

## Gilcomstoun School Nursery Day Care of Children

Gilcomstoun Primary School  
Skene Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1PG

Telephone: 01224 642722

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**Service provided by:**  
Aberdeen City Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000349

**Care service number:**  
CS2003014428

## About the service

Gilcomstoun School Nursery has been registered since 2002. It is registered as a Day Care of Children service to provide a care service for a maximum of 40 children at any one time between 3 years of age to those not yet attending primary school.

The nursery is located within Gilcomstoun Primary School within the city centre of Aberdeen. There are two separate playrooms to support both mainstream and Gaelic provision. Nursery children share an outdoor play space with a sheltered area to allow access in all weathers.

Aims of the service include being committed to "create a caring environment which promotes self-respect and respect for others, whilst reflecting cultural diversity where staff and children feel safe, happy and valued".

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (also known as GIRFEC). This is Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

## What people told us

For this inspection we received seven completed Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs) and we spoke to five parents and carers.

Responses indicated that parents were mostly happy with the service, commenting positively about the care and support their child was given. Concerns were raised about staff continuity within the playrooms and the sharing of children's progress. These will be addressed in the body of the report.

Parents commented:

- "My child really likes going to nursery. They support lots of different cultures and have events such as an international week. My child is more confident and their English language has improved a lot".
- "I am very happy. The teachers are very nice and caring. The children do lots of activities. I really like the photos and big books. It's amazing to see what they have been doing".
- "It's fantastic! It's a really friendly service and the staff are really approachable. I love the outdoor play area and this is one of the reasons I put my child to this nursery".

There were approximately 16 children in the mainstream sessions during inspection and seven children in Sgoil Araich, Gaelic speaking nursery class. The children were engaged in their play at all times and were enthusiastic to show us their toys. The children were playing with Chinese dragons as part of their learning about Chinese New Year and excitedly told us, "The teeth go snap, snap".

They also made us noodles in the role play corner. "This is for you. Noodles".

The children enjoyed painting and told us about their pictures. "Look, look. This is eyes, nose and mouth".

Some children were very busy playing with Lego and told us this was their favourite activity. "I have made some stairs. You can too. You do it like this".

## Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self-assessment document from the service. The service identified what they did well and gave examples of improvements in their outdoor provision and how they supported children to progress. The service told us how the people who used the care service had taken part in the self-assessment process and how their feedback directed the development of their plans for improving the service. However, the self-assessment could have been more evaluative with more information on the impact on outcomes for children.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

## What the service does well

Gilcomstoun School nursery provided a good level of care and support to the children. The school ethos was very friendly and inclusive. Families from various cultures were welcomed and encouraged to be involved. For example an International week was held with activities such as tasting foods from around the world. Staff were very nurturing and caring and supported children new to the setting to settle and follow nursery routines. Kind words were used to reassure the children and praise to develop their confidence and self-esteem. In Sgoil Araich, staff successfully used lots of expression and body language to support children to understand. The atmosphere in the nursery was calm and respectful at all times and children liked the songs and music used to gain their attention. Children were responsible and helped staff tidy up.

Daily outdoor play opportunities helped keep children fit and healthy. The outside space was very attractive and children could choose from a variety of activities supporting their physical development and knowledge of the world around them. Children were involved in checking the area was safe for play and followed the rules put in place to keep them safe.

Staff were working hard to evolve planning procedures to support children progress. Children could choose independently from a selection of toys and activities attractively displayed in the bright playrooms and outdoor area. Floorbooks were used effectively to support children achieve by involving them in the planning process. The progress of individual children were recorded in their learning journeys. These included information about their likes, dislikes and preferences to ensure a continuity of care.

We looked at a sample of the children's records and found relevant information to support the welfare of the child was recorded. A previous recommendation to review nursery procedures for the management of medication had been met. A medication policy and detailed forms were in place to support the safe administration of medication. Staff had completed annual child protection training and through discussion were able to tell us the correct procedures to follow if concerned about the welfare of a child.

Management and leadership of the service was operating at a good level to provide quality assurance and to support improvement to the service. Recent changes to staffing had a positive effect on the nursery and all staff showed a commitment to improve. The deputy head teacher and lead practitioner had successfully worked

alongside the Aberdeen City development team and this was evident in the evolving planning procedures to support child-led learning.

## What the service could do better

Staff worked well as a team and shared responsibility for working in both playrooms. However, concerns were raised by parents about a continuity of care when staff swapped between playrooms. The deputy head teacher explained this was due to staff shortages in Sgoil Araich and new staffing structures. We discussed informing parents and evaluating the new system which she told us she would be happy to do.

Some parents felt they were not fully aware of their child's progress. We found observations of children's learning were recorded in the children's learning journeys which were shared regularly with parents. However, meaningful observations with identified next step were not consistent in both playrooms to fully inform and support parents. We found inconsistencies in the recording of information in chronologies and in the storage of medical and allergy forms to help keep children safe and well **(see Recommendation 1)**.

Activities and resources in the playrooms were bright, colourful and supported creativity and problem solving. However, to fully support children's learning, more opportunities should be provided for open-ended creative play. Possible ideas to promote sand and water play can be found at: <http://www.tomsensori.blogspot.co.uk/> **(see Recommendation 2)**.

Staff followed good practice infection control procedures when making snack and supporting children with their personal care. However, the cleaning policy had not been updated recently and did not refer to current guidance. This was a previous recommendation and has been restated **(see Recommendation 3)**.

Aberdeen City Early Years development workers had worked closely with the service to help identify areas for improvement and develop an action plan. However, staff were not involved in using self-evaluation tools such as Building the Ambition or (HGIOELCC) , How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare **(see Recommendation 4)**.

During feedback we discussed ensuring the Care Inspectorate self-assessment document was evaluative and showed the impact on children's outcomes.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 4

1. To keep children safe and help children achieve, the manager should ensure children's records in both playrooms are consistent. Records should include:
  - (a) Children's observations in their learning journeys linked to next steps.
  - (b) Clear and accessible care plans for children with allergies and medication needs.
  - (c) Detailed chronologies about significant events in a child's life.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 4: Engaging with children; Standard 5: Quality of Experience and Standard 14: Well-Managed Service

2. To fully extend children's thinking and learning, more opportunities for open-ended, child led-play should be made available.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 5: Quality of Experience and Standard 11: Access to Resources

3. To keep children safe and well, the cleaning policy should be updated to refer to current guidance. Staff should ensure they follow good practice procedures when cleaning toys.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 2: A Safe Environment

4. To support staff and help make improvements to the service, the manager should ensure all staff are involved in self-evaluation to support development of the service.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 13: Improving the Service and Standard 14: Well-Managed Service

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
9 Jan 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
18 Jan 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
20 Nov 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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