, learn and acquire skills that will encourage them to become confident, motivated and independent thinkers and learners.

- * to encourage partnership between parents/guardians, community, outside agencies and Noah's Ark.

- * involve respect and work in partnership with parents in their child's pre-school learning and development.
- * respect each child as an individual and maximise their capabilities to allow the child to reach full potential.
- * promote equality of opportunity and encourage positive attitudes to self and others.
- * to provide a day care setting where the ethos is friendly and relaxed, but professional.
- * facilitate training and professional development for all staff.

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

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of Environment - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of Staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

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.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0345 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 7 and 12 November 2014. Feedback was provided at the end of the inspection.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed Annual Return and Self Assessment forms that we asked the provider to complete and submit to us.

We sent Care Standards Questionnaires to the manager to distribute to service users. Ten parents and carers of children attending the service sent us completed questionnaires prior to the inspection.

During this inspection process, we gathered evidence from various sources:

We spoke with:

- children attending the service
- parents and carers
- the manager
- the staff team

We looked at:

- the service's policies and procedures relevant to the Quality Themes and Statements being considered
- individual portfolios / folders for several children
- questionnaires distributed by the service
- information pack provided to parents
- observation of staff practice
- examination of the premises.

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

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 Care Inspectorate received a Self Assessment document from the provider. We were satisfied with the way the provider completed this and with the relevant information included for each heading that we grade services under.

The provider identified what it thought the service did well, some areas for development and any changes it had planned. The provider told us how the people who used the care service had taken part in the self assessment process.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

The children present during the inspection were observed to be very happy and relaxed in the care of the staff. There was a very good selection of equipment and resources available which the children all enjoyed playing with. The children were able to confidently talk about the different activities they liked to take part in. Several of the children enjoyed sharing their learning journey folders with us and talked positively about the photographs of them taking part in various activities.

Taking carers' views into account

Ten Care Standards Questionnaires were completed and returned by parents and carers prior to the inspection. Nine strongly agreed with and one agreed with the statement, 'Overall, I am happy with the quality of care my child receives in this service'. Comments made included:

'After having a poor experience at a different nursery, I can't speak highly enough of Noah's Ark. My child has come on leaps and bounds since attending'.

'All the staff are friendly and welcoming and I feel relaxed leaving my daughter in their care'.

'My husband and I feel that ALL the staff (including recently retired) are exceptional. They are caring and nurturing'.

'There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere at Noah's Ark'.

'We feel our daughter has really benefited from all her experiences. When we have had concerns about our daughter, the staff have acted upon them with understanding and effectiveness'.

'Our daughter is happy going to nursery and we would recommend Noah's Ark to anyone'.

'My son has learning difficulties and the care and attention he receives is outstanding ... he has come along and made such amazing progress since starting here and loves coming ...we couldn't wish for anyone or anywhere different to support my wee boy'.

'My son has been coming here for 2 years and I feel he enjoys his time at Noah's Ark and is well cared for!'

'We all love Noah's Ark and think it definitely offers a fun, educational, safe and happy learning environment'.

'Excellent care and facility with motivated, friendly staff. Great facilities, planning and inclusion. Very happy with Noah's Ark'.

'The nursery staff are always welcoming and very approachable. My child loves attending the group and I am impressed with the large garden area. Even on cold and wet days the children still go outside'.

The parents spoken with during the inspection were also extremely positive about the service, the approachability, friendliness and professionalism of staff and the very high standards of care provided to their children. Several parents of children with additional needs were spoken with. They were of the opinion that their children received very good levels of support. Staff were described as being 'absolutely fantastic', very flexible and very helpful. Parents commented on how resources within the playroom were routinely changed.

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: 5 - Very 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

The children and their families continued to be involved in the on-going assessment and development of the service. During the inspection we collected information from a range of sources and found evidence to support that the manager and staff continued to encourage participation.

The aims and objectives of the service highlighted the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers. There was also a clear parents' participation policy which set out how the service would work with parents and carers and to encourage them to be involved in the life of the centre.

Parents and carers who contacted the service about enrolling their child were provided with a very informative welcome pack. It contained information about the nursery, a copy of the service's aims, details of some of their policies and procedures and contact details for the manager and the staff. Parents and their children were encouraged to visit the nursery prior to starting, see the facilities available and ask any questions they might have about the service provided.

Establishing and maintaining good relationships with all the children and their parents and carers, as well as other professionals, was important to all who worked at the service. During the inspection it was evident that there was a good rapport between the staff and the children. They knew the children they cared for very well and were very caring, nurturing and supportive towards the children. Staff had also established positive relationships with parents and carers. This was evident when parents and carers collected their children. Staff took time to speak to each of the parents and carers to tell them about their child's time at the nursery.

