

Care service inspection report

Full inspection

Stepping Stones For Families: Thistle Childcare Centre Day Care of Children

45 Boyndie Street
Easterhouse
Glasgow

Service provided by: Stepping Stones For Families

Service provider number: SP2003001274

Care service number: CS2007146780

Inspection Visit Type: Unannounced

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and set out improvements that must be made. We also investigate complaints about care services and take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

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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	4	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 staff had a very good knowledge of meeting the all round needs of the children in their care. The manager and the staff team have a very good relationship, creating a positive and value base.

What the service could do better

Please refer to recommendations noted in this report.

What the service has done since the last inspection

Please refer action taken on previous recommendations and requirements noted in this report.

Conclusion

This nursery offers a stimulating, nurturing, tranquil and learning environment for children aged 0-5 years old. The manager and staff genuinely cared about providing the best outcomes for all the children.

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 01 April 2011.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps service focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people – and what they can do to improve. Getting it Right for Every Child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy, and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it Right for Every Child. They are; safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

The provider is a national voluntary organisation, operates childcare services throughout Scotland.

Stepping Stones for Families: Thistle Childcare Centre, provides care to a maximum of 30 children at any one time. The age range of the children is from birth to those not yet attending primary school. This includes a maximum of 12 children aged birth to under two years and a maximum number of 18 children aged over two years to those not yet attending primary school.

The nursery offers full and part day care between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday 52 weeks per year.

The nursery operates from the ground level of a purpose built property situated in the Easterhouse area of Glasgow. The nursery has its own secure door entry system.

The service have access to designated playrooms for children aged up to two years, children aged two years to those not yet attending primary school and an enclosed outside play area.

The service aims includes the following information: "All children to be involved in planning, routines and activities in a flexible manner".

Recommendations

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

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

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 - 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 medium intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections where we have assessed the service may need a more intense inspection.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection. This was carried out by an Inspector on behalf of the Care Inspectorate. The inspection took place on Wednesday 9 March 2016

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed annual return and self assessment form that we asked the manager to complete and submit to us.

We sent 15 care standard questionnaires to the manager to distribute to the parents/carers of children who attend the service. Five questionnaires were completed and returned before the inspection.

During the inspection process, we gathered evidence from various sources, including the following:

- Children's care plans/profiles
- Daily sheets
- Daily plan
- Staff training folder
- Health and safety checklists
- Staff meeting minutes
- Medication recordings and storage
- Floor books
- Photographs/and Thank You cards
- Observation of staff/child interaction
- Registration certificate
- Insurance certificate
- Newsletters

- Parent group meeting minute
- Participation folder
- Improvement plan
- Parents' and staff questionnaires and evaluations
- Children's and staff achievement awards
- Evidence to support C. I. quality themes and statements.

We spoke with:

- The manager
- Senior childcare worker
- Childcare workers
- Parents
- Individual and small groups of children.

We observed the indoor and outdoor environment.

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.firescotland.gov.uk

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.

A completed self assessment document was submitted by the service. This was fully completed to a good standard and gave relevant information for each of the quality themes and statements. The service identified its strengths and some areas for future development. We discussed this document could have contained more detail and include an outcomes focus.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

Children were confident and comfortable within their playrooms. The older children were taking part in the inspection by chatting and showing us their favourite toys. Some of their comments included:

"We are always good in nursery"

"He is my best friend"

"We are all friends in this nursery"

"I can walk to my house from nursery"

"We like to play outside with the scooters"

"I like to play in the waster, look it smells of chocolate".

Taking carers' views into account

Parents told us:

"This nursery has been a godsend for my child, I had such a bad experience with his previous one. I was always getting telephoned or spoken with about my child's challenging behaviour. Within four weeks this nursery had put strategies in place, to keep him calm and integrated. It is such a relief, when I pick him up, he is happy and engaged with the staff and children. I am so grateful to the staff, I can't thank them enough".

"The staff are lovely and very helpful, my son is learning to speak English and is getting good at it. He loves the toys and has made friends".

"They helped support me when I was having a rough time, they put on cooking and budgeting classes for us, You can look in the box at the front door for toys and clothes. They feed the kids well, really healthy food".

Please refer to parental comments noted throughout the report.

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 3

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

Service Strengths

After examination of relevant documents, feedback from children, parents and staff, this service was found to have a good performance in relation to this statement.

Children's learning was displayed in many formats including personal plans and learning stories. These were available for parents/carers to look at and comment on. This gave parents/carers an opportunity to see what their children had been learning and celebrate their achievements with them. Parents were involved in their child's direct observations, they are invited to make comments to support their child's learning progress. The staff completed daily sheets this enabled parents to consult about personal routines etc.

The parents are informed about the children engaging in a variety of opportunities and experiences, these notes are attached to the personal learning plans. A record of the child's routines and experiences are given to parents daily.

