Green Apple Nursery
Day Care of Children

18 Clydesdale Street
Hamilton
ML3 0DA

Telephone: 01698 891141

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 31 July 2017

Service provided by: Green Apple Nursery Ltd
Service provider number: SP2012011873

Care service number: CS2012309777
About the service

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 registered with the Care Inspectorate on 27 November 2012.

We carried out a quality themed inspection. This targeted approach meant that we looked at identified aspects focusing on children’s experiences under four quality themes - care and support, environment, staffing and management/leadership.

Green Apple Nursery is registered to provide day care to a maximum of 73 children aged from six weeks to those not yet attending primary school. The nursery provides full and part time day care between 7:30am and 6pm Monday to Friday throughout the year.

The nursery operated from a refurbished single storey building in Hamilton, South Lanarkshire. The children were accommodated within four playrooms - baby room for 0 - 1 year, baby room 2 for 1 - 2 years, toddler room for 2 - 3 years and a main playroom for 3 - 5 year olds. There were two designated welcome areas/cloakrooms for accommodating 0 - 2 years and 3 - 5 years. There were sufficient toilets and designated sleeping areas for baby room 2 and the toddler room. The nursery had a secure door entry system in operation and was well maintained throughout. There were also two large, secure and well resourced outdoor play areas which were easily accessible to children aged from birth to 2 years and 3 to 5 years. The service also had a parents’ room.

The nursery was in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council to provide pre-school education.

The service’s aims and objectives were as follows:

"To provide a stimulating, safe and caring environment."
"To form positive relationships with parents/carers ensuring we meet the needs of individual children."
"To fully involve parents/carers in the decision making regarding the care and education their child receives."
"To promote the development of children’s intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs."
"To track, record and share children’s progress, developments and achievements."
"To encourage outdoor learning on a daily basis in all weathers where planned learning experiences will take place."

A full statement of the service’s aims and objectives was available to people who used the service.

This report was written following an unannounced inspection which took place on 31 July 2017 between 8:30am and 4.15pm. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. Feedback was given to the manager and the acting depute on the same day as the inspection visit. There were 41 children in the service during the inspection.

As requested by us the service completed an annual return.

During the inspection we gathered evidence from different sources. We spoke with the manager, acting depute, eight staff and ten children.

We looked at the service’s health and safety records including infection control, risk assessments, medication, care standards questionnaires, children’s files, personal plans and on line learning journals, accident/incident records, staff training records, monitoring systems, registration certificate and insurance certificate.
We observed staff’s childcare practice, the environment, equipment and outdoor areas.

All of the above information was taken into account and reported on under the relevant quality themes within this report.

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 (GIRFEC); Scotland’s national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. GIRFEC supports children and their parents to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

**What people told us**

We issued 40 care standards questionnaires to the manager to distribute to parents and carers. We received 14 completed questionnaires before the inspection with six having additional comments. Parental comments were as follows:

- "Green Apple is a great nursery. My daughter loves the other children and staff. I wouldn’t put my daughter anywhere else."
- "A very dedicated nursery. Staff support children with their additional needs. They are encouraged and listened to."
- "It’s a fantastic environment for the children."
- "This is an excellent nursery and there is nothing I could fault."
- "My child settled amazingly as did his big brother."
- "The staff are amazing, keep me informed and take the best care of my child."
- "The nursery is always clean and we are always happy with the progress our child is making."
- "Staff build excellent relationships with the children and are always enthusiastic about my child."
- "Feedback is personalised and useful. Any concerns/questions I have had have been dealt with very promptly."

Some parental negative comments were as follows:

- "Staff turnover during key times and transitions have been unfortunate for my child. Green Apple have really developed some excellent practitioners and I wish more could be done to keep key individuals on at the end of their training."
- "High turnover of staff. Very young trainees in all the time. Lack of individualism - no daily journal of what child has done, learned, slept or eaten that day. Very little communication or information given."

We spoke with one parent/carer during the inspection visit and her comments were as follows:

- "I have seen an improvement in the service - wall displays completed, tidier/cleaner environment. Staff have upped their game. Very happy with the service now. My child has been here since age 9 months. Online journals could have more photos and observations could be more frequent."

We issued six staff questionnaires before the inspection visit and three were returned with the following comments:
“Our manager is there to help us support each individual child and meet their needs on a daily basis.”
“I would like to receive training in First Aid and in supporting children with additional support needs.”