There was opportunity for daily, informal contact between the staff and parents and carers during drop off and collection times. Staff also made use of the telephone and email to maintain contact with parents and carers. The comments contained within completed Care Standards Questionnaires indicated that parents found all the staff and the manager very approachable and easy to talk to. This view was reiterated by the parents and carers we spoke with as part of the inspection. The parents all commented on the friendliness of all the staff and the time they took to tell them about their child's day.

The progress of individual children was recorded in their own learning journey/profile folders. Included in these folders were identified next steps, records of observations, records of children's achievements, photographs and examples of art work. Children were encouraged to look through their folders and include work in them. Their parents and carers were also encouraged to look through their children's folders, add any other achievements and make any comments. The folders were readily accessible to the children in the play room and they could look at them any time and add any of their work. The folders were well laid out and good use was made of colour. During the inspection, several of the children allowed us to look through their folders with them. The children were clearly very proud of their work and enjoyed telling us about the various photographs and what they had been doing in them.

The service completed annual reports for each child. Parents and carers were also invited to attend parents' evenings with staff to discuss their child's progress. These meetings took place twice a year. Parents and carers could also ask for 1 to 1 meetings with staff at any time. The manager explained that they very much operated an open door policy and she and other staff members made themselves available to speak to parents and carers. It was very important to the manager that they maintained such positive and open communication.

The nursery also held review meetings for those children with additional support needs. The child's parents or carers were invited to these meetings along with the other professionals who were involved with the child and their family. The nursery also facilitated MIDAS meetings - Moray Interagency Developmental Assessment Support team.

The service circulated newsletters approximately every 3 weeks to keep parents and carers informed of what was happening at the nursery and any planned activities or events. The newsletter was bright and informative and included photographs of the children taking part in a range of activities. The manager explained that they were also developing their website and were hoping to include more information for parents and carers on this.

The nursery was run by a voluntary board which was made up of a range of people including parents and carers and other interested parties in the local community.

Parents and carers were invited to attend board meetings and there were minutes from these meetings available in the nursery.

There was a bright and welcoming reception area. There were notice boards which provided a range of information about the service, the staff and other relevant information. The nursery displayed weekly planning sheets.

The nursery continued to make use of questionnaires to get feedback from parents and carers. The manager evaluated the findings from these and identified areas for improvement which were then included in the service's improvement plan.

Staff made use of circle time, mind maps, floor books and snack time to get and record the ideas and comments from the children. Staff took into account the preferences of the children when planning activities and encouraged the children to provide feedback informally in order to evaluate activities.

Areas for improvement

The service should continue to build on current very good practice.

The children, their parents and carers should continue to be encouraged to participate in the on-going assessment and improvement of the quality of care and support provided.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 3

We ensure that service users' health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service strengths

We found that the service performance was very good in the areas of this Quality Statement. During the inspection we looked at and considered a range of evidence including:

- examination of children's records
- examination of policies and procedures
- discussion with the staff
- discussion with the manager
- speaking with children
- speaking with parents and carers
- observation of practice
- examination of completed care standards questionnaires

- examination of the premises.

The manager and staff were very committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing needs of all the children were being met. The service had a statement of aims and objectives which reflected their intentions for the service and promoted the children's welfare, emotional wellbeing and development. There was also a range of policies and procedures in place to promote the health and wellbeing of the children using the service.

When a child started at the service, relevant information was recorded in the registration form and individual information sheets to ensure that staff were aware of the children's particular needs and how best to meet them. These forms were completed in conjunction with parents and, where appropriate, other professionals. Where necessary, there were clear health care plans and protocols in place for individual children.

The staffing levels were very good which allowed for children to receive good levels of support and ensure continuity of care. Staff had a very good rapport with the children and there was very good interaction between staff and the children they were caring for. From speaking with staff it was evident that they had a good knowledge and understanding of the children attending and what their individual needs and stages of development were. They were very proactive in meeting the children's needs. Staff were observed to be very nurturing and supportive in their approach, providing encouragement and appropriate praise. Parents spoke very highly of the levels of support their children received.

The service had established very good links with, and received regular visits from other professionals - including the occupational therapist, health visitors, social services, speech and language specialists, physiotherapist, education psychologist and autism specialists - to ensure the children received the support they required. These professionals came in to speak with staff about how to work with children and meet their additional needs. Staff welcomed this input and worked with these professionals to meet the needs of the various children. The service facilitated MIDAS meetings and reviews - Moray Inter-agency Developmental Assessment and Support team.