Staff consulted with children during mind mapping in the Big Floor Books. Throughout the day, we saw some staff consulting with the children on planning and choosing activities. We found the service had put in place effective systems to seek children's views and displayed their achievements throughout the service.

We saw the majority of children enjoying physical outdoor play. Children aged 2-5 years enjoying free flow play, indoors to outdoors at certain times. This enabled children to enjoy risk taking, turn taking and negotiating space.

We saw a copy of the monthly newsletter, the service had invited parents to get involved in the nursery life. We also saw the staff team compiling daily communication sheets, this is to keep parents informed of their child's routine and experiences. We witnessed staff giving very positive feedback to parents at collection time.

We saw that there were opportunities for children aged 0-3 years to have rest periods throughout the day. The children had access to drinking water in the playrooms. Some children participated in physical play in the fresh air. Babies were cuddled and comforted. Children and staff had a genuine mutual respect for one another.

Parents' comments included:

The service gives great activities and I love how they involve the rest of the families so, since it's a family with three children. It's the best nursery and I have used it for years. (Since it opened)".

Areas for improvement

The personal care plans/learning journeys should be further improved to mainstream the plan and include additional support offered. Personal learning journals should identify achievable targets. (see recommendation 1)

The manager agreed to further improve infection control prevention for example. Children and staff hand washing techniques, children's toilet's doors to be closed and snack handling. (see recommendation 2)

The manager agreed to review lunchtime procedures to enable children to be more independent and promote social skills.

Grade

4 – Good

Number of requirements – 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations – 2

1. Personal plans should be completed correctly and additional support should be recorded.

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

2. Children and staff should encouraged to keep themselves safe and free from infection.

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

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 2

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

Service Strengths

After examination of relevant documents, feedback from children, parents and staff, this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

Parents, carers and children enter the nursery via a controlled entry system, the manager and staff team regularly answer the nursery door to welcome children and parents.

The service had an effective child protection policy in place and staff were confident about their roles and responsibilities relating to protecting children from harm, abuse, bullying and neglect. Staff told us they would have no problem reporting poor practice, they were aware the nursery had a whistle blowing policy.

The babies and some two year old children slept comfortably. There was a sleep monitoring checklist in place. Babies slept and ate at different times. This reflected all babies were cared for on an individual basis, mirroring their personal home routines.

Children's toilets were bright and clean with ample supplies of hot running water, soap and paper towels. Visual aids were displayed within children's toilets to promote hand washing. Safety features were observed to be in place throughout all areas of the nursery environment.

All playrooms were observed to be clean, bright, warm and welcoming. Staff considered the risks of the environment. The outdoor area was clean and safe.

A keyworker system was in operation and parents/carers spoken with stated that they found this to be beneficial. The role of keyworker includes helping to promote a healthy emotional attachment with children in their care, taking responsibility for planning and reviewing children's individual needs and progress and being the main contact for families.

Sensitive information about children was stored securely in the office ensuring confidentiality to protect children and families. The rooms were well laid out with designated areas. Children could move freely and play independently or in a group, safely.

The manager informed us she was intending to raise staff awareness on the best practice guidance, she agreed that the HUB was a useful resource for sourcing this.

A parent stated:

"I do think there is room for improvement with regards to space. I think hygiene can also be improved".

The nursery is situated in a local housing community resource. We saw that they had made good use of the space available, the children aged 2-5 years were able to enjoy free flow outdoor play. The nursery had regular access to a large hall within the centre to enjoy indoor physical play.

We discussed the environment with the manager and she agreed that the playroom walls were in need of refreshing some of the paintwork. She will pursue this with the provider.

All parental questionnaires returned stated they strongly agreed that the nursery was a safe, secure, hygienic, smoke free, pleasant and stimulating environment.

Areas for improvement

We discussed best practice infection control guidance. The manager agreed to review nursery practices for example refreshing all staff's knowledge about washing hands after cleaning children's noses and to further improve on the handwashing techniques for children and staff.

Grade

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 3

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

Service Strengths

After examination of relevant documents, feedback from service users and the staff, this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

All staff held appropriate qualifications. We found all staff to display a confident, caring and nurturing manner towards children in their care. Staff knew children and families well and responded appropriately to their individual needs and interests. Children were observed to know staff and be comfortable around them.

Staff planned appropriate resources and activities for children across all age groups. Children in all playrooms were engaged in a variety of stimulating activities. The staff challenged children and encouraged them to reach their potential.

Staff in the baby room offered a calm and relaxed environment for babies. A wide range of natural resources and heuristic play opportunities were available. We observed babies being cuddled and comforted in a nurturing way. The staff team had a positive, caring manner towards all children.

Staff worked together as a team and supported each other. They told us the service had a whistleblowing policy, they would have no problem reporting poor practice.