We spent time in the nursery playrooms and observed children who were happy, settled and enjoying a variety of play experiences. The interactions between staff and children were friendly and nurturing which created a positive environment.

We spoke with ten children and all of them told us that they enjoyed coming to the service. We observed that the children were very settled within the nursery environment and presented as being very confident and enjoying their learning. Some comments were as follows:

“I’m Batman and this is penguin.”
“Why haven’t you got your jammies on?”
“This is the beast.”
“This is Belle.”

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own development plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

| Quality of care and support | 3 - Adequate |
| Quality of environment | 4 - Good |
| Quality of staffing | 3 - Adequate |
| Quality of management and leadership | 4 - Good |

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We looked at the service’s child protection policy and procedures and evidenced that staff were about to receive annual child protection training. The manager told us how training would provide more in depth information and highlight the important role all people play in children’s lives in order to better protect them. We also discussed how staff needed to be knowledgeable about the procedures to be followed and have confidence in their written recordings of concerns when required.

We evidenced that within the 3 to 5s the children received good support for their health and wellbeing needs from management and staff. Children were observed to be happy and confident in their environment. Resources were easily accessible which encouraged children to be independent when choosing what they wanted to do. We discussed how staff should continue to consult with children and take their views and ideas into consideration when planning and adapting their learning environment. Observations should continue to be taken to help identify individual preferences. Learning environments were continuing to be refreshed and new resources purchased to further stimulate children’s learning.
We observed that the routine in Babyroom 2 was very structured and that there was no malleable activities such as sand and water. More choice of activities and resources should be made available to the children in order to promote more enjoyable learning experiences.

Personal plans using the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) wellbeing indicators were in use and included some targets for achievement and next steps. Staff should continue to record tracking information in order to follow individual developmental progression. On going development of personal plans should be continued with more use of the SHANARRI health and wellbeing indicators. We discussed the use of a separate sheet to record six monthly reviews or sooner as required.

Online learning journals had been introduced and were proving to be popular with staff and parents/carers. These could be accessed at any time from a mobile phone, tablet or computer. Staff members uploaded some observations and photographs of the child’s daily learning and on going development. This allowed families to be actively involved in all aspects of their child’s time at nursery including commenting and adding in achievements and information from home. These journals provided good links between home and nursery and would be further enhanced if more observations with photographs were recorded in order to track children’s individual development. The GIRFEC SHANARRI health and wellbeing indicators should also be used in recordings as well as within relevant wall displays.

A system for recording any medication given to children was in place and parents/carers were required to sign this. Information about the dosage and how often the medication should be administered should be more clearly recorded and no communal creams should be used. We discussed the importance of being aware of the need to administer medication safely and referred to the most recent copy of the Care Inspectorate guidance - 'Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services.' See recommendation 1.

We discussed the nappy changing procedure and the manager stated that she would be refreshing this with all staff including the revamping of storage areas which needed to be more organised and tidied up. Nappies should be stored in sealed boxes and not left open to the risk of contamination. We also emphasised the need to ensure staff were up to date with infection control best practice guidance.

We observed the snack and lunch procedure and found that children’s independence skills could be further promoted including clearing away their dishes and cutlery. Water and milk were provided and children had access to drinks throughout the session. The children also had opportunities to learn about healthy living, diet, environmental issues, personal hygiene and tooth brushing. Hand washing procedures were also promoted by the staff.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0
Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The manager should ensure that all staff are aware of and follow current best practice infection control guidance and management of medication guidance in order to maintain a safe, healthy environment for the children.

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

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We evidenced that evaluation of all playroom settings had been undertaken with particular emphasis on how the environment supported children’s learning and development. Some new resources had been purchased through consultation with children and staff. Staff told us how they promoted children’s interests using observations and through discussions.

The outdoor learning environment for 3 to 5 year olds encouraged an active and healthy lifestyle. There were areas for growing fruit and vegetables, exploration, wheeled resources, chalk boards, mud kitchen, climbing frame, sand area, water area, construction area, story telling area, bike area and a see saw. One tractor tyre was filled with shaving foam to encourage sensory play. Sufficient space was also available in a large paved area for the use of wheeled vehicles. The 3 to 5 playroom had direct access to the outdoor area which encouraged free flow play experiences.

A smaller outdoor area was available to the under 3s which was equipped with appropriate outdoor resources. We did not see this area being used during the inspection visit and would encourage staff to include more outdoor play on a daily basis.

