

# Little Einstein's Perth Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection: Announced  
Inspection completed on: 4 September 2017

**Service provided by:**  
Forth Care Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2014012365

**Care service number:**  
CS2014332127

## About the service we inspected

Little Einstein's Nurseries are part of a group of six nurseries, which are situated in various parts of Scotland. Little Einstein's Perth is located in an industrial estate close to the town centre and other amenities. The nursery caters for the developing needs of children aged from six weeks to 14 years. The service also runs an after school club and offers school holiday care for those attending primary school. Children are cared for by staff in various rooms according to their age and stage of development. The nursery operates Monday - Friday offering both full and part-time sessions between 7:00am and 6:00pm.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 150 children aged from six weeks to 14 years, 42 children from birth to two years, 50 children two to three years and 48 children three years and over. A minimum of two staff are to be present in an operating playroom/area at any time.

The staff consisted of several early years practitioners, modern early years apprentices, two deputy managers and a manager, a cook and a domestic assistant. Some of these posts were currently vacant. The service had their own training and administration service. The service stated the following principles of their service were:

- to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for all-round care to help children develop intellectually through a balance of directed and free choice activities
- continuity of care for all children and flexible care routines
- to create a stimulating and challenging environment, providing opportunities for learning through play and covering the five key areas
- to encourage children to develop self-control, self-direction and independence
- to develop self-expression through various activities such as drama, music, story telling, block building and other forms of play
- to provide a warm and welcome atmosphere with good staff, child and parent relationships
- to ensure a safe environment which protects children from harm, abuse and neglect
- to develop respect for individual and cultural differences
- effective use of assessment information to identify needs and plan the next steps for learning and evaluating regularly to meet changing needs.

## How we inspected the service

This was a follow-up inspection to assess if the requirements detailed in the recent improvement notice had been met within the given timescale of 30 August 2017. Other aspects of the improvement notice had already been met within the given timescale of 30 June 2017.

This visit focused on the improvements that were required to the quality of staffing, the care and support provided to children and the quality of children's experiences. We also focused on staff's awareness of child protection and their role in ensuring that children are safe and protected from harm. We sent Care Standards Questionnaires to the service before this inspection took place to seek the current views of parents using the service. We received nine completed questionnaires which provided us with valuable information that supported our inspection findings.

The inspectors spent time observing staff practice and considering outcomes for children in all rooms. We looked at relevant documentation and met with the nursery's operations manager who explained the actions that had been taken to improve the quality of the service. Managers from other Little Einstein services were present and were actively involved in our discussions, they had been helping with the improvements to the nursery, each taking responsibility for leading change in specific rooms.

We carried out individual interviews with seven care staff from all three rooms. These discussions were a valuable way to seek staff views and to talk about their involvement in the changes that had taken place. We also explored their personal development through the training and staff development programme that had been put in place. We asked all seven staff about their child protection knowledge, what actions they would take if they had concerns about children's safety and welfare, and asked them to explain their learning from recent child protection training.

The inspectors had a constructive feedback meeting with the management team at the end of our investigations, where we shared our findings and confirmed that the requirements in the improvement notice had been met within the given timescales. We discussed the impact and sustainability of the improvements that had been made and the proposals for further developments that would be examined at the next full inspection of the service.

## Taking the views of people using the service into account

We saw that children throughout the nursery were settled, happy and more motivated by the resources, opportunities and staff engagement now being provided. We saw that staff were more attentive and responsive to children's needs, and that play and learning opportunities had improved. We concluded that this improved environment had resulted in better outcomes for children.

## Taking carers' views into account

Feedback from the nine questionnaires returned to us from parents was mostly positive. Seven of these parents 'strongly agreed', one 'agreed' and one 'disagreed' that they were overall happy with the quality of care that their child receives. Some parents commented that they had noticed improvement to the service in recent months, their comments included:

'There has been an improvement in the last few months, the rooms are much cleaner and more activities are set up for the children to take part in. There are photograph displays showing the children doing different activities. There are also paintings and artwork displayed in the rooms. It seems like there are more staff and I am confident that they provide good quality of care for my child.'

'I am happy with all the staff, and my daughter is too. This is the most important thing for me and my partner. Superb staff'.

'Both my son and I feel that the nursery is a safe and friendly environment. I know that my son is well looked after and that he enjoys his time at the nursery. The only downfall has been the lack of management, but considering the circumstances of the nursery, the staff have coped extremely well. I could not praise the staff enough, you are always greeted with a friendly smile and a "hello". They are always happy to help with any queries and nothing is too much trouble for them.'

'I have noticed massive change in the last three months, my children have a lot more artwork home and I see this displayed in the rooms alongside lots of photographs of the children at play. Cleanliness has improved and the rooms have more activities for children. Staffing seems to have increased and I am more than happy to leave our children in their care.'

'The staff are great with my daughter. She has been attending here for over a year and has developed greatly due to the care and attention of staff. I do feel that management need to involve parents more and interact more with the children.'

One parent was clearly less happy with the service and did not feel that the nursery had met her children's specific needs. She told us that external professionals had recommended supports which had not been put in place to support her child's care and learning. Further details were shared with the management team to inform their development of the service. This parent went on to tell us that:

'My overall impression is that most staff are caring and helpful but lack support, training and direction.'