There were appropriate infection control procedures in place and risk assessments were completed. Daily checks of the premises and the equipment were undertaken by staff prior to the children arriving as well as throughout the session. There were cleaning schedules in place to maintain the cleanliness of the premises. Staff had access to protective clothing, including disposable aprons and gloves, for use as appropriate. The service had copies of best practice guidance in relation to infection control.

There were risk assessments in place in relation to the premises and the equipment which were routinely reviewed and updated. Risk assessments were also completed

prior to any outings or specific activities taking place. The children were encouraged to take part in risk assessments and learn how to keep themselves safe, for example learning about road safety. Recently the nursery had the theme of road safety which coincided with it getting darker earlier. The children had learnt a song about road safety which they sang for us. On the day of the inspection, the service had a fire bowl outside upon which they heated snack. Before the activity took place an appropriate risk assessment was completed. The children were able to tell us what the risks were and how they could keep themselves safe while the activity took place.

There were appropriate toilet facilities for the children attending the service. Children had access to hand washing facilities and staff emphasised to the children the importance of good hygiene practices. Children were encouraged to wash their hands before snacks, and after using the toilet or taking part in messy play either indoors or out.

There were emergency procedures in place. All staff had completed first aid training and there were first aid boxes located at various points in the building. There was a policy and procedure in relation to the storage and administration of medication. There was a system in place to record all accidents and incidents. Parents and carers signed any accident and incident reports and were offered a copy.

There were systems in place to ensure that all staff were aware of the individual health needs, allergies and nutritional needs of the children. Staff had attended food hygiene training and took account of best practice guidance when planning snacks. There was a weekly snack menu on display so parents knew what children were getting. All snacks and drinks provided were healthy. Fresh fruit and/or vegetables were offered as part of snacks on a daily basis, as was milk and water.

There was a large fully enclosed outdoor play area which the service accessed on a daily basis. There was a varied selection of toys and activities for the children to take part in outdoors. When it was not possible to use the outdoor space because of particularly bad weather, the staff encouraged the children to take part in various indoor games and activities which included some physical exercise. The service also had use of a soft play area which was popular with the children.

Areas for improvement

During the inspection we discussed with the staff how they could develop further the learning journey/profile folders for each child and involve the children more in identifying their own next steps. We also discussed the need to encourage greater parental involvement in them.

The service should ensure that they routinely review all their policies and procedures to ensure that they reflect current best practice.

The service should continue to build on current very good practice.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service strengths

We found the service's performance was very good in relation to this Quality Statement.

Previous comments in Quality Theme 1, Statement 1 in relation to communication and participation are also relevant to this Quality Statement.

The children and parents were actively involved when there were any proposed changes to the environment. The manager explained that the parents and carers were kept informed throughout the whole process of getting an extension added to the building. She stated that parents and carers were also actively involved in the development of the outdoor play area and the construction of the challenging balancing course. Other parents have been involved in the on-going maintenance of the building and outdoor play equipment. The manager and staff were very appreciative of the support they received from parents and carers.

Parents were invited to give feedback formally in questionnaires as well as informally when they called in to collect their children. The parents spoken with during the inspection all said that they were very happy with the premises. They considered them to be safe, bright and very welcoming. Parents and carers were very positive about the extension and the extra space it had provided. They appreciated there being a smaller room which offered a quieter space where either individual children or small groups could go to work. Parents also valued the outdoor play area and the improvements which had been made to it.

Areas for improvement

The areas for improvement identified previously in Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 1 are also relevant to this Quality Statement.

The service should continue to develop the outdoor play area and involve the parents and carers, children and local community in this.

The service should continue to build on current very good practice.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 2

We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected.

Service strengths

During the inspection we found that the service's performance in this area was very good. The manager and staff made sure that the environment was safe and service users were protected.

We concluded this after:

- inspection of the premises and outdoor play area
- examination of relevant policies and procedures
- examination of relevant written records
- talking with the children
- speaking with parents and carers
- discussion with the manager
- speaking with staff.

The service was based in a modern purpose built nursery on one level which allowed for easy access for children and adults with mobility problems. The accommodation was very bright and welcoming. There was appropriate ventilation, heating and light. The building was in a very good state of repair and any maintenance issues were dealt with promptly. The manager explained that parents and carers assisted with some of the maintenance jobs. Since the last inspection, there was an extension added to the side of the building which provided the service with extra space and a smaller room for quieter activities for either individual or small groups of children.