We discussed Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Some of the staff told us that this had been covered at a staff training meeting. We could see this framework implemented throughout the day. Staff were competent when discussing individual needs of the children. They spoke with a very good understanding of supporting the children who faced challenges.

A parent told us "The staff are approachable and really interested in your whole family".

Personal training records were maintained for individual staff members. The manager had started to monitor the children's learning and how development needed to be taken forward.

Staff had been involved in training opportunities since the last inspection. Examples of training staff had participated in included:

- First Aid
- Bonding and attachment training
- Building the ambition
- Child Protection
- Nurture training
- Sound sleep.

Parents told us:

"The staff make this a really good nursery." "It has a lovely atmosphere and you always get a warm welcome".

A few parents stated:

Stepping Stones for Families provide a friendly, supportive and safe environment. All staff tried to involve parents to take part with any important events. In my eyes they have A GREAT RELATIONSHIP WITH ALL PARENTS. Great service".

"My daughter loves thistle childcare. The staff are welcoming and friendly and

always make my daughter feel safe and included".

Four members of staff completed the Care Inspectorate questionnaires. They agreed that they were supported and well informed. One member of staff stated: "I feel SSFF provide real good learning opportunities for staff".

The parental questionnaires strongly agreed that the staff were highly motivated and well trained.

Areas for improvement

The staff team should continue to be highly motivated and well trained.

Grade

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 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

After examination of relevant documents, feedback from service users and the staff, this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

The aims and objectives of the service were available to families in the handbook with a complaints procedure and other operational policies.

The management kept parents, staff and service users well informed about the nursery and future developments for example weekly feedback, progress meetings, website, newsletters, letters and photographs. They attended the local childcare forum, this enabled very good access to training opportunities and sharing of best practice.

We saw auditing take place by the manager, for example we saw audits of children's accidents and incidents, staff appraisals, training, team meetings and staff registration with SSSC.

The service uses the Curriculum for Excellence and Birth to Three objectives and monitoring calendar to measure and evaluate quality. The nursery is managed by an umbrella voluntary sector group Stepping Stones for Families. They make policy decisions and support the service to make improvements. The nursery is supported by a family worker and external manager. The management team told us: "We are on the floor often, hopefully leading by example and mentoring".

The management team were well prepared for the inspection visit, they co-operated fully, supporting parents to chat with us, they had collated strong evidence to support the quality improvement framework of the Care Inspectorate.

From care standard questionnaires issued to parents prior to our inspection, the majority of parents strongly agreed or agreed that overall they were happy with the quality of management and leadership.

Areas for improvement

The manager had introduced robust quality assurance systems. She had formulated a formal quality improvement plan to monitor and evaluate staff childcare practice and understanding of best practice guidance, for example recordings in staff appraisals and evaluating how training had impacted on the quality of the service.

Please refer to quality theme 1 statement 3: Areas for improvement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

4 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

Previous requirements

1. The provider must ensure that people employed by the service in a practitioner role have achieved registration with SSSC or another professional body within the required timescales.

This is in order to comply with:

SSI 2011/210 regulation 9(2)(d) - a requirement that the provider shall ensure that staff are fit to be so employed.

Timescale by 31st October 2016.

This requirement was made on 30 March 2014

We saw evidence of the all the staff team member's registration with the SSSC.

Met - Within Timescales

5 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

Previous recommendations

1. The management team and staff should improve their practice in relation to the prevention of the spread on infection. They should pay particular attention to nappy changing areas, hand washing sinks and the use of mops in toilet and food preparation areas.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 2.4 - A safe environment.

This recommendation was made on 31 March 2014

We saw all the issues had been corrected.

2. In order to ensure children's safety staff should provide suitable hand washing facilities for younger children and encourage effective hand washing routines.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 2.4 - A safe environment.

This recommendation was made on 31 March 2014

This recommendation had been met.

3. The manager should ensure that all members of the staff team undertake and keep up-to-date core skill training such as first aid, infection control, child protection and safe food handling.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 12.2 - Confidence in staff.

This recommendation was made on 31 March 2014

We saw that staff have participated in all of the above recommended training.

4. The management team should continue to review and update the services policies and procedures in line with current legislation and best practice.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 14.2 - Well-managed service.

This recommendation was made on 31 March 2014

We saw that the provider had updated policies and procedures.

5. The management team should act on the findings of the services monitoring and evaluation processes and effect further improvement.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 14.2 - Well-managed service.

This recommendation was made on 31 March 2014

The manager had improved the quality assurance systems and processes.

6 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

7 Enforcements

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

8 Additional Information

There is no additional information.

9 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
16 Sep 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 4 - Good
20 Sep 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
8 Apr 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing Not Assessed Management and Leadership Not Assessed
8 May 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
13 Aug 2008	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good

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