Parental feedback from the returned questionnaires also highlighted that some parents did not feel that the service made good use of resources in the community, for example the library and parks. One parent 'strongly disagreed' that they were confident that staff had the skills and experience to care for their child and support their learning and development. One parent also 'disagreed' that they were confident that staff would protect their child from neglect. Another parent 'disagreed' that the service had involved them and their child in developing the service and asking for ideas and feedback.

These less favourable viewpoints were shared with the management team to inform their improvement agenda. They felt that some of the issues raised were being addressed through the programme of training and staff development.

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous requirements

#### Requirement 1

By 30 August 2017, you must:

(a) Improve the quality of care and support to provide children with nurturing and responsive care and experiences that supports them to achieve and reach their potential

(b) ensure that at all times there are sufficient numbers of staff working in the service who have the appropriate skills, knowledge, training and experience to meet the children's needs.

**This is in order to comply with regulations 4(1)(a), 9(2)(b) and 15(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/210.**

**This requirement was made on 1 June 2017.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

We spent time observing staff practice and engagement with children in all rooms. We saw that there was significant improvement to the quality of children's experiences and found that staff were more attentive and responsive to the children's needs. There were only 15 children present in the nursery with ample staff in all rooms, offering an enhanced ratio throughout our visit. This resulted in children having improved levels of attention and support from staff, leading to more positive outcomes for children of all ages. The programme of staff training, support and development had been effective in improving practice and extending staff understanding of their roles and responsibilities. We did note that the quality and skill level of staff was still variable and that further support was still required for some staff. We were reassured that the management team were aware of these individual support needs and were working towards achieving greater consistency throughout the team. Some staff had left the service since our last inspection and one new member of staff had been appointed, who had brought some fresh ideas and experience into the team. Staff told us that they felt the nursery was improving and that they felt well supported by the management structure and the interventions that had taken place to improve the service. We found that staff were happier at work, more motivated and we saw a growing confidence in some staff that was encouraging and was contributing to improving outcomes for children. Room teams were more settled and consistent and there was less movement and covering of other rooms, which had led to more consistency for children and parents, and was developing more effective team work.

Children's experiences and opportunities for learning were seen to be improved and they were happier and more focused at play. Children were enjoying and benefitting from the improved resources, improved environment, better organisation and improved quality of staffing. Staff were seen to be more cheerful and approachable, they smiled, laughed and generally communicated more with the children. We observed some nurturing and good staff interactions with children. Staff were supporting children at play and most staff demonstrated better insight into children's needs. We saw staff having fun with the children and noted improved relationships and strengthened attachments with children, which had positive impacts on their development and well-being. The under twos were seen to be receiving affectionate and nurturing care and approached staff readily for comfort and support. All children were seen to be happy and settled in the nursery and were enjoying the play experiences on offer.

Staff were starting to develop their approach to planning and recording to support children's needs and recognised that they were at an early stage of development in this area. We discussed ways that they could develop a more responsive approach to planning with greater emphasis on evaluation, reflection and supporting next steps in learning. We discussed the role of floor books in developing this aspect of their work. We also discussed the further support needed for staff to develop their observation and recording skills. These were all areas also identified for on-going improvement by the management team.

The staff training programme had started to develop staff awareness of some good practice guidance and staff were starting to consider how Building the Ambition, Pre -Birth to Three and the Curriculum for Excellence could be further embedded into their practice. We found that the service was still at an early stage of effectively embedding current guidance and was hopeful that this would be more evident as staff confidence developed.

We were satisfied that there had been sufficient progress to the quality of children's experiences to conclude that this requirement has now been met, whilst recognising that the improvement seen needed to be sustained and further progressed to ensure that outcomes for children continue to improve. The service was continuing its recruitment for experienced and skilled staff, recognising that the quality of staffing was key to service improvement. We found there to be an improved and more inviting atmosphere in the nursery and were confident that the commitment to improvement from the nursery team would continue.

## Met - within timescales

### Requirement 2

By 30 August 2017 you must ensure that all staff working in the service receive training in child protection relevant to their role and are able to demonstrate that they have the skills and knowledge to protect children from harm.

**This is in order to comply with regulations 3, 4(1)(a), 9(2)(b) and 15(b)(ii) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/210.**

**This requirement was made on 1 June 2017.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

All staff working in the service had recently received training in child protection that had refreshed and extended their knowledge. We interviewed seven care staff and found that they now had sufficient understanding of child protection and of their responsibilities to safeguard children. Their development in this key area was further supported through the regular staff supervision sessions that were in place, where staff had the chance to talk about any further training needs and to clarify any gaps in their knowledge. Through discussion they demonstrated a suitable knowledge of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and the procedures to follow in the event of any concern. All staff knew who the current designated child protection officers were and of

local authority child protection contacts. The current child protection officers are based in the Little Einstein's service in Dundee. There were plans in place for two senior staff from this Perth nursery to become the designated child protection officers for this service once they had completed further training for that role in October 2017. We were satisfied that the service's approach to safeguarding children had improved.

**Met - within timescales**

## What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

### 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).

### Enforcement

Please see Care Inspectorate website ([www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)) for details of enforcement action taken against the service. This follow up inspection is to report on the progress made on the enforcement action taken by the Care Inspectorate.

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
3 Jul 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	Not assessed
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
24 May 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	1 - Unsatisfactory
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
30 Nov 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	2 - Weak
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
14 Jul 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	4 - Good



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