The playroom was bright, spacious and stimulating. In the playroom and the communal areas there were lots of bright and colourful displays of the children's work. The furniture was appropriate to the age range of children in attendance in each of the rooms. The layout of the room allowed the children to move around freely. There was a very good range of equipment and play experiences available which challenged and motivated the children. There was a range of sensory toys available for children with additional needs. Resources were displayed attractively and safely. The storage facilities allowed the children to independently select resources where

appropriate. When new resources were being purchased, the children were encouraged to get involved in deciding what to buy.

The service operated a no smoking policy.

The premises were observed as being very clean throughout. There were appropriate cleaning procedures in place. The staff checked the premises throughout the day to ensure that they were satisfactory. Staff had access to infection control best practice guidance. Good hygiene practices were promoted. There were visual prompts on display to encourage the children to follow good hand washing practices. There were nappy changing facilities and staff were aware of the procedure in relation to nappy changing.

The premises were secured during the session and all visitors were required to sign in and out. Risk assessments were routinely undertaken to maintain the safety of the building. Parents who completed and returned Care Standards Questionnaires made positive comments about the safety and security of the premises.

The service had in place appropriate health and safety policies which were accessible to all staff as well as parents and carers. During the inspection we looked at the risk assessments completed by the service. Risk assessments were completed for the building and activities, and were routinely updated. Risk assessments were also completed for any outings. There was an appropriate procedure in place in relation to outings which included parents having to give their consent.

To the rear of the building there was a large, fully enclosed play area which was well used by the different age groups attending the service. There was further space for outdoor play to the side and front of the building. The outdoor area was checked on a regular basis each day prior to being used by the children. The children were supervised at all times whilst outdoors. Since the last inspection work had been done to develop the outdoor play area and introduce more challenging play experiences.

Areas for improvement

The service should maintain current very good practice.

During the inspection we discussed with the manager the on-going development of the outdoor play area.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

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

Service strengths

During the inspection we found that the service's performance in relation to this Quality Statement was very good.

Previous comments in Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 1 and Quality Theme 2, Quality Statement 1 in relation to communication and participation are also relevant to this Quality Statement.

During the inspection it was evident that the manager and staff had established very good working relationships with parents and carers which allowed for open and on-going communication. This was confirmed by comments made by parents we spoke with as part of the inspection. The parents were all of the opinion that the staff were very friendly and approachable and took time speaking to them at the end of the sessions. The staff had also established good relationships with the children. We were able to observe very positive interaction between the staff and children.

As members of the committee, parents could get involved in the assessment and recruitment of staff. Children could also get involved in the recruitment of staff. The manager explained that part of the recruitment process involves the prospective candidates spending some time in the nursery and reading a story to the children. The manager and existing staff observed how the children reacted to the candidate and listened to their comments.

There was an appropriate complaints policy in place which encouraged parents and carers to discuss any concerns or issues with the manager and staff.

Areas for improvement

The areas for improvement identified previously in Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 1 are also relevant to this Quality Statement.

The service should continue to build on current very good practice.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 3

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

Service strengths

During the inspection, we found the service's performance was very good in relation to this Quality Statement.

We concluded this after:

- examination of policies and procedures
- discussion with the staff
- discussion with the manager
- observation of staff interaction with the children
- talking with the children
- discussion with parents and carers.

There was a very welcoming, friendly and relaxed atmosphere within the service. We found all the staff to be very enthusiastic and committed to providing a quality care service for the children. There was low staff turnover which allowed for continuity of care. We were able to observe staff being very caring and nurturing towards the children. They offered the children lots of praise and encouragement. They supported the children's learning and development. The parents spoken with during the inspection described staff as being very professional, caring and approachable. They were of the opinion that staff had the strengths and skills to meet the varied needs of the children attending, especially the children with additional support needs.

During the inspection we spoke with several of the staff. They were all very positive about working at the nursery and they greatly enjoyed working with the children. Staff were positive about the new manager. They were of the opinion that the manager encouraged them to be involved in the on-going development of the service and that she listened to their comments and suggestions. Staff confirmed that they were involved in the drawing up and the on-going review of the service's development plan.

The service had in place appropriate policies and procedures including recruitment, whistle-blowing, confidentiality and child protection. The service had a policy and procedure to ensure that staff were recruited and inducted in a safe and robust manner, and service users were protected. All new staff completed a period of

induction. As part of the induction, staff were required to familiarise themselves with the service's policies and procedures as well as attend mandatory training such as child protection, health and safety, fire safety and first aid.