We discussed the recently published early years good practice document ‘My World Outdoors’ which the service was beginning to use to aid the continual development of the outdoor area. This guidance highlighted examples of effective practice around the SHANARRI health and wellbeing indicators and provided a good model for assessing and reporting the service’s impact on children’s outcomes.

We observed that the standard of resources and equipment was of a good quality and that all necessary safety features were in place. Staff were continuing to develop the 3 to 5 outdoor area which provided children with free choice taking into account their interests and preferences.

The service should continue the use of the outdoor environment to promote children’s interests and individual learning. More use of sensory experiences within the playrooms for under 3s could be promoted. Children’s work should also be displayed wherever possible and at a suitable height.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0
Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The new manager had begun to address issues around staff training and appraisals. We evidenced that she was keen to ensure that the management structure encouraged the involvement of staff in identifying their own personal development and training needs. The annual training plan should be improved to evidence the range of training undertaken by the staff. A variety of mandatory and specific training courses should link to the service’s improvement plan. These should include child protection, infection control, food hygiene, paediatric first aid, Pre-Birth to Three, Curriculum for Excellence and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). See recommendation 1.

Staff reflection and evaluation of their training should be recorded to show how it had helped them in their current roles and benefitted children in their care. We discussed that they should be made aware of the need to record the impact of their training as a requirement of their Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration.

Staff were enthusiastic in their individual roles and discussed how they wanted to provide positive outcomes for all children. They told us that the new manager provided skilled support and guidance.

Staff held a range of childcare qualifications and showed commitment to their own personal development and that of the service. All team members took part in monthly staff meetings and had input into the agenda.

Leadership opportunities and extended remits could be put into operation with staff having delegated responsibility for outdoor play, literacy and numeracy.

The service should continue to provide staff with up to date training and encourage continual evaluation processes in order to evidence the impact on children’s developmental needs.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The manager should continue to ensure that an annual appraisal/personal development and review system is formally put in place for each member of staff to identify individual training needs, skills and development opportunities. This would feed into an overall training plan for the service.

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

Grade: 3 - adequate
Findings from the inspection

The new manager had been in post since May 2017 and we observed that she was knowledgeable about nursery procedures and the individual needs of children who used the service. We also observed that she had the skills, experience and enthusiasm to ensure that all service users received a quality service leading to positive outcomes. Staff we spoke with told us that they felt more motivated, enthusiastic, involved and consulted since the new manager had been in post.

We observed that the manager undertook informal monitoring of staff practice, children’s personal plans, planning and tracking of individual progress. We evidenced that planning was linked to observations of children. We discussed the benefits of introducing a monitoring calendar to ensure that regular quality assurance was undertaken within the service as well as formal monitoring to ensure continual development and improvement. See recommendation 1.

On line learning journals should continue to be monitored with particular attention paid to how next steps were recorded and followed up as well as the monitoring of staff’s childcare practice to ensure continual improvement.

We evidenced that the manager maintained a floor presence on a daily basis. This also included seeking the views of parents/carers as well as children.

We observed that self evaluation was linked to the document ‘How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare’ and the manager discussed how this would continue to be taken forward with the staff team. An Improvement Plan had been developed with staff and the manager was beginning to work through the individual priorities identified.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The manager should continue to introduce more formal monitoring of staff’s childcare practice, on line learning journals and personal plans. This is in order to ensure the ongoing development and improvement of the service and to ensure staff are following best practice guidance to support the health, safety and learning opportunities for all children in their care.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard: 14.7: Well Managed Service.

Grade: 4 - good
Previous requirements

Requirement 1

The provider must ensure that appropriate staffing levels are maintained throughout the day. This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011. SSI 2011/210 Regulation 15 (a) Staffing.

This requirement was made on 9 March 2017.

Action taken on previous requirement

An online register which automatically counted the number of children in the service was in use. During the inspection we found that all playrooms had appropriate staff to child ratios.

Shift patterns had been changed to accommodate staff/child ratios. Staff sign in/out sheets in place to ensure ratios were maintained at all times.

Met - within timescales

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

Management and staff should ensure when using an electrical appliance that a robust risk assessment is carried out for the safety and security of children.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 2.2: A Safe Environment.

This recommendation was made on 23 October 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The electrical appliance in question had been removed and child friendly lamps purchased.

Recommendation is met.
Recommendation 2

The manager should ensure that management accountability and responsibility is clearly defined and communicated to all staff.

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

This recommendation was made on 22 January 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation
The new manager had had meetings with the staff group when accountability and responsibility had been defined.

Recommendation is met.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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