There was a staff training and development policy and the service was committed to providing training opportunities for all staff. Staff attended individual annual appraisals. During these meetings, training was discussed and any training and development needs identified. Training was also discussed during the regular full team meetings. Staff could attend relevant courses to ensure that they are appropriately trained to meet the needs of the children attending. Staff were able to access training provided by Moray Childcare Partnership and other external providers. Staff had attended a range of training including autism, epilepsy, diabetes, Curriculum for Excellence, early phonological awareness, child protection and first aid. A number of the staff had either already been awarded a relevant child care degree or were studying for one. We discussed with the manager other options in relation to training, including accessing on-line training and keeping up to date with best practice by reading relevant publications.

All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and had a copy of, and worked to the SSSC Codes of Practice.

Areas for improvement

The service should maintain current very good practice.

Staff should continue to be supported to attend appropriate training and keep up to date with best practice guidance.

Consideration should be given to developing further the staff appraisal system to include feedback from children, parents, colleagues and other relevant stakeholders.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service strengths

We found the service performance was very good in relation to this Quality Statement. Comments relating to participation, communication and information sharing in Quality Theme 1, Statement 1, Quality Theme 2, Statement 1 and Quality Theme 3, Statement 1 are also relevant to this Quality Statement.

There were various opportunities for children and their parents and carers to give their views and suggestions and be involved in assessing and improving the quality of management and leadership of the service. Their feedback was audited and taken account of during any internal quality assurance review of the service.

As a committee run service, parents were all invited to get involved in the committee and be part of the on-going process of quality assurance.

There was an appropriate complaints policy in place which encouraged parents and carers to discuss any concerns or issues with the manager or a member of staff.

Areas for improvement

The areas for improvement identified previously in Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 1 are also relevant to this Quality Statement.

The service should continue to build on current very good practice.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 4

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide

Service strengths

During the inspection we found that the service performance was very good in relation to quality assurance and involving children, parents and carers, staff and other relevant stakeholders in the on-going assessment of the quality of the service.

We concluded this after:

- speaking with children
- talking with parents and carers
- discussion with the manager
- talking with staff
- looking at the service's strategic improvement plan
- looking at relevant policies and procedures.

Comments recorded under previous Quality Statements relating to communication and participation are also relevant to this Quality Statement. The service responded to the findings and feedback from questionnaires, informal discussions, as well as previous inspections and internal quality assurance visits to improve practice.

The service periodically received a quality assurance visit from the local authority. Following the visit the manager and staff were provided with feedback on what they were doing well and what they could improve. The manager explained that she also routinely did informal monitoring visits within the playroom to observe practice. She then fed back her findings to the staff. The service also valued the feedback from any visiting professionals as to how they could improve practice.

Each year the service drew up a development plan which incorporated any areas of practice they needed to improve or develop further. The manager explained that staff were fully involved in this process. Action plans were routinely reviewed during team meetings as well as informally on a regular basis to ensure that the identified next steps were being achieved or whether amendments needed to be made in order for the improvement plan to be met. During the inspection we were able to view the service's current development plan.

Asking for and listening to the feedback from the children and their parents and carers was very important to the manager and staff. The children attending the service and their parents and carers were encouraged to give their views on the service and the quality of their experience. The children who attended the service were able to give their views, ideas and suggestions during informal discussions with the staff. For example, the children were all actively involved in deciding how the outdoor space could be developed. Parents and carers were also encouraged to give feedback and suggestions.

The service made use of various methods to pass on information to parents and carers. These included newsletters, emails, informal feedback during sessions, and information displayed within the service. The parents spoken with during the inspection were very happy with the level of information shared and the methods used to do this. Parents were pleased with how they were kept informed throughout the whole process of getting the extension added.

Staff were able to make use of their individual appraisals, team meetings and informal discussions to reflect on their practice, identify their individual strengths and those of the service as a whole, identify areas for improvement and then plan the next steps to improve practice. The staff spoken with during the inspection were of the opinion that they were very much encouraged to be involved in the on-going assessment and development of the service. They felt that the manager and other staff listened to and valued any ideas they might have.

Areas for improvement

The service should continue to actively involve children, parents/carers, staff and all other relevant stakeholders in the on-going self-evaluation process.

The service should maintain current very good practice.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

4 Other information

Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last 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 the Care Inspectorate re-grading a Quality Statement within the Quality of Management and Leadership Theme (or for childminders, Quality of Staffing Theme) as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme being re-graded as unsatisfactory (1).

5 Summary of grades

Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 3	5 - Very Good
Quality of Environment - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 2	5 - Very Good
Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 3	5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 4	5 - Very Good

6 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
26 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
25 May 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good

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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